



BUSINESS TECHNOLOGY QUARTERLY

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Why You Should Backup Online



By Greg Robinson

How important is the data within your company to the operation of your business? Would your company be able to operate if it were to get lost or destroyed? If the answer is no you may want to consider online backups as a solution to safely securing your data.

While most clients use tape backups, the preferred and most widely accepted solution for years, there are several problems with tape backup. One is that the tape media degrades over time and has to be replaced which becomes costly.

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Don't Give Hackers "Free" Information



By Greg Rothauer

Most security audits and assessments we perform have revealed at least one server vulnerable to "null session" connections. These types of connections can be one of the first methods used by a hacker or virus in attacking your network. Some null session access was necessary with

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Join Us!

Upcoming Sage MIP and Sage FR50 Seminar

Join us on January 17, 2008 at the New Haven Lawn Club in New Haven for breakfast and a free demonstration of Sage MIP Fund Accounting and Sage Fundraising 50. Register today by calling Camille Livsey at 860- 524-4465 .

Just for Non-Profits

What's New in Sage Fundraising 50 Version 8?

By Camille Livsey

Released in October 2007, Sage Fundraising 50 (FR50) Version 8 provides many product enhancements as well Sage Donate Now capabilities.

User Defined default templates are available for up to 5 functional areas in FR50 including Data Entry, Quick Gift, Import Wizard and Donate Now Processing and can be shared with other users within your organization.

Reporting improvements have been made to strengthen the audit trail. "Last save by" information will now be displayed to keep track of changes made by the user to the report.

Security has been improved. Global security has been added to the system.

A "Mailing List" stamp has

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Backup data online

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Clients do not see the need to replace the media as often as we may recommend. There is also the risk of human error, in terms of changing the tapes every day. Also, ideally the tapes should be stored off site. This is an additional manual step and without it makes backing up to tape useless if there were to be a disaster such as a flood or fire on site where the server is located. There can also be a the problem of the tapes being stolen.

Secondly, the tape drive itself could also be a problem. Tape drives have mechanical parts that are known to fail over time. Tape drives need to constantly be cleaned to ensure proper operation and are also slow in backing up data. Performing restores from a tape drive are also rather slow requiring someone to manually locate the correct tape, mount it to the drive and then find the needed information on the tape and restore it to its location.


Online backups address the issues concerning tape backup. Online backups work by using your current internet connection to backup your data through encrypted sessions which remain secure during the transfer and while stored at the online backup company's data center. Advantages to online backups include not having to buy any

"...Online backups work by using your current internet connection..."

hardware to maintain, or repair and no tape media to manage. Online backups are completely automated after being initially setup and therefore you eliminate the daily manual task of changing tapes and reducing possible human error. Also the restore process is simplified and can be done with a couple of clicks from anywhere with an internet connection. There is no need to arrange for the storage of media, either onsite or offsite. No need to worry about degrading media or it becoming obsolete. Since all your files are encrypted before sending and stored in that format ensuring a very high level of security.

Now is the time for online backup. As the technology for online backup continues to mature, the costs have significantly decreased. Therefore, it may be time to start thinking about the possibility of an online backup solution.

Online backups require a monthly fee which may be a consideration when deciding to choose this as a backup solution; however, an online backup system is reliable, uncomplicated and can save time and money.

The TTG group is available to discuss this system and provide any assistance in choosing which is best for your business. Please contact us at 860.524.4400 

Don't Give Hackers Info

(Continued from page 1)

Windows NT 4.0 Servers and domains for retrieving information about the network. Recently, this need has been eliminated but is often engaged by default in order to provide backwards compatibility. First, we'll look at how a hacker would use this vulnerability and then we'll see how to turn it off.

