



Backups

With many of our clients working from home, we thought it might be helpful to discuss using backups to avoid disaster if your home computer crashes. Here are our recommendations.

Why Backups

If your hard drive crashes or you catch a ransomware virus, the only thing standing between you and lots of pain is a backup. At some point, all hard drives fail; maybe not tomorrow, maybe not next year, but some day. If you don't have a backup of your valuable documents and pictures, they will be lost when that day comes.

File-level backups

File-level backups back up anything in your Documents and Pictures folders. You can also specify additional folders if you are storing files somewhere else. Daily, or backup-as-you-work backups are not designed to back up your programs (apps) or the state of your computer. If your hard drive dies, a typical backup will not help you restore the computer to health, but your documents can be safely restored to a repaired or replaced computer. Unfortunately, you will have to reinstall your apps – unless you have an image backup.

Image backups

In addition to the files, photos, movies, and videos you store on your computer, you also have other important information stored there too. This includes your operating system, applications, browser history, preferences, settings, bookmarks, device drivers, etc. If you lose these files, worst case is that your computer will not start. Best case is that you will spend time re-creating information.

With disk image backups, the software takes an image of the entire hard disk. This lets you restore the entire system to another computer, including the operating system, applications, browser history, preferences, settings, bookmarks, device drivers, and all of the files you created and downloaded. Image backups let you restore the whole system and/or get back to a previous state fast.

What type of backup do I need

The simple answer is both. You would only need to make an image backup once every month or so. With an image backup, the most important things being backed up are the files required to transfer your system to another computer. Since those files don't change very often (except for Windows updates), there's no need to backup the whole system very often. You would depend on your file-level backups to keep documents and pictures backed up so they were always current.

The good news is that the cloud-based solutions we recommend below offer both types of backups for one subscription.

Different backup solutions

Home users - Backup to a thumb drive or an external USB hard drive

This is the least recommended solution. You can connect a USB drive to your computer and copy your documents and pictures there. You will have to make sure you have a drive large enough to store everything, and you will have to discipline yourself to make frequent copies of your docs. You will also have to make sure you don't misplace your drive. That would be especially unfortunate if you have sensitive documents stored on it. Overall, this is a very unsecure approach, and it requires user diligence.

Home users - Subscribe to a cloud-based service

We recommend [iDrive](#) for this. iDrive will back up your documents as you work and store the backups in the cloud, releasing you from the burden of remembering to do your own backups. iDrive is also secure, so your docs won't be hacked. For around \$52 a year, you get 2TB of storage. If you need 5GB or less, you can get it for free. There are other plans available, offering more storage, but for home use, one of these 2 plans should be enough. And the best part... you can install iDrive, let it go to work and then forget it. It does not require you to manage anything unless you want to.

One of the best features of iDrive is that if a file or folder is deleted, it remains in the iDrive archive until you manually delete it, ensuring that nothing is ever lost by accident. The same goes for previous versions of files, which makes it easy to revert any changes you may have made.

Here is a [Jan 2020 review](#), if you'd like to get someone else's perspective.

TekResults is an iDrive partner. We get a small piece of the action when you subscribe, so if you go through us for your subscription, we will be happy to help you set it up.

Business users typically back up documents on the server

Both of the previous backup methods will work for the home user, but if you are in a business and connected to a server, the server is the best place to store your documents, as long as the server is being backed up regularly.

Most networks provide storage space on the server for users' personal documents. Many times this comes in the form of a mapped drive that only the user has access to. It's common policy for the network administrator to give the mapped user drive the drive letter U (You... get it?). Documents stored in the U drive are actually stored on the server. Check with your network administrator if you're not sure you have a network drive.

In a networked environment, there are usually other folders on the server besides the folder set aside for your personal documents. Shared folders on the server are accessible by other users on the network, based on the permissions set on the folders themselves. The documents stored in these folders are also typically backed up daily.

Part of the network administrator's job is to make sure the server with all the users' documents is backed up daily. If this is the case with your network, and you are storing your documents in your server-based folder, congratulations, you don't need another backup solution. One note of caution though, if you store your documents on your desktop, your documents are at risk. Your desktop is not backed up as part of the server backup. Only those documents specifically stored on the server will be backed up.

[Home users - I store my documents in OneDrive or Dropbox. Do I still need to back up](#)
Cloud storage services like Dropbox and OneDrive are good for storing files, photos and videos from your laptop to one centralized location – the cloud. You can access your files from any device and easily share files with friends and family; it also allows easy syncing.

But cloud storage isn't the same thing as backup.

If your data goes missing -- say your computer crashes or gets stolen – and if you haven't been constantly moving your updated files to your cloud storage, then you will lose the files that weren't manually uploaded. Even if file sync is turned on, if a file on a laptop is deleted or gets infected with malware, data gets deleted or infected on both sides.

This is where cloud backup comes in.

Cloud backup – also known as online backup -- is specifically designed for making copies of your files and ensures continuous backup and offers an easy way to restore your files.

Backup services offer file versioning, which means in the event of data loss – say, your computer gets infected with ransomware – you will be able to recover a clean version of your file from a point in time before your system became infected.

Cloud storage vs. cloud backup: Key differences

- Cloud storage is designed to supplement your hard drive space and makes it easier to access and edit files from different devices. Cloud backup is designed in a way that you can restore files in the event of data loss.
- With cloud storage you must manually select files you want to store in the cloud, while cloud backup services work automatically to save and sync files stored on your computer.
- Cloud backup providers are serious about keeping your data secure: Your files are usually encrypted both on transfer and on storage. But with most cloud storage services, files can only be encrypted on the server side, making the data transfer process less secure.

As with all our recommendations, TekResults is eager to assist you with answers to your questions or to help you engage any of these settings. Just call or email.

Referrals

TekResults owes much of our success to our loyal and enthusiastic clients. It's those of you who tell your friends about us that keep our company growing, and we'd like to say thanks. Just telling someone about us is all it takes. Just let us know you dropped our name and we'll drop a gift card in the mail for you to enjoy a great meal at a [Dante's restaurant](#). See... who said talk is cheap!

The TekResults Team

support@tekresults.com

814-206-0000 Option 1

To unsubscribe send an email to UnsubscribeNewsletter@tekresults.com with unsubscribe to Newsletter in the subject line or click here UnsubscribeNewsletter@tekresults.com

Our Services and Products

- IT problem solving
- Office 365 sales and support
- Business phone systems (Comcast, VoIPly, Vonage, Fortinet)
- Infrastructure design and implementation
- Pre-Sales consulting
- Capacity planning/ system design
- Network cabling
- Security compliance review HIPAA
- Security compliance review PCI
- System installations
- System upgrades
- System auditing / documentation
- Desktop, laptop and monitor and other sales
- Network administration
- Network troubleshooting
- Business consulting software testing and service
- 3rd party software setup and support
- Computer security solutions (including PGP, encrypted mail, secured transactions)
- Custom application development
- Legacy system migration and rewrites
- System integration
- Application integration
- Network installation and integration
- Training and staff development