

# MANAGED OR DIY BACKUP



**Talk to your customers about options**

# MANAGED OR DIY BACKUP – TALK TO YOUR CUSTOMERS ABOUT OPTIONS

Many businesses rely on partner companies to assist them with their technology needs. This relationship helps the business focus on what they do best and on what they understand, without the need to build an internal IT organization to support all of their technical needs. It's true that even the smallest businesses might have an IT department of one or two people to help keep things operating for their co-workers, but doing more with less has become the norm for companies of all sizes.

Being able to rely on a managed service provider (MSP) for some or all of the services needed to ensure that the systems are up and running is awesome, but what about the features or tasks nobody wants to talk about? Backup and recovery fall in this category for many organizations. Many do what they can to backup information, but that is only part of the story and a great backup solution isn't worth much money if the things being backed up are not there when they are needed. This is an area where the managed service provider can be a greater ally to their customers. This paper will outline how managed backups can help your organization solve one of the problems that is scariest (or certainly should be) for your customers.

As a managed services provider, monitoring and managing your customers' environments is all part of a day's work. However, even though your customers realize the need for outsourced monitoring and management, they may still look at backup as a DIY task. According to a recent survey (Spiceworks.com, 2012), the top three things that prevent SMBs from achieving success with backup and disaster recovery are:

- Tight budgets
- Lack of IT expertise
- Constantly changing technology and solutions

Another study (Mays, 2013) found that only 38 percent of surveyed SMBs had a formal disaster recovery plan in place. 72 percent said that they back up their data on-site only, which has its own inherent dangers.

Since backup may be something your customers are still doing on premise (and on their own) there is definitely an opportunity to help your customers at

the same time you are building your business. Organizations are made of data, and data loss—at any level—can be a business impacting event. Moving this very important task to the MSP removes the stress of managing these items from the customer organization and ensures backups get done in a timely, consistent, and restorable manner.

I am sure that almost every organization that uses a computer will tell you that they backup their data. But data loss is more common than you might think. A 2011 Carbonite survey (Carbonite.com, 2011) found some facts concerning data loss that may surprise you:

- 48% of small businesses in the US between 2 and 20 employees have experienced data loss (up from 42% in 2010)
- Top causes for data loss include hardware/software failure (54 percent), accidental deletion (54 percent), viruses (33 percent), and theft (10 percent)
- Thirty one percent of small business owners consider backing up company data to be a hassle

## Discussing the Benefits of Managed Backup with Your Customers

With backup, the inclination is to talk about doom, gloom, and disaster recovery. There is a lot of data to support the necessity of a plan and solution, and it's clear that not every event requiring a data restore features thunder and lightning, or other weather related incidents. According to a 2011 Aberdeen study, only 5% of small & 9% of mid-sized business reported data loss from a natural disaster. (Aberdeen Group, 2011)

But data loss could be triggered by a number of things:

- Server failures/hardware failures
- Employee oversight/human error/accidental deletions
- Power outages
- Viruses
- Disgruntled employees
- Natural disasters

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN MANAGED BACKUP

Managed backup provides a way for you to seamlessly protect your customers' valuable data. A good managed backup solution will offer:

- Set it and forget it – with managed backup, you and your customers shouldn't have to be involved in the process. Backups should be made and stored automatically.
- Always ready – backups should be focused on restoring data and any associated systems as quickly as possible. The goal is to minimize downtime and lost productivity.
- Choose your own restore –you should be able to restore a single file or recover an entire system to new hardware.
- Incremental backups – by only storing what has changed since the last backup, time and storage are significantly reduced.
- Snapshot frequency – depending on the solution and configuration you implement, snapshots can be as frequent as needed. A typical snapshot time is every 10-15 minutes which reduces potential lost data considerably.
- A data recovery plan—helping your customers build a plan for disaster recovery will ensure both organizations are on the same page to ensure backups are happening as needed and recovery can be accomplished with minimal interruptions and downtime

