



Architecture Firm Chooses Veeam and ExaGrid, Reduces Backup Window from 108 to 36 Hours



USA

Key Benefits:

- Veeam synthetic fulls occur on the ExaGrid, eliminating the need to move data between the Veeam backup server and backup storage, shortening backup window
- Restores, and recoveries complete faster with Veeam and ExaGrid – in seconds to minutes
- Easy scalability provides increased capacity and performance as needed

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Pat Stammer
Systems Administrator

Customer Overview

Solomon Cordwell Buenz (SCB) is an award-winning architecture, interior design, and planning firm with offices in Chicago and San Francisco. SCB has extensive commercial and institutional design experience in multi-family residential, hospitality, retail, corporate office, higher education, laboratory, and transportation facilities.

Need for Backup Solution Designed for Virtualized Environments Led to Veeam

The IT team at SCB needed to revisit the company’s backup strategy after a virtualization initiative led to rapid data growth. The firm has nearly 14TB of backup data that consists mainly of AutoCAD, PDF, general office files, and assorted databases. The SCB IT team had been backing up to tape but found they needed a solution that was optimized for virtualized environments and would reduce backup times.

“Our old tape solution and backup application weren’t designed for virtualized environments, and our weekly backups were running from Friday nights to Wednesday mornings, so we really needed to reign in our backup times,” said Pat Stammer, systems administrator at SCB. “We needed a new solution to more efficiently back up our environment.”

The firm contacted its trusted reseller, who recommended that the team evaluate several different approaches. SCB decided on Veeam because it was designed specifically for virtual environments along with a two-site ExaGrid system due to the high level of integration between the two products and the efficiencies of their data deduplication and scalability.

Stammer said that SCB did a thorough analysis of various backup applications before choosing Veeam.

“Our reseller spent a lot of time going over the pros and cons of different approaches, but Veeam was the clear choice for our virtual environment. We loved Veeam’s ease of use and easy restores, and the fact that it works so seamlessly with the ExaGrid system,” he said.

“We liked how effective ExaGrid’s data deduplication was at reducing data and were impressed with the sheer amount of usable storage space available on the system,” said Stammer. “We also felt the ExaGrid system would deliver faster backup times than some of its



competitors because it sends backups directly to a landing zone and deduplication occurs in parallel.”

SCB installed an ExaGrid system in its Chicago and San Francisco offices and replicates data from San Francisco to Chicago each night for disaster recovery. Data from Chicago is backed up to tape but will eventually be replicated back to San Francisco once the ExaGrid system is expanded.

Full Backup Times Reduced From 108 Hours to 36 Hours, Deduplication Reduces Data to Maximize Disk Space

Stammer said that prior to installing the ExaGrid system, weekly full backups would run from Friday night at 7:00 p.m. to Wednesday morning. Initially, active full backups to the ExaGrid system would run approximately 60 hours but now run 36 hours after implementing the ExaGrid- Veeam Accelerated Data Mover.

“We saw a huge improvement in our backup times when we switched over to the Veeam-ExaGrid solution, but when we started using the Data Mover, we gained even better results,” said Stammer.

ExaGrid has integrated the Veeam Data Mover so that backups are written Veeam-to-Veeam versus Veeam-to-CIFS, which provides a 30% increase in

backup performance. Since the Veeam Data Mover is not an open standard, it is far more secure than using CIFS and other open market protocols. In addition, because ExaGrid has integrated the Veeam Data Mover, Veeam synthetic fulls can be created six times faster than any other solution. ExaGrid stores the most recent Veeam backups in an unduplicated form in its Landing Zone and has the Veeam Data Mover running on each ExaGrid appliance and has a processor in each appliance in a scale-out architecture. This combination of Landing Zone, Veeam Data Mover, and scale-out compute provides the fastest Veeam synthetic fulls versus any other solution on the market.

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.



Simple, Easy-to-Maintain Environment

Stammer said that the ExaGrid system is very intuitive and has a simple interface that makes management quite simple. "ExaGrid's user interface is streamlined and easy to use. I like that there aren't a million different configuration screens to go through to customize things the way I want to," 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.

"We absolutely love ExaGrid's customer support model, and our engineer has been nothing short of awesome. The engineer assigned to our account knows the system inside and out, knows us, and is incredibly responsive. If we have an issue or concern, he remotes in and can diagnose and resolve the problem quickly and easily," said Stammer.

Scalability to Grow

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 other key reasons we picked the ExaGrid system is its scalability. When we need to expand the system, it's a 'plug-and-play' process, where we can easily add appliances to increase performance and capacity," said Stammer.

Veeam and ExaGrid

The combination of Veeam and ExaGrid was the right choice for SCB, Stammer said. "Veeam and ExaGrid work together seamlessly and provide all the functionality needed to deliver fast, stress-free backups as simply as possible," he said.

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.

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.