

The Importance of Data Backup

Every moment, someone in some part of the world is experiencing data loss. Unless data is backed up, this is accompanied by a sinking feeling as they realise that important information is now gone for good. Data loss is a classic example of a preventable disaster.

What is Data Backup?

How do we remember the phone numbers and addresses of all our friends? We can't memorise them all. So we maintain it in a diary and update it accordingly. What if this diary gets lost? It would either take us several days and a lot of embarrassment to get back everything again, or we wouldn't be able to retrieve the whole list at all. Most people use both the cell phone memory / SIM card and a paper phone book / notepad. The process of creating a copy of necessary information at another location is called backing up data. We save a piece of data only if it is needed, so it is sensible to likewise ensure what we saved remains intact. So data backup consists of the following steps:

We create the original data in a digital format.

We save it at the preferred location, i.e. we save an MS Excel file on the hard disk after tabulating something, or we save the photos we have just clicked in the memory of our digital camera or attached hard disk / DVD.

We take an output of this data as its backup, i.e. we burn a CD with the MS Excel file in it, or create a separate DVD with the photos.

We update this data as and when necessary, i.e. if we edit the file or the photos, we will be updating the backup copy of the data as we had originally saved it.

Why Do We Take Backups?

The digital mode always generates an unreasonable sense of security. "I haven't written it down on a piece of paper that can fly off or get wet, I have saved it on my cell phone," this is how we reason it out. And then when this impervious phone falls out of the pocket into a puddle while hopping up on a bus, we blame the local municipality, the manufacturers of the phone, fate, British buses and God. Wouldn't it be much better if we had a backup of this data to prevent it from getting lost due to all such foreseen and unforeseen circumstances, instead of wringing our hands when it's out of reach?

The Advantages of Backup

Yes, it is indeed tedious and boring to maintain a regular backup of all the data that we may really need, both personal and official. But the advantages outweigh the excuse of laziness and boredom by far.

Digital backup is the cheapest and easiest to maintain. A CD actually costs less than a phone and address notebook, and the price falls if bought in bulk. A pack of blank DVDs will always cost less than buying movie DVDs from the store again. Once you have the backup system and habit in place, it is also maintenance-free.

Data backups can prevent companies from disasters. It is always cheaper to maintain a room full of tapes than to wrap up your business because you realise (after the data is lost) that you can't manage to continue working without it and rebuilding it is impossible.

Data backup is a proof of original copyright, a safety measure for securing confidential information, a step towards effective disaster management, a ready record for reference, and a source of security in daily activities.

The Hour of Need

Accidents and disasters don't distribute calling cards before visiting, and neither do thieves or virus. Be it a corporate giant or a student with a thesis, having a backup is always more useful and cost-effective than running for data recovery. We know all the horror stories, research papers disappearing the evening before submission, hackers running away with intellectual property worth millions. There is no harm in storing up the resources for that rainy day. Scores of UK SMEs have shut down due to inadequate data backup measures. Thousands of people have cursed themselves, unable to afford data recovery professionals, but with the problem lying beyond the capacity of DIY software. Why join this sad brigade?

About the Author

James Walsh is a freelance writer and copy editor. If you are concerned about data loss and would like more information on [Data Recovery](#) see <http://www.fields-data-recovery.co.uk>

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