ExaGrid-Veeam Solution Provides RDV Corporation with 66% Shorter Backups and 'Phenomenal' Restore Speed

RDV CORPORATION

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> **Erik Gilreath**
> **Senior Systems Engineer**

Key Benefits:

- ExaGrid supports RDV Corporation's existing technology; Veeam for backup and Zerto for real-time DR

- ExaGrid-Veeam solution reduces backup windows and restores data at 'phenomenal' speed

- ExaGrid support assists RDV Corporation with re-architecting site, ensuring no data loss during the major transition

Customer Overview

Headquartered in Grand Rapids, Michigan, RDV Corporation was founded in 1991, and provides best-in-class private equity investment, finance and accounting, tax, philanthropy, technology, talent management, and other professional services.

ExaGrid-Veeam Chosen as Optimal Backup Solution

RDV Corporation had used Dell EMC Avamar as its backup solution, and the IT team found Avamar difficult to use. "We were using a six-node Avamar grid at both our primary site and our disaster recovery location. Avamar was not a very intuitive system to use, especially when it came to restoring data. I would open up support tickets on a weekly basis, and it felt like a part-time job just working though issues with Dell EMC support," said Erik Gilreath, senior systems engineer at RDV Corporation.

RDV Corporation decided to switch its backup solution, using Veeam to back up data to a Tegile array, but that did not deliver the results the IT team hoped for. "The Tegile array couldn't handle the throughputs we needed and wanted. We ended up looking for other solutions, such as Dell EMC Data Domain, but a colleague of ours had experienced issues with that product. Our vendor suggested ExaGrid, and we were impressed with its Landing Zone feature, and the fact that it offered competitive deduplication compared with Data Domain, while also providing quick restores. ExaGrid offers the best of both worlds, in terms of providing quickly-restorable data and maximizing long-term retention storage," said Gilreath.

Backup Windows 66% Shorter after Switch to ExaGrid

Since installing ExaGrid systems at the primary site and disaster recovery (DR) site, the IT team has found that backing up and restoring data has become an easy and straightforward process. RDV Corporation's data consists of SQL, SharePoint, Exchange, CRM, and general file servers. "Our Exchange environment in particular is rather large, as there's no retention policy around email," said Joe Wastchke, senior systems engineer.

The IT team is impressed with how short the backup windows are since switching to ExaGrid. "We back up our data in daily incrementals and a weekly synthetic full. We assign our backup jobs by application and most of our backup windows are thirty minutes or less. Backing up our entire environment takes three hours. That's a huge improvement compared with Avamar, as backing up our environment took up to nine hours with that solution. We were able to store a good deal of data on it, but it wasn't as efficient," said Gilreath.

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 DR 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 DR.

Time is Money: ExaGrid Provides Quick Restores

The IT team at RDV Corporation has been pleased with how quickly data is restored from the ExaGrid-Veeam solution. "The restore speed from our ExaGrid system has been phenomenal! I had to restore an entire

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server recently and it only took three minutes," said Gilreath. "To restore a server from Avamar was more complicated and after working through the menus to find the data, the process took at least ten minutes, which isn't terrible, but it's much simpler and quicker using ExaGrid and Veeam. Recently, some of our SharePoint developers were working in our IT environment at the same time we were restoring data. With the restore process being so quick, they didn't have to wait to pull up a production SharePoint environment," said Wastchke. "Since the developers were consultants, time was money, and we didn't need to lose any," added Gilreath.

ExaGrid-Veeam Deduplication Key to Retention

As RDV Corporation keeps its backups for over a year, retention space is important, and data deduplication maximizes storage capacity. Gilreath finds ExaGrid's flexible approach to storage is also helpful in maintaining retention. "One of my favorite features about ExaGrid is that we can fine-tune it to adjust to our storage capacity by adjusting how much space is used by the landing zone versus the retention repository, allowing us to maximize what is important to us. Our DR location has fewer servers to backup, so we have a relatively small landing zone to maximize the amount of long term retention space available."

Veeam uses the information from VMware and Hyper-V and provides deduplication on a "per-job" basis, finding the matching areas of all the virtual disks within a backup job and using metadata to reduce the overall footprint of the backup data. Veeam also has a "dedupe friendly" compression setting which further reduces the size of the Veeam backups in a way that allows the ExaGrid system to achieve further deduplication. The net result is a combined Veeam and ExaGrid deduplication rate of upwards to 10:1, which greatly reduces the amount of disk storage required.

ExaGrid Support Assists with Re-Architecting Production Site

Recently, the IT team at RDV Corporation has undergone a major project, moving its production site to a new location, and they appreciate the help they have received from their ExaGrid support engineer during the transition. "We use Zerto to replicate our data between sites. While we were moving our production site to a colo facility, our ExaGrid support engineer was instrumental in making sure the systems reset and integrated into the other site. We had reached out to our engineer in the beginning and explained our vision of what the process should be, and he took the reins on setting up the ExaGrid systems for backup and replication," said Wastchke. "We had to re-architect the site, which had only been backing up a small number of servers in the past, to receive the majority of the backups and replicate them, and we needed to make this transition without losing any data. Our ExaGrid support engineer helped us to design the site to ensure it was able to accomplish what we needed," added Gilreath.

"I appreciate how proactive our support engineer is. In addition to helping me with moving our production site, he also reached out recently to make upgrades to our ExaGrid systems," said Wastchke. 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.

ExaGrid and Zerto

Zerto is an ExaGrid Technology Partner. Zerto provides enterprise-class business continuity and disaster recovery (BCDR) solutions for virtualized IT infrastructure and cloud. Its DR solutions replace traditional array-based BCDR that can't deal with virtual IT environments. The ExaGrid system provides Zerto customers with Zerto Offsite Backup plus deduplication, delivering cost-effective longer-term retention for the offsite backups of VMs that have been replicated from the primary site to the DR site.

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**.