



# Is online backup right for your business? Eight reasons to consider protecting your data with a hybrid backup solution

Who should read this paper

A Symantec.cloud white paper for small and medium-size business  
owners



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## The Importance of Backup

When it comes to disasters, the question isn't *if*, but *when* they will occur. Ranging from minor power outages to catastrophic floods, more often data loss results from malicious tampering, computer failure, hardware theft, computer viruses, or hacking. Equally common is simply deleting a file accidentally. Businesses must be proactive to ensure that data is protected, so they can get back to work as quickly as possible.

If you're like most small businesses, you rely on your computer systems to keep day-to-day operations running smoothly. Any unexpected downtime—when systems are out of operation or become inaccessible—can result in serious consequences, including reputation damage, lost revenue, or legal liability. If your data isn't protected when a serious glitch occurs, the digital assets that drive your business can be permanently lost.

However, according to Symantec's 2011 SMB Disaster Preparedness Survey, many small businesses are still not appropriately protecting their data. In fact, less than half surveyed back up their data weekly or more frequently, and only 23 percent back up daily.

Why are small and medium-sized businesses so glib about the possibility of serious data loss? For one thing, as an organization grows and uses more applications, managing backup can become time-consuming, complex, and expensive. Many small businesses are simply overwhelmed. They know it's important, but they simply don't have the time and resources to deal with the ongoing maintenance and management of their applications, software, and hardware.

This is where comprehensive, automated hybrid backup solutions come in. Today's hybrid solutions permit business owners to back up data either solely to the cloud, or both on-premise and in the cloud, ensuring fast backup and retrievals and an offsite copy that is safe in the event of a natural disaster. The solutions are also suitable for an increasingly mobile workforce, as data can be restored from anywhere with an Internet connection. Whether for messaging security or data storage and protection, small and medium-size businesses are increasingly turning to hybrid solutions that employ the best of both worlds: on-premise and cloud backup, freeing up time and resources.

## The Benefits of Cloud-Based or Hybrid Backup

Like other SaaS (Software-as-a-Service) applications, purely online backup is an alternative to an on-premise software application. In this instance, both the backup application and storage of information resides offsite. Users with smaller file backups or those who don't require extremely fast recoveries may prefer a solely cloud-based backup. However, customers with an increasing reliance on data files or who regularly backup up large data files will find that a hybrid approach combining local and cloud-based backup is the optimal solution. Symantec Backup Exec.cloud allows an organization to tailor their implementation down to the user or department's needs.

Following are eight reasons to consider a hybrid backup solution for your business:

- **Secures and protects your company's data.** After its employees, a company's information is probably its most important asset. Cloud-based or hybrid data recovery solutions back up data electronically over the Internet to the vendor's data center. Data is encrypted and backed up to local servers while in transit and at rest in secure, off-site data centers and can be restored to any Internet-connected laptop, desktop, or server or backed up directly to the cloud without the need for additional hardware other than the hardware being protected.
- **Ensures comprehensive, secure, automated backups.** Cloud-based backup can be set up easily from a web-based management console. Backups are stored in off-site data centers and run when file changes occur or on a schedule, as desired. Online backup solutions can be completely automated, and the vendor assumes much of the responsibility for the success of the backups and restores. Some

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vendors offer 24x7 support and provide a Web-based portal to view completed backups and backup version histories, initiate restores, and run reports. The hybrid option provides the additional convenience and assurance of an onsite copy that can be restored quickly when necessary.

- **Simplifies off-site protection.** Online and hybrid backup eliminates the need to physically transport tapes or removable external drives. Offsite protection without a vaulting service is affordable and doesn't require interaction with physical media prone to failure.
- **Protects remote and branch offices.** Many remote and branch offices have limited or no backup in place, or no way to monitor backups to make sure they are occurring. Online or hybrid backup protects remote offices with regular and automated backups even if they lack local technical staff. Download, email, and redistributable package options make the service easy to deploy to individuals or large groups—whether they are in the office or working remotely.
- **Is fast and easy.** Today's hybrid backup solutions offer the ability to set the backup policy down to the user or system level. This allows users to choose when the system will be backed up, whether it will be backed up locally or to the cloud, or—using the hybrid configuration—which files will be backed up locally and which to the cloud. Businesses can set up regular automated backups quickly with no need for dedicated or onsite IT staff. With vendors that support block level or incremental backup, after the initial backup, the service runs quietly in the background, backing up only items that have changed.
- **Helps to keep data available.** Hybrid backup solutions offer the best of both worlds: on-premise backup that quickly and easily retrieves data, and cloud-based backup that preserves data a copy offsite for traveling employees or in the event of a local disaster. Data center redundancy plans help keep information and applications available.
- **Reduces costs and allows access to advanced systems.** Flexible subscription-based pricing allows businesses to use only the data protection needed with no per-user licensing fees. With a subscription-based model, the cost of building and maintaining the infrastructure to support the backup application is spread across numerous customers, allowing the service provider to offer a sophisticated service at a lower cost than would otherwise be possible.
- **Increases business focus.** A common complaint from small and medium-size businesses is that they have too little time to think about how to grow their business, or how they can further leverage technology to boost profits, revenue, and productivity. When business owners no longer have to worry about data recovery, they're free to focus on the core business. With fewer servers to manage and fewer client computers failing, there's time to build competitive strategies that allow the company to grow.

