Ireland's IT Tralee Triples Backup Retention Thanks to ExaGrid's Data Deduplication

INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TRALEE
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA TRÁ LI

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Chris Bradshaw
Computer Technician

IRELAND

Key Benefits:

- Data deduplication maximizes the Institute's backup storage capacity, tripling retention

- Replication between on- and offsite systems saves time and alleviates prior concerns about physical storage

- Institute easily adds an appliance to keep pace with data growth

- Data is restored in minutes from ExaGrid's landing zone – "much faster" than tape

- Managing ExaGrid system is "effortless"

Customer Overview

The Institute of Technology, Tralee (IT Tralee) was established in 1977 as the Regional Technical College, Tralee and became the Institute of Technology, Tralee in 1992. Located in Tralee, Ireland, the Institute currently has 3,500 full- and part-time students, employs 350 staff, and provides a financial contribution of about €60 million annually to the local economy. IT Tralee is involved in the provision of third-level education and training, as well as research and development for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social, and cultural development of the State with particular reference to the region served by the Institute.

Replacing Tape to Gain Data Deduplication

The Institute of Technology, Tralee (IT Tralee) had outgrown its tape libraries. Its IT staff found that backup jobs took too long and that tapes were often faulty and temperamental. Chris Bradshaw, IT Tralee's computer technician, was interested in finding a new backup solution that offered data deduplication. "Data deduplication had just come on the scene, and since we were looking to replace tape, we decided to try it to see if it would speed things up, and it did!

"We chose to purchase an ExaGrid system because of its deduplication capabilities, and because it worked with our existing backup application, Veritas NetBackup. Installing our ExaGrid system was very straightforward, especially with the help of our ExaGrid support engineer," said Bradshaw.

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 retain its investment in existing applications and processes.

ExaGrid Triples Retention and Provides Quicker Data Restores

Bradshaw backs up IT Tralee's data in daily incrementals and weekly fulls, along with two yearly full backups. He has found that ExaGrid simplifies managing IT Tralee's backup retention. "We used to keep one

month's worth of data on tape, as well as end-of-month backups for three months. Now, we simply keep three months' worth of all backups, which we have enough room for thanks to deduplication. Switching to ExaGrid has allowed us to keep a great deal more data available to restore, and allows us to more easily manage our backup storage."

IT Tralee's data backups are replicated to a second ExaGrid system on another campus for disaster recovery. Bradshaw has found that the daily and weekly backup jobs stay well within the established backup windows despite continued data growth, and that restores are quick and efficient.

"Restores are much faster compared to tape; it only take a few minutes to restore a file from our ExaGrid system," said Bradshaw.

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

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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 immediately available in its full undeduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

Scalable System is "Effortless" to Manage

Bradshaw has found that his assigned ExaGrid support engineer is helpful with everything from system maintenance to configuring a new appliance when IT Tralee recently scaled its system due to data growth.

"Our support engineer reaches out to us whenever there's a firmware upgrade, and has either guided us through the upgrade or done it for us remotely. Whenever we've had a question or an issue, he's responded quickly, and he recently helped us to add a new appliance to our existing system. It's been a great relationship so far," said Bradshaw.

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.

"Switching to ExaGrid has made my job so much easier! The system's web interface is straightforward, which makes it effortless to manage. It works so well that I don't have to worry about our backups anymore. I no longer have to travel to a tape library, or worry about the environmental conditions of where our data is stored, such as a change in humidity or temperature that could damage our tapes," Bradshaw said.

ExaGrid's computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, appliances of any size or age can be mixed and matched in a single system with capacities of up to a 2PB full backup plus retention and an ingest rate of up to 432TB per hour. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic.

ExaGrid and NetBackup

Veritas NetBackup delivers high performance data protection that scales to protect the largest UNIX, Windows, Linux, OS X and NetWare environments. With complete protection from remote office to data center to vault, NetBackup offers a single console for all backup and recovery operations. Organizations using Veritas NetBackup can look to ExaGrid as an alternative to tape for nightly backups. ExaGrid sits behind existing backup applications such as NetBackup, providing faster and more reliable backups and restores. In a network running NetBackup, 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**.