

Credit Union Uses ExaGrid with Veeam for Enhanced Deduplication

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Jeremy Stockberger
Information Security Analyst

Key Benefits:

- ACU leverages Veeam's deduplication and gets further deduplication using ExaGrid
- 'Awesome' ExaGrid customer support provides assistance with both ExaGrid and Veeam
- Backups consistently complete within defined eight-hour backup window
- IT staff easily manage both primary site and DR site with automated emails from system

Customer Overview

Associated Credit Union (ACU) is one of Georgia's oldest financial institutions. Chartered in 1930, the non-profit cooperative is owned by its members. ACU is a full-service financial institution offering a wide variety of products and services to its members in Georgia, across the United States, and overseas.

ExaGrid Provides Additional Deduplication to Veeam

At the time that ACU installed ExaGrid a number of years ago, the company was using Veritas Backup Exec, but Jeremy Stockberger, ACU's information security analyst, was not impressed with the deduplication ratios achieved while using that backup application. However, Stockberger is pleased with the results after a recent switch to Veeam, and his environment is now 99% virtualized. "We needed a product that was going to satisfy our virtual machine backups, and the Veeam-ExaGrid combo works very well.

"When we were using Veritas Backup Exec, we weren't getting deduplication from the product, but we were getting pretty good deduplication from the ExaGrid system. Now, we are able to get deduplication from Veeam, and we get additional deduplication from ExaGrid."

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. "The deduplication with ExaGrid is great, especially when used with Veeam, because we are basically getting double dedupe," said Stockberger.

Efficient and Easy to Manage

ACU backs up its data in daily incrementals as well as weekly and monthly fulls. Its backup data is retained for one year. Andrew Schmidt, ACU's senior systems engineer, is impressed with the short backup window of the weekly fulls, noting that they take eight hours, keeping an efficient schedule.

ACU copies critical backups to a second ExaGrid system at a DR site. Schmidt likes how easy it is to manage both ExaGrid systems. "We get emails each night with the status updates of our systems. I also log into the GUI and I can see both locations with it. It's easy."

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk landing zone, avoiding inline processing and ensuring the highest possible backup

performance, which results in the shortest backup window. “Adaptive” deduplication performs deduplication and replication in parallel with backups while providing full system resources to the backups for the shortest backup window. Available system cycles are utilized to perform deduplication and offsite replication for an optimal recovery point at the disaster recovery site. Once complete, the onsite data is protected and immediately available in its full unduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

‘Awesome’ Customer Support

Schmidt and Stockberger have both been impressed with ExaGrid’s customer support. “Whenever I call ExaGrid support, whether I need to replace a drive or need help with a project I am working on, the support engineer is very helpful,” said Schmidt. Stockberger added, “Our support engineer is awesome. He has been helpful with the smaller issues as well as with larger projects, like implementing Veeam.”

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.

Unique Architecture Provides Investment Protection

ExaGrid’s award-winning scale-out architecture provides customers with a consistent backup window regardless of data growth. Its unique landing zone retains the most recent backup in its full unduplicated form, enabling the fastest restores, offsite tape copies, and instant recoveries.

ExaGrid’s multiple appliance models can be combined into a single system configuration of up to 2.4PB raw capacity, allowing full backups of up to 1PB with a combined ingest rate of 200TB/hr. The appliances virtualize into one another when plugged into a switch so that multiple appliance models can be mixed and matched into a single configuration. Each appliance includes the appropriate amount of processor, memory, disk, and bandwidth for the data size, so as each appliance is virtualized into the system, performance is maintained and backup times do not increase as data is added. Once virtualized, they appear as a single pool of long-term capacity. Capacity load balancing of all data across servers is automatic, and multiple systems can be combined for additional capacity. Even though data is load balanced, deduplication occurs across the systems so that data migration does not cause a loss of effectiveness in deduplication.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid’s architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.

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.

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.

United States: 2000 West Park Drive | Westborough, MA 01581 | (800) 868-6985

United Kingdom: 200 Brook Drive | Green Park, Reading, Berkshire RG2 6UB | +44 (0) 1189 497 051

Singapore: 1 Raffles Place, #20-61 | One Raffles Place Tower 2 | 048616 | +65 6808 5574



www.exagrid.com