The 5 Best Cloud Backup Solutions for Small Business Owners

2016-06-29 - Tom Collins - Comments (0) - Blog Posts

Data loss is the basis of every IT managers' worst nightmare. On an industry-wide basis, the cost of lost or stolen data access is estimated at $1.7 billion per year. Inclement weather, unreliable hosting, and equipment failures are just three of many factors that can result in lost data access. Depending on your redundancy and continuity planning, this lost access could be permanent.

If you're struggling to develop a comprehensive approach to business continuity planning against data loss on a limited budget, cloud data backup could be the right choice for your small or mid-sized business (SMB). In this blog post, you'll gain objective insight into some of the best options for small business cloud backup and some information on how to pick the right one for you.

What are the Benefits of Cloud Backup?

The definition of cloud backup is as simple as remotely backing up your data with an offsite provider. If your business is hosting your data assets and workload on-premises, this could encompass the help of a third-party cloud backup provider. If your small business is engaged with a cloud hosting provider, there's a good chance that redundancy is part of your service agreement.

The benefits of remote data backup can include:

1. **Zero Infrastructure Investment:** Instead of having to dedicate on-premises servers and real-estate, you unlock the privilege of off-site backup with zero infrastructure investment.
2. **Easy Customization and Maintenance**: Many cloud backup providers offer a user-friendly interface with minimal learning curve.
3. **Faster Disaster Recovery:** Should your business lose assets access, the data backups are typically able to be restored in full in record time.
4. **Less IT Resources Investment:** Paying a third-party vendor for infrastructure investment means you're not responsible for backups in-house. This means you don't have to worry about implementing, maintaining, and troubleshooting the assets.
5. **Advantages over Tape Backups:** While tape backups were the defacto standard for years, they're not the cutting-edge. Off-site backups via a cloud provider offer significant advantages, particularly in the

areas of time-to-recovery and protection against physical breaches.

6. **Tiered Cost-Value Alignment:** At some small businesses, budgetary factors are incredibly tight. However, thanks to the flexibility of many cloud backup providers, the total cost analysis (TCO) is quite clear. The potential benefits of cloud backup (value) are far greater than the costs invested.

To learn more, check out 6 Reasons Businesses Should Choose Cloud Backup.

The Best Cloud Backup Providers for Small Business

1. Carbonite

Carbonite is perhaps the "biggest kid" on the block when it comes to small-business cloud backup solutions. It's certainly among the best-known options for tiny companies and startups! This organization offers a host of options for companies, including Carbonite Server Backup and the Advanced Server Bundle. The number of connected devices your organization owns and servers can determine which online backup option is best for you.

2. Equiniti

Equiniti is a provider of managed "infrastructure and hosting" services for businesses of all sizes, which includes cloud backup planning. This includes off-site backups at Equiniti's "disaster recovery site." Equiniti offers a variety of business services to SMB, which include intranet implementation and "complaint management."

3. CrashPlan

CrashPlan is an "online data backup" provider. Targeted to small businesses and startups, their services include flexibility in data volume and more. Once you've backed up your data with CrashPlan, you can enjoy the benefits of redundancy thanks to this provider's remote data center locations.

4. Backup Blaze

Backup Blaze has pioneered themselves as a service for organizations who need business continuity at low prices. With this provider, customers are able to back up each device on their network (think employee laptops and computers) continuously, at a flat rate per calendar year.

5. Honorable Mention: Atlantech

Atlantech isn't strictly a provider of cloud backup services. They're a nationwide provider of unified business communications services, at a price that small businesses can afford. Small and medium-sized customers of Atlantech can choose between fiber-optic data connectivity, cloud hosting and backup, hosted voice, and more—at an affordable price. With Atlantech as your backup cloud vendor, you can trust that your data assets are shrouded with layers of expertise, business continuity planning, and redundancy.

Factors to Consider When Choosing a Cloud Backup Provider:

1. Is Public, Private, or Hybrid Cloud the Best Bet for Your Business?

The decision between public, private, and hybrid cloud services is largely dependent on your business. Certain regulatory requirements may demand dedicated, or private, infrastructure, while other businesses are fine opting for shared (or public) backup conditions. Understanding your organizations' unique needs is typically the most effective way to understand the connection between compliance and your backup requirements.

To learn more, we recommend Public vs Private vs Hybrid Backup Services: Which is Best?

2. Which Type of Backup Schedule is Best for You?

Full data backups on a daily basis require an enormous amount of storage. In contrast, doing differential backups can introduce the risk of extended-time-to data restoration. Backup scheduling isn't as simple as "set it and forget it." It necessitates an understanding of your businesses unique needs, workload, and demands.

For in-depth insight into this topic, please read Full Backup vs. Incremental Backup vs. Differential Backup: Which is Best?

3. Do They Offer Sufficient Flexibility for Your Storage and Scalability Needs?

An in-depth conversation about scalability often requires a consultation. However, for small businesses and startups who require specific attention to rapid growth, a conversation about scalability potential is often necessary. Understanding whether or not your provider has the potential to grow backups as quickly as your business can revolutionize your business continuity planning.

4. How are Their Uptime Guarantees?

Reputable business continuity planning and cloud backup service providers will offer service-level agreements (SLAs) or promises to their customers about reliability. A provider who offers 99.999% or better access guarantee has a clear commitment to accessibility and customer service.

4. Do They Offer Sufficient Data Security and Compliance?

If your business is required to comply with PCI, SOX, or another regulatory requirement, investigating a potential providers' compliance is crucial. Your vendors should not introduce regulatory risk, but should support your compliance efforts with regular audits and expertise.

5. Do You Have Adequate Bandwidth?

Is there a chance that your business will need to rapidly scale your workload or data hosting in the near future? If so, having a conversation with your cloud backup provider is crucial. Some cloud services providers lack the capacity to accommodate serious spikes in client requirements, while others charge steep fees to scale storage.

6. Is There an Opportunity for Unified Business Communications?

What does unified business communications have to do with business continuity? As it turns out, an awful lot. Purchasing unified business communications services, which may include fiber-optic internet connectivity, voice, and more can allow for:

- Lower costs
- More employee productivity
- Better collaboration
- Faster troubleshooting

- Lower travel costs

If there is a chance your business plans to upgrade your voice or internet connectivity services, it may behoove you to consider a provider who can bundle these crucial business tools.

Which Backup Cloud Provider is Best for Me?

To understand which small business cloud backup provider is best for your organization, you should look deeper than pure cost-output factors. The right cloud backup provider is the organization that's prepared to support your growth and scalability goals, regardless of how aggressive they may be.

To begin a conversation about how your unique needs stack up against available industry solutions, we recommend enlisting an expert. Grab a free, expert consultation from an Atlantech representative today to learn more!