

WHITE PAPER:
DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE: BACKUP TO
THE CLOUD TO PROTECT YOUR BUSINESS



Don't Wait Until It's Too Late: Backup to the Cloud to Protect Your Business from Disaster

Who should read this paper

A Symantec.cloud white paper for Small Business Owners

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The situation

When it comes to disasters, the question isn't *if*, but *when* they will occur. Ranging from minor power outages to catastrophic floods, disasters more often result from malicious tampering, computer failure, hardware theft, computer viruses, or hacking. Even more common is the catastrophe of simply deleting a critical file accidentally. Whatever the cause, if your company's information isn't protected when a serious glitch occurs, the digital assets that drive your business can be permanently lost. Possible consequences—including reputation damage, lost revenue, legal liability, even the close of the business—are sobering. Companies must be proactive to ensure that when disaster strikes, their data will be protected, so they can get back to work as quickly as possible.

However, rather than being motivated by these risks, many small and mid-size businesses (SMBs) are clearly not taking disaster preparedness seriously. According to [Symantec's SMB Disaster Preparedness survey](#), half of SMBs don't have a disaster preparedness plan at all, and others say they have no intention to create one. Since these companies aren't backing up their systems, and their data is unprotected, it appears that many are simply placing their bets against the event of a severe system outage or data loss.

Why don't SMBs have a plan?

Given what's at risk, the question is, why don't these companies have a plan? Several reasons were offered. Some respondents felt computer systems aren't critical to the business. Others said it never occurred to them to create a plan. Still others claimed disaster preparedness simply isn't a priority, or that they lack the skills needed to identify and implement a plan.

There's no doubt that backup has historically been somewhat of a hassle. As an organization grows and uses more applications, managing backup becomes increasingly complex and time-consuming. The cost of equipment or solutions can be prohibitive. Many small businesses are simply overwhelmed, with limited resources to manage and maintain backup applications, software, and hardware on an ongoing basis.

The costs

From the complete inability to conduct business to loss of customer trust and reputation, system outages and data loss incidents are clearly costing SMBs. Impacts include:

- **It's expensive.** A system outage costs SMBs an average of \$12,500 per day. In addition, the act of losing customer data can have financial impacts. For example, the Payment Card Industry's Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) mandates fines of up to \$25,000 for minor violations, up to \$500,000 for more serious violations, and possible loss of credit card processing authorization.
- **Customers leave.** Many data protection regulations include disclosure and notification requirements. When sensitive data is lost or stolen, potential victims must be informed so they can take steps to protect themselves from identity theft. Therefore, businesses that lose their customers' personal information risk public embarrassment that can permanently damage their reputation and cost them customers.
- **Business continuity is lost.** The most significant problem, however, is not being able to conduct business at all. Businesses today are heavily reliant upon smoothly operating IT systems and, perhaps more importantly, the data they interact with. According to the Symantec study, outages lead to an average of 54 percent of customers switching vendors because of "unreliable computing systems." For many businesses, a disaster could put them out of business permanently¹. Businesses must do their utmost to ensure the continued operation of their systems and the ability to rapidly recover data in the event of a disaster.

SMBs don't act until it's too late

Although 65 percent of SMBs reside in regions that they consider susceptible to natural disasters, they don't have plans to help them keep their computer systems up and running in the face of such a disaster. In fact, these companies experienced an average of six outages in the past year.

Of SMBs that *do* currently have a disaster preparedness plan, half implemented their plan only *after* an outage or loss of data. The top three culprits listed were cyber attacks, power outages, and natural disasters, however, common causes of data loss also include more mundane events such as coffee spilled on a laptop, machines dropped on concrete pavement, and accidental file deletion. It's critical for SMBs to act *before* disaster occurs to protect their data.

