



Hospital Hits Capacity with Data Domain, Opts for ExaGrid to Ensure Future Scalability

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

 St. LUKE'S CORNWALL HOSPITAL
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Jim Gessman
Systems Administrator

Customer Overview

St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital (SLCH) is a not-for-profit hospital dedicated to serving the health care needs of those in New York's Hudson Valley. In 2002, St. Luke's Hospital and The Cornwall Hospital merged to create an integrated health care delivery system, and in 2016, St. Luke's Cornwall Hospital partnered with the Montefiore Health System, making SLCH part of the leading organization in the country for population health management. The organization's 300+ physicians and 1,500 clinical and support personnel provide comprehensive, quality care for over 270,000 patients each year.

EMRs Present Backup Storage Challenges

Like all other hospitals, SLCH had taken the plunge into EMRs and digital records, which required a lot of space for both production as well as backups. The hospital had been using Meditech as its EMR system, Bridgehead with Data Domain for backups, and offsite tape copies for disaster recovery. However, the hospital got to a point where it was no longer possible to do daily backups because of how long they were taking, and had to resort to backing up only three times a week instead.

Backups Constantly Running, Restores 'Risky'

Prior to ExaGrid, the hospital had been using physical tape as well as Data Domain to virtual tape, and the biggest problem, according to Jim Gessman, systems administrator at SLCH, was that backups were painfully slow. "It took forever to get backups done, and it got to a point where backups were taking so long that they were constantly running. We need to keep a lot of historical data, and with EMRs and digital records, we need a lot of space for backups."

In addition to painfully slow backups, deduplication wasn't running correctly on the Data Domain system, and SLCH was running out of capacity. "When we had a failure, we'd have to restart. Given how long it took to back up, I didn't want to attempt a restore – fortunately, we never needed to but if we had, it would have been painful, and we knew we were taking that risk. Overall, it just wasn't meeting our needs," said Gessman.

SLCH Faces Costly Forklift Upgrade with Data Domain

When St. Luke's first ran out of capacity on its Data Domain system, the hospital was able to do one upgrade, but when it happened again, Gessman was surprised to learn that it couldn't be expanded further. He was told that he needed a whole new system in order to add the capacity the hospital needed to keep pace with its data growth.

"I was really put off by EMC when they told me I had to buy all new gear, and our Data Domain system wasn't even that old. If I bought a new Data Domain, after I ported everything over, I would have had to just throw the old one away. For what we needed, the cost for a whole new Data Domain system was literally immense. It really came down to the fact that if I was going to have to spend that much money for a new Data Domain, I'd much rather purchase something new that offers much more flexibility. So we started to look at other options."

ExaGrid Scale-Out Architecture Proves to be 'Much Better Fit'

When he was comparing Data Domain, ExaGrid, and one other backup storage product, there were a number of things that tipped the scales for Gessman and made his decision to purchase ExaGrid an easy one – ease of use, cost, and future expandability.

"When we looked at ExaGrid, it seemed to be a much better fit, especially in the area of scalability." Gessman felt comfortable that he

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid's scalability ensures that SLCH will never face another forklift upgrade
- System can be scaled commensurate with hospital's data growth
- Backups now complete in hours instead of days
- IT staff now spends 'almost no time' on backup



would never outgrow the ExaGrid system. “In the future, when we have more data to back up and we need to grow the system a little, great. If we need to grow the system a lot, we can do that too.”

ExaGrid uses a GRID-based configuration, where each appliance contains not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply attached to the GRID. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows, and you only pay for what you need when you need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliances are added to the GRID, the ExaGrid system automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the GRID.

Easy to Install and Maintain

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use, and works seamlessly with all of the most frequently used backup applications, so an organization can seamlessly retain their investment in existing applications and processes. In addition, ExaGrid appliances can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

Gessman reports that his ExaGrid system was up and running within a few hours and has found that the time he spends on

backup is far less than it used to be. “I spend almost no time on backup now. I forget about it sometimes – no kidding. It’s that good! I look at the daily backup report that the ExaGrid generates, and it’s always fine. I haven’t had any issues with running out of space or failing because it choked. It just runs. We can actually do daily backups now, because the jobs are completing in a matter of hours instead of days.”

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid’s turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise SATA/SAS drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to straight disk. ExaGrid’s patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 by storing only the unique bytes across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups while providing full system resources to the backups for the fastest backups and, therefore, the shortest backup window. As data grows, only ExaGrid avoids expanding backup windows by adding full appliances in a GRID. ExaGrid’s unique landing zone keeps a full copy of the most recent backup on disk, delivering the fastest restores, VM boots in seconds to minutes, “Instant DR,” and fast tape copy. Over time, ExaGrid saves up to 50% in total system costs compared to competitive solutions by avoiding costly “forklift” upgrades.

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides backup storage with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone provides for the fastest backups, restores and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable GRID and provides for a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at www.exagrid.com.

United States: 2000 West Park Drive | Westborough, MA 01581 | (800) 868-6985

United Kingdom: 200 Brook Drive | Green Park, Reading, Berkshire RG2 6UB | +44 (0) 1189 497 051

Singapore: 1 Raffles Place, #20-61 | One Raffles Place Tower 2 | 048616 | +65 6808 5574



www.exagrid.com