

Extract more value from your backup than just 'backup'

 By [Iniel Dreyer](#)

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Let's face it, data has become a valuable business asset. At any given time, an organisation has reams of data stored, from customer information to records of transactions to employee information and sensitive documents.

No organisation can afford to risk the loss of any of this data or, perhaps even more threatening, having their data leaked publicly. Yet, many companies still regard data backup as a necessary evil, grudgingly spending as little as possible on what they think will give them the necessary protection.

Are you relying on manual backup systems?

Many organisations are still relying on manual backup systems, where human error could lead to data loss. If someone forgets to backup, and a breach occurs or a system fails, data could be irretrievably lost.

However, more companies store their backup copies in the same location as their original data, such as on a shared server, or by backing up to a hard drive which is kept in the same bag as the laptop it backs up. This means that if the original data is destroyed through means of cyber-attack or physical damage, such as a fire, both copies of the data are lost, rendering the backup completely superfluous.



Data loss or leakage can be severely detrimental to the success of an organisation. Reputations and credibility could be at stake – nobody really wants to do business with an organisation that has lost or accidentally distributed their customer's private information, nor do they commonly want to rely on a business that cannot maintain control of their own data.

If the data loss is caused by Ransomware, a form of malware that is being used increasingly to infect entire systems and effectively hold customers' to ransom for thousands, if not millions of rands, it can also be crippling expensive. In such instances, data retrieval may not even be possible and the company will have paid a ransom for nothing.

Backup as a security tool

Organisations are quick to invest in security tools, such as firewalls and security software, yet many fail to realise the added value that backup brings as a security tool itself.

It can serve as the last line of defence against malware such as Ransomware. This ensures that organisations have useable backups of their data available so that resorting to forking out money to retrieve it is not something that even needs to be considered.

New, sophisticated iterations of backup offer even more advanced benefits, such as the ability to scan for Ransomware and other cyber threats and automatically restore all data to a version prior to infection, thwarting would-be cyber criminals in the process.

Advanced backup solutions

Most advanced backup solutions offered by reputable backup specialists today will include the ability to not only restore data following a Ransomware attack, but will also assist with pinpointing where the attack came from.

Storing multiple copies of data, rather than replacing, or overwriting, existing backed up data means that backup solutions providers can assist organisations to identify when the attack happened, narrowing down the search for point of entry.

In fact, the backup can serve as the basis upon which to build a disaster recovery plan against threats of any form of data loss – there is no need for the purchase of additional data recovery systems if an organisation has a suitable backup solution in place.

Data compliance

As data is becoming more and more vital to business success, the protection of it falls within the responsibility of IT security. Another facet of IT security is data compliance. Certain existing and emerging regulations lay out specific data requirements which businesses need to comply with, such as how many copies of a customer's information a business may have at any given time.

Backup solutions have evolved to the point where they can act as a data management tool, too, assisting with compliance.

Data analytics

Today's backup solutions offer another, often unconsidered, benefit: data analytics. Through analysing the data that is stored in a backup solution, organisations can make their data work for them instead of sitting in a storage system, unused and untapped.

Data analytics can allow a business to tap into all the value that data can offer, allowing it to work for the business and increasing its worth. In this way, organisations can identify trends and risks – security and otherwise – and use this knowledge to increase market share and ensure cover.

Backup systems as accessible file servers

Backup systems can also double as accessible file servers. Users can upload or download files to the backup system simply and seamlessly, all the while the system is automatically backing up any added, changed or removed information.

Users can also retrieve previous versions of any specific file or piece of data – handy for accidental file overwrites or fact checking. This means that data doesn't simply get spirited away to some storage area. Data is then used, and will continue to add value to the business.

In addition, since the system automatically backs up, originations can rest assured knowing their data is always there when they need it, regardless of security breaches.

ABOUT INIEL DREYER

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