



# Sarah Lawrence College Moves Backups Off Campus with ExaGrid and Gains Faster Backups



USA

## Key Benefits:

- Full backups reduced from 36 hours down to 12
- Deduplication helped reduce energy usage with the ability to backup massive amounts of data
- Unmatched scalability and flexibility
- Cost-effective to acquire

**"We can easily scale the ExaGrid system to back up more data in the future. Looking forward, we can also add a second system to replicate data and to further reduce our reliance on tape."**

### Sean Jameson

Director of Information Technology

## Customer Overview

*Sarah Lawrence is a prestigious, residential, coeducational liberal arts college. Founded in 1926 and consistently ranked among the leading liberal arts colleges in the country, Sarah Lawrence is known for its pioneering approach to education, rich history of impassioned intellectual and civic engagement, and vibrant, successful alumni. In close proximity to the unparalleled offerings of New York City, our historic campus is home to an inclusive, intellectually curious, and diverse community.*

## Data Center Move Prompts Search for a New Approach to Backup

Sarah Lawrence College had been backing up its data to tape, but its IT staff had grown tired of dealing with full backups that stretched as long as 36 hours each weekend. When the school began planning to move its datacenter to a co-location facility an hour away from campus, the IT staff knew it was time to look for an alternative to tape backups.

"It simply wasn't acceptable for us to even consider using tape to back up data across the network to a co-location center," said Sean Jameson, director of information technology at Sarah Lawrence College. "It was obvious to us that we needed a disk- to-disk solution that would give us faster backups and reduce our reliance on tape."

## ExaGrid Reduces Backup Times, Provides Data Deduplication to Maximize Storage Efficiency

After briefly considering backing up to straight disk, the College chose ExaGrid. The ExaGrid system works with the College's existing backup application, Arcserve.

"We easily could have built something ourselves with massive disks, but we wouldn't have had the data deduplication necessary to reduce our data. Also, the power draw and footprint alone for a system like that wouldn't have been practical in a co-location facility, where we pay for rack space and are subject to electrical surcharges," said Jameson.

Since moving its backups to ExaGrid, the College's weekly full backups have been reduced from 24 to 36 hours to 10 to 12 hours. Nightly differential backups have been reduced from six hours to less than two hours.

One of the main reasons the College chose ExaGrid was its built-in data deduplication technology.



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's data deduplication technology enables us to maximize the amount of data we can back up onto the system," said Associate Director, Information Technology Khanh Tran. "Overall, we're trying to reduce our energy usage and the ability to backup massive amounts of data onto ExaGrid's 3U footprint certainly helps."

## ExaGrid Makes Moving to New Data Center Faster and Easier

The ExaGrid system not only provided relief for the College's long backup windows, but it also helped make the process of moving the information from the campus datacenter to the co-location center easier.

The ExaGrid system was one of the first systems up and running in the new datacenter. The IT team moved VMware images from its servers in

the old datacenter and backed them up to the ExaGrid system in the new datacenter. The images were then extracted from ExaGrid to servers in the co- location facility.

"The ExaGrid system was critical in allowing us to move our data quickly to the new site and helped us get up and running as fast as humanly possible," said Jameson, "Also, we couldn't really keep tapes at our new site because we don't have personnel there. The ExaGrid has significantly reduced our reliance on tape and has enabled us to automate our backups."

## Scalability and Flexibility to Address Future Needs

Since the College's data is growing quickly, scalability and flexibility were critical factors in choosing ExaGrid.

"We're looking to capture more data and to convert many of our paper documents to electronic files, so it's critical that our backup system be able to handle additional capacity in the future. With the ExaGrid system, we know that we can easily grow the system to back up more data," said Jameson. "Looking forward, we can also add a second system to replicate data and to further reduce our reliance on tape."

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.

"The ExaGrid was instrumental in helping us quickly move our datacenter offsite," said Jameson. "It was cost-effective to acquire and it has taken a lot of the pain out of our daily backup routines. We have a high degree of confidence in the ExaGrid system," said Jameson.

## ExaGrid and Arcserve Backup

Efficient backup requires close integration between the backup software and backup storage. That is the advantage delivered by the partnership between Arcserve and ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage. Together, Arcserve and ExaGrid provide a cost-effective backup solution that scales to meet the needs of demanding enterprise environments.

## 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](http://www.exagrid.com).