

How to Prevent Data Loss with Automatic Backup and Recovery

By Sam Trachtenberg

IT'S 2:30 am Monday morning and your Fortune 500 company's help desk gets a call from the frantic Senior VP of Marketing who set his laptop down "for just a moment" after he landed on the red-eye. Now, tomorrow's presentation for the tradeshow has been wiped from the drive, and if your VP doesn't get it back by 11:00 am tomorrow, he's going to have to use shadow puppets.

Let's take a look at this again in slow-motion replay: where did the problem really start? We all know we should back up our computers, but no one really does it. And if we do back up, it's sporadic with no real science behind it. In fact, less than 8 percent of end users comply with corporate backup policies. But, the problem can be avoided if the company implements a policy or technology that automatically backs up nightly every computer on or off the network. The network is now really only a small part of a company's computing universe. More and more people are on the road or located in remote offices and need the same level of support as if they were onsite.

Everdream Corporation provides a fully managed service called Everdream Online Backup that is designed to safeguard corporate data residing on all PCs regardless of end-user location. This service leverages best-of-breed in technology and processes to ensure that all corporate PCs are protected regardless of where the PCs reside and more importantly, without requiring end-user action.

A LOOK AT THE TECHNOLOGY

With unique data reduction and optimization algorithms, Everdream Online Backup utilizes the Internet to back up all data on a nightly basis, regardless of network connection speed. These backups are scheduled to take place nightly between 1 am and 4 am as long as the PC is connected to the Internet. In situations when the PC is not online, the backup takes place upon the next system reboot.

Because this technology only requires the PC to be connected to the Internet, remote users who are not connected to the corporate LAN can be protected. Even users who periodically connect to the Internet will

be backed up incrementally from the point where disconnected. Security of all data transmissions is ensured through the use of Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) 128-bit encryption.

Everdream Online Backup includes a new data reduction process for ultra-efficient handling and storage of user email files and archives. This combination, along with PC-centric storage practices, provides a substantial reduction in disk space and email server and storage requirements. Backups of 2GB of data can typically be optimized to about 20MB of data traveling through the Internet.

SECURE DATA STORAGE

Compared to putting the responsibility on the end-user to back up their computers to a disk drive or removable hard drive that can be exposed to theft or that may reside at the same location as the user's PC, Everdream Online Backup increases the security of typical data back up functions by hosting the data in an offsite facility. All PC data is backed up to Everdream's data centers that are configured with mirrored server pairs and co-locations for redundancy, high availability and failover.

DATA PROTECTION AS A MANAGED SERVICE

Everdream's Online Backup service does a superior job of backing up PC data without requiring end-user action. However, to effectively safeguard from data loss and to ensure that end-users are up and running and productive following a data loss incident, Everdream also provides managed services around their Online Backup offering. All users of the Everdream Online Backup service are provided a 24x7x365 live help desk so they can access Everdream technicians for assistance with data or file recovery or to simply ask a question about the Online Backup service. For example, if the VP of Marketing mentioned earlier in this article accidentally deletes his PowerPoint presentation that is due in the morning, the Everdream help desk is available to assist him with the retrieval of the presentation from the

data archive. When he calls into the help desk he is required to answer security questions to verify his identity. Once his identity is verified, the help desk can assist him as needed to retrieve the latest version of the presentation or even an earlier version from a previous backup.

Taking this example further, if the VP of Marketing has his entire laptop stolen on the eve of the big presentation, Everdream's help desk can still retrieve his original presentation and email it to him that same night. At the same time, they will begin the full data recovery process to enable him to have all of his data once his replacement laptop is available.

Everdream's help desk services related to data backup and retrieval are backed by industry leading Service Level Agreements (SLAs) that provide organizations with a guarantee that the data will not only be automatically backed up, but retrieved in a timely and efficient manner. Custom retrieval procedures that may involve the organization's IT department or even a third-party such as the hardware vendor can also be developed as part of the managed service.

PROACTIVE MONITORING OF BACKUPS

Merely having backup software installed on a PC is not sufficient to ensure that all data is being backed up on a frequent basis. Users often change their software settings or even uninstall software that they deem as "not needed." Unfortunately, even backup software that is specifically designed to not require end-user action is not immune to this type of end-user action. However, in the case of Everdream's managed Online Backup service, Everdream technicians *proactively monitor* backup logs to ensure that all data is being backed up as well as to simply ensure that backups are taking place. In the event that a user's data has not been backed up in two weeks, the Everdream help desk will notify the organization's IT department or even the end-user directly if they have been authorized to do so. In situations when Everdream Online Backup needs to be re-installed, the service can be re-deployed electronically using Everdream's electronic software distribution engine. In situations where the software needs to be looked at or modified, Everdream technicians are able to use a web-based remote control tool to resolve the problem.

CONCLUSION

In today's business environment where the traditional office has become a virtual office that includes the main campus location as well as home offices, satellite offices and even hotels, it is essential to deploy a data backup solution that meets the needs of users residing at headquarters and all types of remote locations. At the same time, the backup solution needs to be seamless to the end-user because depending on users to conduct their own backups is a very dangerous and non-productive proposition. And, since the data residing on employee PCs is critical to the corporation, the backup solution must protect this data in a secure manner. Finally, when users do lose data, support processes must be in place to ensure that the data can be quickly retrieved—keeping all end-users productive. For these reasons, Everdream's Online Backup managed service is an attractive data backup alternative for organizations that wish to cost-effectively and securely outsource their PC management. 🌐

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