

Solutions

Tape Backups: Your Setup & Configuration Make a Difference

During a meeting, a prospective client told me that they had walked into their office on a Monday morning and realized that they could not login to their network because their file server was off. They were unable to restart the file server because the file server's hard drive had failed during the weekend. When their IT guy replaced the hard drive and attempted to restore all of their data, he had difficulty. He spent several days attempting to restore the data, but unfortunately, even though an attorney at the firm had been putting a tape into the tape backup drive every night, the firm lost all of their email and a very important database, which contained their cases and calendars.

I empathized with them, since the firm had lost so much data; however, this situation could have been avoided. It was apparent that the correct version of backup software had not been used to backup email and the database files correctly and that a test restore had not been performed. Additionally, the proper configuration of hard disk drives on the file server could have prevented the situation too, for example, with a RAID 5 configuration on the file server, three or more hard drives are used and if one hard drive fails, the file server continues to run and there is no data loss. With the right backup device, backup software, and rotation of storage media, there is no reason to experience loss of data on a pc or network.

You can use external hard drives, CD/DVD burners, tape backup drives, or online backups to backup data. Whether you are backing up data on a standalone pc or a file server, some sort of daily backup should be performed. Due to space constraints within this article, I will focus on tape backup drives.

For a reliable backup on a file server, you should purchase a tape backup drive that is large enough to backup all of your data onto one tape cartridge and make sure it has enough capacity for anticipated future data. Additionally, at least ten to twenty tape cartridges should be used for a two to four week (Monday-Friday) tape rotation and five additional tapes should be used as monthly backups, rotate one at the

end of each month. A full backup should be performed each night, not an incremental backup, which can make restoring complicated and cumbersome. Tapes should be replaced once a year and you should purchase a cleaning cartridge and run it periodically to maintain your tape backup drive.

The tape backup software should include the correct software agents. For example, Symantec Backup Exec, which is a very good tape backup software program, has additional software agents that you purchase if you have MS Exchange Server, MS Terminal Server, MS SQL Server, Linux, Citrix, etc. These backup software agents make sure that the files are backed up correctly for the other software applications you are using. This was the problem with the prospective client's data restore. Since the backup software agents had not been installed on the file server, the IT guy was unable to restore the MS Exchange email and the MS SQL database files. Hence, they lost very valuable data.

A test restore should be performed periodically (once or twice a year) to determine if all of the files are being backed up correctly. The test restore should include a restore of an individual email mailbox. Most importantly for the tape backup process, someone should verify that the tape backup was successful every day. An email can be sent through the network with the results of the backup and/or an icon can be put on the file server to see if there were any issues with the backup from the night before. As soon as there is an issue with the tape backup, your IT person should be notified immediately.

When a tape backup drive and the tape backup software is configured and setup properly, restoring data is a seamless process.

For more information contact Alicia Slade at ext. 202

Register your Domain Name: How Important is it?

Why should you register a domain name? What are the advantages of registering a domain name? Have you thought about these questions?

Most firms have wondered whether or not they should register a domain name. Unfortunately, the longer you wait, the more likely that your firm name will not be available as a domain name.

A domain name is the World Wide Web (www) address for a website. Plummer Slade's domain name is www.plummerslade.com. Go to www.register.com to see what domain names are available; however, don't be surprised if your firm name has already been taken.

A misconception about registering a domain name is that you must have a web site. You do not have to develop a web site just because you have registered a domain name. One of the biggest advantages of having a domain name is for your email address. In addition, someone sending you email has no idea which Internet Service Provider (ISP) you are using and if you decide to change ISP's, your email address remains the same.

For more information contact Christina Watson at ext. 210



Sinking Feelings about Syncing?

More and more people are syncing a mobile device with a software application on their computer in order to have access to their calendar and contacts while away from the office. We still refer to these devices as “phones”, but they are so much more than that now. Choosing which device to use can be a daunting task. Some of the things you will need to consider are: Which devices are offer by your phone service company? Which will sync with your software? Will you like the interface, screen size, keyboard size & functionality? And what kind of experiences have others had with them.

If you want to synchronize your device with a product that is widely used, such as Microsoft® Outlook, you will have more options available to you. Most devices are designed to be compatible with Outlook. If you want to synchronize with a practice management application such as Time Matters, you will need to verify that the device is compatible.

Every time you replace a phone you need to make sure the new one you buy isn't so new that it will not work with your software.

