



Hoffman Construction Optimizes Data Protection with Veeam Backup & Replication on ExaGrid's Disk-Based Backup Appliance



USA

Key Benefits:

- Instant VM recoveries
- Seamless integration with Veeam
- Growth is easy to manage with scale-out architecture
- Reduced backup window by 50%

"The integration of Veeam and ExaGrid's landing zone architecture is a winning combo for flexibility and scalability."

Kelly Bott
Technical Specialist

Customer Overview

Founded in Portland, Oregon, in 1922, Hoffman has grown to be the largest general contractor headquartered in the Pacific Northwest. Today, their reach extends beyond the Northwest to include projects in over a dozen states and overseas.

The Business Challenge

Hoffman Construction Company has seen tremendous growth in its IT infrastructure over the last three years, almost doubling the responsibilities of its IT team. Based at the headquarters in Portland, Oregon, the IT team supports approximately 600 users who need continuous access to servers and data over WAN connections.

"The job of protecting and archiving our data is a tremendous challenge," said Kelly Bott, field technician for Hoffman Construction Company. "Prior to the ExaGrid/Veeam solution, I was using up half my SAN just for storage, and we didn't have any replication, so it was risky if the SAN went down," he said.

"We support everyone, from corporate office staff members to engineers and supervisors in far-flung trailers in the middle of a field," said Bott. "We have to ensure that all of our users, particularly those in field operations, have adequate connectivity, whether they're using VPN, DSL or microwave links."

Hoffman Construction Company began the move to virtualization in late 2010, with five VMware ESX hosts and 60 virtual machines (VMs). Initially, the IT team used VM snapshots backed up to tape and stored on a SAN as its backup strategy. At the time, the team felt there might be a more efficient way to ensure continuous data protection and facilitate easy data recovery. An outside consultant suggested Veeam.

"We downloaded a trial copy of Veeam and were simply amazed at the capabilities it offered," Bott said. "We found a comprehensive solution that maximizes the protection of our virtual infrastructure. We have never regretted the decision to use Veeam."



The Veeam-ExaGrid Solution

Hoffman Construction Company first installed Veeam and found it to be an ideal solution because it's built specifically for virtual environments and provides fast, reliable backup and recovery for their VMs. In addition, the IT team can automatically verify the recoverability of every backup.

With Veeam, backup speed has significantly increased. "Prior to installing Veeam, it took at least six hours to recover one Microsoft SQL Server database, but we now do that in less than half the time," Bott said.

Veeam's On-demand Sandbox feature has been especially important to Hoffman. According to Bott, "We didn't have a test environment prior to Veeam, and this has become a huge asset. It gives us the ability to run VMs from backups in an isolated environment. With this capability, we have a working copy of the production environment for troubleshooting, testing and training. It's magic."

Initially, Hoffman's VMs and the Veeam backups were stored on the same SAN. Storage took up at least half the SAN, which restricted its ability to add more VMs if needed. The IT team discovered that Veeam and ExaGrid have a special

configuration that pairs Veeam with ExaGrid's unique landing-zone architecture to deliver fast, reliable backups and efficient data storage and retrieval.

The ExaGrid appliance, maintains the most recent Veeam backups in their original formats. The ExaGrid technology and architecture, operating in tandem with Veeam, lets the IT team recover and run an entire VM directly from ExaGrid's disk-based backup storage. While most deduplicating storage only retains a deduplicated copy, often resulting in limited functionality, ExaGrid's architecture allows Hoffman to fully leverage Veeam's Instant VM Recovery feature — which restores an entire VM from backup in a matter of minutes — to minimize downtime and disruption.

The Veeam and ExaGrid configuration has already had a significant impact on Hoffman's business. "We recently had a major SAN crash and lost all the data stored on our VMs," Bott explained. "Thanks to the Veeam and ExaGrid solution, we were able to restore 100 percent of our VMs almost instantly, with no disruption to our users, and a real catastrophe was avoided. We are confident that our data is protected in the event of a failure. That's peace of mind on a large scale."

Veeam and ExaGrid also facilitate on- and off-site backups that will grow as Hoffman continues to prosper. The IT team can simply plug in more ExaGrid systems to create a larger virtual pool of storage without additional expense and ongoing configuration and management issues. Veeam recognizes this additional storage, as data loads are automatically balanced across all servers. The additional ExaGrid systems do not affect performance, since processing power, memory, and bandwidth are added along with storage capacity,

"ExaGrid's backup appliance works seamlessly with Veeam Backup & Replication," said Bott. "The combined solution gives us the best of both worlds by allowing us to take advantage of Veeam's backup capabilities and ExaGrid's disk-based backup system. The net result is fast, reliable backups, high availability of our virtualized environment, and efficient data storage."



Fast, reliable, and verifiable backups

Before the IT team at Hoffman Construction Company deployed Veeam, the backup of one database took six hours to complete. With ExaGrid an Veeam, that can be accomplished in less than three hours, with verified recovery of every backup at any time.

Efficient data storage and improved data protection

When Hoffman first began using Veeam, backups were stored on the same SAN as the VMs, and storage used over half the available space. Now, with the integrated solution that pairs Veeam with ExaGrid, Hoffman realizes an 8:1 compression ratio and has fast, reliable backups coupled with efficient data storage and retrieval.

Provides scalability to cost-effectively meet future business needs

As Hoffman's data grows, ExaGrid's scalable architecture allows the IT team to plug in additional ExaGrid systems to create a larger virtual pool of storage without sacrificing performance. Veeam's automatically recognizes and takes advantage of the additional storage. Together, ExaGrid and Veeam enable backups to grow without additional expense and ongoing configuration and management issues.

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.

ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe

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.

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.