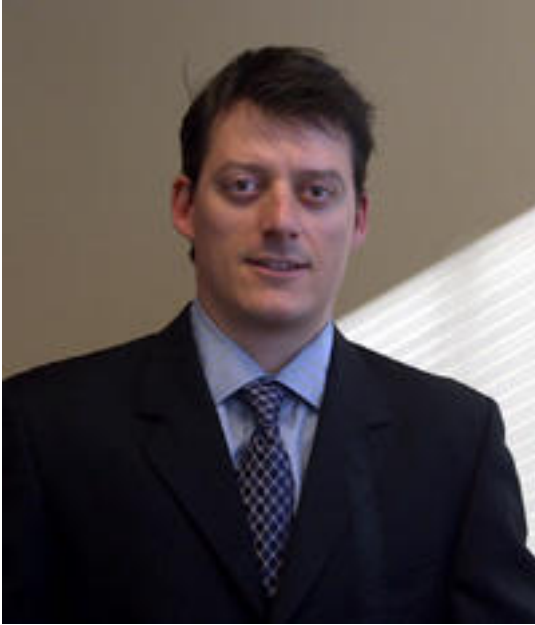


Driving Manufacturing Success By Backing Up

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Today's smaller manufacturers are creating enormous amounts of data — everything from new product designs to top-secret intellectual property, as well as a constant flow of customer and sales information that must be managed and protected every day. To say that this data is vital would be understating the value of its constant use, and any loss of information could be devastating.

For small businesses in general, the value of information has never been more important. According to the [Symantec 2012 State of Information Survey](#) [1], the information small businesses create and manage on a daily basis constitutes 40 percent of the value of their business. The same survey revealed that information for small businesses is expected to increase by 178 percent within a year, and for those in the manufacturing space, that number could be even higher. The reality is that over the past few years, there hasn't been a shortage of examples in the news spotlighting businesses losing critical data, whether through cyber-attacks, natural disasters or suffering regulatory fines for compliance violations related to losing customer data. The challenge today's smaller manufacturers face: How do they maintain productivity by protecting their intellectual property from loss?

The simple answer is to back up that information. While the answer is simple, it's often times not so easy to execute. In some cases, smaller manufacturers often have few or no dedicated IT staff members, and they rarely have extra time to pursue any initiative that is not focused on running the day-to-day business. When there is no immediate visible risk that a data loss incident will occur, it's easy for them to de-emphasize and even neglect regular backups — especially when backup has a historical reputation for being difficult to manage. These incidents happen all

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too easily and far too often, and manufacturers can no longer run under the premise that backup is not a real need.

Fortunately, it's simpler than ever for today's businesses to effectively ensure that they will always have access to their information. It's just a matter of determining which backup platform is best for your business, and which vendor best meets those needs.

The Right Backup Platform

Manufacturers with onsite IT expertise may be interested in backup software that can be installed on the hardware they are already using. This means there is no need to buy new storage, and keeping their backup files onsite presents several advantages. It optimizes recovery time and can allow the company to more easily meet industry regulations, which may mandate where certain information can be stored.

For smaller manufacturers that have perhaps one or just a few IT staff members working onsite, and are open to purchasing or upgrading their hardware, backup appliances may be the ideal solution. Appliances are a seamless package combining both software and hardware into a single device that helps reduce issues with configuration, as well as eliminating potential compatibility issues between the hardware and software. Using a backup appliance also makes support a seamless experience with one point of contact.

For organizations that have no IT presence, onsite and desire quick setup that requires no expertise, a cloud-based solution may be the best option. Cloud-based backup offers a very cost effective solution as businesses only pay for the storage they need. Cloud backup also works well for companies that have computers in multiple locations since no hardware nor IT staff is required.

The Right Backup Provider

Backup solutions have a more complex job to complete than ever before. Today's IT environments store information not only on traditional computers but also in virtual environments, and smaller manufacturers should look for a single backup solution that can handle both tasks. One solution instead of two saves time and money, which is more important than ever, as everyone is tasked with delivering more with fewer resources to complete the task. It is critical to have the ability to restore just a single file immediately without requiring full system restore or staging that saves valuable production time. This further highlights the need to have the right information available, when you need it. Select the provider that will best meet your company's needs.

With the right technology in place, the next step is to educate your employees on intelligent information management practices, and implement policies including what information should be archived and what should be deleted. The most effective backup results from combining the right tools with employees making the right decisions. Backup is an important part of an overall information retention plan,

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and now is the time to make sure it is happening — before you lose critical information.

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