Sinking Feelings about Syncing? - continued

There are other options for synchronizing Time Matters data to your device to your device. If you have Time Matters 9.0 Enterprise Edition, you can sync the data to a Microsoft Exchange server and then to all devices over the air – OR – you can subscribe to Mobile TM, a service that allows you to access all your Time Matters information on your phone. This option allows for reference only and is not a bi-directional sync. Time Matters Enterprise Edition provides this additional functionality which is not available in the Professional Edition.

Mobile Devices	Requirements
BlackBerry® Desktop	BlackBerry Desktop Manager 4.0, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6.
BlackBerry Enterprise Server	BlackBerry Enterprise Server 4.0
BlackBerry Handheld	The BlackBerry link requires Java-Enabled BlackBerry Wireless Handhelds with OS 4.0, 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3.
Palm®	Any device using the Palm® OS® v4 or 5 and the HotSync® Manager version 4.0 or 6.0; no additional software is required—for example, IntelliSync.
Microsoft® Pocket Outlook	Windows Mobile® 4.0 and 5.0 Pocket PCs, Pocket PC phones and Windows® Smartphone devices and Microsoft ActiveSync®.

For more information contact Leslie Hennessy at ext. 228



Tape Backup Maintenance

Everyone is aware of the importance of a good tape backup system. However, you must know how to maintain the system properly in order to receive a consistent backup. Most of you have either a DAT/DDS Tape Drive or an Ultrium/LTO Tape Drive. You can identify the type of system you have by reading the front of the tape drive or by looking at the actual tape cartridges. Here are some recommendations and simple guidelines to follow to ensure that your backup drive and tapes continue to work properly.

For DAT/DDS Tape Drives:

Dirt and dust will build up on the drive heads over time and must be cleaned. Otherwise, you will begin receiving read/write errors or tape cartridge errors because the drive is not able to write properly. It is recommended that you clean the drive on a weekly basis with a DDS Cleaning Cartridge. Each cleaning cartridge is good for 50 cleans. They come with a label that has 50 check boxes on it. You must check off 1 box every time you insert the cleaning cartridge. When all 50 boxes are checked, it is time to get a new cleaning cartridge. The actual tape cartridges themselves will also need replaced over time. It is recommended that you replace the tape cartridges every 1-2 years.

For Ultrium/LTO Tape Drives:

These drives do not need to be cleaned as frequently as DAT/DDS drives. They should only be cleaned when the “clean” LED light on the front of the drive comes on. Then you must use an LTO Universal Cleaning Cartridge to clean the drive. Each cleaning cartridge is good for 15 cleans. The drive will communicate with the cleaning cartridge and keep track of the number of times it has been used. After 15 cleans, it will not accept that cleaning cartridge again and you must use a new one. The tape cartridges themselves will also need replaced over time. It is recommended that you replace the tape cartridges every 4-5 years.

Regardless of which tape backup system you are using, here are some simple guidelines to follow when handling your backup media.



You should try to avoid exposure to the following:

- Extreme dust
- Extreme humidity
- Extreme temperature changes
- Direct sunlight
- Areas with strong magnetic fields

By following these simple recommendations and guidelines, you can help maintain your backup system and help to ensure the consistency of your backup over time.

For more information contact John D’Amico at ext. 204

Virus Protection: Is your pc on the latest version?

These days there are so many different computer viruses that can infect a pc. It becomes more and more important to know and understand how computer viruses spread and how to prevent infection. The best advice is to not open any e-mail attachments from people we don’t know. That is typically how viruses infect pc’s. By making sure your pc has the latest updates & versions of virus protection, like Norton Anti-Virus, McAfee, or Symantec, then you pc will be able to catch more viruses and malware.

Some of these viruses spread through the Internet by going through peoples’ address books and mailing themselves out to everyone listed. This means, they can “appear” to come from people that we do know. Therefore, it is important to be very careful about opening up *any* attachments that arrive unexpectedly. One of the best solutions is to not open emails, attachments, or anything that may look suspicious. Another solution to prevent viruses from infecting pc’s is to make sure your pc is up-to-date with the latest virus protection software.

For more information contact John D’Amico at ext. 204



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Register for training classes on-line!! Visit www.plummerslade.com for more information.• If you are interested in Time Matters, Timeslips, or QuickBooks, contact us to receive a demonstration on how to put the software to work for you!• Make sure to check your UPS battery so that you are prepared for any power outages caused by seasonal thunderstorms. |