

ON-SITE AND ON-LINE BACKUPS

For years now we have stressed the importance of good backup systems. In the last few months this has been made ever more apparent as several companies have had their file server drives crash. Were it not for timely backups a considerable amount of information may well have been lost. In these cases, current copies of the company data were stored on portable hard drives allowing for easy access and retrieval once the server was repaired. Other companies have been less fortunate and often have lost everything.

The first line of defence for most smaller companies is a portable hard drive. These can be purchased for as little as \$60. depending on the capacity. Larger drives from 1 to 2 terabytes can allow you to maintain multiple versions of your data. In many cases this involves creating Monday thru Friday folders and January thru December Folders to take selective snapshots of your data at different periods in time. This can permit the retrieval of a good copy of the file even when the original has been compromised and backed up.

We can install the backup devices and devise a backup scheme to meet your needs quite easily. Installing dual drives in a File Server can also allow Data and Operating Systems to be separated reducing the daily wear and tear on the drives. By using a combination of multiple and portable hard drives your on-site backups can be made quite secure but this does not protect you from some of the more serious major disruptions like Fire and Theft.

To up your protection from such threats some form of off-site backup must be implemented. This can take the form of Portable Drives or devices that are swapped out daily or weekly and taken off-site. New forms of on-line backup technologies have recently come of age allowing users to automatically port their data to a safe place outside of their business.

CRASH PLAN ON-LINE BACKUPS

For the last month or so we have been investigating a number of On-Line Backup companies, looking for easy automatic alternatives to taking data off-site on a daily basis to minimize potential data loss. We looked at Acronis, Mozy, Carbonite and finally Crash Plan. All of them offered On-Line Data Backup Facilities in the neighbourhood of 200 or more gigabytes for about \$50. per year.

After looking at and experimenting with several of them and reading a lot of reviews we have decided to recommend Crash Plan. Crash Plan has some of the most flexible Backup and Recover options in the industry. It's easy to use and in many cases you can actually use it for free. This is due to the fact that while Crash Plan does offer On-Line Storage at \$50. / year, the program allows you to backup to another computer free of charge.

This can be another computer at the other end of the building or it can be your computer at home. To do this you basically setup an account with Crash Plan and load it onto all of the computers you want to backup to and from. It can be installed on a File Server for example and then on the general manager's home computer and the data can be backed up via the Internet automatically.

If you have two or more computers at home with sufficient disk space each of them can also be configured to backup to the other thereby minimizing the chances of losing all of those Word, Excel, Tax, Photo or Music files. And this can all be done with the free version.

Just a reminder that we do provide Data Recovery Services at often a fraction of the price of the larger companies. As long as the Hard Drive that contains your data has not failed completely we can often get it back. If you can drop it off to us, we can take a look and provide a free estimate for the recovery.