



Pfizer Launches Backup Storage Architecture with ExaGrid and Veeam, Proving Optimal Results



USA

Key Benefits:

- Seamless integration with Veeam
- ExaGrid fit strict security backup storage requirements
- Professional and knowledgeable support
- Dedupe ratio 16:1
- Easily scalable for future

“It made my job easier because I don’t have to worry about it. Just set it and forget it. That’s how I feel about the ExaGrid appliance – it’s bulletproof. I don’t have to think about it. It takes the backups, it does the dedupe, it just does its job. From my perspective, it just made my job easier. If everything I purchased worked like it, I would have a very low stress level!”

Jason Ridenour
Senior Computing/Networking Systems Engineer

Customer Overview

Pfizer applies science and global resources to bringing therapies to people that extend and significantly improve their lives. They strive to set the standard for quality, safety and value in the discovery, development, and manufacture of health care products, including innovative medicines and vaccines. Every day, Pfizer colleagues work across developed and emerging markets to advance wellness, prevention, treatments, and cures that challenge the most feared diseases of our time.

Pfizer’s Andover campus was deploying an ICS (Industrial Control System) cyber security project where they needed to build an entirely new network infrastructure for hardening purposes. “I was the manager and technical lead that decided to go with ExaGrid. We had nothing, so it was all new hardware, all new software, all new fiber runs, all new Cisco switches. Everything was new,” said Jason Ridenour, Senior Computing Networking Systems Engineer.

Project Launch Required Performance, Reliability, and Scale

“I took a Veeam class, a couple of their competitors’ classes, and I settled on Veeam. Then it was clear at that point to go with ExaGrid. Racking the hardware in with my ExaGrid support engineer was the easiest thing in the whole project. So far, ExaGrid is the best part of the project.”

“When I decided to go with Veeam, it was a no-brainer to go with ExaGrid because the Veeam Data Mover is incorporated with it. ExaGrid does a lot of the heavy lifting for Veeam and takes some of the responsibility off the Veeam backup and replication server. It just works.”

Disaster Recovery and Cyber Security for Backup Storage

Disaster recovery for this project is currently being developed. “There are many steps to setting up a new network infrastructure and to check all the boxes. I tell everyone – just make your lives easy and pick ExaGrid. My ultimate goal is to have a central DR site where we just have racks and racks of ExaGrids.”

“I really wanted ExaGrid’s Retention Time-Lock for Ransomware Recovery feature for our current backups. I’ve got an ExaGrid 5200, total capacity is 103.74TB. Currently, I have 90 days of backups for approximately 120 virtual machines, and I still



have 94% of the ExaGrid available. The dedupe is just amazing.”

ExaGrid appliances have a network-facing disk-cache Landing Zone Tier where the most recent backups are stored in an unduplicated format for fast backup and restore performance. Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing tier called the Repository Tier, where deduplicated data is stored for longer-term retention. The combination of a non-network-facing tier (virtual air gap) plus delayed deletes and immutable data objects guards against the backup data being deleted or encrypted. ExaGrid’s offline tier is ready for recovery in the event of an attack.

ExaGrid chosen for Veeam Integration

“At this time, my network is all virtual. We have a VMware infrastructure, multiple ESXi hosts, and Veeam. ExaGrid just works and all backups are going to the ExaGrid appliance.”

When their project is complete, Pfizer will have 8 SQL server availability groups, each availability group has 3 SQL Servers clustered. Each of those SQL server clusters will have 3 to 4 databases on each – all going to the ExaGrid appliances. This is

business critical manufacturing data proving the products they manufacture in Andover are viable. This data has genuine financial and business impact.

"Everything must be verified that it is functioning correctly. As a test, we restored a generic VM, a domain controller, and an SQL server database. It was all successful."

ExaGrid has integrated the Veeam Data Mover so that backups are written Veeam-to-Veeam versus Veeam-to-CIFS, which provides a 30% increase in backup performance. Since the Veeam data mover is not an open standard, it is far more secure than using CIFS and other open market protocols. In addition, because ExaGrid has integrated the Veeam Data Mover, Veeam synthetic fulls can be created six times faster than any other solution. ExaGrid stores the most recent Veeam backups in unduplicated form in its Landing Zone has the Veeam Data Mover running on each ExaGrid appliance and has a processor in each appliance in a scale-out architecture. This combination of Landing Zone, Veeam Data Mover, and scale-out compute provides the fastest Veeam synthetic fulls versus any other solution on the market.



Deduplication by the Books

"We take dailies of all the VMs at different points throughout the day, and we do weekly synthetic backups, which was another reason we went with ExaGrid. We also do a monthly active full. The level of dedupe was as advertised. Our dedupe ratio is 16:1."

"Everybody is impressed with the whole backup architecture we made here, and at the core is the ExaGrid. It's the only thing I haven't had to put a support ticket in for."

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance in the event that the primary 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.

Scalability

A big consideration for Pfizer was how ExaGrid could grow with them as they build more VMs and their retention grows. "We could just keep adding ExaGrids to the site and they would just be incorporated into the environment. It's that easy."

ExaGrid's appliances contain not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply added to the existing system. The system scale linearly, maintaining a fixed-length backup window as data grows and with customers only paying for what they need when they need it.

Data is deduplicated into a non-network-facing Repository Tier with automatic load balancing and global deduplication across all repositories.

Deployment & Support Model Reduces Stress

"ExaGrid support is brilliant. My support engineer knows what he's doing. There's never been a question he hasn't been able to answer. The ease of deployment and the ease of configuration were unmatched. When I say 'deployment,' it's not only racking it in and logging in, but they helped set up Veeam to work with my ExaGrid system."

"It made my job easier because I don't have to worry about it. Just set it and forget it. That's how I feel about the ExaGrid appliance – it's bulletproof. I don't have to think about it. It takes the backups, it does the dedupe, it just does its job. In my role, it just made my job easier. If everything I purchased worked like it, I would have a very low stress level!"

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. Customer's never have to repeat themselves to various support staff, and issues get resolved quickly.

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.