

Harrison Clinical Cuts Backup Times in Half and Increases Backup Retention with ExaGrid

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY

Harrison Clinical Research

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Thomas Hain
System Administrator
Harrison Clinical GmbH

Customer Overview

Harrison Clinical Research GmbH is an international clinical research organization (CRO) with offices throughout Europe, Israel and the USA, with head offices in Munich, Germany. Harrison works with international affiliates in the UK, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain, Austria, Israel, Russia, Ukraine, Poland and the USA.

Backup Window Too Short, Restores Too Slow

Harrison Clinical's IT staff in Germany was backing up servers, normal data files, an Exchange server and SQL databases.

According to Thomas Hain, systems administrator at Harrison Clinical, prior to ExaGrid, backup retention time was four weeks and worked well until "the timeframe for the backups grew too small to back up everything on tape and recovery was too slow. We had to look for faster systems." Since Harrison was backing up to a single-drive Sony tape changer, they had problems trying to scale the old system to shorten the backup window. Hain says, "It took too long to back up all servers and files within our 12-hour window."

Looking for Better Backup Solutions

According to Hain, "We had a meeting with a vendor who showed us some other systems. Based on that, we thought perhaps we should try a disk-based system. An Internet search showed us which disk-based systems are available. Then we asked around to see if anyone knew about the different systems and could tell us more. One thing in particular that we liked about ExaGrid when we started learning about it was the deduplication concept, and we liked the success stories from other companies. We saw comments in a forum where people stated that they were able to get the system up in ½ hour and it worked well."

ExaGrid Enables Longer Backup Retention

When Harrison started looking into data deduplication, the IT staff was looking for increased backup retention. "It was very interesting because formerly we kept only four weeks. That was enough in normal cases, but when somebody found out that they had deleted data five or six weeks ago, we had to rely on the monthly backups and try to put the data back," said Hain.

Exceptional 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 experience with the customer support team has been great," says Hain. "ExaGrid monitors the health of our system remotely. Our assigned support contact calls us when a problem occurs, when there are lock file alerts, or some other problem. ExaGrid Support is easy to work with."

Customer Impact with ExaGrid

Harrison found it important that the ExaGrid would work with their existing backup applications. According to Hain, "We use Symantec BackupExec for backing up files, Exchange data and SQL and VRanger for our virtual machines. The ratio of deduplication

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that we're able to achieve depends on the file type, but for an Exchange file, for example, we get 23 to 1. With SQL server it's nearly 34 to 1 and on file servers we are seeing ratios of about 13 to 1." Before ExaGrid, says Hain, "We were not able to restore the Exchange server and put it all back up within 12 hours; now we are able to do it in five. We have more than halved the restore time."

"The return on investment for the company was the saving of my time, my nerves and of course, the time of end users. During backups, the Exchange server, for example, wouldn't work smoothly because the load was too high. Compared to before installing ExaGrid, administering backups is much simpler and faster. I think the system saved me 10 hours a week," said Hain.

"The best features of the ExaGrid system are the speed, the time savings, and all the complex things you can do without complexity. It's very easy to install it, to configure it, to use the deduplication and you don't have to read 200 pages in a manual. You have the ability to get a large number of backups on one device without changing tapes or anything else."

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 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.

For more information about ExaGrid, please visit us at www.exagrid.com or call us at 1-800-868-6985.

About ExaGrid Systems, Inc.

Customers worldwide depend on ExaGrid Systems to solve their backup problems—effectively and permanently. ExaGrid's disk-based, scale-out GRID architecture adjusts to increasing backup demands due to constantly growing data volumes. It is the only solution that combines compute with capacity as well as a unique landing zone to permanently shorten backup windows and eliminate expensive forklift upgrades. Learn more at www.exagrid.com.