Ipswich Borough Council Shortens Backup times, Speeds File Restores with ExaGrid

IPSWICH BOROUGH COUNCIL

UNITED KINGDOM

Key Benefits:

- Critical DR solution
- Data deduplication rates as high as 61:1
- Restores in minutes
- Responsive customer support
- Inherently scalable to support future data growth

"We are expanding our use of VMware and it was becoming a real challenge to put the images onto tape. With the ExaGrid system, we are receiving 61:1 compression for our VMware images and our recovery times are far better. We can recover a VMware server in about ten minutes. With tape, recovering the same VMware server would have taken half a day."

Howard Gaskin
IT Infrastructure Manager

Customer Overview

Ipswich is a multi-cultural centre for business, culture, entertainment and sport. With more than 140,000 residents from many communities, the county town of Suffolk is the fastest growing regional centre in the East of England. Home to University Campus Suffolk and Suffolk New College, the Regent Theatre and the Corn Exchange, Ipswich is a vibrant, thriving centre. Team Ipswich, promoting sport in the community ahead of the 2012 London Olympic Games, and the IP-City Network, a hi-tech business cluster for the wider Ipswich area, are also both based in Ipswich.

Continuous Backups Left Little Room for Error

Ipswich Borough Council's IT department decided to look at alternatives to tape when nightly backup times grew to 23 ½ hours a day.

"Operationally, it was quite complex to run our backups to tape, and our nightly backup jobs ran continuously. We dealt with tape jams or a failure at least once a week and often had to cancel backup jobs before they were completed so our data wasn't fully protected," said Howard Gaskin, IT infrastructure manager for the Ipswich Borough Council. "We decided to look to disk to improve our backup times and to reduce our reliance on tape."

Two-site ExaGrid System Fits into Existing Infrastructure, Improves Disaster Recovery

After looking at several different disk-based backup systems, Ipswich chose a two-site ExaGrid system to work alongside its existing backup application, Veritas Backup Exec. One ExaGrid system was installed in Ipswich's main datacenter for primary backup, and data is replicated to the second ExaGrid system located three miles away in Ipswich's disaster recovery center.

"The ExaGrid system seemed like it was far less complex than some of the other systems we looked at, both in terms of installation and management. It has been running smoothly since the very beginning and our backups are now running flawlessly," said Gaskin.

Since installing the ExaGrid system, Council has been able to significantly reduce its backup times and its reliance on tape.

"Our backups are now completed well within our backup window, and we've been able to increase the number of times per day we backup our Exchange servers from once to twice a day," said Gaskin.

"Also, eliminating tape has made a huge impact on our day-to-day IT workload. We no longer have to manage and administer tape for those backups

going to the ExaGrid and we've been able to reduce transportation and storage costs as well."

Data Deduplication Provides 61:1 Compression for VMware Images

Ipswich backs up a wide variety of data to the ExaGrid system, including SQL, file data, and VMware images. The Council backs up its VMware images directly to the ExaGrid system and has been receiving data deduplication rates as high as 61:1.

"We are expanding our use of VMware and it would have been a real challenge to put the images onto tape. ExaGrid's data deduplication technology does a fantastic job at compressing our VMware images, and our recovery times have really improved. We can recover a VMware server in about ten minutes. With tape, recovering the same VMware server would have taken half a day," said Gaskin.

Gaskin noted that restoring data from the ExaGrid is significantly faster than with tape.

"With tape, we had to retrieve the right tape from our offsite storage site, catalog it and read the file in. The whole process could take hours and hours. However, restoring data from the ExaGrid takes no time at all. It's far more efficient and it frees up our time to focus on more important things," said Gaskin.

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to disk with deduplication or using backup software deduplication to disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1, depending on the data types and retention periods, by storing only the unique objects across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups. As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it is also replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

Scalability to Grow Along with Budget and Needs, Responsive Customer Support

"One of the nice things about the ExaGrid system is its scalability. We had a defined problem with our backup window and the budget to address it, but we didn't want to buy a dead end solution. The ExaGrid system is inherently scalable and we can add more capacity as our budget allows and our needs grow," said Gaskin.

The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate data growth. ExaGrid's software makes the system highly scalable – appliances of any size or age can be mixed and matched in a single system. A single scale-out system can take in up to a 2.7PB full backup plus retention at an ingest rate of up to 488TB per hour.

ExaGrid appliances contain not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply added to the existing system. The system scales linearly, maintaining a fixed-length backup window as data grows so customers only pay for what they need, when they need it.

Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing Repository Tier with automatic load balancing and global deduplication across all repositories.

The ExaGrid system was designed to be easy to set up and operate. ExaGrid's industry-leading level 2 senior support engineers are assigned to individual customers, ensuring they always work with the same engineer. Customer's never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

"We have had a very good experience with ExaGrid's customer support. We can always reach support via phone or email, regardless of the time," said Gaskin.

"We've been very happy with the ExaGrid system and it's worked as promised. Our backup jobs are now completed correctly each and every night and it has taken a lot of the hassle out of our backups."

ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

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

Organizations using Veritas Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Veritas Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Veritas Backup Exec, using ExaGrid is as easy as pointing existing backup jobs at a NAS share on the ExaGrid system. Backup jobs are sent directly from the backup application to ExaGrid for backup to disk.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to disk with deduplication or using backup software deduplication to disk. ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1, depending on the data types and retention periods, by storing only the unique objects across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups. As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it is also replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

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**.

United States 100 Campus Drive / Marlborough, MA 01752 / (800) 868-6985
United Kingdom 200 Brook Drive / Green Park, Reading, Berkshire RG2 6UB / +44 (0) 1189 497 051
Singapore 1 Raffles Place, #20-61 / One Raffles Place Tower 2 / 048616 / +65 6808 5574

exagrid.com