

# ExaGrid-Veeam Solution Modernizes Backup Environment for Wholesale Power Cooperative

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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**James Binkley**  
Senior Systems Administrator

## Key Benefits:

- Oracle database backups reduced from 14 to 2 hours using ExaGrid
- Ease of system setup and backup management allows EKPC's IT staff to 'use time more efficiently'
- ExaGrid-Veeam solution provides fast data restores
- 'Proactive' ExaGrid support keeps system upgraded

## Customer Overview

For over 75 years, the East Kentucky Power Cooperative (EKPC) has provided wholesale electricity to its owner-member distribution cooperatives. EKPC owns and operates four power plants and six renewable energy plants in the U.S., providing affordable power to its 16 owner-member distributors that serve 1.1 million residents. EKPC generates more green power than any other utility state-wide.

## ExaGrid-Veeam Combo Proves Optimal for EKPC's IT Environment

The IT staff at East Kentucky Power Cooperative (EKPC) had grown frustrated with their existing backup environment and the amount of management time it required, especially after going through numerous backup applications. The time had come for a more efficient and leading-edge alternative.

James Binkley, EKPC's senior systems administrator, attended a local trade show hosted by an IT vendor, and was impressed by the ExaGrid presentation. "After the trade show, I read through the material that the ExaGrid sales team sent over, and I was sold on the system – particularly how simple it would be to set up and especially because we would no longer need to install a client on each virtual machine (VM) we back up."

EKPC installed ExaGrid systems at two of the co-op's locations and its DR site for offsite replication, installing Veeam as its new backup application. EKPC's backup environment is a blend of VMs that are backed up using Veeam, and Oracle and SQL databases on physical servers, which are backed up to ExaGrid directly.

The ExaGrid system is easy to install and use, and works seamlessly with all of the most popular backup applications, so an organization can retain its investment in existing applications and processes. In addition, ExaGrid appliances can be used at primary and secondary sites to supplement or eliminate offsite tapes with live data repositories for disaster recovery.



## Backup Window Reduction of 7x

Binkley backs up EKPC's data in daily incrementals and runs weekly, quarterly, and annual fulls, as well as running a nightly full database backup. "It used to take up to 14 hours to back up our Oracle databases, and that's been reduced to just a couple of hours with ExaGrid. Our VM backups are much shorter, too! Veeam backs up 60 VMs daily to ExaGrid in just a couple of hours. We are constantly receiving data from several locations across the state, and ExaGrid's data deduplication has helped us to work within our limited bandwidth," said Binkley.

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a unique 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

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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.

## Unique Landing Zone = Fast Restores

“One of my favorite features of ExaGrid is data restores and how easy they are. Most of the data that I restore is from the previous night’s backup, and I like that the backup is still instantly available in the landing zone, and I don’t have to wait for the data to rehydrate. Locating a file to restore using Veeam only takes minutes, so data is very quick and easy to restore,” Binkley said.

Switching to ExaGrid has allowed EKPC’s IT staff to use their time more efficiently. “Using ExaGrid, our data is backed up and replicated automatically; it’s all behind the scenes,” he said.

## Proactive Customer Support

Binkley finds that ExaGrid is simple to manage, but knows that his assigned ExaGrid support engineer is available to provide assistance, if needed. “Setting up the ExaGrid system was easy. I read through the customer guide, and I had my system up and running within minutes.

“My ExaGrid support engineer lets me know when the system needs an update and will upgrade it for me remotely. When I contact him, I don’t wait days for a response to a trouble ticket; he’s always on top of it. He’s proactive, and will let me know if a drive has failed; by the time I notice, a new drive is already on its way.”

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 level 2 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.

## ExaGrid and Veeam: ‘Excellent’ Together

Binkley has been impressed at how easy it is to use ExaGrid and Veeam together. “I can create a Veeam share in ExaGrid, point Veeam at it, and I’m done. The integration between the two products is excellent.”

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 zone-level 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 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](http://www.exagrid.com).

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