This vulnerability can be easily exploited with a freely available program called "enum" which attaches to computers without the need for a username and password. Once connected, it can retrieve information such as user names, group membership and password policy. Here is an example of what the result looks like:

```
C:>enum -G yourserver
Server: yourserver
Setting up session... success.
Group: Administrators
YOURSERVER\administrator
YOURSERVER\service
YOURSERVER\jim
```

From these results, the attacker now knows that there is a user account named "jim" that is an administrator on this server. Typically, the "administrator" account has a complex password, but actual user accounts often use shorter and commonly guessed words. "Jim" would be a good target for an attack. Next, in order to know how many times he could guess at a password before the computer locks him out the attacker uses enum again with different options and gets the following:

```
C:>enum -P yourserver
Server: yourserver
Setting up session... success.
Min length: 6 characters
Min age: 30 days
```

Max age: 182 days
 Lockout threshold: none
 Lockout duration: 30 mins
 Lockout reset 5 mins

Now the attacker knows that there is no lockout threshold and he can keep trying to crack the password without locking out the user. "Enum" can attack a user account with a "dictionary file" which is a text file with hundreds of thousands of words and names along with common variations on spelling. If the "jim" account has a word-based password, the attacker will have it in minutes.

Even if a password policy is in place that will lock out "jim" after several failed attempts, the attacker can tailor the password guessing within those restrictions. It may take weeks, but they will eventually get it.

A good rule of thumb is anything that provides a hacker with "free" information about your network and how it is secured is valuable to them and dangerous to you.

The fix involves some changes to the Windows Registry on the affected PCs or Servers. However, some servers require that kind of connection for backwards compatibility to older systems and software. The fix should be implemented and thoroughly tested to ensure proper function of your network and software. Once complete, you have closed another hole that a hacker would love to use.

TTG provides security assessments and audits for both best security practices as well as regulatory requirements such as HIPAA and Gramm-Leach-Bliley)

Battery Backups



By Ian Cranston

Using battery backups for servers and essential network equipment has been a standard practice for years, but recently the major battery producers have been targeting the desktop computer. For approximately \$60 per computer, you can protect yourself from data loss due to blackouts and hardware loss from lightning or brownouts.

Battery backup units, also called uninterruptible power supplies (or UPS) have two main benefits:

Auxiliary power - If you lose power, your computer loses power as well, taking with it any unsaved work and also possibly damaging the computer itself. With a battery backup, you have approximately 10 minutes to save your work and shutdown your computer with no loss of data or hardware.

Power smoothing - A surge protector will stop a moderate amount of surging electricity from reaching your computer and potentially damaging it. The opposite of a surge, a drop in regular power or "brown-out" is just as damaging. If the power goes too high, the UPS lowers it, and if the power goes too low, the unit supplements it

with electricity from the battery.

Having battery backup units on each computer becomes increasingly important in the summer because when air conditioners click on, they "gulp" electricity and cause a brownout. Winter months also cause electrical problems because portable heating units create electrical "noise" that can damage electronics that is blocked by battery backup units.

With the recent considerable drop in prices, having a battery unit for each desktop is a wise decision and pays for itself the first time power is lost.

Fundraising 50 Ver. 8

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been added to Caddy Items.

The most exciting enhancement is Sage Donate Now. An organization with a Sage Payment Solutions (SPS) account can collect gifts right from their web site and send donor information straight to FR50.

SPS is a payment card industry (PCI) compliant service. SPS uses the Sage Vault to securely store customer credit card data. By storing the data within SPS and not FR50, the risk of identity and credit fraud is reduced.

A "Donate Now" report is also available with version 8.

Spotlight on TTG's Equipment Ordering Strategy - Saving Client's Money

By Mark R. Torello

When a client needs a new computer or firewall, they rely on TTG to specify the right solution and acquire it on time and at the best price.

What makes this different than ordering it from bestbuy.com? Several things:

1. We have paid agreements with our distributors in order to buy from them at discounted rates. This provides us access to their product experts who help ensure the right product is specified and delivered. We can rely on distributors' inventory counts, which can make the difference between a 1 day delivery and 10 day delivery.
2. Our staff compares the prices of several distributors and discount companies to ensure the best possible price. For mission critical items we order from tried and true distributors.
3. TTG staff monitor order status and delivery schedules to ensure that the equipment is received in time for the planned installation

How does this save client's money?

