Morton Plant Mease Primary Care Chooses ExaGrid System to Alleviate the Pain of Long Backups and Restores

Morton Plant Mease
BayCare Health System

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> **Manager of Information Systems**
> **Morton Plant Mease**

Customer Overview

Morton Plant Mease Primary Care, Inc. is a non-profit group of over 100 primary care physicians serving Florida's Pinellas, Pasco and West Hillsborough counties. The group requires all its Pediatric, Internal Medicine, and Family Practice Physicians to be Board Certified in their Specialty and many are Dual-Boarded. Their training comes from the most prestigious medical schools and residency programs in the country. The group's affiliation with Morton Plant Mease Health Care provides an excellent inpatient and outpatient network of hospitals for its physicians, with Morton Plant Hospital in Clearwater, Mease Hospitals in Dunedin and Safety Harbor, and Morton Plant North Bay Hospital in New Port Richey.

IT Staff Had Difficulty Backing up Data Even with Backup Jobs Running 24 Hours a Day

Backing up to tape had become time consuming and problematic for the IT department at Morton Plant Mease Primary Care. The organization's backup infrastructure couldn't keep up with its rapid data growth and consequently, staff members had to juggle backup jobs each day in an effort to protect the most critical data.

"We were backing up our servers sequentially, and we couldn't get a complete backup even though the process was running 24 hours a day. We were backing up our most critical data to tape and less important information was sent to disk and then to tape," said Gary Lyons, manager of information services at Morton Plant Mease Primary Care. "I was losing sleep at night We finally decided the time was right to look for a new backup approach."

Cost-Effective ExaGrid System Provides Data Deduplication to Reduce Amount of Data Stored, Cuts Backup Times in Half

Lyons did his own research and also contacted his reseller who is experienced in backup solutions. Together, they determined that the disk-based ExaGrid system would provide the fastest possible backups along with the data deduplication technology the organization needed to reduce the amount of data stored.

"I've been working with my reseller since 1997 and trust their opinion. I researched backup solutions myself and then talked with them, and they helped me learn more about the ExaGrid system. I really liked ExaGrid's architecture and felt it was the best choice for our environment, but I was initially concerned that it would be more costly than some of the other solutions available. I was pleasantly surprised when the quote came in because it was priced comparably to the other solutions that weren't nearly as feature-rich." he said.

The ExaGrid system works along with Symantec Backup Exec to back up and protect the organization's billing and patient records databases, scanned documents such as patient medical charts, and other business data.

"Data deduplication was the number one thing we looked at when we researched the various backup approaches on the market. We were impressed with ExaGrid's post-process method of deduplicating data because it provides the fastest possible backups and restores," said Lyons. "We've been very happy with our data deduplication ratios, which run as high as 76:1. We're able to keep 37TB of data in 5.5TB of space, which certainly helps with retention."

EXAGRID™

ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space required by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance. ExaGrid delivers extremely fast backup performance because data is written directly to disk, and data deduplication is performed post-process after the data is stored to reduce data. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Lyons reports that the organization's backup times have been reduced from over 24 hours to 12 hours. Restores are also significantly faster.

"Our backups are so much faster now, and we don't have to worry about continued growth of our databases because we're able to back up even more data than we could before," he said. "Also, restores are a breeze now. I have all the backup data right there in front of me and I can pick a file and simply restore it. It sure beats searching through tape."

Easy Installation, Superior Customer Support

Lyons said that he worked with ExaGrid's customer support engineer to set up the system, and he found the process to be simple and straightforward.

"The ExaGrid support engineer assigned to our account was extremely helpful in getting the system up and running, and he also spent a lot of time showing me how to build the first couple of backup jobs. Once I was familiar with the system, I found it easy to build the remaining jobs. We're actually backing up more data than we used to," he said. "Since the installation, I've forged a great relationship with our support engineer. He's extremely proactive and easy to get in touch with if I have a question or issue. He also monitors our system and if anything is amiss, he gets ahold of me and we look at it together."

The ExaGrid system was designed to be easy to set up and maintain, and ExaGrid's industry-leading customer support team is staffed by trained, in-house engineers who are dedicated to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

Reduced Management and Administration, Scalability to Meet Future Needs

Lyons said that he finds himself spending far less time on managing and administering backups.

"With tape, I'd spend at least an hour each day troubleshooting and making sure the tapes were being cycled and reformatted properly," he said. "With the ExaGrid, I get an email each day that tells me how many jobs were completed overnight and the system alerts me of any issues. It's a big time saver."

ExaGrid's GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single GRID system with capacities of up to a 130TB full backup plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

"I like that the ExaGrid system will be able to scale up to handle more backup data in the future. It's a nice solution for the long haul and it has taken the pain out of our backups," said Lyons. "It's a very user-friendly system, and it saves me lots of time each day. Most importantly, we're able to completely back up our data. The ExaGrid was the right choice for our environment."

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

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

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more. The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with popular backup applications, so organizations can retain their investment in existing applications and processes. ExaGrid servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at www.exagrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.

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