



University's Switch to ExaGrid-Veeam Solution Reduces Backup Window from One Day to One Hour



Radboud Universiteit



NETHERLANDS

Key Benefits:

- Backup window reduced from 24 hours to just a couple of hours
- ExaGrid offers seamless integration with Veeam
- Restoring data is quick and easy
- A cost-effective, long-term solution that is easy to scale
- ExaGrid system is "rock-solid" with personalized customer support

"In the past, we had issues getting the backups done overnight. We had to squeeze everything in, as tight as possible. Now we can sit back and relax because it's getting processed, and we still have capacity left. We can focus on other department priorities which makes us all more efficient. It gives me peace of mind."

Adriaan Smits

Senior Systems Administrator

Customer Overview

Radboud Universiteit is one of the best traditional, general universities of the Netherlands, situated on a green campus south of the Nijmegen city centre. The university wants to contribute to a healthy, free world with equal opportunities for all.

The Proof is in the POC

Adriaan Smits, senior systems administrator, has been working at Radboud Universiteit for 20 years. One of his primary duties today is to back up the university's data. The IT team at the university had been using Tivoli Storage Manager – TSM (also known as IBM Spectrum Protect) for decades to back up data to a tape library, which was eventually replaced with disk storage. "The tape library was simply not a fit anymore. It was too slow and too cumbersome to maintain. We already switched the backend over to a Dell storage device, dedicated to the backup of TSM, and that also approached its retirement rapidly," he said. Meanwhile we had Veeam running alongside for an ever-increasing part of our population of VMware virtual machines. Over time, it became clear that the university needed to replace its TSM solution and decided to consolidate on Veeam.

Smits' team was responsible for the introduction of ExaGrid after they learned about the ExaGrid-Veeam solution at a Veeam Expo. "We wanted to switch to Veeam in a fresh and clean setup and learned about ExaGrid as one of our possible storage targets, so we decided to do a POC to get to know the solution better," said Smits. "Things really took off! Originally, we intended to test for one or two months, but the ExaGrid system ended up in our environment for almost a year. We thoroughly tested it to see how it fit in our environment, and how it performed with Veeam. We were quite impressed with how easy it was to set up. The ExaGrid system did what it was supposed to do, so it was hands-off for us. On several aspects, ExaGrid scored big points."

Smits was impressed with how simple the ExaGrid is to install and configure. "ExaGrid was a very straightforward setup. I read a few pages from the manual and the rest was self-explanatory," he said. 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.



Backup Window Decreased from One Day to One Hour

After installing the combined solution of ExaGrid and Veeam, Smits gradually transitioned the backup jobs from the existing TSM solution, and was pleased with the results. "We started adding more Veeam backups, especially for our virtualized environments, and eventually the Veeam backups outnumbered TSM. Veeam, combined with ExaGrid is modular, scalable, and flexible. This was a no-brainer decision for our team."

Radboud Universiteit has a straightforward backup schedule and a 30-day retention of daily backups. Since switching to ExaGrid and Veeam, backups are finished within a couple of hours, leaving plenty of time for maintenance at night.

"It had been getting quite troublesome to get all the backups finished when we were using TSM. With Veeam and ExaGrid, our backup window decreased from 24 hours to just over an hour per job. Restoring data is also very easy and no longer creates bottlenecks in our environment, and that is something I really like about the whole solution," said Smits.

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).

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a file or VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance if 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.

ExaGrid System is "Rock-Solid"

Smits is pleased with the performance of the university's ExaGrid system and with ExaGrid's customer support. "Our ExaGrid appliance is rock-solid, and the only time we need to touch it is for software upgrades and scheduled maintenance. We have a silent agreement with our ExaGrid support engineer – he does the update work, and we just admire the result," he said.

"The nice thing about ExaGrid is that you are assigned a personal support contact, and you're not just a number in the system. If I ever have a question I can simply email my ExaGrid support engineer, and it gets answered quickly. My support engineer knows our environment. That's the level of support I like. It's based on certain trust, but trust is something you should earn, and they earned it quickly."

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. Customers never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

ExaGrid System Easily Scales and Accommodates All Data Types

"When we started using Veeam, we only backed up VMs to our ExaGrid system. Now, we are also using it to store file backups, user data, Exchange servers, SQL backups, and all different types of data. We have had it running for over two years in production and it scales easily, which is something I really like," said Smits.

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.

No Need to Worry About Backups

One of the best results of using ExaGrid, is the confidence that it gives Smits that data is backed up properly and ready for recovery. "I worry less now about our backups and the throughput. In the past, we had issues getting the backups done overnight. We had to squeeze everything in, as tight as possible. Now we can sit back and relax because it's getting processed, and we still have capacity left. We can focus on other department priorities which makes us all more efficient. It gives me peace of mind. I don't have to worry about backups," said Smits.

ExaGrid's Tiered Backup Storage helps IT organizations solve the most pressing backup storage issues they face today: how to keep backups in the backup window with extremely fast backups, how to restore quickly for user productivity, how to scale as data grows, how to ensure recovery after a ransomware event, and how to lower backup storage costs up front and over time.

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.

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.

