

# SMALL BUSINESS TIPS

## Data Recovery Tips For Small Businesses Planning For Everyday Disasters



(NAPSA)—For a small business, a minor disruption can have a big impact on revenue. Even something as simple as the mistaken deletion of files or a hardware failure can be disastrous.

By taking a few proactive steps, small-business owners can help protect their company in the event of a major natural disaster or an “everyday” disaster. In fact, natural disasters account for just 2 percent of data loss; more common causes are human error and hardware failures, according to a study conducted by Kroll Ontrack Inc.

Here are four simple technology tips to help small businesses put a data recovery plan in place:

- Take inventory of core business processes. When starting a data recovery plan, take inventory of core business processes. Consider how each is affected in the event of a disaster and make sure there is a data recovery plan for all mission-critical systems. Don't assume that older systems are no longer being used. For example, someone in the accounting department may still be using an archaic spreadsheet to close the books each month, and if that process is not included in the data recovery plan, the company won't be able to close the books in the event of a disaster.

- Ensure that data backup and recovery solutions are in place. For small businesses that own a server, the server should be a central part of the data recovery plan. Consider what would happen to a small business if the server crashed the day before payroll. While this may not qualify as a major disaster, for a small-business owner unable to make payroll, this could lead to distraught employees and bad publicity. Having the server backed up allows

the business to replicate the server applications and environment in the event of a disaster. Windows Small Business Server 2003 R2 provides a reliable way to perform regular server backups to a tape drive, external hard drive or network share. For those small businesses that don't have a server, it is important to ensure that the hard disk is imaged on a laptop or PC.

- Consider having your software hosted by a trusted partner. An option for a small business is on-demand software delivered over the Internet, where the software application and data are managed by a hosting partner or vendor in data-centers. Be sure to check with the vendor or hosting partner to understand its practices for support, data recovery and backup.

- Maintain a Web presence. A Web site can come in handy in times of disaster, allowing for communication with customers, partners and employees. Consider Microsoft Office Live Small Business (<http://smallbusiness.officelive.com>), a free, online service that allows a small business to maintain a professional Web site and e-mail alias.

For more information on solutions that can help small businesses protect one of their most valuable assets—their data—visit <http://www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness> and click on the Security tab, or participate in Microsoft Small Business Summit 2008, a free online event, for additional advice and security tips. The event will be held March 24–27. To register, visit <https://www.sbsummit.com>.

And if a small business is able to do nothing else, it should at least back up its servers and files on a routine basis.