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Do You Have a backup FOR Your Cloud Data?

by Jeff Verry

The following is based on true events. A student backed up all of his files using Dropbox, a popular cloud storage solution that was provided by their university. Everything. Syllabi, materials used for research, the start of a book or two. Somewhere along the way, the student decided to clean up some files on one of his devices. A month later – that's when he noticed an entire directory, two years' worth of material had been inadvertently deleted. Gone.

The cloud did exactly what it was supposed to do. It replicated the changes (in this case, the command, "delete this folder and all of its contents") perfectly to every device. Dropbox's retention period is 30 days. All of the course material was permanently gone.

With the popularity of the Cloud we know two things for certain: 1. It's a brave new world. 2. It's a world still filled with the same heartbreaks. We used to see folks coming in the door, cradling a hard drive that has been damaged. You know the one with all of their family pictures on it. And then they find out just how much it is going to cost to try to get their data back, if it can be done at all. The question was always the same: **what kind of backup do you have...?**

Now we have the Internet! The Cloud! Online storage! Whatever you want to call it, the promise is exciting: store all of your stuff in a secure location on someone else's servers. It's a solution of (almost) biblical proportion! "Do not store that which you treasure on the ground, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but rather store that which you treasure in the sky, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal." The \$65,000 question is this: what happens if the sky falls?

What is the plan if you have everything in the Cloud...and you experience the following:

- You lose access to your account and everything in it (think Google turning off your gmail account).
- Someone hacks your account and wipes everything in it.
- Human error (like the story above) leads to deletion or some other data loss?
- An entire service just goes away. (Anyone remember Webshots, or MobileMe, or Kodak Gallery?)
- You forget your password and whatever security questions you had. Or the person who knows all of this moves on (think employee leaving or the death of a loved one).

In this brave new world, we need to employ the same three words that have never let us down in the past: backup, backup, backup! Here are some ideas on how to make sure you have a backup for your cloud.

If you use cloud storage (Dropbox, iDrive, OneDrive, etc.), keep a local backup of all of your important files. This can be as straightforward as copying your entire Dropbox folder to a different location like an external drive periodically.

Set up that alternate email and/or text. When you are reminded by your email provider or other service that it would be a good idea to set up an alternative SMS (Short Message Service), phone or email address, get that done before you need it.

Use 2-step authentication wherever possible. Two step authentication (sometimes called 2fa) takes the recovery email idea one step further. It means that you need at least two devices or steps to sign in to a new environment. If you are trying to access your Gmail account on a hotel business center computer for example, Google will text your phone first to make sure that it is you. This makes it impossible for a hacker to brute force their way into your account.

Consider using a password manager. This takes the sting out of changing your passwords frequently, which mean you might actually do it! We've talked about passwords before, but make sure they are secure and lengthy if feasible. Also, if you have a business computer or network, keep a record of the critical passwords to everything you use. It is not unusual for us to find people who can no longer access their own firewall or email!

It is a whole new world in "the cloud" and you need to stay safe, along with all your data. **Please!** Give us a call or email if you have any questions or need any help.

"Relax...we're on IT"

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Grand Haven Store & Hudsonville Store

Mon-Thu 9:00 am - 6:00 pm, Fri 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

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tiny size tiny price



Width: 7 in
Weight: 2.9 lbs

(size comparison)



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