EXAGRID®

ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage Stands up to the Test with Sioux Technologies

SIOUX TECHNOLOGIES

NETHERLANDS

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid offers deep integration with Veeam

- Retention Time-Lock ensures Sioux Technologies ready to recover from ransomware

- Excellent support model offers better experience than other solutions

- Comprehensive security gives confidence in data protection

- ExaGrid-Veeam deduplication key to longer-term retention

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Daan Lieshout
System Administrator

Customer Overview

Sioux Technologies brings high-tech to life, contributing to a society that is healthy, safe, smart, sustainable, and more fun. Sioux is a strategic high-tech solutions partner that develops, innovates, and assembles complex high-tech systems with advanced Software, Mathware, Electronics, and Mechatronics.

As the largest privately-owned tech company in the Netherlands, they are focused on people and building long-term relations, continuously developing our 900 bright employees. This way, they create more fun & value, for their employees, inter(national) customers, Sioux, and the world around them.

ExaGrid's Architecture Stands on its Own

Daan Lieshout, system administrator at Sioux Technologies, had been using a Synology NAS, QNAP, and tapes along with Veeam to handle the organization's backups. Over time, he realized he needed a more powerful solution that was easier to manage to handle their increasing volume of data.

"ExaGrid was super easy to set up. When I first witnessed ExaGrid's results here at Sioux, I was astonished by the speed, and how quickly backups were completed with the Landing Zone. Once I understood exactly how it works, I was even more astonished. The architecture is the big differentiator between ExaGrid and other solutions," 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. In addition, ExaGrid appliances can replicate to a second ExaGrid appliance at a second site or to the public cloud for DR (disaster recovery).

IT Team Tests and Can't Corrupt Secure ExaGrid System

Lieshout is taking full advantage of ExaGrid's Retention Time-Lock for Ransomware Recovery (RTL) and has a policy set in place so that Sioux Technologies is prepared to recover if ever faced with a ransomware attack and is also impressed with the comprehensive security that ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage provides.

"One of my favorite features is the role-based access control (RBAC). In our case, even with a team of three people who do everything, the operator cannot set a retention period without the security officer," he said.

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team puts that to the test. It's sort of a game to get it corrupted so we can say, 'look, this is not safe' because that's what a hacker does. Honestly, I can't make ExaGrid defect, because I cannot get into the ExaGrid Repository Tier, so it feels more safe and secure than other solutions."

ExaGrid appliances have a network-facing disk-cache Landing Zone where the most recent backups are stored in an undeduplicated format for fast backup and restore performance. Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing tier called the Repository Tier, for longer-term retention. ExaGrid's unique architecture and features provide comprehensive security including RTL, and through the combination of a non-network-facing tier (tiered air gap), a delayed delete policy, and immutable data objects, backup data is protected from being deleted or encrypted. ExaGrid's offline tier is ready for recovery in the event of an attack.

Solid Backup and DR Plan

"Our environment is mainly virtual with over 300 VMs, which are all backed up to ExaGrid, and as a best practice for deduplication appliances, we do a full backup of all the VMs weekly. We have about 15 physical servers that are backed up to ExaGrid. Most of our data is made up of databases, and half of our VMs are developer service, so developers are making software and testing and simulating.

ExaGrid is the main backup in the first place, but we also use it for DR as needed, and we use it on the weekends for Veeam SureBackup," said Lieshout.

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 DR.

Support Makes ExaGrid a Better Investment than Data Domain or HPE Store Once

Lieshout has found that ExaGrid's operation management is easy, especially working with his support engineer who is easy to get in touch with whenever there is a question or if an issue needs to be resolved. "On a normal day, I do not have to do anything. But if there should be an unlikely error or issue, you don't solve it yourself. We get a proactive notification from our ExaGrid support engineer. This level of support is a very strong part of the product! There is always a quick and solid answer for resolution," he said.

"I've worked with HPE StoreOnce, and I have worked with Dell Data Domain, and if anyone asks me for a recommendation I say, 'You have to buy ExaGrid.' In the end, you have a backup when it goes wrong. You will also have all the expert support you need. With other companies, you can't directly contact an engineer – you must wait hours."

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.

Deduplication Necessary for Longer-Term Retention

"We could not operate without ExaGrid's deduplication. In the Netherlands, we have to keep retention of most data for 7 years and up to 15 years for medical systems," said Lieshout.

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."

Tiered Backup Storage Architecture and Scalability Key to Managing Data Growth

Lieshout appreciates the flexibility that ExaGrid's architecture provides and feels confident that it will continue to accommodate data growth by scaling out the current ExaGrid system with additional appliances in the future.

"When I first started at Sioux Technologies, some non-critical VMs were not being backed up because we thought they could not fit on the ExaGrid system. Once I understood more about how ExaGrid works, I realized that I could decrease the amount of storage in the Landing Zone a little bit, and increase the amount of storage used for the Repository Tier. In addition, the storage our VMs require can vary —sometimes it's more, sometimes it's less. When needed, we will be adding another ExaGrid appliance, and we are sure it will be very easy to do so because the system arranges itself," he said.

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.

ExaGrid appliances contain not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply added to the existing system. The system scales linearly, maintaining a fixed-length backup window as data grows so customers only pay for what they need, when they need it. Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing Repository Tier with automatic load balancing and global deduplication across all repositories.

ExaGrid and Veeam

Veeam's backup solutions and ExaGrid 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**.