



NCI Building Systems Moves Away from Tape and Adds Data Capacity with ExaGrid's Tiered Backup Storage



USA

Key Benefits:

- Seamless integration with Veritas NetBackup
- ExaGrid system easy to manage with expert technical support
- Scalable architecture supports future growth
- Cost-effective offering
- Accomplished goal of automatic offsite disaster recovery plan

"Now, with the addition of Veritas and ExaGrid's joint OST capability, we have complete visibility into both our on-site and off-site copies of backups. In the event we need to restore from a DR copy of a backup, we can seamlessly do so without any additional catalog operations as the ExaGrid appliance has informed Veritas NetBackup of the replicated copy, thus saving us time during critical restores."

Mark Serres

Backup and Storage Administrator

Customer Overview

NCI Building Systems, Inc. is one of North America's largest integrated manufacturers of metal products for the nonresidential building industry. NCI is comprised of a family of companies operating manufacturing facilities across the United States, Canada, Mexico, and China, with additional sales and distribution offices throughout the United States, Canada, Asia and Europe. Our large network of nationally recognized and regionally-located brands align with our three complementary business segments: Metal Coil Coating, Metal Components and custom Metal Building Systems. NCI Building Systems merged with Ply Gem Building Products and now operates as Cornerstone Building Brands.

Overwhelmed with Tape, NCI Looks for a Better Solution

NCI's IT team is responsible for supporting multiple sites across the US, Mexico, and Canada, and 5,000 to 6,000 end users. Traditionally, NCI has performed backups primarily using tape. As the company continued to grow and expand, however, its tape backups became increasingly cumbersome.

"Basically we were being overwhelmed by tape," said Mark Serres, NCI's backup and storage administrator. "In my inventory alone, I have about 5,200 tapes to manage. We store them off site with a vendor at about 100 tapes a week. It takes a lot of time to manage that many tapes."

ExaGrid Makes Backups Easier to Manage, Adds Scalability

NCI implemented a two-site ExaGrid system, placing a 50TB system at their headquarters in Houston, with a 40TB grid off site for disaster recovery. ExaGrid works alongside NCI's existing backup application, Veritas NetBackup, and has helped ease the management of NCI's backups.

"The ExaGrid system has helped tremendously with the backups we've moved off of tape," said Serres. "For those systems where we're no longer using tape at all, we are saved from having to make several trips to our data center on a weekly basis. That saves quite a bit of time."

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 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).



As NCI's data grows, 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.

"We liked the scalability," said Serres. "We liked how simple it was to manage. It was basically a simple backup target. We liked the fact that it was modular, that you could add capacity and processing – not just capacity. That's very appealing."

Easy to Install, Outstanding Customer Support

"This is the first vendor I have ever dealt with that had a support engineer who was assigned to my account. So whenever I have an issue, I call him directly and he provides whatever support I need," said Serres. "I like that model, as opposed to trying to get whoever is available. The support engineer already knows our environment, so that saves a lot of time from having to explain what we're doing here."

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.

ExaGrid and Veritas NetBackup

Veritas NetBackup delivers high-performance data protection that scales to protect the largest enterprise environments. ExaGrid is integrated with and certified by Veritas in 9 areas, including Accelerator, AIR, single disk pool, analytics, and other areas to ensure full support of NetBackup. ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage offers the fastest backups, the fastest restores, and the only true scale-out solution as data grows to provide a fixed-length backup window and a non-network-facing tier (tiered air gap) for recovery from a ransomware event.

"Now, with the addition of Veritas and ExaGrid's joint OST capability, we have complete visibility into both our on-site and off-site copies of backups. In the event we need to restore from a DR copy of a backup, we can seamlessly do so without any additional catalog operations as the ExaGrid appliance has informed NetBackup of the replicated copy, thus saving us time during critical restores. Further, we can now set differing retention policies for on-site and off-site copies, allowing us to more cost effectively use the capacity on the ExaGrid appliance."

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.

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