Ohio Farm Bureau Harvests Faster Backups and Restores with ExaGrid

> "The way the ExaGrid system compresses data is impressive. We are now able to retain three months of data on-site on the ExaGrid and it gives us a comfort level we didn't have with tape. And since our data is always readily available on disk, we can perform restores quickly at any time"
>
> **Matthew Miller**
> **Web and Database**
> **Administrator**
> **Ohio Farm Bureau Federation**

Customer Overview

The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation is Ohio's largest farm organization. With over 225,000 members, the farm bureau is a federation of 87 county Farm Bureaus representing all 88 counties in the state. Farm Bureau members in every county of the state serve on boards and committees working on legislation, regulations and issues which affect agriculture, rural areas and Ohio citizens.

Long Backup Windows, Problems with Tape Frustrate IT Department

The two-person IT department at the Ohio Farm Bureau is responsible for all IT operations in the organization, including backing up its data and the data from 40 county farm bureau offices. With increasing amounts of data to backup every night, the Ohio Farm Bureau was exhausting its 12 hour nightly backup window, and full backups were taking nearly 50 hours each weekend.

"Our backup situation was stressful. The backup windows were huge and we were constantly filling up tapes. And while we had a robotic tape drive, it didn't hold enough tapes so we would still have to go in and physically swap out tapes each night," said Matthew Miller, web and database administrator for the Ohio Farm Bureau.

Looking for a Total Solution

With critical data such as its membership database and other important business data to protect, the IT staff at the Ohio Farm Bureau began looking for alternative solutions to address its backup situation.

"We decided that tape wasn't a good long term solution for us and we considered building our own backup system using straight disk," said Miller. "We looked at the total cost, including the hardware, software, and management and decided that what we really needed was a total solution."

The Ohio Farm Bureau chose ExaGrid's Disk-based Backup solution to work alongside its existing backup software, Symantec's Backup Exec™.

"We needed a system that would enable us to efficiently backup all of our data, alleviate our backup window and provide faster restores. ExaGrid provided us with all of that functionality and more in an easy to use appliance," said Miller.

Nightly Backup Window Reduced by 50%

After installing ExaGrid, the Ohio Farm Bureau has experienced a significant reduction in its backup window, with nightly backups cut in half, from 12 hours to six. But because its weekly full backups were taking almost 50 hours over a weekend and spilled into Monday mornings, not all data was backed up. Since moving its backups to the ExaGrid system, the Ohio Farm Bureau is now able to backup all of its data each week, yet has still reduced its weekly full backup by 14 hours, to 36 hours.

The IT staff at the Ohio Farm Bureau is also experiencing faster restore times.

"With tape, restores are very time consuming because you have to find the right tape, load it, and make sure the data is there. If we could quickly find the right tape, it would take only about twenty minutes. If we had to track down the tape, it could take hours. Restoring files from the ExaGrid is a breeze and it's nearly instantaneous," said Miller.

EXAGRID™

Retaining More Data On-site, Faster and Easier Restores

Prior to moving its backups to ExaGrid, the Ohio Farm Bureau rotated tapes to a disaster recovery center each week and only kept three weeks of data on-site.

Now, the organization is able to keep three months of data on-site in the ExaGrid system.

"The way the ExaGrid system reduces data with byte-level data de-duplication is impressive. We are now able to retain three months of data on-site on the ExaGrid. Now, we can be ready to perform restores at any time," said Miller.

ExaGrid's innovative approach minimizes the amount of data to be stored by providing standard data compression for the most recent backups, along with byte-level data de-duplication for all previous backups. ExaGrid's byte-level data de-duplication technology stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space needed by 10 to 50:1, or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance at 25 to 30% the cost of standard SATA disk storage.

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.

Organizations using Symantec Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Symantec Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores.

In a network running Symantec Backup Exec, using ExaGrid in place of a tape backup system 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 the ExaGrid for onsite backup to disk.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with byte-level data de-duplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's byte-level data de-duplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk space needed by 10 to 50:1, or more, resulting in a solution that is 25 to 30% the cost of standard SATA drives. ExaGrid is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with popular backup applications, so organizations can retain their investment in existing applications. ExaGrid can be used at a primary site and at a second site to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with a live data repository or for disaster recovery. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's byte-level data de-duplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

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

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

Customers worldwide depend on ExaGrid Systems to solve their backup problems–effectively and permanently. ExaGrid's disk-based, scale-out GRID architecture adjusts to increasing backup demands due to constantly growing data volumes. It is the only solution that combines compute with capacity as well as a unique landing zone to permanently shorten backup windows and eliminate expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.

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