

Fuss & O'Neill Engineers Better Backups with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Stephen Cram
Computer Analyst III
Fuss & O'Neill

Customer Overview

Fuss & O'Neill is a full-service consulting firm specializing in planning, scientific studies and engineering. The company has been serving public and private sector organizations for over 85 years, providing multidisciplinary solutions to maximize value and best address the long-term needs of its clients. With a staff of nearly 300, Fuss & O'Neill has office locations in Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and New York.

Cumbersome, Unreliable Tape Made Backups Difficult and Time Consuming

The IT staff at Fuss & O'Neill had been backing up data at each of its five locations to individual tape devices, but keeping up with backups had become increasingly difficult because of outdated, unreliable technology and the daily grind of tape management. When it came time to replace the aging drives, the firm's IT staff originally looked at newer, faster tape technology but eventually decided to go with a disk-based solution in an effort to streamline backup processes.

"We back up a significant amount of data from our various locations, and it was becoming more and more difficult to get complete backups with our old tape devices," said Stephen Cram, computer analyst at Fuss & O'Neill. "We were tired of backup issues and were running out of room to keep tapes."

ExaGrid Delivers Ease of Use, Scalability and Strong Data Deduplication Technology

After looking at solutions from a variety of different vendors, Fuss & O'Neill chose ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with data deduplication to back up and protect the firm's data. The ExaGrid system works alongside Fuss & O'Neill's existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec.

"We chose the ExaGrid over other solutions because we liked its ease of use, scalability and its data deduplication technology," said Cram. "We also were impressed with the tight integration of ExaGrid and Backup Exec. We're pretty embedded with Symantec and run several Backup Exec products. The ExaGrid system and Backup Exec work together seamlessly."

Cram explained that since Fuss & O'Neill backs up a significant amount of information, including AutoCAD, Civil 3D, and GIS data, effective data deduplication technology was a critical feature they looked for when evaluating systems. The firm has experienced data deduplication rates of 12:1 and higher since installing the system.

"ExaGrid's data deduplication technology does a phenomenal job at reducing our data. We currently have all of our data in the system, and we still have 40 percent capacity left," said Cram. "Since the ExaGrid deduplicates the data after it has landed on the system, the backup times are the fastest possible."

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 byte-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Full Backups Reduced from Four Days to One

Since installing the ExaGrid system, Cram said that Fuss & O'Neill's full backup times have been reduced from four days to just one.

"The ExaGrid has done a tremendous job at reducing our backup times. Things are so much easier now. With tape, I had to pore over error reports every morning to determine which backups had issues. Now, I come in every morning and spend mere minutes just making sure everything ran okay overnight. The ExaGrid is very reliable, and I probably spend 90 percent less time managing and administering backups," said Cram. "Restores are also far faster. Before, I had to pick through our fireproof safe to find the tape, mount it, and run the backup. Now, I can restore even older data in minutes. It's made a huge difference."

GRID Computing Software Provides High Levels of Scalability

As Fuss & O'Neill's data grows, the ExaGrid system can be scaled to accommodate additional data. Cram said that the firm is also considering adding a second ExaGrid system for data replication to enhance its disaster recovery efforts.

"The ExaGrid is a very scalable solution, both in terms of capacity and in terms of adding a second system for disaster recovery. Its modular design means that we can add appliances at any time," said Cram.

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 100TB 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.

Easy Setup, Responsive Customer 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 dedicated to individual accounts. The system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"Quite honestly, we would have had to go to training sessions just to learn how to set up some of the other solutions. The ExaGrid was a piece of cake. We turned it on, created a couple of shares, and we were up and running. It's very easy to use. We've also had a good experience with ExaGrid's customer support and have always found them to be knowledgeable and responsive," said Cram. "The system has been extremely reliable, and our backups are completed correctly each and every night. It really has taken a lot of the stress out of my job."

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.

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 is the leader in cost-effective disk-based backup solutions. A highly scalable system that works with existing backup applications, the ExaGrid system is ideal for companies looking to quickly eliminate the hassles of tape backup while reducing their existing backup windows. ExaGrid's innovative approach minimizes the amount of data to be stored by providing standard data compression for the most recent backups along with byte-level data deduplication technology for all previous backups. Customers can deploy ExaGrid at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories or for disaster recovery.

For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at www.exagrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.