

IT advice – Back up!



EVERY BODY NEEDS BACK UP

Richard Walsh, managing director of It-atWork provides advice on how to keep that all- important computer information safe and sound.

Computers are great. We can access all the information we need in an instant. But, never forget that ‘catastrophic’ PC failure can happen at any time.

So, how do you protect yourself from losing data that is vital for the smooth running of your business – and your life? Back-up is crucial. We all know this, but as an IT consultant, I often discover that not everyone does it, or that it is not done as often as it should be. The fact, though, is that if you don’t want to lose data, you do need to back it up – regularly.

And if you are already in the good habit of backing up, a word of advice: it can be wise not to back everything up in the same place. If you do this, you only have one level of back up and this can cause problems.

For instance, what if you removed 20 pages of a business proposal believing them no longer relevant – then you are asked to reinstate them?

You find that each back up overwrote the proposal stored before on your single flash drive so the pages are gone. Disaster.

This can be avoided by keeping a series of backups reflecting the state of rapidly-changing data at different points in

time, and by keeping some of your data off-site. On-line back-up solutions can be worthwhile, but again, not as your only, or even primary, method of backup.

Why not? Because anyone can lose your data – even Amazon, who offer cloud storage services for PCs. In April 2011 Amazon was unable to recover 0.07% of the data lost during what they described as an ‘outage’.

So , to sum up, always back up your data – and back up your back up, by having at least two levels of storage.

It-atWork, based in Edinburgh and Angus, provides IT support and consultancy to businesses and other PC users throughout the east of Scotland. Further information is available at www.it-atwork.co.uk.