Hybrid backup gives companies the best of both worlds: on-premise and cloud-based backup. The solutions allow a company to leave data protection to the experts. Optimized to work over limited bandwidth connections between corporate locations and the vendor's data center, hybrid backup is ideal for companies with one to two servers per site and several dozen PCs, and for smaller remote offices and mobile workers.

Consider cloud backup if you have:

- **No local IT staff:** Smaller companies where IT is overtaxed, or where there is no onsite IT staff may opt for cloud-based backup. A hybrid solution offers them the choice to take advantage of on-premise protection as well, should the need arise.
- **Smaller data sets:** Network bandwidth is a consideration when data sets are large. A hybrid solution continuously backs up data to an on-premise solution which automatically transmits to the cloud, ensuring comprehensive data protection. For smaller businesses, cloud-only backup may be sufficient.
- **Limited applications and databases on local servers:** A limited number of local applications or databases generally means you have less data or applications to recover. As the business grows or data sets become larger, a business can opt for the more comprehensive and flexible hybrid option.

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- **A preference for limited backup hardware:** Businesses who have no plans to invest in backup hardware, and no desire to own or manage it, will prefer the cloud-based option. As they grow, they may opt for the hybrid solution in order to take advantage of fast on-premise data retrieval.
- **A preference for SaaS:** More and more companies have adopted SaaS elsewhere in their business and prefer the benefits (agility, low initial price, pay-as-you-grow) over on-premise solutions. As they acquire more data, they have the option to back up onsite as well.
- **A growing number of remote offices and mobile workers:** Online and hybrid backup helps to relieve remote offices of back up duties so they can focus on business operations.

### Considerations

When researching backup vendors, seek out those that provide detailed information on their policies and programs. In addition, ask about:

#### ***Security & Privacy***

- Data Security. When selecting a cloud-based or hybrid backup vendor, research the levels of encryption and security used to protect the data. Seek out vendors who will protect your data in transit with military-grade encryption levels like 128-bit SSL connections and store it on reliable enterprise-grade redundant disk arrays (RAIDs).
- Data center access. How secure are the offsite facilities your data will be stored in? Make sure the data centers used by the vendor are constantly monitored with carefully controlled personnel.

#### ***Compliance***

Think about legislation or regulations the business must comply with. Are there regulatory requirements for where the data can be stored? Is the business required to retain data for a certain period of time? What data privacy safeguards are required? Ask the vendor how they can help you address these requirements.

#### ***Performance & Reliability***

What happens if the backup provider becomes temporarily or permanently unavailable? What rights do you have to your data? How quickly will you receive your backup? Make sure you understand your backup service provider's service level agreements and the measures they use to protect your data and ensure the availability of the service. Check out their reputation for reliability.

### Conclusion

Cloud-based and hybrid backup offer important benefits for small and medium-size businesses. With the promise of significant cost savings, flexible options designed for agility, and a workforce that is free to focus on the company's core offering, it's no surprise that small and medium-size businesses are leading the charge to move their backup operations to new cloud-based and hybrid options. Symantec's next-generation hybrid backup solution, designed by the same team that created the award-winning Symantec Backup Exec™ software, provides essential disaster recovery and backup protection that offers the best of both worlds: fast on-premise retrieval and the assurance of an offsite copy in the cloud. With Symantec data protection solutions, you can rest assured knowing your data is being backed up automatically and continuously without disruption to your business.



## About Symantec

Symantec protects the world's information, and is a global leader in security, backup, and availability solutions. Our innovative products and services protect people and information in any environment – from the smallest mobile device, to the enterprise data center, to cloud-based systems. Our world-renowned expertise in protecting data, identities, and interactions gives our customers confidence in a connected world. More information is available at [www.symantec.com](http://www.symantec.com) or by connecting with Symantec at [go.symantec.com/socialmedia](http://go.symantec.com/socialmedia).

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