1. We pass along our distributor discounts to the client.

2. Our order management process ensures that equipment is delivered within the planned project schedule.
3. Our "purchasing department" services are provided free to the client.
4. We know what products are available at no or reduced cost to nonprofits. We saved one of our nonprofit clients \$40,000 on one order!
5. We can often get software through "Volume-License" programs. Understanding when these programs apply and save money takes experience.
6. TTG volume purchase relationships with DELL, Microsoft, Ingram Micro, Sage Software and others results in money saved and passed on to our clients.

In House News



New Technology Group, LLC web site

The new site delivers up to date security news as well as a new Client Only area with resources such as Guides on selecting an accounting system, security guides, and more. Take a look at www.TheTechnologyGroup.com.

We welcome the following new client additions:

- Pure Tech Holdings, LLC
- SINA (Southside Institutions Neighborhood Alliance)

- Valley Stone Credit Union
- United Way of Connecticut
- Community Foundation of Greater New Britain
- VSI HD Media Services

Referral Reward Program Announced

For every submitted referral, your organization will receive 2 free hours of consulting and/or training services. If you would like us to send you the referral form please call the office at 524-4400 or check the client section of our website.



ISP Choices

By Eric Stoltz



Remember the days of dial-up internet? Since then high speed internet came along and users rejoiced. Now that the high speed honeymoon is over, how happy are you? More importantly, do you know what your options are?

High speed internet options used to be limited to the provider available in your area. Consumers now have additional options when selecting their Internet Service Provider (ISP):

Phone company - For starters and small businesses there is DSL (digital subscriber line), which is available over normal phone lines and has different pricing options depending upon line speed and number of IP addresses that you need. A downside to DSL can be support times in the event of an

outage. With no guaranteed response time, DSL service can be down for a long amount of time. Phone providers also offer higher speed connections such as T1s and T3s, which offer guaranteed connectivity, and a faster internet connection.

Cable company - Previously focused on rural markets, and limited business locations, cable internet access is now available most everywhere. Many offer higher speed connections than DSL, with competitive pricing, and a strong support promise. This is very attractive to DSL users that want higher speeds with faster support in the event of an outage, and pricing relatively close to DSL costs.

Interoffice connections - companies with 2 or more offices usually want to connect their locations to one another to share resources (phones, servers, etc). This is usually done with point-to-point circuits from the phone company. These are usually very reliable, but expensive when higher speeds are needed. They also lack an internet connection, requiring one of more of the offices to carry a second circuit (such as DSL) just for their internet traffic. A new choice for some smaller offices is to have DSL or cable connections at each office, and use hardware with VPN technology (virtual private network) at each end to make a secure connection between the offices. This allows each office to talk to the other offices securely, and there is still an

"...do you know what your options are?"

internet connection for any other traffic.

Other options - there are other options depending upon your location and connectivity needs. These include satellite dishes, broadband wireless cards through cell phone companies, and public wireless internet in some locales. There are also other options for inter-office connections such as fiber-optic cables.

Please contact The Technology Group to schedule an evaluation of your internet access needs.

How Long Will Your Microsoft Products be Supported?

By Ian Apruzzese

As Microsoft products age, these products become unsupported for technical support, security updates, and patches. This support life cycle can have a significant impact on how organizations plan for and deploy their technology and are an important factor in developing an effective technology plan.

Mainstream support

Mainstream support lasts for five years or for two years after the release of a successor product. Mainstream support includes;

- Paid support
- Security update support
- Non-security hotfix support
- No-charge incident support

Windows 2000

Mainstream support for most versions of Windows 2000 expired at the end of 2005.

