



Mississippi DFA Replaces Dell EMC Data Domain and Now Restores Data Faster with ExaGrid



USA

Customer Overview

The Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) is the primary agency responsible for State government financial and administrative operations including employee payroll; vendor payments; employee insurance; construction, maintenance, and protection of State buildings in the Capitol Complex; financial information management systems; management of the State's vehicle fleet; and numerous other related activities.

Landing Zone Avoids Data Rehydration, Provides Better Performance

The Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) had been experiencing long backup windows using Dell EMC Data Domain and a Tegile array with Veeam as its backup application. Due to substandard performance, Scott Owens, the department's systems manager, took up the search for a new solution that would increase backup performance and thus shorten his backup window as well as decrease restore times.

One of the solutions that Owens looked into was ExaGrid, which had been recommended by a colleague. He was impressed with how quickly data could be restored from the system's unique landing zone because it retains the most recent backup in its full unduplicated form to avoid time-consuming data rehydration.

"When it was the time to re-evaluate backup storage, we were already familiar with Dell EMC Data Domain and were looking for something different. We wanted to continue to work with a system that had data deduplication and worked with Veeam, but also needed a solution that would decrease restore times, so we decided to go with ExaGrid," said Owens.

Easy-to-Install System 'Runs Itself'

Owens found that installation of the ExaGrid system was a simple process. "It went smoothly. We racked the system and worked with my assigned support engineer to set it up on the network. She helped us configure it, helped us set up some jobs from our backup, and made sure everything was working well.

"One thing that I like about using ExaGrid is that once it's set up and running, it pretty much runs itself. There's not much that we've had to reconfigure or change since we installed the system. It's been working well, and I would definitely recommend it to others."



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).

Shorter Backups and 'Very Quick' Restores

Owens backs up the department's data in daily incrementals as well as weekly and monthly fulls. He has noticed a significant reduction in the backup window, particularly the incrementals. "At least two hours have been saved. Before, it was taking about four hours to do a nightly backup, and now that's down to just an hour and a half!

"Restores are definitely faster now, too. That was one of the biggest changes that we noticed right off the bat once we moved over to the ExaGrid system. The landing zone works well and the restores are very quick," said Owens.

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk-cache Landing Zone, avoiding inline processing and ensuring the highest possible backup performance, which results in the shortest backup window. Adaptive Deduplication performs

Key Benefits:

- IT staff finds ExaGrid system reliable and easy to manage - "it pretty much runs itself"
- Restoring data took too long with Dell EMC Data Domain; ExaGrid provides 'very quick' restores
- Backup window has been reduced by 2 hours with ExaGrid

"ExaGrid is reliable – we know it's running every night, and we know it's keeping our data for the retention periods that we have set up, so we love it. It's not something we ever have to worry about. We can focus on other things knowing that the system is running tip-top."

Scott Owens
Systems Manager

deduplication and replication in parallel with backups for a strong recovery point (RPO). As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it can also be replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

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.



Backup Storage That's Simple and 'Reliable'

Owens finds it easy to manage the ExaGrid system. "ExaGrid is reliable – we know it's running every night, and we know it's keeping our data for the retention periods that we have set up, so we love it. It's not something we ever have to worry about. We can focus on other things knowing that the system is running tip-top.

"We don't have to constantly tinker with it. It pretty much runs itself, and that's exactly the kind of solution we were looking for. We get daily e-mails from the system, and I can easily check on the health of the system anytime using the GUI."

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.