



# Queens' College Implements 'Future-Proof' Backup Solution which Reduces Backup Windows by 73%

CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY



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**Andrew Eddy**  
Senior Computer Officer



UNITED KINGDOM

## Key Benefits:

- Queens' College finds ExaGrid to be the most cost-effective backup storage solution
- ExaGrid reduces the College's backup window by 73%
- ExaGrid provides 'future-proof' architecture, as the College can add to the system as data grows

## Customer Overview

Queens' College supports world-leading teaching and research in a beautiful and welcoming environment. Their large, diverse and inclusive community is committed to encouraging students to pursue their interests and achieve their full potential. Queens' has been in the heart of Cambridge for more than five centuries. Today it supports a thriving academic community of about 500 undergraduates, 450 graduates and more than 60 academics.

## 'Future-Proof' ExaGrid System Chosen for College's Backup Environment

Prior to using ExaGrid, Queens' College was backing up its data to NetApp FAS2220 network storage server. As the IT staff struggled with low disk space due to shared storage for backups and replication, they looked into other backup storage options. "Our MSP, think S3, recommended that we use an ExaGrid system behind Veeam," said Andrew Eddy, Senior Computer Officer at Queens' College. "We had considered purchasing another NetApp box with larger capacity, but we were impressed with ExaGrid's scalable architecture, which is future-proof because it is so expandable. ExaGrid also offered competitive pricing, and taking into account that we can simply add on appliances as our data grows, it seemed like the most cost-effective option."

Queens' College installed an ExaGrid system at its primary site which replicates backups to its disaster recovery (DR) site for additional data protection. "Installation at both sites was very straightforward and hassle-free," said Andy. ExaGrid's award-winning scale-out architecture provides customers with a consistent backup window regardless of data growth. Its unique Landing zone retains the most recent backup in its full unduplicated form, enabling the fastest restores, offsite tape copies, and instant recoveries.

ExaGrid's multiple appliance models can be combined into a single system configuration, allowing full backups of up to 2PB with a combined ingest rate of 432TB/hr.



The appliances virtualise into one another when plugged into a switch so that multiple appliance models can be mixed and matched into a single configuration. Each appliance includes the appropriate amount of processor, memory, disk, and bandwidth for the data size, so as each appliance is virtualised into the system, performance is maintained, and backup times do not increase as data is added. Once virtualised, they appear as a single pool of long-term capacity. Capacity load balancing of all data across servers is automatic, and multiple systems can be combined for additional capacity. Even though data is load balanced, deduplication occurs across the systems so that data migration does not cause a loss of effectiveness in deduplication.

This combination of capabilities in a turnkey appliance makes the ExaGrid system easy to install, manage, and scale. ExaGrid's architecture provides lifetime value and investment protection that no other architecture can match.



## ExaGrid Reduces Backup Window by 73%

Andy works with think S3, a managed services provider (MSP) to keep the College's data protected. The data is backed up on an hourly and nightly basis, and Andy is impressed with the impact ExaGrid has had on the speed of the backup jobs. "Our backup windows have been reduced from 45 minutes to 12 minutes, since we've switched to ExaGrid. We back up our data often, so having quick backups are vital to keeping up with our schedule," said Andy. "When we used our NetApp system, we were running out of storage space, which limited our retention of restore points. Now that we use ExaGrid, we have been able to increase our restore points, allowing us to better protect our data," he added.

Andy is impressed with how quickly he can restore a file using Veeam from ExaGrid's landing zone. "I was able to restore a file in just one second, and was able to send it to the user in two minutes! That's incredible!"

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 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 unduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance in the event that the primary storage VM becomes unavailable. This is possible because of ExaGrid's landing zone – a high-speed cache on the ExaGrid appliance that retains the most recent backups in complete form. Once the primary storage environment has been brought back to a working state, the VM running on the ExaGrid appliance can then be migrated to primary storage for continued operation.

## 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](http://www.exagrid.com).

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## ExaGrid Customer Support Helps Keep System Up to Date

Andy values the assistance that ExaGrid customer support provides on keeping the system well-maintained. "Our experience with ExaGrid has been very positive. The customer support is proactive and notifies up whenever an upgrade is available for our system. Our ExaGrid support engineer accesses our system remotely and implements the upgrades for us, which is quite convenient."

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

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 adaptive 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 adaptive deduplication to further shrink backups.

## About think S3

think S3 takes their 14 years of experience of delivering hybrid cloud platforms and managed services from the leading edge to bring the latest technologies to their customers – enabling them to achieve more through collaboration, close relationships with their vendors and seamless support.

think S3's range of solutions allows them to inspire the future and change what is possible for their customers, whilst delivering on a promise of providing an industry leading end to end service where their people and personalities come together with world class expertise to deliver true transformation.



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