

Law Firm Selects Cost-Effective ExaGrid System for Faster Backups, Better Disaster Recovery

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Scott Timmerman
Senior IT Manager
von Briesen & Roper, S.C.

Customer Overview

Founded in 1904, von Briesen & Roper, S.C. employs over 100 attorneys and is the seventh largest law firm in Wisconsin. The firm’s attorneys are leaders in the areas of corporate, commercial, health, banking, litigation, risk management, labor, real estate, construction, employee benefits, intellectual property and wealth management law.

Quest for Better Disaster Recovery Led to ExaGrid

The IT staff at von Briesen & Roper began to look for a new backup solution in an effort to improve disaster recovery. The firm had been backing up to a tape library and then rotating the tapes offsite for safekeeping but wanted to better protect its critical data by electronically replicating it each night to a disaster recovery location.

“Our firm handles lots of sensitive and business-critical data for clients,” said Scott Timmerman, senior IT manager at von Briesen & Roper. “Sending tapes offsite really isn’t disaster recovery. We needed a solution in place capable of providing near instantaneous replication of data to a second site so that we could quickly and easily recover from a disaster.”

After looking at a Symantec NetBackup appliance and a few other solutions, the firm decided to purchase a two-site ExaGrid disk-based backup solution with data deduplication. Data is backed up to the ExaGrid system located in the firm’s main Milwaukee datacenter and then replicated to a remote office 70 miles away. The ExaGrid system works with Symantec Backup Exec and Veeam to back up and protect the firm’s mission-critical data, including its document management system, email and billing data.

“The ExaGrid system delivered the speed and replication capabilities we were looking for at a terrific price point,” said Timmerman. “We also liked the fact that it works with all the popular backup applications. The

ExaGrid is versatile so that we not only can use it along with Backup Exec and Veeam, but looking forward, we can use it with practically any other application we choose.”

Data Deduplication Reduces Amount of Data Stored, Speeds Transmission Between Sites

Timmerman said that the ExaGrid’s data deduplication technology is effective at reducing the firm’s data and also helps to speed transmission between sites.

“The ExaGrid system does a fantastic job at reducing our data, which maximizes disk space on the system,” he said. “It also helps to make the transmission between our primary datacenter and our disaster recovery site efficient because only changed data is moved between sites. For us, transmission is nearly instantaneous.”

ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with 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 changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.



Prior to installing the ExaGrid system, the firm had a limited backup window and a long weekend job schedule to capture the point-in-time backups to tape. However, von Briesen & Roper revamped its backup infrastructure when it implemented the ExaGrid system and added Veeam for virtual backups. Now, the firm is able to back up its entire virtual server environment, NAS and SAN systems to the ExaGrid system. Because multiple backup jobs can be run simultaneously, backup times have been reduced to less than 12 hours.

Easy Setup and Maintenance, Superior Customer Support

Timmerman said that he spends less time managing backup jobs now with ExaGrid.

“The ExaGrid system was easy to work with from the start. The installation was quick and easy, and maintaining the system doesn’t take any time at all. I look at the ExaGrid system every day to monitor the status of our backup jobs, but there’s not a whole lot to manage because they run consistently well,” he said.

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.

“ExaGrid’s customer support has been excellent. We don’t have any other product in our datacenter that comes with a support model like ExaGrid’s, where we get a dedicated support engineer who is knowledgeable and proactive,” said Timmerman. “There’s a deep level of expertise in ExaGrid’s customer support center. If our support engineer doesn’t know the answer to something, he directs it to a senior level engineer, and we can get any issue or question resolved quickly.”

GRID Architecture Ensures Scalability

ExaGrid’s GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single GRID system with capacities of up to a 130TB full backup plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

Customers worldwide depend on ExaGrid Systems to solve their backup problems—effectively and permanently. ExaGrid’s disk-based, scale-out GRID architecture adjusts to increasing backup demands due to constantly growing data volumes. It is the only solution that combines compute with capacity as well as a unique landing zone to permanently shorten backup windows and eliminate expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at www.exagrid.com.

“ExaGrid’s GRID architecture ensures that we won’t get locked into a system that can’t scale to handle more data,” said Timmerman. “It’s comforting to know that we can just pop in another unit when we outgrow this one. We’ve been pleased with the system, and I’m very confident in the speed and accuracy with which we can recover from a disaster.”

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.

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

Symantec Backup Exec provides 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. High-performance agents and options provide fast, flexible, granular protection and scalable management of local and remote server backups.

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.