EXAGRID®

Westmoreland County Reduces Backup and Restore Times, Reduces Reliance on Tape with ExaGrid

USA

Key Benefits:

- Restore requests are completed in minutes
- Full backups reduced from 40 hours to 26
- Nightly incremental backups reduced from 8 hours to 4
- Made staff more productive with less administration time
- Seamless integration with Veritas Backup Exec
- Proactive and knowledgeable support

"The ExaGrid saves us a tremendous amount of time each day because we no longer have to manage or administer tapes or troubleshoot our backups. Our staff time is valuable and the ExaGrid system has made us more productive."

Jason Lehman
Systems Administrator

Customer Overview

Westmoreland County is located in northeastern United States within a 500-mile radius of 70% of the country's total population. Founded in 1773, it is the second largest county in southwestern Pennsylvania. The county encompasses over 1,000 square miles of varied topography with a highly stable and growing population of 365,000.

Long and Unreliable Backups to Tape Strain IT Department

Westmoreland County's IT staff had been backing up the County's data to tape but had become frustrated with long backup times, unreliable backups, and daily tape management.

"It had become difficult to get good backups every day with tape," said Jason Lehman, systems administrator for Westmoreland County. "Our backup times were long, and we spent lots of time troubleshooting our tape drives and backup jobs. Also, restoring data from tape was a headache. We're a very busy department and dealing with tape was extremely time-consuming."

ExaGrid's Post Process Data Deduplication Speeds Backups and Restores, Maximizes Disk Space

Westmoreland County's IT staff began to look for a solution that could reduce its day-to-day reliance on tape. After looking at several products on the market, the County purchased a disk-based backup system from ExaGrid.

"We looked at several different approaches to disk-based backup and we really were impressed with the ExaGrid system. We liked ExaGrid's post-process data deduplication and felt that it would provide faster backups than some of the other products with in-line data deduplication," said Lehman.

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk-cache Landing Zone, avoiding inline processing and ensuring the highest possible backup performance, which results in the shortest backup window. Adaptive Deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups for a strong recovery point (RPO). As data is being deduplicated to the repository, it can also be replicated to a second ExaGrid site or the public cloud for disaster recovery (DR).

"We've been extremely happy with ExaGrid's data deduplication ratios and our backups are now completed well within our backup windows," said Lehman. "Restoring data is now a painless process. With tape, we had to search through our fireproof safe for the right tape, load it into the library, inventory it and search the tape for the data. All in all, the process often took hours. With the ExaGrid system, our restores requests are completed in minutes. It really saves us a considerable amount of time."

Since installing the ExaGrid system, Westmoreland County has been able to reduce the length of its backups each weekend from 40 hours to 26 hours. Nightly incremental backups have been reduced from eight hours to four hours.

"The beauty of the ExaGrid is that we can write multiple jobs at the same time to the system. With tape, we could only write one job at a time. It has enabled us to cut our backup window by nearly 50 percent," said Lehman. "The ExaGrid saves us a tremendous amount of time each day because we no longer have to manage or administer tapes or troubleshoot our backups. Our staff time is valuable and the ExaGrid system has made us more productive."

Cost Effective to Acquire, Works with Existing Backup Applications and Tape Library

The ExaGrid system was installed in the County's datacenter and works along with its existing backup application, Veritas Backup Exec. The ExaGrid system is copied to tape in case the data is needed for disaster recovery purposes and the tapes are kept in a secure location.

"The ExaGrid system was cost-effective to acquire, and we were able to keep our investment in both Backup Exec and our tape library," said Lehman.

"In the future, we may add a second ExaGrid system for data replication to eliminate tape altogether. It was a big advantage for us to be able to use the first system as a proof of concept before going to a two-site system."

Easy to Install and Manage, Industry Leading Customer Support

"Setting up the ExaGrid was simple and took no time at all, and we've found it extremely easy to use. If you can set up a simple network share, you can use the ExaGrid," said Lehman.

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.

"The level of support we have received has been phenomenal. We were extremely impressed that we were assigned to a specific support engineer who is familiar with our installation. Our support engineer has been proactive, knowledgeable, and easy to reach. It's simply been one of the best support experiences I've ever had," said Lehman. "We've been very pleased with the ExaGrid. It is extremely easy to use, it's enabled us to cut our backup times by 50 percent, and its fast restore times let us be more responsive to our users."

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.

Intelligent Data Protection

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).

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**.