



Ingham County Achieves Faster Backups via ExaGrid's Disk-Based Backup with Deduplication System

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Jeff VanderSchaaf
Senior Network Engineer

Customer Overview

Ingham County is the seventh largest county in the State of Michigan and the home of Michigan's capital, Lansing. The Ingham County Management of Information Services (MIS) Department located in Mason, Michigan is responsible for the day-to-day operation of Ingham County's Computer Center and telephone PBX switches. They provide support for 1,100 users over 21 different departments located in five major campuses dispersed throughout the county. Along with individual computers, Ingham County MIS supports 41 servers and 1,300 phones.

Faster Backups Needed to Manage Growing Amounts of Data

Prior to implementing the ExaGrid system, Ingham County was backing up its data to tape, but rapid data growth was making tape backups more difficult to manage. "The amount of data we have on our network that we need to protect has been exploding," said Jeff VanderSchaaf, senior network engineer for Ingham County. "Every time we turn around, we have to add another terabyte here or another 100 gigabytes there, so we're wrestling with getting everything backed up in a timely manner."

VanderSchaaf researched several alternatives to improve Ingham County's backup situation, looking at deduplication in particular. "Our backups were taking us well into Monday production hours, so I knew I had to do something," said VanderSchaaf. "We needed to speed things up, and ExaGrid fit the bill."

ExaGrid Delivers Faster Backups, Scalability, and a Disaster Recovery Solution

With the ExaGrid, Ingham County has been able to reduce their backup window and increase the amount of data they back up – all with a scalable architecture that can easily grow along with their data growth. According to VanderSchaaf, "We wanted something that was going to decrease our backup window and reduce the amount of data we store, and with deduplication, we are able to get more data on the disk."



The ExaGrid system works alongside Ingham County's existing backup application, ARCserve Backup. ExaGrid's turnkey disk-based backup system combines enterprise SATA/SAS drives with zone-level data deduplication, delivering a disk-based solution that is far more cost effective than simply backing up to straight disk.

ExaGrid's patented zone-level deduplication reduces the disk space needed by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 by storing only the unique bytes across backups instead of redundant data. 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.

Key Benefits:

- Ingham County chooses ExaGrid to add data deduplication to its backup environment.
- ExaGrid's scalable architecture will accommodate Ingham's data growth
- Ingham County able to cross-replicate data with school district using ExaGrid, adding disaster recovery to environment
- Ingham's IT staff feels confident in backup solution, especially with proactive ExaGrid support



Ingham County chose a 10TB ExaGrid system for on-site backups, and there is also an ExaGrid system installed at Ingham Intermediate School District (IISD), Ingham County's collaboration partner. There is a plan to replicate data using ExaGrid's replication capability between Ingham County and IISD, creating a cross-protected disaster recovery (DR) solution for the two sites. As Ingham County's data grows, the ExaGrid can easily be expanded to handle additional data. The ExaGrid system can easily scale to accommodate data growth. 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.

Easy to Install, Outstanding Customer Support

ExaGrid comes packaged as a turnkey appliance. It was designed to be easy to deploy and manage and to deliver maximum uptime with redundant, hot-swappable components. "It was simple to set up," said VanderSchaaf, "I didn't even have to call tech support. I read the manual briefly, which was just a couple of pages, jumped through it, and I had it up and running in 30 to 45 minutes. It was that straightforward."

All ExaGrid components are fully supported by ExaGrid's trained, in-house engineers dedicated to proactively managing individual accounts. "Support has been excellent," said VanderSchaaf. "I don't usually have vendors calling me proactively – that's a first."

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.

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