

YCCD Selects ExaGrid Over Data Domain for Faster Backups in Virtualized Environment



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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

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Patrick Meleski

Database Administrator

Customer Overview

YCCD spans eight counties and nearly 4,192 square miles of territory in rural, north-central California. Yuba College and Woodland Community College, offer degrees, certificates, and transfer curricula at college campuses in Marysville and Woodland, educational centers in Clearlake and Yuba City, and outreach operations in Williams. The two colleges in Yolo County and Yuba County and the campuses in Clearlake, Colusa, and Sutter Counties, serve 13,000 students across the northern Sacramento Valley.

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 guickly 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 a Dell 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 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).

"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.

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a file or VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance in the event that the file is lost, corrupted or encrypted or the primary

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storage VM becomes unavailable. This instant recovery is possible because of ExaGrid's Landing Zone – a high-speed disk cache on the ExaGrid appliance that retains the most recent backups in their complete form. Once the primary storage environment has been brought back to a working state, the VM backed up on the ExaGrid appliance can then be migrated to primary storage for continued operation.

Straightforward Management, Cooperative Support

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 ExaGrid system is straightforward to manage, and I've had a 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'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.

"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

Veeam's backup solutions and ExaGrid's Tiered Backup Storage combine for the industry's fastest backups, fastest restores, a scale-out storage system as data grows, and a strong ransomware recovery story – all at the lowest cost.

ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe

Veeam uses changed block tracking to perform a level of data deduplication. ExaGrid allows Veeam deduplication and Veeam dedupe-friendly compression to stay on. ExaGrid will increase Veeam's deduplication by a factor of about 7:1 to a total combined deduplication ratio of 14:1, reducing the storage required and saving on storage costs up front and over time.

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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