

# Home Health Company Easily Expands System with ExaGrid's Scale-Out Architecture

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



"I don't have to worry about my backups not working anymore, or arriving in the morning to find that a tape is stuck, or that it's overrun and still backing up because of something I didn't anticipate. I have peace of mind with ExaGrid."

**Jeff James**  
Director of IT

## Key Benefits:

- Sta-Home replaces tape and chooses ExaGrid as the 'best option' to work with Veeam
- System scalability accommodates Sta-Home's data growth
- ExaGrid support provides assistance with initial installation and system expansion
- System provides reliability and easy management, offering time savings and peace of mind

## Customer Overview

For over 40 years, Sta-Home Home Health & Hospice has served patients in Mississippi with skilled home healthcare services and hospice/end-of-life care to the residents of approximately 50 counties. The company ensures safe and smooth transitions home from hospital stays with ongoing care to help avoid emergency room visits and unplanned re-hospitalizations. Sta-Home provides professional skilled nursing and therapies, and hospice team members provide a multitude of services from pain management to emotional, spiritual, and end-of-life planning support.

## Switch from Tape to a Disk-Based Solution

Sta-Home had been backing up its virtual machines to tape, using Veritas Backup Exec as a backup application. Jeff James, director of IT, was spending too much time managing tape backups, from resolving issues of incomplete backups running into production hours to the daily routine of swapping out tapes.

James decided to switch Sta-Home's backup application to Veeam and started looking into disk-based backup targets as well. An IT consulting firm recommended ExaGrid and, after reviewing several solutions, James felt that ExaGrid was the best option. "We went with the recommendation of the consulting firm we work with. We've done a lot of business with them, and they had never steered us wrong. ExaGrid seemed like a good way to move away from tape, and it was the best fit for us, especially when it came to pricing."

James was unfamiliar with data deduplication at that time but learned more about it during a meeting with ExaGrid's team and was intrigued by the long-term savings that it would offer his company.

ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces disk space needed by storing only the unique bytes across backups instead of redundant data. Adaptive deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups while providing full system resources to the backups for the fastest backups and, therefore, the shortest



backup window. As data grows, only ExaGrid avoids expanding backup windows by adding full appliances in a system. ExaGrid's unique landing zone keeps a full copy of the most recent backup on disk, delivering the fastest restores, VM boots in seconds to minutes, "Instant DR," and fast tape copy. Over time, ExaGrid saves up to 50% in total system costs compared to competitive solutions by avoiding costly "forklift" upgrades.

## ExaGrid-Veeam Combined Dedupe Maximizes Backup Capacity

Sta-Home installed an ExaGrid appliance at its primary site and its DR site. James backs up data with daily incrementals and weekly synthetic fulls. Much of Sta-Home's data is made up of SQL databases.

"With tape, we were doing a full backup every night. There's no way that I could back up the amount of data that we have now if we still used tape; we'd have to go to incrementals, and there's just no comparison. I would say it would be impossible," said James.

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James is pleased with backups and with the deduplication achieved with ExaGrid and Veeam. "There are really two backups that we run. One is a database backup that SQL runs, and the other is a system backup run by Veeam. We're seeing 5.5:1 deduplication ratios; that's pretty great! Now 30TB of backup data only consumes 7TB."

Veeam uses the information from VMware and Hyper-V and provides deduplication on a "per-job" basis, finding the matching areas of all the virtual disks within a backup job and using metadata to reduce the overall footprint of the backup data. Veeam also has a "dedupe friendly" compression setting which further reduces the size of the Veeam backups in a way that allows the ExaGrid system to achieve further deduplication. This approach typically achieves a 2:1 deduplication ratio.

ExaGrid is architected from the ground up to protect virtualized environments and provide deduplication as backups are taken. ExaGrid will achieve a 3:1 up to 5:1 additional deduplication rate. The net result is a combined Veeam and ExaGrid deduplication rate of 6:1 upwards to 10:1, which greatly reduces the amount of disk storage required.

## Easy-to-Manage System Provides Peace of Mind

James has found significant time savings after switching to ExaGrid from tape. "I don't have a lot of time to spend on managing backups so I'm happy if I can just set them up and forget them, while occasionally taking a look to make sure they are working. To check on backups using ExaGrid, I just open the GUI and make sure that I don't see any red warnings at either my primary or DR site. I can quickly check that the data is replicating and make sure I still have plenty of space. That's all I need to do."

The reliability of the ExaGrid system has relieved some of the day-to-day stress James once experienced with tape. "I don't have to worry about my backups not working anymore, or arriving in the morning to find that a tape is stuck, or that it's overrun and still backing up because of something I didn't anticipate. I have peace of mind with ExaGrid," said James.

## 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](http://www.exagrid.com).

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## Scaling Out is Simple with ExaGrid Support

James is impressed with ExaGrid support. "I'd say that the top feature of using ExaGrid is the customer support. I work with the same engineer and I've never had a problem getting a hold of him. He knows my system and can take a look in the background to see how things are going.

"When we started running out of space, we decided to scale-out our ExaGrid system. It was a painless process thanks to my support engineer's guidance. The system is so easy to work with; I racked it and set it up with the help of my engineer. I didn't need to do much else," said James.

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 assigned to individual accounts. The system is fully supported, and was designed and manufactured for maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components.

The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate data growth. ExaGrid's computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, appliances of any size or age can be mixed and matched in a single system. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

## 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.



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