



# HealthEquity Replaces Straight Disk with ExaGrid for a 'Perfect Fit'

## HealthEquity®



USA

### Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid was the 'only appliance that could keep up' during POC with other solutions
- Scale-out system ideal for HealthEquity's yearly growth plan
- 'Amazing' deduplication with combination of ExaGrid and Veeam
- ExaGrid support provides expertise on entire environment

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**Mark Petersen**  
Systems Engineer

## Customer Overview

*Founded in 2002, HealthEquity is a leading administrator of Health Savings Accounts (HSAs) and other consumer-directed benefits – FSA, HRA, COBRA, and Commuter. Benefits advisors, health plans, and retirement providers partner with us to help over 13 million members work toward long-term health and financial wellbeing. HealthEquity is based in Draper, Utah.*

## A 'Perfect Fit' for Increased Retention

HealthEquity had been backing up straight to disk, which limited the capacity for retention. Mark Petersen, systems engineer at HealthEquity, looked for a better backup storage solution that would allow the company to keep more than seven years of retention. HealthEquity was using Veeam as its backup application and Petersen hoped to find a solution that would work with the incumbent software.

HealthEquity sought out several potential solutions including Cohesity, Dell EMC Data Domain, HPE StoreOnce, and ExaGrid. "We did the POC of the different solutions and ExaGrid came out on top as the other solutions didn't fit as well with Veeam. We had already invested in Veeam, and ExaGrid's integration with Veeam made it a perfect fit," said Petersen. "What impacted our choice the most was the amount of throughput we could get with ExaGrid. The bottleneck in our environment had been Veeam. The solution that the other products offered was to move the bottleneck to the actual storage appliance. ExaGrid was the only appliance that could keep up. Actually, it surpassed our expectations for a backup solution."

Since installing ExaGrid, HealthEquity has been able to increase all backup retention to more than seven years. Petersen noted, "Our company is a combination of financial and healthcare services. This requires that we keep some data indefinitely and other data for a seven-year period."

## Expertise on Entire Environment

Petersen found the ExaGrid system easy to install and was impressed by the expertise of his assigned support engineer of both the ExaGrid hardware and the Veeam software. "Installation was amazingly simple, especially with the support model that ExaGrid has.

We work with a single person that knows our solution. He knows Veeam and makes sure



that integration between the two products is extremely simple. The fact that he is very knowledgeable about our backup application along with ExaGrid is awesome. The best feature of ExaGrid is the support model; it provides the best support of any product I've used. I would highly recommend ExaGrid to anybody that ever asks me, and a major reason would be the support."

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with the industry's leading backup applications so that an organization can retain its investment in its existing backup applications and processes.

In addition, ExaGrid appliances can replicate to a second ExaGrid appliance at a second site or to the public cloud for DR (disaster recovery).

## 'Amazing' ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe

Petersen is pleased with the deduplication ratios he has experienced with the combination of ExaGrid and Veeam. "Right now, we have 470TB of data on our ExaGrid, and the space consumed on the ExaGrid is 94TB, so we are seeing a ratio of 5:1. We weren't getting the dedupe before, so that's a significant savings. The fact that we can get 5:1 on data that's already deduped is pretty amazing."

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a file or VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance in the event that the file is lost, corrupted or encrypted or the primary storage VM becomes unavailable. This instant recovery is possible because of ExaGrid's Landing Zone – a high-speed disk cache on the ExaGrid appliance that retains the most recent backups in their complete form. Once the primary storage environment has been brought back to a working state, the VM backed up on the ExaGrid appliance can then be migrated to primary storage for continued operation.

Veeam uses changed block tracking to perform a level of data deduplication. ExaGrid allows Veeam deduplication and Veeam dedupe-friendly compression to stay on. ExaGrid will increase Veeam's deduplication by a factor of about 7:1 to a total combined deduplication ratio of 14:1, reducing the storage required and saving on storage costs up front and over time.



## Short Backup Windows and Quick Restores

Data is backed up often at HealthEquity. The company keeps six weekly fulls and runs a monthly full on the first Sunday of every month, keeping 13 monthlies total in addition to seven yearlies. Petersen is pleased that the backup windows are as short as five hours and don't leak into production time.

Petersen finds that restoring data is a quick and simple process using ExaGrid in combination with Veeam. "With Veeam, I just go in and select a restore job which it pulls from the ExaGrid. Our restore times have always been great with ExaGrid. Our database users write directly to the ExaGrid as though it is a file share and can pull data back out, like a file share. They have reported that the speeds are great and have had no problem restoring database data."

## Scalable System Ideal for Replication Between Sites

HealthEquity uses ExaGrid at both its primary site and DR site, and Petersen finds managing the backup process simple. "We have two identical ExaGrid systems and we replicate everything on our primary site for backups to our DR site. So, we are using ExaGrid to replicate those backups, too. I like using the GUI; I can log into one spot to see all of the information and check to see that everything is being replicated. The data replication is pretty quick – I'm amazed at how fast you can replicate given how much data is being backed up."

HealthEquity plans to scale out the system at both sites as its data grows. Petersen said, "We are using EX40000E models. We plan to purchase additional models in a year or so, depending on our growth. Our plan is to keep growing the ExaGrid system year over year."

ExaGrid's appliance models can be mixed and matched into a single scale-out system allowing a full backup of up to 2.7PB with a combined ingest rate of 488TB/hr, in a single system. The appliances automatically join the scale-out system. Each appliance includes the appropriate amount of processor, memory, disk, and bandwidth for the data size. By adding compute with capacity, the backup window remains fixed in length as the data grows. Automatic load balancing across all repositories allows for full utilization of all appliances. Data is deduplicated into an offline repository, and additionally, data is globally deduplicated across all repositories.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid's architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.

## ExaGrid and Veeam

Veeam's backup solutions and ExaGrid's Tiered Backup Storage combine for the industry's fastest backups, fastest restores, a scale-out storage system as data grows, and a strong ransomware recovery story – all at the lowest cost.

## About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides Tiered Backup Storage with a unique disk-cache Landing Zone that enables fastest backups and restores, a Repository Tier that offers the lowest cost for long-term retention and enables ransomware recovery, and scale-out architecture which includes full appliances with up to 2.7PB full backup in a single system.

Learn more at [www.exagrid.com](http://www.exagrid.com).