

What is your backup plan for your backup?

Brent Bol, Teacher, Crawford Adventist Academy, Willowdale, ON

The warnings are everywhere...backup, backup, backup. Have you ever failed to back up crucial documents, only to have something go wrong, losing them forever? Backup your backup, and back that up too! That's what I did, but I made one critical error. Let me tell you my story. . .

I had all my files on my laptop backed up on a memory stick and CD(Lesson Plans, course outlines, tests, Pictures etc..) which I kept in my laptop bag. At the end of the day, I packed up my laptop, picked up my cousin and was on my way home. I just had to make a quick stop at the Best Buy to buy a new laptop. My cousin and I went into the Best Buy and looked at several models of laptops and after about 30mins, decided on one. To our astonishment, when we returned to my Suburban, we noticed that the entire locking mechanism on the passenger side was drilled out- laptop and the backup with it were both gone. We had even locked the doors and the laptop was out of sight on the floor of the back seat! Robbers these days are high tech! They must have used some sort of gadget to remove the entire locking mechanism!

So what are your backup options? Prior to my research for this article, my knowledge extended as far as the use of Flash Drives, external hard drives, or DVD backup. USB back up is a popular form of backup although they're easy to lose or break and you can't label them. External drives are slower than internal drives because the data has to travel across the USB, FireWire, or eSATA cable, but they are faster than Flash drives. Optical Media (DVD's and CD's) can be used for backup, however it is very time consuming and you will need several discs to complete the backup.

There is, however, another option- online software backup. There are various online software options starting at \$50/month such as Barracuda Backup service.

"Barracuda Backup Service is an affordable data backup solution that provides full local data backups with several options for offsite data replication. Barracuda Backup Service provides complete control over where data is stored. For local backup, Barracuda Backup Service offers a full line of Barracuda Backup Servers to store data locally at different sized locations. To prevent catastrophic data loss at any single location, Barracuda Backup Service lets customers replicate backups offsite to the cloud, to their privately owned locations or a combination of both." (<http://www.barracudanetworks.com>)

Other Proprietary backup software options are: Bitser, Novobackup, Backup4all, Crashplan, Genie Backup Manager, LazySave, Backup Exec, Norton Ghost, Time Machine, UltraBac, etc...

Some free backup software options are: AMANDA, Box Backup, DirSync Pro, dump, FlyBack, rsync, etc..

For a complete list of software backup options, please see:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_backup_software