


WHITE PAPER:  
IS ONLINE BACKUP RIGHT FOR YOUR  
BUSINESS?



# Is Online Backup Right for your Business? Eight reasons to consider protecting your data in the cloud

Who should read this paper

A Symantec.cloud white paper for Small Business Owners



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## The Importance of Backup

When it comes to disasters, the question isn't *if*, but *when* they will occur. They can range from minor power outages to catastrophic floods, but more often result from malicious tampering, computer failure, hardware theft, computer viruses, or hacking. Equally common is the disaster of simply deleting a file accidentally. Businesses must be proactive to ensure that when a disaster occurs, their data will be protected, so they can get back to work as quickly as possible.

If you're like most small businesses, you rely on your computer systems to keep day-to-day operations running smoothly. Any unexpected downtime—such as when systems are out of operation or become inaccessible—can result in serious consequences, including reputation damage, lost revenue, or legal liability. If your data isn't protected when a serious glitch occurs, the digital assets that drive your business can be permanently lost.

However, according to Symantec's 2011 SMB Disaster Preparedness Survey, many small businesses are still not appropriately protecting their data in the event of a disaster. In fact, less than half back up their data weekly or more frequently, and only 23 percent back up daily.

Why? As an organization grows and uses more applications, managing backup can become very time-consuming, complex, and expensive. Many small businesses are simply overwhelmed. They don't have the time and resources to deal with the ongoing maintenance and management of their applications, software, and hardware.

This is where automated backup to remote computers in the cloud comes in. Data is automatically stored offsite, safe in the event of a natural disaster. It is also suitable for an increasingly mobile workforce, as data can be restored from anywhere with an Internet connection. Whether for messaging security or data storage and protection, small businesses are increasingly turning to cloud-based solutions they can trust to ease the burden on their time and resources.

## The Benefits of Online Backup

Like other SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) applications, online backup is an alternative to an on-premise software application. In this instance, both the backup application and storage of information resides offsite. This approach allows customers to replace upfront investments in backup hardware, software, and personnel with a predictable subscription-based service fee.

Following are eight reasons to consider online backup for your business:

1. **Secures and protects your company's data.** After its employees, a company's information is among its most important assets. Online data recovery solutions back up data electronically over the Internet to the vendor's data center. Industry best practice is for data to be encrypted while it is transmitted to the vendor and again at the vendor's data center. Storage in enterprise-class facilities provides additional security.
2. **Ensures consistent, automated backups.** Online backup solutions can be completely automated, and the vendor assumes much of the responsibility for the success of the backups and restores. Some vendors offer 24x7 support and provide a Web-based portal to view completed backups and backup version histories, initiate restores, and run reports.
3. **Simplifies off-site protection.** Online backup eliminates the need to physically transport tapes or removable external drives. Offsite protection without a vaulting service can be more affordable and doesn't require interaction with physical media that may be prone to failure.

4. **Protects remote and branch offices.** Many remote and branch offices have limited or no backup in place, or no way to monitor backups to make sure they are occurring. By using an online backup service, remote offices are protected by regular and automated backups even if they lack local technical staff. 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.
5. **Is fast and easy.** You can set up regular automated backups quickly with no need for dedicated or onsite IT staff. With vendors that support block level or incremental backup, after the initial backup, the service runs in the background, backing up only items that have changed.
6. **Helps to keep data available.** Online backup preserves data for small businesses with aging computers or data stored on hard drives that are not backed up regularly. Data center redundancy plans help keep information and applications available.
7. **Reduces costs and allows access to advanced systems.** With a subscription-based model, the cost of building and maintaining the infrastructure to support the backup application is spread across numerous customers, allowing the service provider to offer a sophisticated service at a lower cost than would otherwise be possible.
8. **Increases business focus.** A common complaint from IT managers is that they have too little time to think about the growth of their business, or how they can further leverage technology to boost profits, revenue, and productivity. When companies no longer have to worry about data recovery, they're free to focus on the core business. With fewer servers to manage and fewer client computers failing, there's time to build competitive strategies that allow the company to grow.

Online backup allows a company to leave data protection to the experts. Optimized to work over limited bandwidth connections between corporate locations and the vendor's data center, online backup is ideal for companies with one to two servers per site and several dozen PCs, and for smaller remote offices and mobile workers.

Consider online backup if you have:

- **No local IT staff:** Smaller companies where IT is overtaxed, or where there is no onsite IT staff.
- **Smaller data sets:** Network bandwidth is a consideration when data sets are large.
- **Limited applications and databases on local servers:** A limited number of local applications or databases generally means you have less data or applications to recover.
- **No hardware for backup:** Businesses who have no plans to invest in hardware, and no desire to own or manage it.
- **A preference for SaaS:** More and more companies have adopted SaaS elsewhere in their business and prefer the benefits (agility, low initial price, pay-as-you-grow) over on-premise solutions.
- **A growing number of remote offices and mobile workers:** Online backup helps to relieve remote offices of backup duties so they can focus on business operations.

## Considerations

When researching backup services vendors, seek out vendors that provide detailed information on their policies and programs. In addition, ask about:

### **Security & Privacy**

- Data Security. When selecting a vendor to store your data in the cloud, it is important to research the levels of encryption and security used to protect it. Strong vendors will protect your data in transit with military-grade encryption levels like 128-bit SSL connections and store it on reliable enterprise-grade redundant disk arrays (RAIDs).
- Data center access. How secure are the facilities that your data will be stored in? It is important that the data centers used by the vendor are constantly monitored with carefully controlled personnel access.

### **Compliance**

Think about legislation or regulations the business must comply with. Are there regulatory requirements for where the data can be stored? Is the business required to retain data for a certain period of time? What data privacy safeguards are required? Ask the vendor how they can help you address these requirements.

### **Performance & Reliability**

What happens if the backup provider becomes temporarily or permanently unavailable? What rights do you have to your data? How quickly will you receive your backup? Make sure you understand your backup service provider's service level agreements and the measures they use to protect your data and ensure the availability of the service.

## Conclusion

Cloud-based backup offers important benefits for small businesses. 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 small businesses are leading the charge to move their backup operations to the cloud. Symantec's cloud backup solution, designed by the same team that created the award-winning Backup Exec software, provides essential disaster recovery and backup protection in the cloud. With Symantec data protection solutions, you can rest assured knowing your data is being backed up automatically and continuously without disruption to your business.

## 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](http://www.symantec.com).

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