Barneys New York Reduces Backup Window by 65% with ExaGrid

BARNEYS NEWYORK

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>
> **Michael Costa**
> **Systems Administrator**

Key Benefits:

- Switch from tape reduces costs and staff time spent on backup
- Barneys shaved 5 hours off nightly backup window with ExaGrid running 20-30 jobs at once
- 25:1 deduplication ratio maximizes disk space
- Barneys now restores data 'at the touch of a button'

Customer Overview

Barneys New York is a luxury specialty retailer with flagship stores in New York City, Beverly Hills, and across the country. Founded as a men's retailer in 1923 in downtown Manhattan, it turned into an international arbiter of high style for both women and men in the 1970s and became renowned for discovering and developing new and innovative design talent. Barneys is famous for selling the most intriguing items from the world's top designers including women's and men's ready-to-wear, accessories, shoes, jewelry, cosmetics, fragrances, and gifts for the home.

Long, Problematic Backups Led to Performance Issues, Search for a New Solution

The IT staff at Barneys had been backing up the company's data to tape libraries located in its New York office and in its Lyndhurst, NJ datacenter, but persistent device failures and long backup times routinely caused missed backups and performance issues.

"We were constantly battling with our tape libraries just to get them to work consistently and our backup times were too long," said Michael Costa, systems administrator at Barneys New York. "Oftentimes, our nightly backups would creep into the workday and cause our network to slow down. We finally decided that enough was enough and began searching for a new approach that could make our backups faster and more reliable, and reduce the amount of tape and tape-related expenses we incur.

"After looking at various solutions, we narrowed down the field to disk-based products from ExaGrid and Hitachi. We eventually chose the ExaGrid system based on cost and its tight integration with our existing backup application," said Costa.

Cost-Effective ExaGrid System Provides Primary Backup and Disaster Recovery

Barneys purchased a two-site ExaGrid system to work along with its existing backup application, Symantec Backup Exec, and installed one each in the company's New York and New Jersey datacenters. Data is automatically replicated between the two systems each night in case it is needed for disaster recovery.

"For us, strong integration with Backup Exec was critical because we didn't want to change our whole backup infrastructure," said Costa. "The ExaGrid system fit right into our existing environment and it's worked beautifully with Backup Exec since the beginning, so we were able to get up and running quickly without a steep learning curve."

Faster Backups and Restores, Data Deduplication Reduces Data 25:1

Since installing the ExaGrid system, Barneys has been able to reduce its backup window for weekday and weekend full backups by 65%.

"For us, one of the main strengths of the ExaGrid system is its ability to run 20 to 30 concurrent backup jobs at once. That functionality alone makes our backups run so much faster. We've been able to shave at least five to six hours a day off our nightly backups," Costa said.

EXAGRID®

Costa said that ExaGrid's data deduplication technology helps to reduce the amount of data stored so that disk space is maximized. Currently, the company's Lyndhurst site is seeing a 25:1 deduplication ratio.

"ExaGrid's data deduplication technology is outstanding. In our environment, we have a lot of static information. The system only backs up unique data, which in turn enables us to make the most of our available disk space. We're extremely pleased with our results, and it's nice to have so much data on hand in case we need to do a restore," said Costa. "Restores are so much faster than they were with tape. We now have immediate access to our data and don't have to call to retrieve tapes anymore. We're able to basically restore anything we want with the touch of a button."

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 after the data is stored. 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.

Easy Installation, Top-Notch Customer Support

Costa said that Barneys has saved a significant amount of money in tape costs, transportation, and storage fees since implementing the ExaGrid system. In addition, he said that he spends far less time managing and administering the company's three main backup servers.

"Our executives are pleased with the ExaGrid system because we've been able to reduce the cost of backups," he said. "It also saves us lots of man-hours because it's extremely easy to use and manage, and I don't have to fight with our tape libraries anymore. Having the ExaGrid system in place enables me to spend more time on other projects and improve the level of technical support I can provide to other initiatives."

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. "I worked with our ExaGrid support engineer to install the system and it was a fairly simple process," said Costa. "We've had a great experience with ExaGrid's support organization. I like the fact that we have a permanent technical support engineer assigned to our account. We've developed a relationship, and it's nice to be able to contact the same individual each time I have a question. Our support engineer knows our system, and he can jump in and quickly resolve any issues we have."

Easy Scalability

The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate more data as the company's data grows. ExaGrid's computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single scale-out system with capacities of up to a 2PB 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.

"We've been pleased with the ExaGrid system. It was the right solution for our environment, and its scalable architecture will enable us to easily expand the system as our needs increase," said Costa. "With the ExaGrid system in place, we've been able to reduce our backup times and the amount of man-hours we spend on backup processes. We're also far more confident in our backups now than we ever were before."

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.

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**.