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When it comes to computers, most small- and mid-size business owners have two things in common. First, they want their computers to run reliably so they can focus on their business. Second, when we ask companies lacking credentialed in-house IT staff how they resolve a computer issue, they respond: “*Oh, we have a “guy” who does “that.”*” When we delve into exactly what “that” is, things get murky. Read on to learn more about what “that” should be.

Let’s start with a business basic: data back-up. Best practice is to back-up all data generated in the last 90 days. If asked, the “guy” will affirm that’s what is being done. What we find – 97 percent of the time in companies large and small – is that the “guy” is mistaken.

Here are typical findings of a recent audit:

Client has capacity to backup all data (323 Gb)

Daily back-ups include approximately one-half (166 Gb) of all data.

Sixty percent (14 of 23) of recent back-ups were successful.

Four of 22 data backup media in use are damaged and unable to store/restore data.

Data excluded from back-ups: Windows, user accounts, program files and customizations, passwords, network security settings on all four servers.

It doesn’t take a Bill Gates to conclude that if this business suffers an IT incident, the data loss/downtime repercussions will be significant.

So what went wrong? The problem is simple: “that” needs to be more clearly defined. The owner assumes that in the event of a system crash, *all* capabilities and data can be quickly restored. In reality, the “guy” appears to have decided that “all” data meant files like MS Word and Excel, but not email, user accounts and passwords.

In this case, two quick steps could send the business to back-up Nirvana. One: harvest the missing data by adding three check boxes to back-up software settings. Two: pitch the four damaged back-up tapes, a process that takes less than 60 seconds.

If you are a small business owner and you find yourself saying “*We have a “guy” who does “that,”*” make sure you’re asking your “guy” the right questions so you don’t become part of our statistics. Contact us at info@sseinc.com and we’ll send you the four key questions you should be asking your “guy” related to backing up vital company data. Or if you’d like information on a complimentary health check of your computer systems, including current data backup status, contact us at 314-439-4700.