

The Importance of Backing Up Computer Files: Some Interesting Facts

by Marc Berthiaume

You don't back up? You're not alone. According to Interactive Data Corporation (IDC) analyst Cynthia Doyle, "Up to 60% of corporate data resides unprotected on computers." A recent IDC report states that "40% of small and medium-sized businesses don't back up." Disaster preparation and security are reasons to back up with disk-to-tape, CDs, DVDs, external drives, flash, or the newer online backup methods.

Most of us are familiar with the traditional forms of backup, but what about the newer option of online backup? Traditional methods copy computer files onto external media, which is quick, convenient, and inexpensive. The drawback is this backup is usually kept in the same location as the computer - subject to loss by disaster or theft.

Online backup services save computer files on secure, off-site servers over the Internet. If your computer is lost in a disaster or theft, important files are saved. Online backup is easily set up - using a downloaded utility from the service's website, you decide which files to back up automatically and when. Should something happen to your computer, you can retrieve files from any computer with Web access after entering a user name and password. Many providers let you set up separate, shared folders for high-resolution digital files or other large files - available to employees with user names and passwords.

The cost of online backup is higher than traditional methods, but the old adage comes into play: "You get what you pay for." In this case it's security and peace of mind. The recommendation is to regularly back up key files with an online backup provider, in addition to traditional backup media kept off site. **Following are facts to consider regarding backup and the prevention of data loss.**

The IDC presents some interesting statistics concerning data loss causes and the costs of recouping lost data:

- **Key Data Loss Causes - Hardware/system malfunction** causes 78% of loss. 11% is human error, 7% software

corruption/program malfunction, 2% computer viruses, 1% natural disasters, and 1% other causes.

- **Alarming Facts** - 31% of PC users have lost all their files to uncontrollable events. A hard drive crashes every 15 seconds and portable drive failure causes 25% of lost data. 15% or more of laptops are stolen or suffer hard drive failures. One in five computers suffers a fatal hard drive crash - all hard drives will fail eventually if you keep the computer long enough.

- **Recouping Data Is Expensive** - Retyping 20 megabytes of sales data takes 19 days/\$17,000; 21 days/\$19,000 for 20 MB of accounting data. Re-creating data from scratch costs \$2000 to \$8000 per MB. 60% of companies that lose all data close within six months and 72% of businesses that suffer major data loss disappear within 24 months.

In a 2001 Cost of Downtime Survey, 46% of respondents said each downtime hour would cost their companies up to \$50K. 28% said \$51K to \$250K, 18% said \$251K to \$1 million, and 8% said more than \$1 million.

And if that's not enough, beware of future threats. Trend Micro Inc., the world's third-largest anti-virus software maker, says that companies lost \$20-\$30 billion in 2002 from virus attacks (up from \$13 billion in 2001, according to various industry estimates), and that viruses cost global businesses about \$55 billion in 2003. Corporations are hit on average with 113 virus infections monthly for every 1000 PCs they own, as stated by a survey of virus prevalence in the enterprise conducted by ICSA Labs. All of these numbers are expected to increase substantially.

In view of these eye-opening statistics, it is certainly wise to back up your data! □

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Principles of Persuasion

(Continued from page 28)

While it might be true that some are born with a silver tongue, most people, like Churchill, have to work at developing their communication skills. A good way to improve your public speaking is to engage the services of a communications coach, attend Dale Carnegie training or join a local Toastmasters Club. Developing the ability to

speak with power and influence with passion takes time and effort to master, but it will pay off in big dividends. □

John Boe presents a wide variety of motivational and sales-oriented keynotes and seminar programs for sales meetings and conventions. John is a nationally recognized sales trainer and business motivational speaker with an impeccable track record in the meeting industry. To have John speak at your next event, visit www.johnboe.com or call 877-725-3750. Free Newsletter available on website.