**EXAGRID** ®

# Saint Michael's College Selects ExaGrid-Veeam for Reliable Backup Storage & Cost Savings

USA

## Key Benefits:

- Reliable backups are now 'under the radar'
- Outstanding integration with ExaGrid and Veeam
- 'Stellar' technical support, implicit trust
- Saves cost on consulting hours
- ExaGrid dashboard provides 'snapshots,' proving stability
- Now able to focus on other key IT projects

*"We now have tighter integration, more reliable backups – and save a ton on consulting costs. It all ties back to ExaGrid, because without ExaGrid and their support, I don't think we'd be nearly as successful as we are."*

**Shawn Umansky**
Network Engineer

## Customer Overview

*Settled in a beautiful Vermont landscape, Saint Michael's College is a 400-acre campus built on a scale that supports an outstanding educational, residential and recreational experience. Saint Michael's College puts great thought and care into what their students learn, and how they learn it. With more than 14,000 students and 30 majors, each is grounded in a meaningful liberal studies curriculum, so students learn about our world, past, present and future.*

## Virtualization Leads to ExaGrid and Veeam

Shawn Umanksy, network engineer at Saint Michael's College, moved over to the network team in 2009 to manage Saint Michael's virtualized backup storage after the college migrated from tape backup to Veritas NetBackup and Veeam. "At the time, we outsourced our backup support to a local company. They're the ones that set it up and maintained backup 24/7. Keeping NetBackup running took a lot of care and feeding. The system simply wasn't reliable for us and never quite became what I consider to be 'fully stable,'" said Umansky.

## Wasted Time Troubleshooting and Backup Window Impacting Workday

"There was always a server causing issues when a backup job failed. We'd spend hours trying to figure out the origin of the issue; needless to say, doing a full backup every night was not easy. Now, with ExaGrid, we start our first job at 7:00pm for our ERP system followed by the big job at 10:00pm – that's when all of our servers, which are all grouped together, are all backed up. There is ample window and disk space now. In the past, we weren't able to get everything backed up and jobs would stop before they were completing,often impacting network performance the next day.

"ExaGrid just runs – in terms of ongoing care and feeding, there isn't a lot needed. The only other time I have to do something is when there is a failed disk or an upgrade with either Veeam or ExaGrid. Both of those are rare and simple fixes," Umansky said.

## Stellar Support, Expertise and Guidance

"ExaGrid support is amazing. We've had what I would consider to be 'stellar' support. Our assigned support engineer is phenomenal. I've worked with him since I started supporting our storage

and infrastructure. The consistency has been great because he knows our systems and knows exactly what I expect. He vets new updates and helps me take care of everything; he's an extension of our team," said Umansky.

"Our support engineer will even ask if I want to schedule time to work on an update together. If there is a patch fix, he'll take care of that for us on the back end – I just give him a window and he'll just confirm when it's done. The ExaGrid team gives me peace of mind," he said.

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.

"I have very little time to spend on backup storage. I wear many hats, and backup storage is only one of them, so I don't have the depth at any one particular direction. I know enough to keep them running – and I clearly know when I need escalation. My support experience with ExaGrid has built a very strong relationship with the company. I salute our customer support engineer for that. He brings expertise to the table. I am to the point where I am close to implicit trust," said Umansky.

## Cost Reduction with Tighter Integration

"We had been leveraging an outsourced engineer for quite a while as an extension of our team to assist with backup storage management because we're thinly staffed. We try to balance key projects with consultants when possible. We were relying pretty heavily on consulting hours to keep our backups working. It just so happened that as we started to evaluate adding Veeam to our solution, our consultant who had been managing our backups, left the company.

"We suddenly found ourselves in a situation where we didn't have the in-house skill set to take care of that service anymore, and that was a big challenge for us. Not having the extra help really pushed us to bring that skill set back in-house, and ExaGrid and Veeam were integral for that. We now have tighter integration, more reliable backups – and save a ton on consulting costs. It all ties back because without ExaGrid and their support, I don't think we'd be nearly as successful as we are," said Umansky.

Saint Michael's has a two-site solution – a primary site, which is their DR site. Because their co-location is so stable, they run that as primary. They have a 10GB link between that and their campus, which is now their data center backup target. Most of Saint Michael's virtual servers are systems running in Williston, Vermont, which is the college's co-location. "The integration between Veeam and ExaGrid is amazing – everything is fast and reliable," said Umansky.

## Simplified Management Makes for Productive Work

"We're a VM shop. We use replication of all servers back to our campus, and we also replicate between our ExaGrid appliances. Our total backup is close to 50TB at each site, and we replicate between the two.

"The best compliment I can give to ExaGrid is that I don't have to spend a lot of time thinking about backup. The ExaGrid system works; it does what it needs to do. It's not at the forefront of my mind, and with everything else going on, that's a good thing. Once a month, in preparation for our staff meeting, I share a scorecard of backup information showing a snapshot of where things currently are. For the past several years, our backup numbers have been consistently stable. We have plenty of landing space, ample retention space, and there are no concerns on the horizon. This certainly makes for a productive meeting! Keeping backup under the radar is the way it should be," said Umansky.

## 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.

## ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe

Veeam uses changed block tracking to perform a level of data deduplication. ExaGrid allows Veeam deduplication and Veeam dedupe-friendly compression to stay on. ExaGrid will increase Veeam's deduplication by a factor of about 7:1 to a total combined deduplication ratio of 14:1, reducing the storage required and saving on storage costs up front and over time.

## Scale-out Architecture Provides Superior Scalability

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.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid's architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.

## 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**.