



VSAC Shortens Backup Window, Saves Time with ExaGrid Disk-Based Backup



USA

Key Benefits:

- Easy to install
- Much shorter backup window
- Second site provides disaster recovery protection
- Customer support engineer knows the VSAC environment "inside-out"
- Seamless integration with Veritas Backup Exec
- Scale-out architecture for effortless expansion and scalability

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Brian Blow

Network Systems Administrator

Customer Overview

The Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) was created in 1965 as a public nonprofit agency to assist Vermonters who want to go to college or pursue other training after high school. They provide information on grants, loans, scholarships, and career and education planning.

Relying Solely on Tape Led to Lengthy Backup Process

The IT department at VSAC relied on two tape drives to back up its data on a daily basis. With a combination of over 130 virtual and physical machines in place, the backup process was long and tedious. Backups would begin at about 2:00 pm in the afternoon and sometimes weren't complete until 9:30 am the next morning. The tapes were then stored offsite so restores required putting in a request to get the tapes from a storage facility. If the tapes were needed quickly, getting them required a car ride. "All of our tapes are stored offsite, so if I needed the tapes right away, I got in my car and drove over to retrieve them. I knew there had to be a better, more time-efficient way to complete this process," said Brian Blow, network systems administrator at VSAC.

ExaGrid Delivers Faster, More Cost-Effective Solution

VSAC needed a disk-based data backup solution that was cost-effective, fast, and scalable for future needs. It also had to work seamlessly with VSAC's existing backup application, Veritas Backup Exec. The IT team evaluated several disk-based storage solutions, including Dell EMC Data Domain, Unitrends Enterprise Backup, and ExaGrid. The Data Domain solution was too expensive, and VSAC needed more than the software solution offered by Unitrends. VSAC implemented the ExaGrid disk-based backup solution because of its ease of use, scalability, performance, and price.

Blow was impressed with how easy the ExaGrid system is to use right from the start. "The hardest part of the installation was getting the appliance out of the box. It could not have been easier," he said.

ExaGrid Delivers Shorter Backup Times, Strong Data Deduplication

The backup process with ExaGrid is also going very well. According to Blow, "Our backups are



completed very quickly now. I start the process, go get a cup of coffee, and it's done when I come back." In addition to shorter backup windows, Blow reports that data deduplication ratios at VSAC have been as high as 30:1, and a recent restore took just 15 minutes to complete.

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).

Exceptional Customer Support

Blow is very pleased with ExaGrid's customer support. "The ExaGrid customer support engineer I work with is very thorough and knows my environment inside-out. I consider him to be a member of my team. The few times we've had issues, he's gotten right on it and spent whatever time it took to fix the problem," 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.

Scale-out Architecture Provides Effortless Scalability

VSAC is installing another ExaGrid at a second site for replication purposes. The replicated data will then be copied to tape and stored as an additional backup source for disaster recovery purposes. ExaGrid's scale-out architecture streamlines this process for timely and efficient storage of critical data.

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.



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.

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