



CenterState Bank of Florida Chooses ExaGrid over DD for Price/Performance

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Jamie Orth
Vice President of IT

Customer Overview

CenterState Bank is a Florida-based community bank providing online banking, commercial lending, residential mortgages, and investment services from 56 branches throughout the state as well as a correspondent division that services over 600 relationships in 26 states.

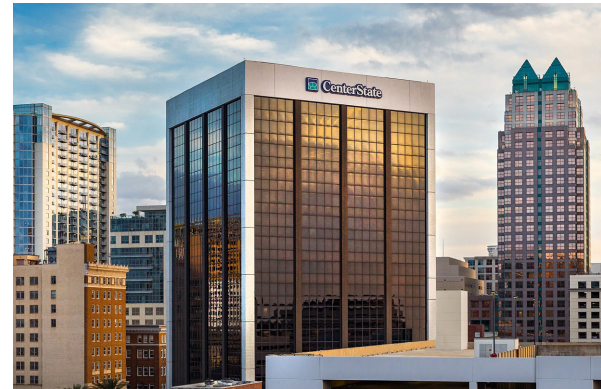
Bank Revamps Backup Infrastructure to Improve Backup Windows and Restores

CenterState Bank had been backing up to tape and was continually outside their backup window. In addition, response time for data restore requests wasn't what the bank needed it to be.

“We had a whole host of issues with our tape backups. Our backup jobs were running way too long and they often failed due to missed windows or the unreliability of tape. Also, we needed to improve our response time for restores,” said Jamie Orth, vice president of information technology at CenterState Bank of Florida. “After taking a hard look at our whole infrastructure, we decided to completely rebuild our backup architecture to incorporate disk-based backup and software capable of effectively backing up our virtualized environment.”

The bank decided to purchase the ExaGrid system after also looking at a Dell EMC Data Domain solution. Orth said that ExaGrid's lower price point, Adaptive Deduplication technology, and superior scalability factored into the decision. The bank also chose Veeam Backup & Replication software for virtual machine backups and continues to use Veritas Backup Exec for physical servers.

“To begin with, the ExaGrid system had a far better price point, and we liked that we could use Veeam for our virtual servers and Backup Exec for our physical servers along with its OST plug in. Also, we have other backups that we could run using SQL dump, and having the integration of all those at the application level was a big plus,” Orth said.



Adaptive Deduplication Technology Speeds Backups

Orth said that after comparing the two, ExaGrid's Adaptive Deduplication technology came out on top of Dell EMC Data Domain's inline approach. “We carefully researched each product's data deduplication approach, and we felt that ExaGrid's Adaptive Deduplication process would deliver faster backup times than an inline process,” he said. “Efficiency and data reduction are further enhanced because we use the ExaGrid together with Veeam's built-in source-side deduplication, which further shrinks the data.”

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.

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid works seamlessly with bank's existing backup applications, Veeam and Veritas Backup Exec – a 'big plus'
- Data reduction maximized using Veeam's source-side deduplication together with ExaGrid
- System has easily scaled as bank's backup intake has grown while still maintaining backup windows



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.

Faster Backups, Expandability to Grow Along with Backup Requirements

CenterState Bank installed one ExaGrid system in its primary datacenter and a second in its disaster recovery site. Since installing the system, the bank has expanded the system and now has a total of five units. Backup times have significantly decreased and are now fully completed well within the bank's backup windows.

"Our backups are now completed flawlessly each and every night. Even if we have a backup failure due to a network communication issue, for instance, we're still able to reset the job in plenty of time for it to finish well within our backup window," said Orth. "As our backup intake has grown, we've been able to easily scale our ExaGrid system while still maintaining our backup windows."

All of ExaGrid's appliances contain not just disk but also processing power, memory, and bandwidth. When the system needs to expand, additional appliances are simply attached to the existing system. This type of configuration allows the system to maintain all the aspects of performance as the amount of data grows, with customers paying for what they need when they need it. In addition, as new ExaGrid appliances are added to the existing system, ExaGrid automatically load balances available capacity, maintaining a virtual pool of storage that is shared across the system.

Tight Integration with Veeam Delivers Faster Restores in Virtualized Environment

Orth said that restores are faster and more reliable as well. "We're using Veeam's one-click restore feature, and we've given the ability to restore files right to our help desk so they don't even have to escalate a ticket up to our engineering team. For more complex virtual restores, we use a combination of Veeam and ExaGrid," he said. "For example, we recently changed out our SAN infrastructure and encountered some issues. We made a business continuity decision to restore the virtual machine and run it from the ExaGrid landing space. We were able to do the restore and provide our users with an available server in less than five minutes."

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides intelligent hyperconverged storage 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.

Orth said that ExaGrid's streamlined interface and ease of use helps to minimize administration time. Originally, the bank hired a fulltime engineer to manage backups, but managing the ExaGrid system takes only about 10% of his time. "With the ExaGrid system, we don't have to constantly replenish tapes or manage backups like we did before. One of the big value-adds is that we've been able to redeploy an engineer we originally hired to do backups," he said.

"We're an in-house shop in almost everything we do, and we with most of the products in our datacenter, we try to figure out how to resolve an issue ourselves before we call into support. That's not the case with ExaGrid. We've had a great experience with ExaGrid's support; our engineer is easy to reach and is always prepared to answer any question we have," said Orth. "We've been extremely pleased with the whole experience of owning the ExaGrid system, from performance to support, and highly recommend it."

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. ExaGrid fully leverages Veeam's built-in backup-to-disk capabilities, and ExaGrid's adaptive data deduplication provides additional data 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 Adaptive Deduplication to further shrink backups.

ExaGrid and Veritas Backup Exec

Organizations using Veritas Backup Exec can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications, such as Veritas Backup Exec, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running Veritas 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 backup to disk.

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