This is particularly significant because Windows 2000 is the most widely used desktop client in corporate environments, accounting for more than 50% of desktop OS's. At this time Windows 2000 is no longer supported by Microsoft and should be phased out of production.

Windows XP

Mainstream support for Windows XP will be provided until 2009. Organizations need to begin planning for replacing their aging Windows XP systems today. Factors to be considered are hardware compatibility, software compatibility, and user training for Windows Vista.

Windows NT 4.0

Support for Windows NT 4.0 has long since been ended. Network systems running NT 4.0 should be replaced as soon as possible to mitigate security risks associated with this system.

Conclusion

Microsoft's Support Lifecycle is an important factor in planning for the future of your organization's technology needs. Understanding how this impacts your technology and network is vital to your organization.

The Technology Group can assist you in determining the level of support for your network software and help you plan for the future.

MIP Tips & Tricks

MIP Custom Formats Missing After Upgrade or Reinstall

By Camille Livsey

With version 9.0 released in November 2007, this article will be of use to Sage MIP Fund Accounting users who utilize the Forms Designer module.

Symptom

After an upgrade or reinstallation of the server, custom check formats created with the Forms Designer module are missing.

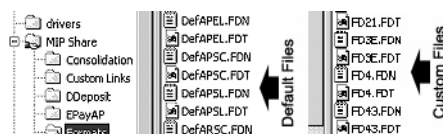
Cause

During the installation process, the link to the custom formats has been lost or the default directory has been changed.

Resolution

Confirm that the custom formats still exist. Go to Windows Explorer under C:\MIP Share > Formats, or go to Start > Run and type the following: \\servername\MIP Share\Formats directory. There will be a large number of files under the Formats folder.

Files that begin with the letters "DEF" are default system formats and files that begin with a prefix of "FD" (normally) are the custom formats:



If the files are not in the default directory you will need to

locate them on your server. You can do a file search (Start > Search > Files or Folders) for *.FDN.

It is hard to say what the exact name of any file will be because the name is assigned by the system when the format was created.

Search For Custom Files

To help with identifying the custom file names, look for a file called Formats.fmt within the Formats folder. Open this file with text editor (WordPad or Notepad for example). You will see lines like this:

```
"AP Bank Check", "First State Bank
Check", "APS", "107",
"C:\MIPSHARE\FORMATS\FD5D.FDN",
"1"
```

AP Bank Check is the name given the format when it was saved. This is what you saw in the dropdown menu when selecting a check format.

First State Bank Check is the user-defined description.

APS is the transaction source; in this case it is an AP system check

"C:\MIP SHARE\FORMATS\FD5D.FDN" is the saved location of the check. This is useful because it references the file name called FD5D.FDN as the First State Bank Check. When you re-import your checks into the system, the FD5N.FDN file is what you will need to refer to.

It is a good idea to print this file for future references.

After locating your formats, you may need to move them to the default directory. The proper directory should be the

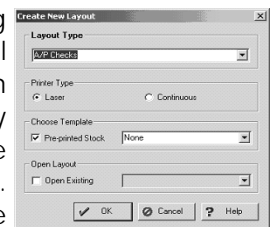
\\Servername\MIP Share\Formats where Servername is the name of the machine that is acting as the MIP server. If you have installed the MIP Server to a new machine or a different location, you will need to move the Formats directory to that location.

Import Custom File

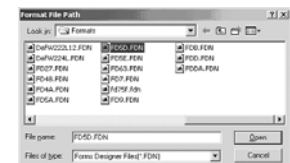
Once you have the Formats in the proper directory, you are ready to import them into Forms Designer. To import a format into Forms Designer go to Accounting > Reports > Forms Designer.

This will bring up a box where you select information about the format you wish to import. In the Layout Type box select the type of format that you wish to import. Select the printer type and choose to use pre-printed stock with "None" as the stock.

