

YCCD Selects ExaGrid Over 'Name Brand' for Faster Backups in Virtualized Environment

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Patrick Meleski
Database Administrator
Yuba Community
College District

Key Benefits:

- All data can now be backed up with greater speed
- System scalability accommodates Yuba's fast growing data
- Veeam's source-side data dedupe minimizes network traffic; ExaGrid's dedupe further maximizes storage
- Faster restores and reliable disaster recovery

Customer Overview

The Yuba Community College District (YCCD) was founded in 1927 and spans eight counties and nearly 4,200 square miles of territory in rural, north-central California. YCCD has colleges in Marysville and Woodland, an educational center in Clearlake, and outreach operations at Beale Air Force Base and in the City of Williams.

ExaGrid System Meets the Increased Backup Needs of Virtualized Environment

The Yuba Community College District recently began looking for a new backup solution after realizing that its old tape library couldn't keep up with its new virtualized environment.

"We were at the point where we couldn't even back up all of our data because our backups were so slow," said Patrick Meleski, database administrator for Yuba Community College District. "We needed a solution that would enable us to back up data more quickly and more flexibly. We also wanted to improve disaster recovery."

ExaGrid was the clear winner in the competitive bid process required for projects of this size and scope. YCCD purchased a two-site ExaGrid system due to its approach to data deduplication and its easy scalability.

"We looked at an EMC Data Domain solution but didn't like its inline data deduplication methodology. The ExaGrid system seemed so straightforward to use and its approach to data deduplication made more sense," Meleski said. "Also, the ExaGrid system seemed easier to scale than competitive solutions in terms of capacity, and considering that our data is growing quickly, expandability is critical."

ExaGrid-Veeam Combination Delivers Faster, More Consistent Backups

Meleski said that since nearly 100 percent of its environment is virtualized, YCCD decided to install Veeam to take advantage of its tight integration with the ExaGrid system. Veeam's built-in source side data deduplication minimizes the amount of data sent over the network to the ExaGrid system. Once the data lands on the ExaGrid, the data is further reduced to minimize space.

"The ExaGrid system and Veeam work very well together. The data sent to the ExaGrid is already reduced through Veeam, and we're still seeing nearly 10:1 data deduplication on the ExaGrid side," he said. "And because only changed data is sent over the network when the two systems are replicating, transmission time is minimized."

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 adaptive data deduplication is performed in parallel with backups 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.

"Prior to installing the ExaGrid system, we weren't able to back up all our systems during off hours. Now, our backups are so fast and efficient that we're able to complete some of our incrementals in less than 15 minutes at different times during the day and then replicate the data offsite at night," Meleski said.

Straightforward Management, Cooperative 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 assigned to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"The ExaGrid system is straightforward to manage, and I've had very good experience with support. We don't have backup experts on staff here, so it's great to know that we can count on ExaGrid support when we need it," Meleski said. "The ExaGrid and Veeam folks work well together, which is important when you have two products that have to work so seamlessly. We've had situations here and there when we've needed help from both sides and there's no finger pointing. Both support groups just wanted to resolve the matter quickly, and they did."

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.

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

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.

"We bought the ExaGrid system with enough room to handle future growth, but we're confident that we can easily expand the system if we need to," said Meleski. "The ExaGrid is a solid system, and we've been very happy with it. It's done a wonderful job at backing up our virtualized environment, and we'd absolutely recommend it."

ExaGrid and Veeam

The combination of ExaGrid's and Veeam's industry-leading virtual server data protection solutions allows customers to utilize Veeam Backup & Replication in VMware, vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V virtual environments on ExaGrid's disk-based backup system. This combination provides fast backups and efficient data storage as well as replication to an offsite location for disaster recovery.

The ExaGrid system fully leverages Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in backup to disk capabilities and ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication for additional data reduction (and cost reduction) over standard disk solutions. Customers can use Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in source-side deduplication in concert with ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with zone-level deduplication to further shrink backups.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality disk 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 zone-level data deduplication technology stores only the changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies, reducing the amount of disk needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, resulting in a solution that is 25 to 30% the cost of backing up to straight disk. The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with popular backup applications, so organizations can retain their investment in existing applications and processes. ExaGrid servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.