



Avoiding System and Data Loss with Windows Desktops and Laptops

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Executive Summary

More and more businesses are becoming less centralized in the 21st century – with many workers relying on laptops as their computing environment. In addition, a lot of small businesses are foregoing the use of servers in favor of using desktops and laptops to run their organizations.

Losing a system is never pleasant, but when it causes business disruption, the result can be disastrous for small and medium sized businesses (SMBs). When desktops and laptops are out of commission – if they're lost, stolen, damaged or corrupted – business can grind to a standstill. That's why it is so important to make data backup and disaster recovery a priority for the desktops and laptops in your environment.

Unfortunately, most backup and recovery strategies are bound by technological limitations. Many are not easy to use or do not work in the background to minimize the need for user interference. Many disrupt business continuity. And most cannot recover systems quickly and easily in the event of a disaster.

Finally, upgrading to new Windows systems network-wide can frustrate IT staff with its complexity and potential for disaster. The migration process can place a heavy load on SMBs with limited IT resources.

This white paper outlines each of these issues, why they are important for SMBs to address and how to resolve them while maximizing business continuity and minimizing IT resources necessary to accomplish the demands of backing up and recovering Windows desktops and laptops in your environment.

Why is protecting your data so difficult?

Many businesses, particularly SMBs, have focused on protecting the data on their server systems. But with so many workers saving data directly to their desktops and laptops, emphasis also needs to be placed on protecting personal computers, as well. It should now be a business-critical priority.

But in the modern world, business is mobile. Along with that increased mobility comes increased difficulty managing and protecting systems. How do you protect data on systems that are constantly on the move?

That increased mobility also means a great propensity for problems – like theft, damage or data corruption from a virus. Once workers are off-site, do you know what they're downloading onto their laptops? Do you know how they're treating your company's equipment?

IT administrators need a way to protect all the data on systems, and also protect the systems themselves. If a user brings in a laptop that no longer boots, you need a way to get that user up and running quickly – whether it's a temporary virtual machine while you fix the system or a brand new laptop. But migrating to a new system can be painful and time-consuming. Meanwhile, the user is impatiently waiting to get back to work.

In addition, most industry estimates place the shelf life for computer hard drives around three to five years. Eventually the desktops and laptops in your environment will have to be replaced. It's a matter of time, not a matter of luck.

Many SMBs are choosing to avoid the issue altogether and leaving desktops and laptops out of their disaster recovery plans. However, with so much business-critical data being saved on personal computers, this is no longer an option. You need a safe and secure way to have a copy of critical data on every desktop and laptop in your computing environment, and you need a way to get users up and running again when their systems fail.

Why is it important to simplify backup and recovery?

Your data is one of your most valued resources. Nearly every modern business relies on personal computers to conduct everyday operations. Not only do you need access to applications such as Microsoft Word and Excel, your users need access to all their information and data all of the time. Extended downtime is not an option.

Managing backups of your users' systems needs to be a straightforward process, without consuming too much time administrating the backup technology or the process of recovery and without overly relying on users to manage backups. IT administrators do not have the time to spend hours or days learning new systems and new processes. Backup technology must be simple to learn and easy to manage and it must be automated, so users don't have to initiate it.

There are many real-world requirements of simplifying desktop backup and recovery.

Rapid Restore of Files and Folders

At one time or another, most users have accidentally deleted files or folders they need. Even with desktop recycle bins, they can permanently delete files they need. Administrators must have a way to resolve those day-to-day "oops" moments.

Rapid Recovery Following Desktop Failure

How often have you had a user call you in a panic because a desktop or laptop is corrupted with a virus or their hard drive is making a funny noise? Whether it's hard disk drives failing, malware downloads, the odd coffee spill to the laptop keyboard or simple acts of God, it's a situation you will end up facing at one time or another.

Workers don't have the time to wait while you repair their systems, reload the operating system, applications and data – if you have a backup of the data at all. Many times, you have to start all over again with a new laptop and the user loses everything on the system.

Migration to New Desktops and Laptops

Upgrading to a new machine can be difficult. You may want to have a user migrate to a virtual system or perhaps they need to upgrade to new hardware. Should you migrate everything on their old system? Should you install a new system and applications and have them move their data only? Do you have a copy of the old data saved on your network somewhere?

