A Primer for Business Owner/Managers – this is how you should be backing up your computer systems; Reassure60

The Problem ...

As the use of technology grows, all businesses are relying more & more on their IT systems. Despite running their business on computers, most SME's can still manage without their IT for a few minutes – but what about a few hours or even days? Computer downtime is of course bad & amongst other things it means staff not able to do their jobs whilst still wanting to be paid!

That reliance on IT means that a business should make sure it has the means to recover quickly from IT problems. However, conventional backup techniques just aren't good enough these days. Take for example the conventional process of recovering from a major server crash. After failing to get the server going again, you have the time, trouble & expense of sourcing & buying a new server. Then a delay of at least a day whilst your IT people build/prepare your new server & then restore your data from the backup onto that new server. Invariably you are looking at the best part of 3 days server downtime from server crash to new server being fully operational again! And then your staff have possibly as much as 3 days work to catch up on!

The Answer ...

Preston based A & N Business Computer Systems Ltd specialise in providing IT solutions for SME's. In conjunction with a number of their clients & using industry recognised leading edge tried & tested solutions, they have developed a new approach to backing up computer systems entitled "Reassure60."

"Reassure60" delivers very very fast systems recovery by taking ghost images or "snap-shots" of an entire server system. An image can then be loaded & run on a separate machine - for example a PC. Typically, the loading of an image & the running of the virtual server delivers a recovery time of 60 minutes rather than days!

From the users perspective, they see absolutely no difference between the real server that's been lost & the virtual server image that has now taken it's place! Work can continue as normal whilst a solution to the lost server problem is found.

Moreover, in a disaster recovery scenario, the virtual server can be located anywhere. For example, immediately after a significant fire, the business owner/manager may want to run the IT from home or in a portacabin. "Reassure60" enables the running of multiple virtual servers on one PC – an absolutely ideal solution when space is limited & time is short.

Real World Example ...

Energy Cost Management Ltd (ECM) are a Preston business with a proven track record of delivering cost effective Utility Management Solutions in both the private and public sector. ECM have been a client of A & N's for many years. Amongst the first to use "Protect & Recover" they are delighted with the peace of mind that it brings. Managing Director, Steve Casson commented, "I was particularly impressed with how quickly A & N were able to demonstrate the recovery process. We had a corrupt database – but not for long! A & N were able to restore the database remotely & we were up & running again within minutes."

Towards the end of the installation/commissioning of "Reassure60" at ECM, A & N simulated a server crash for the customer. With the server off (replaced by the virtual server) staff logged onto the network as normal & unaffected. Steve Casson added, "All our programs & all our data was there running in the virtual environment just as if it was on the server, ready/available for the staff to use – amazing!"

Why Change ...

The traditional way of backing up is to connect a tape drive the main computer & copy everything to tape overnight using a handful of tapes used in rotation. More recently, instead of using tapes businesses have started to use disk space on the internet or spare capacity on network drives. In isolation, these technique has a number of major flaws & weaknesses;

- You may well have a 100% successful backup – but if you loose your server, what are you going to restore your data onto ?

- Tape drives & tape media are an expensive capital cost with a life of typically only 3 years.

- If you have applications/programs that need to run on specific machines (e.g. a server or the accounts PC) & those machines die, you are going to have to re-install all those applications/programs plus any updates before you can even begin to restore your data.

- Tape swap during holidays, staff unsure as to who is responsible for checking backup success/failure, tape storage off-site, tape rotation, ensuring a tape isn't used when it's too old – all painful with a high chance of something going wrong.

Much More Than Just Backup ...

Reassure60 is a lot more than just backup. It provides your business with a local backup/copy of your data, fully functional images of your server(s) that can be run on a PC, offsite data storage on our secure/online servers & a summary disaster recover plan for dealing with an emergency.

Call to Action ...

Don't wait for a major IT problem to happen in your business before considering the benefits of "Reassure60." The technology is proven & the peace of mind is reassuring. At A & N we can implement "Reassure60" within a day with little or no disruption to your existing IT. Moreover, our service includes a simulated disaster recover. Without exception, every "Reassure60" customer has been amazed at how efficiently we were able to recover their entire IT within about an hour as prescribed.

For more information about "Reassure60" or any of A & N Business Computer Systems Ltd products or services contact us by telephoning the office on 01772 823775 or emailing info@ansystems.co.uk