GlobalSpec Engineers Better Backups and Restores with ExaGrid

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>
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> **Vice President, IT**
> **GlobalSpec**

Customer Overview

Based in East Greenbush, New York, GlobalSpec is the leading specialized vertical search, information services and e-publishing company serving the engineering, manufacturing and related scientific and technical market segments. The company provides its buy-side users with domain-expert search engines, a broad range of proprietary and aggregated Web-based content and over 60+ product and industry e-newsletters that help engineers and related professionals perform their key job tasks with the highest levels of accuracy and productivity.

Rapid Data Growth Led to Retention, Restore Issues with Tape Library

GlobalSpec experienced rapid data growth over the past few years and the company's IT staff was having difficulty backing up its nearly 20 TB of data with its aging tape library. Retention was becoming a big issue, and the staff was becoming concerned about restoring data from tape.

"We transitioned from a physical to a virtual environment and our data grew rapidly. We were extremely concerned because we had reached the point where we could only keep two weeks of retention. We were constantly juggling backup jobs just to keep up and our tapes were spinning 24/7. We were also very concerned about our ability to restore data. We had lots issues with bad tapes and found that restoring data often proved to be problemtatic, said Bar Wiegman, vice president, information technology at GlobalSpec. "We realized that we needed to completely redesign our backup systems to meet our business goals and began to look around at the different solutions on the market."

After carefully looking at a variety of backup products, GlobalSpec narrowed it down to disk-based backup systems from ExaGrid and Data Domain.

ExaGrid Provides Best Return on Investment and Flexibility

"We looked at the four year TCO and ExaGrid clearly came out on top. The ExaGrid system was the absolute right choice for us because it was cost effective to acquire and it will give us the ability to scale up as our backup requirements grow," Wiegman said. "We also decided to switch our backup application to Backup Exec. The ExaGrid/Backup Exec combination is extremely powerful and a good value. The two products are integrated very well together."

GlobalSpec installed three ExaGrid EX5000 systems in its primary datacenter and a fourth EX5000 system offsite. Data is automatically replicated to the offsite system each night in case it is needed for disaster recovery.

"First and foremost, the best thing about the ExaGrid system is its flexibility. It's very scalable in terms of capacity and we were also able to deploy a system offsite for disaster recovery. We've been able to virtually eliminate tape and all of its associated costs and we significantly improved our ability to access our data in the event of a disaster."

Improved Retention, Faster Backups and Restores

Since installing the ExaGrid system, GlobalSpec's IT department has been able to tailor retention policies for different data sets. Backup times have also significantly improved. The company's nightly backups now take less than seven hours each night and weekly full backups are completed in less than 48 hours.

"It's wonderful to be able to have different retention policies for our data. We were really nervous about retention with tape but now we're able to retain data as long as we need to. Also, because we're able to run so many

EXAGRID™

jobs simultaneously, our backups our running extremely fast and we're now able to back up everything with plenty of room for retention," said Sarah Flint, business analyst at GlobalSpec. "ExaGrid's data deduplication technology does a great job at reducing our data so that we're able to maximize retention. One area where the ExaGrid has made a huge impact has been restores. We're now extremely confident in our ability to restore data and it takes no time at all."

ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space required by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance. ExaGrid delivers extremely fast backup performance because data is written directly to disk, and data deduplication is performed post-process after the data is stored to reduce data. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's byte-level data deduplication technology only moves the changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Scalability to Meet Increased Backup Requirements

One of the main reasons that GlobalSpec chose the ExaGrid system was its ability to scale quickly and easily to meet future backup demands.

"One of ExaGrid's main differentiators is its approach to scalability. We can mix and match different sized systems to scale up without having to replace the unit. To be honest, we don't know what our backup needs will be in the next two to three years because our content model isn't predictable. The one thing we're sure of is that the ExaGrid will be able to meet our future needs," said Anthony Siano, senior systems architect at GlobalSpec.

ExaGrid's GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single GRID system with capacities of up to a 100TB full backup plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

Easy Management, Superior Customer Support

The ExaGrid system was designed to be easy to set up and maintain, and ExaGrid's industry-leading customer support team is staffed by trained, in-house engineers who are dedicated to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"One of the other differentiators between ExaGrid and its competitors is the company's approach to support. We like that we have a dedicated engineer assigned to our account who knows our environment. Our support engineer was extremely helpful when we brought up our DR site and it's nice to have one point of contact for software updates and things like that. Our support engineer has been extremely knowledgeable and responsive. We've been extremely pleased," said Wiegman. "The ExaGrid system was the perfect solution for our needs today and it will be able to easily scale up to meet our backup demands into the foreseeable future."

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

Symantec Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high performance and certified disk-to-disk-to-tape backup and recovery – including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange, SQL, file servers and workstations. High performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection and scalable management of local and remote server backups.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with byte-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's byte-level data deduplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, resulting in a solution that is 25 to 30% the cost of standard SATA drives. The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with popular backup applications, so organizations can retain their investment in existing applications and processes. ExaGrid servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

ExaGrid is the leader in cost-effective disk-based backup solutions. A highly scalable system that works with existing backup applications, the ExaGrid system is ideal for companies looking to quickly eliminate the hassles of tape backup while reducing their existing backup windows. ExaGrid's innovative approach minimizes the amount of data to be stored by providing standard data compression for the most recent backups along with byte-level data deduplication technology for all previous backups. Customers can deploy ExaGrid at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories or for disaster recovery.

For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at www.exagrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.