

your long-term care.

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Back up data, store off-site for safety

With the anniversary of September 11 coming up, now is the time to think about the issue of disaster recovery.

It doesn't take a terrorist to prove the point. Last summer, a freak lightning storm knocked out the electricity in Manoa Valley and put many a hard drive out of commission. The upshot is, if your data isn't backed up and your drive conks out, you and your business could be in big trouble. So what options do you have?

>> **Removable storage disks:** Removable disks such as Zip, Jaz and SuperDisks are inexpensive, reliable, and portable.

The downside is that one disk may not be big enough to back up data on an average (40-gig) hard drive. Prices start at under \$50 for a 100 MB unit.

>> **Optical drives:** These are relatively inexpensive, but the older technologies -- CD-R (CD-recordable) and CD-RW (CD-rewriteable) drives are most likely being superseded by DVD (digital versatile? disc). Sound confusing? We'd wait until there's a rock steady standard.

>> **The Web as Back Up:** The web now offers a cool way to store your data off-site and out of harm's way. Using a browser you can access and upload files using the drag and drop method as if you have a virtual drive. Both iBackup ([http:// www.ibackup.org](http://www.ibackup.org)) and

Xdrive (<http://www.xdrive.com>) offer inexpensive options.

>> **Extra hard drive:** With the price of storage around \$100 for a fast 40 gigabyte unit, it may make sense to add an extra drive to your computer. But with an extra internal drive, you won't be able to store your data off-site. To solve this problem you might consider a portable hard drive. There are several portable units about the size of a small paperback book that weigh about 2 pounds.

We looked at an 80 gig model from Maxtor. Called the Maxtor Personal Storage line, they come in 40, 60, 80, 120 and 160 gig models and are ideal for storing large files. The unit we looked at can be found on the Net for as low as \$230. Go to www.maxtor.com for info. Search CNET (www.cnet.com) for good prices.

>> **Software:** If you do end up purchasing an extra hard drive, you'll need to set up an automated backup schedule so your system makes a copy of all your files. You can do this with the generic backup program that Windows has built into its OS. An alternative is to purchase third party software. We like Second Copy 2000 (<http://www.centered.com>) from Centered Systems. It costs \$29.95, and has scheduling, compression, and synchronization tools. It was easy to set up and worked flawlessly. You can purchase it directly from the company by downloading it.

Retrospect, developed by Dantz, (<http://www.dantz.com>) offers a solution for around \$50. We also found this to be an excellent system particularly for companies with large workgroups. It was easy to set up and intuitive to administer.

>> **Tape drives:** This is the tried and true method. Tapes are removable, inexpensive, easy to use, and have the storage capacity to back up a whole drive to one tape/disk. And it's easy to put a tape in your pocket and take it home. Figure on around \$200 for a "Travan" style tape system.

Whether you use an automated system or copy your files manually, make sure you regularly back up your daily work and store copies of your data off-site.

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