

# Masco Canada Ends Vendor “Cat-and-Mouse Games,” Switches to ExaGrid for Data Backup

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

MASCO

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**Matt Wilson**  
Infrastructure and Support  
Team Lead

## Customer Overview

Masco Canada, based in St. Thomas and Mississauga, Ontario, brings relevant, smart solutions for plumbing-related goods to its consumers and business partners. Responsible for manufacturing, product management, product development, and sales and marketing, Masco Canada meets the needs of its uniquely Canadian marketplace with a robust portfolio that includes brands such as Brizo, Delta, Master Plumber, and Peerless.

## Solving a Tape Backup Process Riddled with Issues

Masco Canada had been backing up its data to tape at several data centers. Due to the fact that these centers were so far apart, the company relied on administrative staff, outside of the IT department, to transport tapes to and from the centers.

Matt Wilson, Masco Canada’s infrastructure and support team lead, found the process of backing up to tape to be riddled with issues. “We were very frustrated with failing tape drives and backups that weren’t running; it was a constant battle of fighting tape. When we began to evaluate new solutions, we were specifically looking for one that provided data deduplication and compression. We narrowed the search to ExaGrid and a Dell EMC appliance and, after reading so many positive reviews about ExaGrid, we decided to purchase that system.”

Masco Canada installed a two-site ExaGrid system with cross-replicating backups. Its environment is 95% virtualized, and the company uses Veritas Backup Exec as its backup application.

Replacing tape solved many of the backup administration issues that Masco Canada had faced. “Switching over to ExaGrid gave us the ability to administer everything ourselves from anywhere and be able to actually validate our backups at any point in time. Now we’re able to maintain our encrypted data in-house rather than relying on our administrative staff to keep tapes on them as they travel,” said Wilson.



## Backing up UNIX Data from ‘Ancient’ Tape Drive Do-able with ExaGrid

Masco Canada has a wide variety of data to back up, including UNIX data stored on older tape drives. “One of the items that was initially out of scope was our UNIX backups. That had been like a black box that nobody wanted to touch because the data was stored on an ancient tape drive that we could barely even write to; however, we’ve been able to not only back up the UNIX data directly to the ExaGrid but also run our LPAR backup and a VIOS backup as well. We’re also able to completely restore our AIS environment from an ExaGrid NFS share directly,” said Wilson.

Wilson backs up Masco Canada’s data on a daily basis and does weekly fulls as well. “We do weekly fulls, and because of ExaGrid’s deduplication, some of our environment is fully backed up on a daily basis, and it doesn’t affect our storage. Our UNIX environment, in particular, has a footprint of approximately 8TB and it only consumes about 100GB. Those numbers are fantastic!”

## Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid able to back up previously ‘untouchable’ UNIX data stored on ‘ancient’ tape
- ExaGrid’s proactive customer support model avoids ‘cat-and-mouse games’ experienced with other vendors
- Encrypted data now kept safely and conveniently inhouse versus offsite
- Backup data validation can now occur at any point in time

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Wilson is pleased that backups are reliable and stay within an established window. "Our backups generally kick off at 11:00 p.m., and everything is done by the time I'm in at 6:30 a.m." ExaGrid's award-winning scale-out architecture provides customers with a consistent backup window regardless of data growth. Its unique landing zone retains the most recent backup in its full unduplicated form, enabling the fastest restores, offsite tape copies, and instant recoveries.

## Quick Data Restoration from ExaGrid's Landing Zone

Wilson has found that restoring data is a quick and easy process using ExaGrid. "Restoring data from our UNIX environment is as simple as mounting a share and extracting the files that I need. One-off file system restores and SQL database restores have also had incredibly reasonable restore times. I've been able to successfully restore a failed physical server to a virtual server in minutes."

## Easy System Scalability with 'Plug and Play' Appliances

When Masco Canada needed to expand its ExaGrid system with a third appliance, Wilson found the process to be incredibly easy. "We were able to uproot our existing EX10000E and add it to an ExaGrid appliance at our Mississauga office. I ensured that the network connectivity was working, and our ExaGrid support engineer took it from there. He was able to configure everything remotely with zero down time and migrate any data that had been on the old system. None of our backups were missed, and everything was replicated. It was plug and play, and it just works!"

The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate data growth. ExaGrid's computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, appliances of any size or age can be mixed and matched in a single system with capacities of up to a 2PB full backup plus retention and an ingest rate of up to 432TB per hour. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

## About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides hyper-converged secondary storage (HCSS) for backup with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone enables the fastest backups, restores, and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable system and ensures a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive and disruptive forklift upgrades. Learn more at [www.exagrid.com](http://www.exagrid.com).

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## No 'Cat-and-Mouse' Games, Just Proactive Support

Wilson is impressed with ExaGrid's unique customer support model. "At no point have I had to wait, or call back, or play the cat-and-mouse games that you get with some other vendors. ExaGrid support is proactive and reaches out to me if there is an issue with my system or if my software needs to be upgraded, and then does the upgrade for me. It's not very often a vendor will go out of their way to proactively get in touch about system issues or upgrades, let alone take care of them!"

"Working with an assigned ExaGrid support engineer has been a huge benefit. I've been frustrated when I've had to re-explain my environment over and over again to different vendors. With ExaGrid, I'm able to work directly with my support engineer, and he understands exactly what's going on. He knows my environment, my schedule, and how I work, and that's incredibly helpful. I don't have to start from square one with a new rep every time I call in. It's always the same person and the same experience," said Wilson.

## Reliable System Keeps Data Protected

Wilson appreciates how reliable backups have become since replacing tape with ExaGrid. "I have enough to worry about and enough fires to fight, so I don't need my backups to be yet another thing to fix. ExaGrid just works and I don't have to babysit it."

In addition, Wilson has found the ExaGrid system easy to maintain. "It's amazingly simple. I don't have to swap anything out or do much of anything. The extent of my involvement is customer support reaching out to me, informing me that updates are available and asking when they can update my system. I get my reports, and if they show that backups ran, I believe it."

Switching to ExaGrid added a layer of security for Masco Canada's data in addition to cost savings for disaster recovery. "Before ExaGrid, we still used a third-party company that stored our tapes offsite in a fire-proof security bubble facility, whereas now, everything is in our internal data center. The data is encrypted and it's all in-house. Nobody touches anything. That has added to our data security and provided cost savings as well," said Wilson.



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