TECHNOLOGY | TOOLS

Securing your data in today's world - a must!

Finding out the right data backup solution for you used to be confusing. Not any longer.

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Just imagine that one day your computer becomes infected with a virus - or your hard drive stops working. That's when you will thank yourself that your computer information has been securely stored on a backup. Just be sure to act **before** a disaster happens! Not after it happens! You do take data backups of your system, don't you?

Your needs depend on what you want to backup, how you want to backup it up and on what type of computer or network you are using. It can be difficult to choose the right backup solution that you need. Not because they are difficult to find, but because there are too many of them.

What is data backup?

Backup of data can mean different things to different users! Is it a hard disk you want to backup, a server, a partition of your hard disk? It can also be a database, specific files or Directories/Folders.

There are many ways you can unintentionally lose information on a computer. A child playing the keyboard like a piano, a power surge, lightning, floods. And sometimes equipment, such as a hard drive – which is, after all, a mechanical device - just fails.

If you regularly make backup copies of your files and keep them in a separate place, you can get some, if not all, of your information back in the event something happens to the originals on your computer.

Deciding what to back up is highly personal. Anything you cannot replace easily should be at the top of your list. Before you get started, make a checklist of files to back up. This will help you determine what to back up, and also give you a reference list in the event you need to retrieve a backed-up file.

Here are some file suggestions to get you started: Bank records and other financial information; documents and personal projects; e-mail address book; calendar and bookmarks; digital photographs, software and music you purchased and downloaded from the Internet;

Whether you've already decided how you want to store your backup copies— or you're just trying to determine what's right for you, the chart below will help you determine the optimum solution for your needs and pocketbook.

External drives	An External Hard Drive which has a permanent, additional hard drive, or a Zip drive that uses removable Zip disks to store hundreds of megabytes of data.	• Zip Drives Include backup software • Range of storage options • Portable	• You must invest in the hardware, and in some cases, disks as well
CD-RW* *You need a CD-RW drive to burn files onto CDs.	A CD-RW is a compact disc onto which you can burn information if you have a CD-RW drive. (RW stands for "read-write.")	• Many newer computers come with a built in CD-RW drive • **CD-RW discs can hold up to 700MB**	• You need to buy a CD-RW drive if your computer doesn't come with one • It's possible to accidentally write over data on your CD-RW disc and lose your backup files

		• Portable • CD-RW discs can be used over again • Discs are relatively inexpensive	• Older CD players cannot read CD-RW discs
DVD-RW* *You need a DVD-RW drive to burn files onto DVDs.	A DVD-RW is a DVD onto which you can burn information if you have a DVD-RW drive. (RW stands for "read-write.")	• Many newer computers come with a built in DVD-RW drive • DVD burners double as CD burners, offering more flexibility • **One disc stores gigabytes of information** • Portable • DVD-RW discs can be used over again • Discs are relatively inexpensive	• You need to buy a DVD-RW drive if your computer doesn't come with one • The drive might not come with backup software • It's possible to accidentally write over data on your DVD-RW disc and lose your backup files
USB flash drive	A USB flash drive is like a small hard drive, about 2-3 inches long, that plugs into your computer through a USB port. You can download information onto it for storage.	• Portable • Can hold up to 4 gigabytes or more of data • Files can be saved, modified, or deleted as often as you want • Prices start relatively low as hardware prices go	• USB flash drives, because of their size, are easy to misplace, and because they are mechanical devices, can fail

Online backup and storage	An online storage service lets you save files online. If you have Internet access, you can get your files from the online storage site whenever you need them.	• Stores your information out of the house or office • Includes download and backup software • Offers the potential for a larger amount of storage space than some other backup devices or locations	• You might be required to pay a monthly fee for backing up and storing your files (prices vary according to each provider and service) • If the company's servers fail, you might not be able to access your files • If the company is hacked, your information could be stolen • If the company goes out of business, you lose your backup resource

SOURCE: Microsoft.com

You might also want to consider Tape Backup

Tape backup can be the choice for larger amounts of date, and when you need the ability to periodically copy the contents of all or a designated amount of data from its usual storage device to a tape cartridge device, as well as for archiving and for disaster recovery purposes. Tape backup can be done manually or, with appropriate software, can be programmed to happen automatically. There are a number of Tape Backup options available, the most popular with small businesses and home business being either Travan or DAT systems. Tape backup also includes the ability to restore data that has been backed up back to hard disk storage devices when needed.

Remember, when making a decision that works for you, take into account your data size needs, costs involved, and safety of the data.

But, by all means – backup your data frequently! Make sure that you're not the one who says "I wish I had a backup. Now What?"

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Since 1994, Brilliant Computers has been a leading provider of outsourced information technology and solutions for businesses, corporations, home-based businesses and homeowners. Over the past 13 Years, we have earned a reputation for consistently exceeding client expectations, and today, we manage the IT needs for a multitude of active clients.

Brilliant Computers offers a wide range of services and solutions that address business needs and challenges as Computer Network Specialists for: Network Design, Configuration, Installation and

Maintenance for Wired, Wireless and Wide-Area; Computer Sales (we are an Authorized DELL Reseller), Service, Upgrades, Data & Disaster Recovery, Data Backup Solutions, Security Solutions and Maintenance, Cleanup, Antivirus & Spyware Removal on both a local and global basis via our remote access capabilities.

Our philosophy for Corporate Clients is based on the simple premise that you need to stay in business -- and we need to make sure you do. We provide Onsite and Emergency Services as well as maintaining an in-house workshop. To keep you up and running, we insure fast response time to specific problems. And to minimize those problems we provide Monthly Contract Services.

A business owner for over 30 years, Mark's time in the wiring industry, video production, and especially the printing industry – which in 1985 led to his early use of, and expertise in, computers - complements his natural curiosity to provide hands-on experience that has translated into today's computer technology expertise.