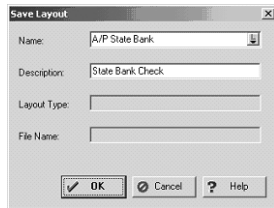
After clicking OK you will get an empty template screen. There will be icons across the top. You want to click the icon that looks like a paintbrush with an arrow pointing to it. This is the Import Format button.



This brings up a dialog box that allows you to browse and select the format file you wish to import. Leave the file name the same.



After you click the Open button another box will appear. This is where you enter the reference name (the name you will see on the dropdown when selecting formats) and the description. If, for some reason, you get a message that the name has already been used, modify the name slightly.



After you select OK you should get a message that the format has been successfully imported. It should now be available for selection wherever you use the format. You may import additional formats or exit out of Forms Designer.

Note: If you happen to get an error message when you attempt to print checks using the form(s) you imported, check that the Formats.fmt folder contains a valid path. For example, if you reinstalled the workstation thru the UNC path instead of its previously mapped network drive path, be sure that the path of the custom format is not pointing to an old drive letter, and that it is referencing a valid path to the MIP Share folder on the server.

For more information about Sage MIP Fund Accounting, and how we can help, please call Camille Livsey at 860-524-4465 or send her an email at clivsey@ttgct.com.



Product Review IronKey Flash Drive

By Ian Cranston



What is it? A super-secure flash drive designed to keep your data safe

Who is it for? Anyone that transfers sensitive files to a flash drive

The IronKey flash drive was designed with one thing in mind: security. Inside its sleek brushed aluminum case is a hardware cryptography chip that automatically encrypts your data as you transfer it to the device.

The only way to access your data is to enter the correct password when you insert the device into your computer. To prevent someone from trying to guess your password, after 10 consecutive invalid passwords the device destroys itself and all of the data it contains, rendering it completely and permanently unusable. This feature is a double-edged sword. On one hand, if the device has all of your financial data on it and you drop it on the sidewalk you can still sleep soundly at night knowing that your data is safe. On the other hand if you forget your password, your device will be completely worthless... But the IronKey makes no sacrifices for security, and even under the metal casing, the drive is filled with epoxy, making physical access to the chips impossible without destroying them.

The IronKey includes a secure version of the popular "Firefox" browser which can be run directly off the flash drive. If you register your IronKey with IronKey's website, you can make an encrypted connection between your Firefox browser and IronKey's servers, preventing anyone from snooping on your web usage. This is especially useful if you're using a public terminal such as in an airport or hotel and you need to access private data securely.

Also included is software that will securely backup your IronKey's data to your computer. The IronKey's data is encrypted and transferred to your PC. The data is completely inaccessible unless the IronKey is connected to your computer and you have entered your password. Should you lose your IronKey; you can get a new one, use the same password and restore your data from your computer with no data loss.

The IronKey is a remarkable device to be considered by anyone that is concerned about keeping their flash drive data safe. Though relatively expensive (\$80 for 1 gigabyte, \$110 for 2 gigabytes, and \$150 for 4 gigabytes) the additional security features help to justify the higher price.

Pros: Protected data, sleek design, secured web browser

Cons: Expensive, Zero-Tolerance self-destruct mode destroys device irrevocably may be too strict for some users.

24/7 Support Now Offered by CT's Technology Leader

As The Technology Group, LLC (TTG) has grown, so have its clients and their needs.

To answer this need, TTG has developed a new system to respond after normal business hours. The system involves a monitored 24/7 answering service that will guarantee

response to the client within 1 hour and in most times, 15 minutes!

If you are a client and calling after hours, listen for the emergency support option on the main phone line's voicemail.

This will be an improved experience during an after-hours emergency because only one phone call will need to be made. Behind the scenes, a process of several communications to primary and secondary engineers will occur.

The Technology Group, LLC is proud to be allied with:

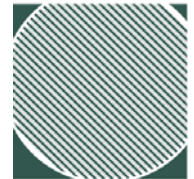


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