

Backup - or Payout!

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I will say this twice: every computer user needs to consider backup. Too many tales circulate of hard drives failing, of laptops being taken for repair and returning with the hard-drive wiped, and of data loss through theft. It's always the same - "I couldn't believe it!", "I lost all of my photos and / or work" or worse still "I never thought it would happen to me"!

Every computer, whether PC, Mac, or mobile phone has a storage memory, allowing the user to store information. Many of us never consider that this may one day NOT be available to us, for whatever reason. How well could you work for a day without the vital data on your PC? How about a week, or what if you were never able to see it again?

10 years ago the options for backup were limited - floppy disks were unreliable, CD recorders and tape drives expensive to buy and run.

Today the USB memory stick has more or less replaced floppy disks. Tape drives remain largely a server-backup option, while hard-disk based storage is appearing increasingly more often in both home and office environments. And DVD recorders are cheaper to buy and run than CD recorders ever were a decade ago.

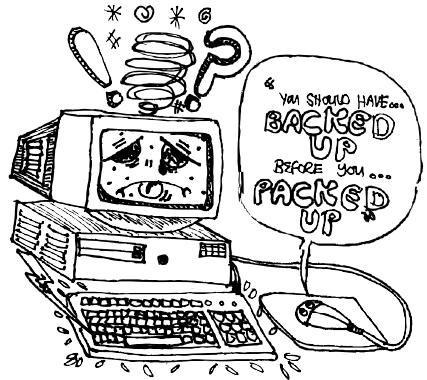
But you still need to consider your options - what to backup and how often? Where and how to store your backup? And most importantly: how to test it. Damaged equipment can render a backup useless, and a backup is no use if you cannot restore it.

Data recovery could be an option if you still have the failed disk. Home users will not want to know

the cost of these services though, and for business; the 2 servers I have known to require specialist recovery services both netted the owners a bill in excess of £5,000 each. Still - with little other choice, they paid up.

If you *know* that you are protected from viruses, hackers and sabotage, fire, theft, flood, and hardware failure, then you are doing pretty well to cover most eventualities - you may even think of some others. If you have a disaster recovery plan and have tested it, you are doing very well.

Otherwise put this on your to-do list - and do it.



Backup Dos and Don'ts:

- ✓ DO backup regularly
- ✓ DO test your backups
- × DON'T rely on your backups unless you have tested them
- × DON'T leave it too late to think about your backups
- × DON'T forget that your company insurance may REQUIRE that you take reasonable precautions for backup provisions, and may not cover the recovery/replacement of your data at all!

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