Softtek Switches to Scalable ExaGrid System for Improved Performance and Longer-Term Retention

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>
> **Arturo Marroquin,
> Global IT Director**

MEXICO

Key Benefits:

- POC reveals how well ExaGrid and Veeam work together to improve backup performance

- Softtek no longer experiences long backup windows or issues with replication

- ExaGrid-Veeam deduplication provides storage savings that allows for longer retention to be prepared for audits

- Easy-to-manage ExaGrid system allows Softtek's IT team to focus on global strategy rather than resolving backup issues

Customer Overview

Founded in 1982 by a small group of entrepreneurs, Softtek started out in Mexico providing local IT services, and today is a global leader in next-generation digital solutions. The first company to introduce the Nearshore model, Softtek helps Global 2000 organizations build their digital capabilities constantly and seamlessly, from ideation and development to execution and evolution. Its entrepreneurial drive spans 20+ countries and more than 15,000 talented professionals.

Softtek Switches to Scalable ExaGrid-Veeam Solution

The IT team at Softtek had been backing up its data to an inline deduplication appliance. The team decided to switch its backup application to Veeam and also decided to update the backup storage as well.

The IT team researched which backup storage works well with Veeam, and decided to do a proof-of-concept (POC) with ExaGrid. "When we started the POC with ExaGrid, I remember the ExaGrid sales team telling us that the POC would be done in just one week, and I was skeptical about that," said Arturo Marroquin, Softtek's global IT director.

"The ExaGrid team assured us that we would be able to have the same backup jobs and schedule that we had been using with our previous backup storage appliance, and that everything would be ready in less than a week. It only took two days to set up in our production environment and ExaGrid and Veeam worked well together, and the backup windows were much shorter. Once our team saw how well the combined solution worked together, we decided to install ExaGrid. We had spoken with other IT professionals and many people spoke highly of using ExaGrid and Veeam together – that they are like Batman and Robin, and they were correct. Choosing ExaGrid and Veeam as a combined solution was one of the best decisions we have made in years."

One of the key factors that caused ExaGrid to stand out from other backup storage that Softtek's IT team researched is ExaGrid's scale-out architecture. "We're a company that has had growth in the last couple of years so we needed storage that can easily scale

and that was one of the main points in our decision-making process," said Marroquin.

All of ExaGrid's appliances contain not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply attached to the existing system. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows, with customers paying for what they need when they need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliances are added to the existing system, ExaGrid automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the system.

Backup Windows Reduced and Replication Issues Resolved for Global Sites

As Softtek has grown as a company, it as increased its global presence with locations in the Americas, Asia, and Europe. The company is headquartered in Monterrey, Mexico and its internal systems are hosted there.

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"We back up our data on a daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly schedule. Our internal systems are hosted at our headquarters and our backup window was too long as we also had to coordinate backups across the globe at our operations in India which is 12 hours ahead of us, so that was an issue we need to resolve, and this was especially important in Spain as it is seven hours ahead and we need to back up our SAP data and due to time zone differences we had to stop working in Mexico at a certain point in the evening, and that left us with a very small window of only four hours to back up and stop the environment, if necessary.

"With our new ExaGrid Veeam solution, we achieved our goal of an eight-hour backup window and are able to run backup jobs across the globe whether they are done locally in Mexico, or in Brazil, Spain, or our other global locations," said Marroquin.

Not only does the IT team manage backup jobs in various locations, they also manage replication between sites. "Our previous solution did offer replication but we experienced many issues with that and it is much more streamlined since we switched to ExaGrid and Veeam," said Eduardo Garza, Softtek's global IT operations manager. "In addition, it takes much less time to restore data, which is something that everyone benefits from."

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 so that an RTO and RPO can be easily met. Available system cycles are utilized to perform deduplication and offsite replication for an optimal recovery point at the disaster recovery site. Once complete, the onsite data is protected and immediately available in its full undeduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

Ready for Audits Due to Longer-Term Retention

Softtek's IT team backs up data that includes file servers, VMs, as well as critical data from the executive team, and is pleased with the deduplication that they are able to achieve with the ExaGrid-Veeam solution. "While our previous solution did offer deduplication we were not able to activate it, and now with ExaGrid and Veeam our deduplication ratio is 10:1, which has allowed us to keep more retention than we were able to in the past," said Garza.

"We keep one year of critical data and also a full backup of all of our information and systems for 21 days or more. We have many audit requirements and we are able to keep the retention we need to meet those requirements due to the storage we are saving with the ExaGrid-Veeam deduplication," said Marroquin.

Veeam uses the information from VMware and Hyper-V and provides deduplication on a "per-job" basis, finding the matching areas of all the virtual disks within a backup job and using metadata to reduce the overall footprint of the backup data. Veeam also has a "dedupe friendly" compression setting which further reduces the size of the Veeam backups in a way that allows the ExaGrid system to achieve further deduplication. This approach typically achieves a 2:1 deduplication ratio.

ExaGrid is architected from the ground up to protect virtualized environments and provide deduplication as backups are taken. ExaGrid will achieve up to 5:1 additional deduplication rate. The net result is a combined Veeam and ExaGrid deduplication rate of upwards to 10:1, which greatly reduces the amount of disk storage required.

Easier Backup Management and More Secure Storage Allows Team to Focus on Global Strategy

Softtek's IT team likes ExaGrid's support model of working directly with an assigned level-2 support engineer. "Our ExaGrid support engineer is very quick to respond and has been helpful as we have installed new ExaGrid appliance models. We decided to switch to ExaGrid's appliances with encryption for added data security and our support engineer has been helpful during the transition. He also was very helpful in setting up the ExaGrid *Retention Time-Lock for Ransomware Recovery (RTL)* feature and we haven't had to use it, but it is good to have set up just in case," said Marroquin.

ExaGrid appliances have a network-facing disk-cache Landing Zone Tier 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 where deduplicated data is stored for longer-term retention. The combination of a non-network facing tier (virtual air gap) plus delayed deletes with ExaGrid's RTL feature, and immutable data objects, guards against the backup data being deleted or encrypted.

"We used to need a huge team to manage backups and restores and since switching to ExaGrid and Veeam, the performance is so improved and much easier to manage, so we only need a couple of people to work on backups now," said Marroquin. "Now we are able to focus the smaller team more on a global strategy for the backup jobs at our locations worldwide," added Garza.

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 a scale-out architecture which includes full appliances with up to 2.7PB full backup in a single system.
Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.