EXAGRID®

SIGMA Data Insights Dramatically Improves Backup Speed, Responds Quickly to Data Loss with ExaGrid

SIGMA DATA INSIGHTS

USA

Key Benefits:

- Install was easy, taking only a few hours

- Backup window reduced by a third

- Seamless integration with Veritas Backup Exec

- SIGMA storage array crashed, and they were able to recover all data easily thanks to ExaGrid

- Extremely scalable to support future data growth

"We're seeing tremendous dedupe ratios. What would have taken a hundred tapes now just takes a fraction of the available disk space on our ExaGrid system. We can go back through a month of data – over 100TB – if we need to right on the ExaGrid. It really is unheard of."

Rob Spencer
Systems Administrator

Customer Overview

Established in 1985, SIGMA Data Insights creates more profitable customer relationships through analytics, marketing technology, and data-driven strategy to drive results. They take data and turn it into ROI. SIGMA is based in Rochester, NY and Boston, MA.

Long Backup Times and Retention Issues Led to ExaGrid Purchase

SIGMA Data Insights had been backing up its data to a combination of tape and disk, but long backup times and stringent retention policies made it difficult for the company's IT department to adequately protect all of its information.

"It was nearly impossible for us to get complete backups because our backup jobs were taking so long," said Rob Spencer, systems administrator at SIGMA. "The other big issue we had was retention. Our retention policies vary from client to client, and some require that we keep backup data for up to two years. We were having difficulty meeting those goals with tape and decided that the time was right to implement a disk-based solution when the maintenance contract was up on our tape library."

ExaGrid Works with Existing Backup Application, Provides Strong Data Deduplication to Maximize Disk Space

After looking at various solutions, SIGMA chose ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with data deduplication to work along with the company's existing backup application, Veritas Backup Exec.

"One of the big factors in choosing the ExaGrid system was its tight integration with Backup Exec. The two products work very well together," said Spencer. "We also like its data deduplication technology, and we're seeing tremendous dedupe ratios. What would have taken a hundred tapes now just takes a fraction of the available disk space on our ExaGrid system."

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).

Backup Times Reduced by a Third, Fast Restores Enable IT Staff to Respond Quickly when Disaster Struck

Spencer said that since installing the ExaGrid system, SIGMA's backup window has been reduced by a third, and the IT department easily completes nightly backup jobs.

"Our backup jobs are now completed correctly each and every night, and we're able to meet our retention goals," he said.

Spencer got to test SIGMA's ability to recover from a disaster recently when the company lost a storage array and had to restore a significant amount of data quickly.

"Our storage array crashed recently due to a dual power supply failure, and we were able to recover our data easily thanks to the ExaGrid system. It was very fast, and we didn't have to dig through offsite tapes. Everything was on-site and ready to restore. It was quite a relief," he said. "It's nice to have such a large amount of data at my fingertips. We archive long-term storage to tape, but we can go back through a month of data – over 100TB – if we need to right on the ExaGrid. It really is unheard of."

Easy Setup and Installation, Industry-Leading Customer support

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.

"We had the ExaGrid up and running in less than a half a day. It was a smooth, seamless process," said Spencer. "We've also had a terrific experience with ExaGrid's customer support team. I have good relationships with quite a few members of the support team, and they're simply excellent. They're always there to answer my questions and they're extremely knowledgeable."

Scalability to Handle Increased Demand

ExaGrid's award-winning scale-out architecture provides customers with a fixed-length backup window regardless of data growth. Its unique disk-cache Landing Zone allows for the fastest backups and retains the most recent backup in its full undeduplicated form, enabling the fastest restores.

ExaGrid's appliance models can be mixed and matched into a single scale-out system allowing a full backup of up to 2.7PB with a combined ingest rate of 488TB/hr, in a single system. The appliances automatically join the scale-out system. Each appliance includes the appropriate amount of processor, memory, disk, and bandwidth for the data size. By adding compute with capacity, the backup window remains fixed in length as the data grows. Automatic load balancing across all repositories allows for full utilization of all appliances. Data is deduplicated into an offline repository, and additionally, data is globally deduplicated across all repositories.

"As our business grows, we will be adding more vertical markets, and we need to ensure that we can handle the additional data and retention policies that our customers demand. Just recently, we brought on a couple of new customers who required on-demand retention policies, and we were able to meet their needs quickly with our VMware environment and the ExaGrid system because everything was in place. The ExaGrid system is extremely scalable, and it will enable us to meet our backup needs now and into the future."

ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

Veritas Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance backup and recovery – including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange servers, Microsoft SQL servers, 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 Veritas Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Veritas Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Veritas Backup Exec, using ExaGrid 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 ExaGrid for backup to disk.

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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