

# TECHNOLOGY INSIDER

## *Data Backup Options*

By Kristin Beasley of Beasley Technology

Every day, at least once a day, someone at Beasley Technology receives a frantic call: “My computer has crashed and all of my [pictures, documents, client records, fill in the blank with your most important data] are gone! Can you help me?” Often we can recover some or all of the data. Sometimes we have to send the drive to a data recovery specialist, at great cost to the customer. Occasionally, none of the data can be recovered. In almost every instance, catastrophic data loss can be avoided by establishing a regular backup system.

Backing up your data simply means saving it in more than one place. People tend to save data to a computer’s hard drive and forget all about it; only after that hard drive crashes do they realize the benefits of a backup copy. It only takes a few minutes to make a second copy on an external source. Beasley Technology offers several data backup options, from a simple flash drive—perfect for most home users—to an offsite backup service, a good option for business clients with large amounts of data.

For a normal home user, a flash drive is a perfect solution for data backup. A flash drive plugs into your computer’s USB port. You can then save files to the drive in the same way you used to save files to a floppy disk—copying and pasting, dragging and dropping, or simply going through the “Save As” process a second time. Flash drives are now available in sizes from 1 GB up to 32 GB—more than enough storage for most home users. Items you should back up include your pictures, videos, documents, e-mail (if you don’t use a web-based e-mail provider), Internet favorites, and any data from personal finance software such as Quicken. Think about what is on

your computer. If a permanent loss would cause headache or heartache, you should back it up regularly.

A second option for larger amounts of data is an external hard drive. This drive is exactly like the hard drive inside your computer, except it is housed in a protective case and can be plugged into your computer’s USB port. Saving to this sort of drive works the same as saving to a flash drive. The only difference is the amount of data that can be stored. An external hard drive stores anywhere from 80 GB to 500 GB of data. Both the flash drive and the external hard drive can be stored offsite, in a safety deposit box or other safe place, so that your data is protected in case your property is somehow damaged or destroyed.

A final backup option, one we recommend mostly for business clients, is our offsite backup service. For a small monthly fee, this service will back up your data automatically at a set interval—daily in most cases, although it can be set to any interval you choose. The service is completely automated and monitored closely by Beasley Technology. If something should happen

to your computer, Beasley Technology can restore your data from the last backup. This is an excellent option for clients with large amounts of data or for anyone who has a difficult time remembering to back up.

Each of these options serves a unique set of customers, and one of the three will suit your needs. The cost of each option is low, especially compared to the price you might pay for data recovery or the priceless nature of some data. If you want to purchase one of these backup options or simply have questions about which option is right for you, contact Beasley Technology at (918) 225-6900.

