



The Salvation Army Improves Backup Times and Eliminates Tape with ExaGrid



USA

Key Benefits:

- Aggressive data deduplication reduces amount of data stored and increases retention
- Backup jobs over 60% shorter
- System scales 'seamlessly'

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Michael Levine

Technology Research & Assessment Manager

Customer Overview

The Salvation Army annually serves more than 25 million people in America, helping them overcome poverty, addiction, and economic hardships through a range of social services. By providing food for the hungry, emergency relief for disaster survivors, rehabilitation for those suffering from drug and alcohol addiction, and clothing and shelter for people in need, The Salvation Army is doing the most good at 7,200 centers of operation around the country. In 2021, The Salvation Army was ranked No. 2 on the list of "America's Favorite Charities" by The Chronicle of Philanthropy.

Long Backup Times and Tape Management Issues Frustrate IT Staff

The Salvation Army was struggling with long backup times and tape management issues in its eastern territory headquarters. Because full backup jobs were taking most of the weekend to run, The Salvation Army's IT staff found system maintenance increasingly difficult. In addition, the agency's data was growing quickly, and tape management was becoming problematic.

"We were backing up to tape, but our backup times were taking too long, and we were constantly pressed for time when we needed to perform maintenance or upgrades," said Michael Levine, Technology Research & Assessment Manager at The Salvation Army. "We looked ahead and saw that tape management was going to be an issue in the very near future. We were transporting the tapes offsite once a week but as our data grew, so did the number of tapes. Finally, we decided to look for a new solution that could reduce our backup windows as well as reliance on tape."

Two-Site ExaGrid System Replaces Tape, Delivers Faster Backups, Ensures Scalability

After evaluating solutions from Quantum and Veritas, The Salvation Army evaluated a disk-based backup system with data deduplication from ExaGrid.

"We liked ExaGrid's approach to data deduplication. Because of how the deduplication process is performed, the network and backup servers don't get bogged down and backups run as quickly as possible," said Levine. "We were also impressed with its scalability. The system



was designed so that we can easily add another appliance at some point down the road to increase capacity."

Shorter Backup Times, Data Deduplication Help to Maximize Retention

The Salvation Army purchased a two-site ExaGrid system and installed one appliance in its datacenter in West Nyack and a second in Syracuse. Data is automatically replicated between the two systems each night. Levine said that in addition to eliminating tape, the agency's backup windows have also been significantly reduced, giving the IT staff plenty of time for maintenance and upgrades.

"Our backups kick off each night at 7:30 p.m. and most of them are finished by 12:30 a.m. With tape, our nightly backups were running all night and finishing up at 8:30 a.m., just in time to start the workday," he said. "We now have plenty of breathing room to work on the system if we need to."

Levine said that ExaGrid's strong data deduplication technology helps to reduce the amount of data stored and increases retention. "The ExaGrid system does a fantastic job at reducing our data. We're currently able to keep our weekly backups for four weeks and monthly backups for six months."

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).



Easy Installation, Proactive 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. Customer's never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

Levine worked with ExaGrid's support engineers to install the system. "After the install was complete, we got in contact with our ExaGrid support engineer, and he worked with us to tweak the system and to make sure it was running correctly. ExaGrid's support team worked closely with Veritas' engineers to ensure we were getting the best performance possible."

Unique Architecture Ensures 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 unduplicated 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.

"One of the key reasons we chose the ExaGrid system was its scalability, and we haven't been disappointed. In fact, I added two appliances to the system yesterday and it was seamless. Our ExaGrid customer support engineer assisted me, but I found the process to be simple and straightforward," said Levine. "The ExaGrid really has taken a lot of the pain out of our backups. Our backups and restores are faster and more efficient, and we don't have to manage tape anymore. It's been a great solution for us."

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.

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.