The Value of Backups

by Betty Hardin

According to CNNMoney.com, 43% of computer users do not backup their computer. Ever.

Why?

Ignorance. Lazy. Expense. Not an important issue. Too complicated. No time to do it. Maybe they assume that the "restore" fuctionality built into windows is a backup. In reality it's not; half the time the restore function doesn't work or it doesn't do what you though it would do.

The number of people who don't have backups or don't have adequate backups simply amazes me; particularly businesses who are dependent on the data stored in the computer.

You just want to use the computer. You don't use it for very much; email, pictures of the grandkids, receipts, tax documents, business documents, letters or even the world's greatest novel. And never save a copy.

A backup is nothing more than a copy of the stuff on your computer. That's it. That's all.

So what if you don't backup?

When your hard drive fails, al of the data on your computer will be gone. Your kid's life history, the letter from your attorney or the IRS, the phone number or email for that guy you have to call tomorrow...gone.

Imagine that someone stole your computer. All of your data is just gone.

If you don't care about the stuff on your computer, don't back it up. If you are one of those people who also never clean the garbage off the computer that might be a good thing - because you get to start fresh with NOTHING on the computer.

What are the odds of failure?

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Business Hours

Monday - Friday
10:00am - 4:00pm
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Severe Weather

In the event of severe weather when the general public is advised to stay off the roads, our offices will be closed. We will continue to support our customers through remote administration from our homes but all appointments on site at the customer location will be rescheduled.

Send a Soldier a Netbook

Big Blue Water, along with other local businesses, are joining together to support our soldiers. Soldiers are sent away from friends and family for long periods of time and we, at Big Blue Water, would like to use technology to bring our soldiers closer to those they love. In October 2009 we began a campaign to collect funds to purchase and donate a netbook to soldiers being deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

If you would like to help, feel free to stop by our office to drop off your donation amount. Or, you

Who cares? IT CAN AND WILL HAPPEN. It's only a matter of time. Hard drives (the only thing inside the computer where your data is stored) are made of glass and aluminum with a thin layer of magnetic coating on them. It's an electrical, mechanical and magnetic device - and all of those are prone to failure.

What happens when you drop a glass, or expose aluminum to heat, or shake the etch-a-sketch?

The life of a hard drive (assuming no bumps, power failures or other issues) is about four years.

The Gartner Group estimates a 5% failure rate in the first year rising to a 12% failure rate in the fourth year. Assuming that 1/3 of all computers are going to have a hard drive failure within four years even if they do not have "issues". Throw in the probability of getting hit by a virus, spyware, electrical surge, spike, power failure, or bad software, and the odds go up considerably (to about 66%).

Time & Money.

The solution - and the expense - will vary (mostly) on the volume of data that you have to backup. Other considerations are time to recover from a failure, the cost of downtime(if you are running a business), the types of disasters you may be susceptible to, governmental regulations and mandates, and whether or not you have the need to "go back in time".

The price of having a backup can range from a few dollars per month into the thousands dependent on the complexity.

Once you've done the initial setup, backups can be totally automated; you simply need to check them once in a while to make sure you have a GOOD backup (a good backup is one that you can use to recover your data; yes-even backups fail from time to time).

So what is the value of a backup?

How long, really, can you manage your business without your computer? How valuable are all of those pictures of your loved ones? What if (God forbid) something happens tomorrow and your loved one is gone?

We put a lot of information, a lot of our lives, into our computer systems.

may go to http://bigbluewater.com/send-a-soldier to make a contribution via PayPal. Also available are donation cans at The Sand Bar Saloon, Holland Tire Center, Blue Goose Restaurant, the Fennville VFW, Pullman VFW, Holland VFW and Caravanserai Bakery.

Any questions? Please call Melissa at Big Blue Water 269-857-5517.

Techie Terminology

Computer jargon is thrown around everyday; in newspaper articles, website advertisements and sometimes in general conversation. To help you stay on top of what's what we've compiled a list of the most common terms and their meanings to help keep you in the loop. Each month we'll add a few more to your techie vocabulary.

Data - Anything stored on a computer (Word documents, email, test files, MP3's (music)etc...)

Trivia Question

Q. What name is given to half of a Byte (4 bits)?

A. Nibble

Inkjet Printer For Sale - $60.00

Epson NX215 Inkjet 4-in-1 printer for sale. If interested please contact Big Blue Water at 269-857-5517.

Backups are one of those things that it's better to have and not need than to need and not have.