

Manufacturer Modernizes Backups, Improves Retention and Backup Times with ExaGrid®

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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Bill Bunch
IT Specialist

Key Benefits:

- Six-fold increase in retention
- 12-hour backups reduced to just two hours
- No more network slowdowns during business hours due to lengthy backups
- Deduplication as high as 22:1
- Runs out of the box with NGK's version of Symantec Backup Exec

Customer Overview

NGK-Locke Polymer Insulators, Inc., (NLPI), a wholly-owned subsidiary of NGK Insulators, LTD (NGK) is located in Virginia Beach, VA and produces silicone polymer insulators for transmission lines and substations. Since its founding, NLPI has been recognized as a dependable, superior quality and world-wide supplier of silicone polymer insulators to major electric utilities both in the U.S. and around the world. NLPI's parent company, NGK, is one of the leading manufacturers of insulators globally.

Limited Retention, Long Backup Times with Legacy Disk-Based Backup Solution

NGK-Locke Polymer Insulators had been backing up its data to a customized disk-based backup solution but had outgrown the seven-year-old unit and had been experiencing issues related to retention and lengthy backup times.

"We are a single-site manufacturing plant and needed a new disk-based solution capable of backing up the data from our plant. Our old solution required constant attention, and we only had about a week of retention," said Bill Bunch, IT specialist, NGK-Locke Polymer. "We began looking for a disk-based backup solution that could work easily with our existing infrastructure and with our backup application, Symantec Backup Exec."

After researching different solutions on the market, the company decided to install an ExaGrid disk-based backup solution with data deduplication.

"The ExaGrid system was cost effective, and it fit seamlessly into our existing environment. We were concerned that we might have to update our Windows 2003 environment to implement a disk-based backup solution with deduplication capabilities, but the ExaGrid system works beautifully with it. We were also able to continue using our existing version of Backup Exec, which made the whole purchase easier and more cost effective," said Bunch.

Data Deduplication Reduces Amount of Data Stored, Boosts Retention

Bunch said the company has seen a six-fold increase in retention since installing the ExaGrid system.

"We only had a week of retention on our old system, and we really struggled with it. We were constantly pulling disks out and rotating them into the safe," said Bunch. "With the ExaGrid, we're able to keep six weeks of data on the system and ready to restore. ExaGrid's data deduplication technology does a terrific job at reducing our data. Our overall ratio is currently 11:1, but we have some data deduping as high as 22:1."

ExaGrid's data deduplication technology helps to reduce the amount of data stored. ExaGrid combines last backup compression along with data deduplication, which stores changes from backup to backup instead of storing full file copies. This unique approach reduces the disk space required by a range of 10:1 to 50:1 or more, delivering unparalleled cost savings and performance. ExaGrid delivers extremely fast backup performance because data is written directly to disk, and data deduplication is performed post-process after the data is stored to reduce data. When a second site is used, the cost savings are even greater because ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication technology moves only changes, requiring minimal WAN bandwidth.

EXAGRID™

Faster Backups and Restores

Bunch said that since installing the ExaGrid system, backup jobs that used to run all night long are now completed in a few hours.

“Some of our backup jobs used to run beyond our backup windows, and if they were still running during the workday, our network would slow down. Now backup jobs that used to run 12 hours take about two hours. It’s made a huge difference,” he said. “Also, restoring data is now much easier. I recently did a major test restore of our ERP system, and it went off quickly and without a hitch.”

Easy Setup, Easy to Use

Bunch worked over the phone with ExaGrid’s customer support staff to set up the system.

“ExaGrid’s customer support engineer worked with me over the phone to help set up the system, and it was a fairly straightforward process. The customer support staff is easy to reach and always willing and able to help answer any question I have,” said Bunch.

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.

“The ExaGrid is extremely easy to use, and I don’t have to manage the system that closely. The ExaGrid system automatically sends an email message to me every day that includes statistics on the deduplication process, and information on the amount of retention space available,” said Bunch.

GRID Architecture Ensures Scalability

ExaGrid’s GRID computing software makes the system highly scalable, and when plugged into a switch, different-sized configurations can be mixed and matched into a single GRID system with capacities of up to a 130TB full backup plus retention. Once virtualized, they appear as a single system to the backup server, and load balancing of all data across servers is automatic. The ExaGrid system can easily expand to increase performance or capacity.

“We sized our ExaGrid system so that it should serve our backup needs into the foreseeable future. However, we tend to keep our equipment for a long time, so we have an extra level of comfort just knowing that the system can scale up to meet increased backup needs,” said Bunch. “We’ve been pleased with the ExaGrid. It’s a solid system that works consistently well day in and day out, and it has taken the worry out of our backups.”

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.

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.

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