

Balfour Beatty Infrastructure, Inc. Strengthens Backup Infrastructure with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Balfour Beatty
Infrastructure Inc.

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Cliff Williams
Manager of Infrastructure and Security
Balfour Beatty Infrastructure, Inc.

Customer Overview

Balfour Beatty Infrastructure, Inc. is part of a leading global infrastructure business, with operations in more than 80 countries and employing more than 50,000 people internationally. Key infrastructure markets include transportation, social infrastructure, utilities, and commercial. The company delivers services essential to the development, creation and care of infrastructure assets including project design, financing and management, engineering and construction, and facilities management services.

Faster Backups and Improved Disaster Recovery Sought

Balfour Beatty Infrastructure began looking at new backup solutions in an effort to streamline processes and shorten backup times.

“We needed to improve the speed of our backups and started looking at next-generation tape solutions but decided that wouldn’t be a good option,” said Cliff Williams, Manager of Infrastructure and Security at Balfour Beatty Infrastructure.

Balfour Beatty Infrastructure decided to purchase a two-site, disk-based backup system with data deduplication from ExaGrid to back up and protect the company’s data. The system works along with the company’s existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec, to back up and protect a wide range of data, including Exchange and SharePoint data, SQL servers, and its VMware environment.

Backup and Restore Times Dramatically Reduced, Backup Management Streamlined

Mr. Williams said that the company’s backups have run far more efficiently since it installed the ExaGrid system. For example, backups of the company’s Exchange system are now completed in just an hour and a half instead of the eight hours required when backing up to tape.

“Our backup jobs run so much faster now. It has really taken a load off our IT staff,” said Mr. Williams. “The ExaGrid system has made a big impact in the amount of time we spend on daily management and on restores. I used to spend a couple of hours a day on backup-related tasks, and now I spend about ten minutes.”

The company installed one ExaGrid system in its main datacenter in Atlanta, Georgia and a second in its Jacksonville, Florida, office. Data is backed up locally at both locations and is then cross-replicated between sites each night.

Data Deduplication Maximizes Disk Space

Mr. Williams noted that ExaGrid’s data deduplication technology is extremely effective at compressing data, so disk space is maximized.

“The ExaGrid was perfectly suited for an environment like ours. Its data deduplication technology works well and enables us to quickly back up and retain lots of data on the unit,” he said. “It also makes the system more economical because it maximizes our storage.”

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™

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

Knowledgeable, 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.

"Our ExaGrid support engineer worked closely with our reseller to install the system, and it was fully operational in just a few hours. It really was painless," said Mr. Williams. "We've had a great experience with ExaGrid's customer support staff. Our support engineer is always available to answer questions and he really knows his way around the system. If we have an issue, we simply give him a call and set up a WebEx session, and he helps us work through it."

Scalability to Grow

As Balfour Beatty Infrastructure's data grows, the ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate 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 130TB 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.

"The ExaGrid system was definitely the right choice for our environment, and it can scale up if and when the need arises," said Mr. Williams. "With the ExaGrid in place, I'm confident that our backups will be completed correctly each and every night. It also saves me lots of time on management and administration and restores. We've been very pleased with the system."

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 zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is more cost effective than standard SATA drives. ExaGrid's zone-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 servers can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.

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 zone-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.