7-Eleven Stores Ring Up Better Backups with ExaGrid

Customer Overview

7-Eleven Stores is a privately-held operator of more than 100 convenience stores in the Oklahoma City, OK area. 7-Eleven Stores is not affiliated in any way with Dallas-based 7-Eleven, Inc., and has been in business for over 50 years. In addition to retail stores that sell food and unbranded fuel, 7-Eleven owns and operates a bakery/commissary and a small distribution center.

> "One of the things we wanted out of a disk-based backup system was a 'set it and forget it' type of product. The ExaGrid has more than lived up to our expectations. Each day, we quickly check the ExaGrid to ensure that everything ran smoothly and then double-check the amount of available disk space, and that's it. We're confident in the system and it's taken the hassle out of our backups."
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> **Gayle Crouche**
> **IT Director**

Key Benefits:

- Two-site ExaGrid system maintains PCI compliance for data security
- Deduplication ratios 'better than advertised' at 30:1
- Reliable ExaGrid system has 'taken the hassle out of backups'

Quest to Protect More Data, Simplify Processes Ends with ExaGrid

7-Eleven Stores began looking for a disk-based backup system in an effort to streamline its nightly data protection procedures and to increase the amount of data the company could back up each night. The retailer had been using a combination of tape and disk to back up its most critical information, but its IT department decided the time was right to upgrade its processes and equipment when a new inventory system was installed and the amount of data the company needed to protect increased significantly.

"We needed to consolidate our backups using a single method and we knew that disk-based was the only way to go. We didn't want to deal with tapes and we needed a simple solution that would minimize our backup times and automate our backup processes," said Gayle Crouch, IT director at 7-Eleven Stores. "We chose ExaGrid because it was easy to manage and administer, and it was more cost-effective than some of the other solutions we looked at. We also liked its approach to data deduplication and felt it would deliver the best performance."

7-Eleven Stores purchased a two-site ExaGrid system. One ExaGrid is located in the company's primary datacenter in Oklahoma City and a second system will be installed in another corporate datacenter 12 miles away. Data will be replicated between the two systems in case it is needed for disaster

recovery purposes. The ExaGrid systems work with the company's backup application, Symantec NetBackup.

Data Deduplication Ratio 30:1

"We looked at different approaches to data deduplication and we felt that ExaGrid's approach was a more efficient methodology than other technologies on the market," said Crouch.

"The ExaGrid system works even better than advertised and we're extremely pleased with our data deduplication ratios," said Crouch. "We're barely scratching the surface of our system and have plenty of disk space left to accommodate future data growth."

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

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performance because data is written directly to disk, and data deduplication is performed after the data is stored. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's byte-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

ExaGrid Makes Adhering to Industry Standards Easier

7-Eleven Stores must adhere to Payment Card Industry (PCI) standards, which dictate how sensitive credit and debit card data is handled and stored. Crouch said that installing a two-site ExaGrid system will enable the company to more easily comply with the stringent PCI requirements than it could with tape because data backups can be better tracked and are more secure. The company is audited periodically to demonstrate that it is properly storing transaction data.

"Backing up and storing sensitive data on the ExaGrid system is far more secure than on tape," said Crouch. "It's easy to see what we're backing up and we now have a higher level of data integrity. And our two-site system ensures that the information is secure in our datacenter. We have plenty of space and it's easy to keep a history and to go back as far as we need to. We're just barely touching the capacity of the ExaGrid system we bought."

Easy to Setup, Easy to Maintain

The ExaGrid system was designed to be a turnkey solution that is easy to install, maintain and administer. ExaGrid's industry-leading technical support center is staffed by in-house engineers who are knowledgeable about ExaGrid products and industry best practices. Each ExaGrid customer is assigned a support engineer who proactively checks on the health of the system and responds quickly to customer inquiries. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"Installing the ExaGrid system was simple. We got the box, opened it, and installed it ourselves. ExaGrid's customer support has been very proactive. They've contacted us several times just to make sure things were going well, but to be honest,

we haven't had any issues," said Crouch. "One of the things we wanted out of a disk-based backup system was a 'set it and forget it' type of product. ExaGrid has more than lived up to our expectations. Each day we check the system to make sure that it reported a good backup and then double-check the amount of available disk space and that's it. We're confident in the system and it's taken the hassle out of our backups."

ExaGrid and Symantec NetBackup

Symantec's NetBackup™ delivers high performance data protection that scales to protect the largest UNIX, Windows, Linux and NetWare environments.

With complete protection from remote office to center to vault, NetBackup offers a single console for all backup and recovery operations. Organizations using NetBackup can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as NetBackup, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running NetBackup, 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.

Intelligent Data Protection

ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines high quality SATA drives with byte-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's byte-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 standard SATA drives. 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.

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides hyper-converged secondary storage (HCSS) for backup with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone enables the fastest backups, restores, and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable system and ensures a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive and disruptive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.