

ChildFund Saves 'Significant' Storage Thanks to ExaGrid's Data Deduplication

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Nate Layne
Network Administrator

Key Benefits:

- ChildFund chose ExaGrid for its deduplication 'at a reasonable price point'
- Restoring data is now a faster and simpler process using ExaGrid and Veeam
- ExaGrid support model of working with assigned engineers is similar to 'seeing a family physician'
- Deduplication leads to 'significant' savings on storage

Customer Overview

ChildFund International is an independent development organization headquartered in Richmond, Virginia that works for the rights and well-being of children worldwide, assisting more than 19 million children and family members in 29 nations. ChildFund programs incorporate child protection, health, education, nutrition, and livelihood interventions that promote conditions where children and youth have a better chance to achieve their potential.

ExaGrid Chosen to Replace Tape Library

ChildFund International had been backing up to a tape library. Tapes were rotated offsite using a data management company. Nate Layne, a network administrator at ChildFund, had grown frustrated with the ever-changing tape hardware that was not backwards compatible. "Over periods of time, we replaced our robotic libraries and the tape technology would change. There were some instances where we would have an older tape that we needed to use, but we no longer had the drive for tapes with longer retention periods." In addition, Layne found that there were often mechanical errors with tape, and he spent too much time troubleshooting just to get the system to work.

Layne's former CIO asked him to find a better solution and after researching some options, Layne recommended ExaGrid. "What I liked about the ExaGrid is that it was a simple solution with a lot of features that wouldn't be hard to leverage. Choosing ExaGrid was a great way to get what we were looking for. Our goals were to get our data offsite and to have deduplication at a reasonable price point."

ChildFund had been using Veritas Backup Exec with a tape library. Since switching to ExaGrid, the organization has recently migrated to Veeam. "Backup Exec works well, but Veeam has some added functionality that I really like, such as parallel VM processing and the high availability Instant VM Recovery feature that mounts a VM to restore point data within the backup repository. It's really fast," said Layne.



The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use and works seamlessly with all of the most frequently used backup applications, so an organization can seamlessly retain its investment in existing applications and processes. "Implementing the ExaGrid system was easy. I had a support call with my assigned engineer and we worked together to set it up. It went pretty quickly and wasn't difficult at all," said Layne.

A 'Family Physician' Approach to Support

Layne appreciates working with an assigned ExaGrid customer support engineer. "One of the deciding factors in choosing ExaGrid was the support model it offers. I like having an assigned technical resource. That individual really gets to know how we use the ExaGrid in our backups in our particular environment. So that allows for better support."

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walk-in clinic where you see a different doctor each time. With ExaGrid, the support engineers get to know your history like your doctor knows your chart. In my experience, it's pretty rare to find a support model like ExaGrid has. It works really well, and it allows ExaGrid customers to build a relationship with the company," said Layne.

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.

High Dedupe Leads to Savings on Storage

Layne is impressed with the data deduplication ratios that are achieved with the ExaGrid system. "We're seeing ratios of 12.5:1, sometimes upwards of 15:1. If we weren't able to get that much deduplication, then we would need significantly more storage than what we have now, so it's a huge savings."

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.

Faster and Simpler Restores

Layne has found that using ExaGrid to restore data is much more efficient than using a tape library. "It's a simpler process now—there are no tapes to recall, our data remains in our custody, and there are no time-consuming tape inventories. The data is restored much faster using ExaGrid. Never again will I have to grapple with potential tape or tape device incompatibilities, outdated drivers, or cleaning cartridges. Tape media degradation occurs over time and can be accelerated if the tapes are stored improperly, which can result in data loss and/or corruption."

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. Once complete, the onsite data is protected and immediately available in its full undeduplicated form for fast restores and VM Instant Recoveries.

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.

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