And, we've probably all seen the scary statistics about what happen to businesses after a data loss:

- 90% of businesses losing data from a disaster are forced to shut down within two years. (StorageCraft, 2012)
- The survival rate for companies without a disaster recovery plan is less than 10%. (StorageCraft, 2012)
- Only 44% [of businesses] successfully recovered information after a recent data recovery event. (Zerto, 2011)

- 53% of claimants never recoup the losses incurred by a disaster. (Disaster Recovery Solutions UK, 2012)

Giving your customer information like this may elicit a “wow, I better do something quick” response or a “I hear you, but I still don't think that will happen to me.”

However, there is a positive spin as well. Consider the growing law firm. If the data and required backups are increasing in line with all of the work being done by the company, related time spent doing backup tasks will increase as well. This would require more work, more storage, and possibly even more resources (if staff is already stretched thin).

If this office had been working with a managed scenario, the new growth could be added to the managed workloads and the backups would happen seamlessly, with no additional logistics. This would free up the staff to work on more pressing issues.

Another scenario to consider is time and ease of recovery. If the organization's data is kept only onsite and the site is struck by a disaster, the information may be lost. Moving tapes offsite is better than nothing at all, but there are many steps required to get these backups rolling again. Making sure all the right tapes are available and not corrupt can be a herculean task when the pressure of recovery is on. A managed backup solution keeps the data ready to recover to a new location and new hardware very quickly should the need arise.

If a recovery event occurs, will your customer have everything they need? Remember that backups are only as good as the restore. Having a backup file of the boss's “My Documents” folder is great, but if you cannot recover the entire machine (including apps, images, and even music), there may be some very uneasy discussions to be had. A good managed backup solution gives you the option of file or bare metal recovery. Plus, you'll want that recovered data to be current. If you restore a machine with data that is a week old – that is not a boon to productivity.

And of course, don't forget ROI. If downtime costs a company X and a recovery event creates downtime for Y, then ROI is pretty easy to estimate. Even lost productivity – some portion of X – has real financial impact.

The sampling above should shed some light on the importance not only of backup, but also of recovery and speed, which are the ultimate goals. Recovery is much easier when planning and documentation happen at the outset. Helping a customer define a backup plan could be the best thing an MSP does for them. Sure it takes work, but should it ever be needed, a plan will define what is where, what gets restored first, and who does what in order to minimize downtime and get your customer's business back on track.

### What managed backup is not - or what is not managed backup

Your customers may claim to have a backup process because they store critical data in the cloud. However, we all know that storing files and folders in a public cloud service like Microsoft OneDrive or S3 or Dropbox in and of itself is not the same as having a managed backup. Sure the data has gone off to reside in a faraway place, but people still need to put the information out there and have practices in place to ensure things get updated consistently (and can come back when needed). It's easy to show the benefits of a true backup solution (see sidebar).

### Who manages backup, Partners, Storage Providers, or Others?

The risks and benefits of backup and disaster recovery can have huge weight associated with them. If done correctly, they will be useful in keeping organizations comfortable with how their information is managed, kept, monitored, and made available. When an organization doesn't know what happens to their data as it is being backed up and has no plan in place to reduce the risks of a disaster, Murphy's Law seems to state that a disaster will find them. Hopefully managed backup can help to mitigate these risks and keep the downtime short and the recovery process moving smoothly along.

When offering managed backup to your customers – choosing a reliable, intuitive solution is key. N-able offers an industry-recognized, award-winning solution that is designed to be an asset to your business. N-able's Backup Manager gives you the opportunity to offer your customers comprehensive data protection services and near-instantaneous recovery of their business-critical data with easy-to-use tools, innovative technology, and exceptional performance. To learn more or start a free trial, visit [http://www.n-able.com/products/backup\\_manager/](http://www.n-able.com/products/backup_manager/).

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