

# Cloudy Thinking About Data Backup

By Chuck Cook

It is now widely accepted that any Internet-enabled business computer system needs sophisticated data-backup capabilities, but although data backup has become standard practice across all industries, there are still a lot of mistaken ideas about it.

With the volume of data and the complexity of processes that 3PL and Trucking Companies must manage, it is particularly important that they have a clear picture of the opportunities and challenges of backup technology. What problems does it present? What are the differences between vendors and the products they sell? What role does the cloud play? How can companies keep up with the constant advances in data-backup solutions and the hacker-driven threats they guard against?

A good place to start is to clear up some common misconceptions.

## **Data-backup vendors aren't much different.**

In fact, vendors vary greatly. Some offer limited product lines that may or may not address a particular customer's needs. Others lack a track record of consistent, solid performance. Preferred-choice vendors are those with a complete range of proven, customizable data protection and disaster recovery offerings, as well as a demonstrable history of successful installations. Equally important, top vendors work hard to keep up with the latest threats.

## **Cloud-backup storage solutions are alike.**

Far from it. In order for 3PL and Trucking Companies of any size to ensure the integrity of their data backup, they should rely on tiered solutions that take into account business processes that are complex, fast-moving, and dependent on pinpoint accuracy. Cost is an equally important variable as well. There are three types of cloud solutions to consider: the relatively simple and easily expanded public cloud; the highly precise private cloud that offers multi-level security; and the hybrid cloud, which allows companies to combine their own systems and processes with cloud components.

## **All cloud storage is equally safe.**

Not necessarily. Cloud services are available from many vendors, whose software systems and infrastructures vary widely, as do the levels of performance and safety they deliver. The best cloud solutions contain high-end encryption, reliable regulatory compliance, and superior infrastructure. Market-leading offerings are designed to eliminate single points of failure by

building in failsafe redundancies throughout the system. They are as safe as technology can make them.

## **Backup systems make it hard to control data.**

Not if they are the right backup systems. A number of available options ensure that no data need ever be lost. Local-disk backup solutions, for example, enable user companies to maintain control of their cloud-stored data, while software-only solutions utilize the company's own computer to house backed-up data.

## **High-level backup is prohibitively expensive.**

A number of available data-backup solutions allow ongoing selection of services, so that customers pay only for those they need at a given time. Maintenance and management costs can be kept low, as can infrastructure investment. As an example, one typically cost-effective solution employs an in-house recovery server that manages PC and workstation data separately from production servers.

## **Long-term storage can't guarantee privacy.**

The best data-backup solutions do just that. For example, customers can choose options such as private data vaulting, with a selection of technical setups and operational modes.

## **Stored data can easily disappear.**

With the right cloud-archiving provider that should never happen. Best-in-class cloud data archiving solutions are designed to provide virtually invincible storage.

**Medium-to-small companies are not always well-informed about the data backup opportunities available to them. Following are some widespread misconceptions.**

## **Small organizations don't generate enough data to require backup.**

Any data that is important needs backup. No company is so small that its future is not heavily reliant on irreplaceable data, and that makes data protection a necessity.

## **Data backup on local media is all you need.**

Perhaps, but what if someone makes a mistake with backup tasks, or forgets to do them? What if the local-media system fails? What about interference from fires, floods, power outages or vandalism? Only a data-backup partner can guard against them all.

**Startup companies can't afford data backup and well-established businesses have their own proven**

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### **in-house backup processes.**

Leading providers base their product lines and pricing structures on the knowledge that each company has its own technical challenges and pricing constraints. These vendors fully understand that many organizations have developed in-house capabilities that can be valuable components of professionally designed data-backup systems.

### **Managing fancy backup systems takes too much time and trouble.**

It is true that implementing and maintaining effective data backup and disaster recovery capabilities requires a significant commitment of time and energy by managers and employees. This includes not only overseeing necessary functional duties, and also regulatory compliance and reporting tasks. However, when compared with the potential toil, expense and damage to both current activities and future business that data

loss causes, the extra effort is a small price to pay for peace of mind.

### **Cloud-based data backup systems damage networks.**

Not at all. High-quality backup solutions fully utilize existing networks and do not add hardware. The fact is, they can improve network performance.

### **Cloud backup is more than some 3PL and Trucking Companies need.**

Cloud-based data backup has made great strides in recent years. It has become a powerful, reliable and cost-effective technology that is within the reach of even the freshest startup. Its scalability options can accommodate organizations of any size and blend smoothly with any network configuration. If a company uses computers, it can find appropriate, affordable and highly effective cloud-backup solutions. The real question is not if cloud backup is needed, but what are the choices best suited to a company's backup requirements.

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