

Lawrence General Hospital Streamlines Backups with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Michael LeBlond
Manager of Computer
Operations
Lawrence General Hospital

Customer Overview

Lawrence General Hospital is a 189 bed facility with 1,400 employees and a medical staff of 450 serving cities and towns near Lawrence, Massachusetts and the New Hampshire border. The Joint Commission accredited hospital provides a full range of medical/surgical and diagnostic services and its Emergency Department/Level III Trauma Center is one of the five largest in the state, treating 67,000 patients each year. Lawrence General also offers advanced cardiac care, surgical day care and a birthing center that delivers over 1,800 babies annually. Its collaborative teaching program with a neighboring health center trains residents in family practice.

Cumbersome Tape Backups, Unreliable Restores

Lawrence General Hospital's IT department found that managing and administering tape on a daily basis was cumbersome and time consuming. In addition, the staff found that data wasn't always available when restores were performed from tape.

"It was just difficult to manage so many tapes on a daily basis and we often found that files simply weren't there when we went to restore them. It really was unacceptable," said Michael LeBlond, manager of computer operations for Lawrence General Hospital. "We're a small group and don't have a lot of room for error. We need to know that our backups are going to work each and every night and if we need to restore information, we need to be confident that the data will be there."

Cost-effective ExaGrid System Fits into Existing Environment

Lawrence General Hospital decided to look for a new backup system and chose ExaGrid. The ExaGrid system is located in the hospital's datacenter and backs up data from its 45 Windows-based servers containing a wide range of data, including SQL databases, file data, individual application servers, and a massive database containing information on emergency room visits. The ExaGrid works with the hospital's existing backup application, Symantec's Backup Exec™.

"From the outset, the ExaGrid system just seemed to make so much sense to us. It met our budget requirements, fit right into our existing environment, offered outstanding data de-duplication and was designed to be scalable.

The fact that it worked seamlessly with Backup Exec was important because it enabled us to keep our substantial investment in our licensing model and didn't require massive changes to our environment or a large capital outlay," said LeBlond.

"We looked at a few other solutions and found that the ExaGrid was a lot less money than some of the larger systems that were a little more involved. It was the ideal solution for us."

Efficient Data De-duplication Reduces Data, Makes Restores Faster

"ExaGrid's data de-duplication technology is very efficient at reducing our data. It enables us to maximize the storage space on our system and we're able to keep three months of data directly on the ExaGrid so we're always ready to restore information if we need to," said LeBlond.

ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data de-duplication, 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 de-duplication 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 de-duplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

Flexibility to Add Capacity, Offsite Data Replication

Looking forward, LeBlond envisions the hospital enhancing its disaster recovery operations by installing a second ExaGrid system offsite for data replication.

"The ExaGrid is a very flexible solution. We were able to start off with a single ExaGrid to back up our data at our main facility but it's nice to know that we can choose to extend it at any point in the future add offsite data replication," said LeBlond. "The system is also inherently scalable and we can easily add capacity to back up more data."

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 60TB 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.

Remote Access Saves Time, Makes IT Team More Responsive

LeBlond said because the hospital's IT department is relatively small customer support is critical to the success of any new system it deploys. ExaGrid provides industry-leading technical support staffed by trained in-house engineers. As a turnkey solution, the ExaGrid system is fully supported and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

"Our customer support engineer is extremely knowledgeable about both the ExaGrid system and Backup Exec. He has been instrumental in helping us resolve complex issues and really eased the transition to disk-based backup. He's also very responsive and is always available to us," said LeBlond. "The ExaGrid has automatic alerts that are sent to both our staff and our ExaGrid support engineer. If I'm in the middle of a busy day, I often get calls from him to let me know that there was an issue with one of our backups. To me, that kind of proactive support is invaluable and we don't get it from any other vendor."

ExaGrid and Symantec Backup Exec

As a 24/7 operation, it's critical that the hospital's systems run flawlessly. With ExaGrid, the IT department has full remote

access and can easily monitor backups and perform restores at any time of the day or night.

"We have a remote access portal that enables me to work on our systems from home or from anywhere else I happen to be. I'm on call a lot and can remote into the ExaGrid on nights or weekends to check on our backups or to restore a file if needed. We couldn't do that with tape.

It saves me a lot of time and aggravation and enables us to be more efficient as an IT organization," said LeBlond. "The ExaGrid has enabled us to save countless hours managing and administering backups and restores and we have greatly reduced our tape costs. However, the best part of moving our backups to the ExaGrid system is that we're now confident in our backups and know that they are performed accurately each and every night."

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.

Intelligent Data Protection

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

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