The Old Globe Theatre Replaces Straight Disk with ExaGrid

THE OLD GLOBE

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>
> **Dean Yager**
> **IT Manager**
> **The Old Globe**

Key Benefits:

- Data deduplication maximizes amount of data the theater can store

- Retention increased to four months of nightly full backups

- Backups run faster; backup window improved by 30% over straight disk

- Painless full server restore in under an hour

- The theater simply changed the target for backup; no need to rebuild backup jobs

Customer Overview

The internationally-acclaimed, Tony® Award-winning Old Globe is one of the most renowned regional theatres in the country and has stood as San Diego's flagship arts institution for over 75 years. The Old Globe produces a year-round season of 15 plays and musicals on its three stages, including its highly-regarded Shakespeare festival. The Globe has become a gathering place for leading theatre artists from around the world. Numerous Broadway-bound premieres and revivals – such as *Dirty Rotten Scoundrels*, *The Full Monty*, and *Damn Yankees* – have been developed at The Old Globe and have gone on to enjoy highly successful runs in New York and at regional theatres across the country.

Straight Disk Doesn't Solve Backup Problems

The Old Globe had abandoned tape in favor of disk and was using a combination of direct-attached storage and consumer-level disk backup devices to back up its business data. While the theatre's IT staff liked the convenience of backing up to disk over dealing with tape, backups ran slowly and there wasn't enough disk capacity to properly back up all of the data while maintaining retention goals. To make matters worse, the staff still spent hours each week juggling backup jobs and managing restores.

"We moved from tape to disk in hopes of making life easier and reducing the amount of time we were spending on managing backups, but retention and backup times quickly became big issues," said Dean Yager, IT manager at The Old Globe. "We were constantly running out of time and space, and it seemed like we had to go in and adjust backup jobs every other week just to get everything done."

The Old Globe began looking for economical disk to add to its network but then decided to go in a different direction. "Initially, we started looking at SAN devices, but they were all too expensive and we were concerned about the idea of backing up our data where our primary data is housed," said Yager. "Finally, we talked with our VAR, and they suggested we look at disk-based backup solutions with data deduplication."

ExaGrid Proves to be the Best and Economical Solution

The Old Globe purchased an ExaGrid system after also briefly considering an EMC Data Domain unit, which came in at a price point that far exceeded the theatre's budget.

"The ExaGrid system was by far the most economical option, especially considering the amount of data we could store in the unit using its data deduplication technology. We're currently storing 18TB of data on our ExaGrid system; purchasing a SAN for that amount of data would have been insanely expensive," said Yager.

Exchange Data Reduced 52:1

Yager said that ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication technology maximizes the amount of data the theatre is able to store while improving backup times.

"We're seeing data deduplication ratios as high as 52:1 with our Exchange data, and we're able to store four months of full nightly backups," he said. "Also, since the ExaGrid backs up our data before the data deduplication process begins, our backups run more efficiently. Our backup times have improved 25 to 30 percent, which is amazing considering we were already backing up to disk."

EXAGRID™

ExaGrid combines standard compression along with zone-level data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space required by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance. ExaGrid delivers extremely fast backup performance because data is written directly to disk, and data deduplication is performed post process after the data is stored to reduce data. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication technology moves only the changes from backup to backup, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth

Full Server Restore in Less than an Hour

According to Yager, restoring data is also far more efficient with the ExaGrid system. Prior to installing the ExaGrid, the theatre stored its removable disks offsite and if a user requested a file that was more than two weeks old, the theatre's IT staff had to retrieve the disk and then locate the correct file, a process that was extremely time consuming. Now, the theatre has direct access to its information stored on the ExaGrid, and as the theatre's IT staff recently found out, restores can be completed quickly and easily.

"We recently had to restore a full server from the ExaGrid system and it took less than an hour," he said. "The difference between backing up from the ExaGrid and from our old removable disks is like night and day."

Fast Setup, Superior Customer Support

The ExaGrid system was designed to be easy to set up and maintain, and ExaGrid's industry-leading customer support team is staffed by trained, in-house engineers who are dedicated to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"The ExaGrid system fit perfectly into our existing infrastructure. Because we were able to plug the ExaGrid right into Backup Exec, I didn't have to rebuild any of the backup jobs. I just set the backup target to a different drive and I was done," Yager said. "Also, ExaGrid's support has been fantastic. During the installation, our ExaGrid engineer walked me through the system and taught me about the ins and outs of the system, so I had a high level of comfort with it. Ongoing support has been terrific, too. We once had a power outage and we received a call because our engineer noticed the system was offline."

GRID Architecture Provides Smooth Path for Future Expansion

ExaGrid uses a GRID-based configuration, where each appliance contains processing power, memory, bandwidth, and disk. When the system needs to expand, additional appliance nodes are attached to the GRID, bringing with them additional processing power, memory, bandwidth, and disk. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows, and you are only paying for the amount of processing power, memory and bandwidth as you need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliance nodes are added to the GRID, the ExaGrid automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the GRID.

"We purchased the system with plenty of room for growth, so I'm confident that when the time comes, we'll be able to easily expand the system," Yager said.

Installing the ExaGrid system has significantly improved The Globe Theatre's backup processes and reduced the amount of time its IT staff spends managing backups.

"Since we installed the ExaGrid system, I don't have to think about backups. In fact, having the system in place probably dropped my interaction with backups by 70 to 80 percent," he said. "The system was a perfect fit for our environment."

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

Symantec Backup Exec is the gold standard in Windows data recovery, providing cost-effective, high-performance, and certified disk-to-disk-to-tape backup and recovery—including continuous data protection for Microsoft Exchange, SQL, file servers, and workstations.

Organizations using Symantec Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Symantec Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Symantec Backup Exec, using ExaGrid in place of a tape backup system 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 the ExaGrid for onsite backup to disk.

For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at www.exagrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.