The solution: cloud-based backup

It's abundantly clear that SMBs can't afford to wait to figure out what to do. They must begin mapping out a data recovery plan now, before the fact. The good news is, backup doesn't have to be overwhelming. Cloud-based backup is a compelling alternative to on-premise software or hardware solutions, allowing a company to replace expensive backup hardware, software, and personnel with a subscription-based service. With no hardware or software to deploy or manage and no need to hire dedicated resources, cloud-based backup is quick and easy to set up. Since data is stored to remote computers in the cloud, it is automatically protected in case of a local disaster such as fire or flood. Cloud backup even offers self-service retrieval, enabling employees to restore their own lost data as needed.

Backup to the cloud:

- **Ensures consistent, automated backups.** Online backup solutions can be completely automated, and the vendor assumes much of the responsibility for the success of backups and restores. Vendors typically offer 24x7 support and provide a web-based portal to view completed backups and backup version histories, initiate restores, and run reports.
- **Secures and protects the company's data.** Online data recovery solutions back up data electronically over the Internet to the vendor's data center. Data is encrypted as it's transmitted to the vendor and encrypted again at the vendor's data center.
- **Simplifies off-site protection.** Online backup eliminates the need to physically transport tapes or removable external drives. The result is affordable, off-site protection with no need for a vaulting service and no interaction with physical media that can fail.
- **Protects remote branch offices and mobile workers.** Many remote and branch offices have limited or no backup in place, or no way to monitor backups to make sure they are occurring. Mobile workers are also often at risk because of increased risks of lost or stolen machines. An online backup service ensures regular and automated backups for these sites and workers who lack local IT staff, or who lack the time to perform and maintain regular backups. Larger organizations wishing to protect remote workers or smaller satellite offices can back up to the cloud while still using traditional software at the main office.
- **Is fast and easy.** A company can set up regular automated backups quickly, thereby reducing the demands for a committed resource to manage them. Vendors that provide block level or incremental backup after the initial backup help to further speed and simplify backup by running the service in the background and backing up only items that have changed.
- **Predictable costs.** With a subscription-based model, customer has a regular predictable costs and can easily add more storage capacity as business requirements change.
- **Increases business focus.** A common complaint from small business owners is that they have no time to think about the growth of their business, or how they can further leverage technology to boost profits, revenue, and productivity. With no need to worry about managing data protection and recovery, business owners are free to focus on the core business. In the event of a failure, downtime is minimized, and users can recover files themselves.

Conclusion

Small and mid-size businesses are increasingly turning to the cloud for solutions to protect their data in case of a severe computer or network outage. A recent survey conducted by the [Aberdeen Group](#) comparing cloud users and non-cloud users found that mid-sized companies were the largest group to adopt the cloud for backup and recovery, accounting for 48 percent of cloud users surveyed. Small companies were next, at 38 percent, and large companies brought up the rear at 26 percent. Interestingly, the same study revealed that the average length of down time was eight hours for non-cloud users versus two hours for cloud-users.

With the promise of significant cost savings, flexible options designed for agility, and a workforce that is free to focus on its company's core offering, it's no surprise that SMBs are among those leading the charge to move their backup operations to the cloud. Symantec Backup Exec.cloud provides essential disaster recovery and backup protection for small and mid-size businesses. With Backup Exec.cloud, businesses gain the assurance that data is being backed up automatically and continuously without impacting business operations.

More Information

Learn more about Symantec™ small business offerings at:

<http://www.symantec.com/business/solutions/smallbusiness/index.jsp>

Learn more about Symantec.cloud offerings and Backup Exec.cloud at:

<http://www.symanteccloud.com>

About Symantec.cloud

More than 11 million end users at more than 55,000 organizations ranging from small businesses to the Fortune 500 use Symantec.cloud to secure and manage information stored on endpoints and delivered via email, Web, and instant messaging. Organizations can choose from 16 pre-integrated applications to help secure and manage their business even as new technologies and devices are introduced and traditional boundaries of the workplace disappear. A division within Symantec Corporation, Symantec.cloud offers customers the ability to work more productively in a connected world.

For specific country offices and contact numbers, please visit our website.

About Symantec
Headquartered in Mountain View, Calif., Symantec has operations in 40 countries. More information is available at www.symantec.com.

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