As many businesses investigate virtualization technology administrators must find new tools to help them migrate to virtual machines from physical ones. Not all tools are created

equally and you may not be sure if desktops, applications and data will migrate safely to a new, virtual environment.

Verification of Backup Images

Even if you have backup technology, how sure are you that your backups will work when you need them to? Many times your backup will work when it's created and then disk corruption or drive failure will make your backup unusable down the line.

Notification of Backup Problems

With many systems to manage and users to assist, many IT administrators don't have a way to check on their backups, particularly for laptops that are constantly on the move. It would be nice to schedule backups that happen in the background, without the need for user involvement. But without some sort of notification, it may be like turning your back on the ocean. Just because you can't see that something has gone wrong doesn't mean that there isn't a problem about to hit you from behind.

Bottom Line

It's vital to have a complete backup of all of the Windows desktops and laptops and data in your computing environment. You need to be able to recover files and folders quickly, but it's far too time-consuming to restore an entire system with only a file-level backup following a catastrophic failure or user error.

In addition, it's very important to have a simple way to keep tabs on your desktop and laptop backups without having to spend a lot of time and money learning to understand a new solution.

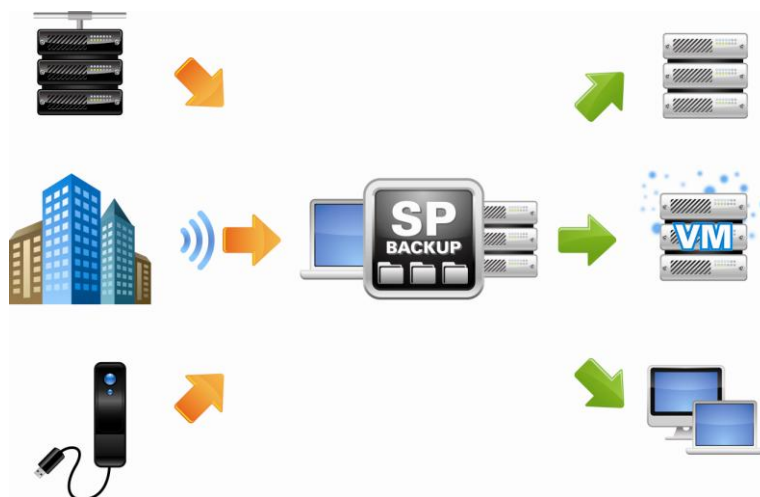
Rapid Recovery for Windows Desktops and Laptops

STORAGECRAFT SHADOWPROTECT 4 DESKTOP™

StorageCraft ShadowProtect Desktop™ 4.0 allows you to backup your Windows desktops and laptops quickly and easily, and recover rapidly in the event of a disaster.

ShadowProtect Desktop is fast and reliable disk-based backup that captures full, differential and incremental point-in-time backup images of your entire system. That includes the operating system, applications, configuration settings and data.

With ShadowProtect Desktop, you can schedule full and incremental backups, giving you automatic protection of every Windows desktop and laptop in your environment. You can schedule automatic backups as often as every 15 minutes, including applications such as Microsoft Office and each user's personal settings and data. Plus, you can set it up to run backups each time a user connects to your network and save those backups on your network. ShadowProtect's point-in-time backup image technology runs in the background without impacting everyday business.



