

Data Backup – Is it Really Worth It?

I'm guessing everyone who reads this title is scoffing at it asking whether it is a rhetorical question. Now, if you own a computer I ask you to take a second and ask yourself, "How much would it cost me to lose this data?" Scary realization, isn't it? Don't backup? You're not alone. For many business owners data backup is just not a high priority. I hear many of the same reasons each time including the amount of time, or the financial investment in hiring a third party. For some, it can be the lack of computer savvy it can take. Each of these business owners just don't realize what they have on their computers and how important it can be.

Whether a business owner uses a laptop to store a few company word documents, or whether their computer is the heart of the business operating as a server, there is data. And its use has become more commonplace in the operation of a business. Offices that lived by the paper and pencil are now relying on automation to help get them through daily activities with customer databases, business finances, even taking incoming calls on their phone system.

Starting to see the big picture? As a business owner, I recommend three very good options when it comes to data backup for you to consider. The first is the standard option to back your own data up on some external media such as a CD, DVD, Hard Drive or USB Key. Although the quickest and most affordable method, remember you are storing the files in their current size rather than in a compressed format which can take up more space on a disc. Rather than one DVD, you could end up with a number of them. To help, try and remember to only backup your data files rather than the whole program which you can reinstall from a CD later.

A second option would be to sign up with an online data backup provider. This option does require a High Speed Internet Connection, for which your data is automatically backed up at an offsite location for a subscription fee at a pre-scheduled time set by you. Programs will let you select which data to backup, so you should be aware of important file locations such as email and word processing.

The third option would be to call in a third party company to perform the backup of data for you. Most companies that offer this service will also offer to store the data offsite for you in case of hazard at your business location. For this option, remember to request a pre-scheduled time for backup before or after business hours so as not to impact your daily operation. Also, it would be beneficial for an owner to research the 3rd party to ensure data will not be compromised. Another good idea would be to ask the 3rd party company for some legal documentation for the safety of the data as well.

Every business owner should be aware of the vulnerability of their data and take the time or make the investment in protecting it. Don't take a risk that the inevitable computer breakdown will not come.

Bob Minhas - Owner/Operator
AlphaStarr Solutions