



TenCate Protective Fabrics Avoids Dell EMC Data Domain Forklift Upgrade



USA

Key Benefits:

- ‘Intelligent’ use of budget dollars up front and over time
- Fastest possible restores – no need to rehydrate data
- Retention increased from 5 days to 4 weeks
- Backup window reduced from a high of 24 hours down to 8
- Automated cross-replication protects against data loss

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Jayme Williams
Sr. Systems Engineer

Customer Overview

TenCate Protective Fabrics creates and manufactures inherently flame-resistant textiles for firefighters, utility linemen and electricians, oil and gas workers, military and security and just about anyone who needs protection from fire and thermal events. In a sometimes dangerous world, people have trusted these made in America fabrics for more than 90 years. This is why TenCate produces more inherently flame-resistant fabric than anyone else in the world and why more workers who wear PPE trust TenCate to protect them so they can get to the things that matter most.

Forklift Upgrade Looms in Face of Growing Data and Backup Window

For many years, like most other organizations, TenCate Protective Fabrics had been backing up to tape. Little did they know three short years ago when they made the investment in their two Dell EMC Data Domain 510 systems that they’d outgrow them so quickly.

Growing data and TenCate’s increasing use of virtualized machines multiplied their need for not only more storage, but a more intelligent methodology for handling backups, as well as a system that would protect them from yet another “upgrade” in such a painfully short period of time.

“When the Dell EMC Data Domain system first went in, it was a physical world; since then, it’s changed dramatically. Not that long ago, we were 99% physical, and now we’re 99% virtual,” said Jayme Williams, senior systems engineer at TenCate Protective Fabrics. “It got to the point where the Dell EMC Data Domain system just couldn’t keep pace with the amount of data that was being pushed to it, and I had to manually go into Veritas Backup Exec to compare the backup files to the data sets and delete data so that the next backup could finish,” he said. “I don’t have to do that anymore.”

Williams thought that resolving the problem would be as easy as adding another tray of drives since his system was only half filled to capacity. That was when he learned that it’s not quite that simple. “I learned about forklift upgrades and how much it was going to cost me. I couldn’t believe it. We’re trying to use our budget intelligently, and that’s not intelligent to me. I turned to my reseller because I trust him, and he told me that they’re no longer recommending Dell EMC Data Domain and that I should look at ExaGrid,” he said.



Pain Points for TenCate Solved with ExaGrid

Not only had Williams experienced sticker shock with Dell EMC Data Domain, once he evaluated ExaGrid, he preferred the approach as well as the price. “If I had money to burn, then Dell EMC Data Domain might have been an option, but nowadays we’re trying to get everything we can out of what we spend,” he said.

“ExaGrid helped me to think about things differently. Of course you want to be able to complete backups quickly, but what about restores as well? With ExaGrid, the data is right there on the landing zone ready to go,” said Williams.

“Our retention was down to a painful five days and that was for the more important data. We had to prioritize retention; for instance, our CIFS shares were down to three days of retention. Ideally, we want to have retention of at least four weeks across the board,” he said. “We have two data centers and a number of remote sites, and with some shifts running 24/7, there never really was a good time for backup, nevermind one that was taking 14 hours!

I’d get calls from 2nd and 3rd shift employees saying that the system was too slow because of the backups.”

Williams says that he is now able to meet TenCate's goal of four weeks' retention. "I started out backing up to the ExaGrid with four weeks' retention thinking I was going to have to collapse it. I'm actually extending it out now to see how far I can go," he said.

Cross-Replication Provides Disaster Recovery Protection

Williams reports a reduction in backup window from 14+ hours (sometimes as high as 24) down to just 8 hours. The company installed two ExaGrid appliances in two sites that cross-replicate using Veritas Backup Exec OST. The backup is sent by the media server to the local ExaGrid appliance, and is replicated to the remote ExaGrid. Upon completion, the Veritas Backup Exec catalog is updated with both the local and remote copies of the data, for easy recovery. By allowing the catalog to be updated with local and remote copies, restores from the remote appliance become much easier. Optimized duplication also allows for different local and remote retention policies, as well as automated tape copy from the remote site.

As for deduplication, Williams reports dedupe from 13:1 to 78:1, depending on data type.

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).

Easy to Manage, Easy to Use

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. Customer's never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

Williams is pleased with the experience he's had with ExaGrid's customer support. He said, "It's great working with the same person all the time who's knowledgeable, understands your problem, and can fix it."

Unique Architecture Ensures Scalability

ExaGrid's award-winning scale-out architecture provides customers with a fixed-length backup window regardless of data growth. Its unique disk-cache Landing Zone allows for the fastest backups and retains the most recent backup in its full unduplicated form, enabling the fastest restores.

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.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid's architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.

ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

Veritas Backup Exec provides cost-effective, high-performance backup and recovery – including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange servers, Microsoft SQL servers, file servers, and workstations. High-performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection and scalable management of local and remote server backups.

Organizations using Veritas Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid Tiered Backup Storage for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Veritas Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Veritas Backup Exec, using ExaGrid is as easy as pointing existing backup jobs at a NAS share on the ExaGrid system. Backup jobs are sent directly from the backup application to ExaGrid for backup to disk.

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.