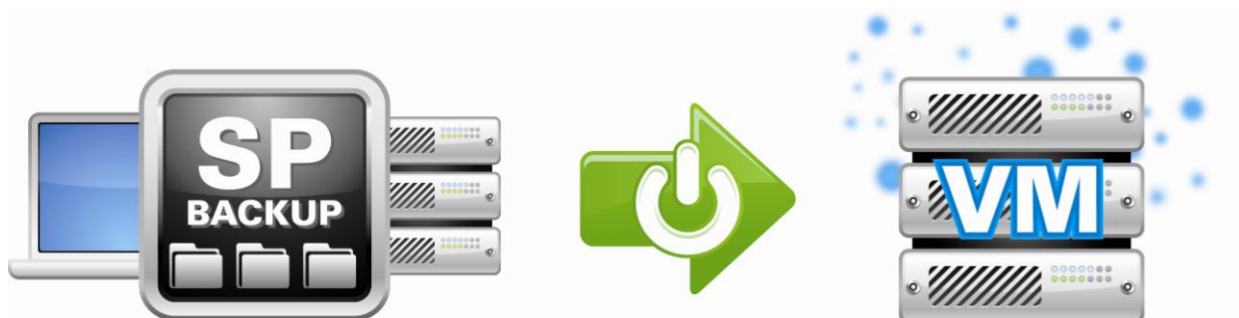
In addition, ShadowProtect's flexibility gives you a number of recovery options. Restore from bare metal through the bootable ShadowProtect recovery CD, or restore a complete ShadowProtect backup image of an entire system that's been saved on your network, a removable drive or even an off-site location. ShadowProtect Desktop allows you to recover rapidly because there are no extra steps for recovery. Following a catastrophic failure or a

virus corruption, you restore your point-in-time ShadowProtect backup image and you're ready to go – the operating system, applications and data are all contained in the backup image file.

For granular recovery of individual files and folders, simply mount a point-in-time backup image file and then quickly browse to the files you need. If you want, you can drag and drop folders to the desktop or leave the point-in-time backup image mounted to allow users to find the files they need.

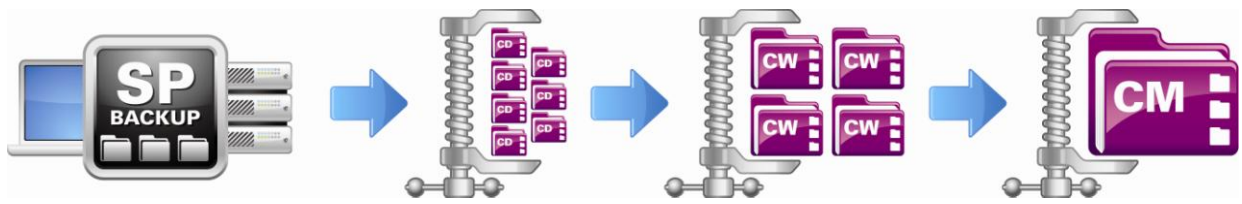
ShadowProtect Desktop makes migrating to a new desktop – even a virtual workstation – a relatively simple prospect. ShadowProtect includes Hardware Independent Restore™ (HIR) technology that helps automate migration to dissimilar hardware or to and from virtual environments.

VirtualBoot™ is revolutionary new technology in ShadowProtect Desktop. VirtualBoot allows you to right-click on any ShadowProtect Desktop point-in-time backup image and automatically boot it as a virtual machine. You can use this technology to test new applications or to restore archived information from legacy systems. For complete conversion to virtual environments, ShadowProtect Desktop also includes a virtual converter. Take a ShadowProtect point-in-time backup image and convert it to a VMware .VMDK or a Microsoft .VHD file.



Streamline management of ShadowProtect backups with an integrated management console that allows you to simultaneously push install ShadowProtect to every Windows desktop or laptop in your environment. You can also check the status of your system backups and create groupings for simplified management.

Another tool, ShadowProtect ImageManager™ allows you to consolidate your backup image files to minimize storage consumption for your backup images. With a minimal amount of set up, ShadowProtect ImageManager will automatically collapse desktop image files into daily, weekly and monthly backups and notify you via e-mail if any backups fail.



ShadowProtect ImageManager also has a verification feature which will automatically check and re-check backup image files. If there is ever a problem, if a disk drive begins to fail or a backup image file is accidentally deleted, ShadowProtect ImageManager will alert you to the problem.



Backup Fast, Recover Faster

ShadowProtect Desktop helps you avoid system and data loss and maximize business continuity. It helps you protect all the data in your environment by streamlining backup of Windows desktops and laptops. Set the scheduler and backups happen throughout the day, with no impact on system performance.

ShadowProtect Desktop also limits the time required to restore systems and data, helping you get users back up and running in a matter of minutes, rather than hours. Every minute you lose in recovery time is income and productivity lost. Minimize recovery time and you maximize your profits.

For additional information about ShadowProtect Desktop, please visit:

<http://www.storagecraft.co.uk/ShadowProtectDesktop.html>.