



**WHITEPAPER**

**7 Reasons  
Why Businesses are Shifting  
to Cloud Backup**

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## Introduction

Managing data has become one of the most important and complex IT challenges for businesses of all sizes. Organizations are creating and saving data in unprecedented quantities: According to IDC's landmark 2010 Digital Universe Study, the amount of data created and stored in 2009 was greater than ever before and was a remarkable 62 percent higher than the previous year. Over the next decade the amount of data will be 44 times greater than it was in 2009.

It's not just the ever-growing amount of data that creates challenges for businesses and IT professionals: This amassing accumulation of data represents a company's most valuable asset and it must be backed up, protected, stored, secured and made available to the organization whenever it is needed – whether to address employee and customer issues or to address increasing demands for regulatory compliance or electronic discovery.

Further complicating the challenge of managing data is the reality that IT budgets are tight and most organizations are looking to consolidate IT rather than expand IT, so continually buying more storage devices for backup just won't work. In addition, the threat of lost data is greater than ever – either to malicious threats or accident – and the need to manage and back up data based on its value to the organization has also become more important.

For many businesses, particularly small and mid-size businesses of up to 500 employees, the best solution to these complex challenges is a simple one: Manage backup in the cloud. With cloud backup, businesses can outsource their data backup to a company that specializes in data backup and protection and acts as a managed serviced provider offering the latest advances in security, encryption, deduplication, disaster recovery and continuous real-time data protection. With this approach, organizations can eliminate many of the headaches involved in data backup without relinquishing control of their most important asset.

The advantages of cloud backup are significant. As your data backup needs grow you don't have to worry about buying more devices, taking up more space and using more power in order to scale up. Also, as backup technology advances and changes – with deduplication or disk-based near-line storage tiering, for example – you can continue to take advantage of leading-edge backup and protection technologies delivered through your cloud vendor. In addition, by using a cloud backup supplier that uses advanced technology within its own infrastructure, such as Dobson Technologies, you can actually improve data recovery speed and have faster access to archived data. Not only will you save money and resources, you will actually improve performance and gain efficiencies.

Why are so many small and mid-sized businesses switching to cloud backup? Here are the seven top reasons:

## **1. Internal Resource Efficiency**

Cloud computing services were identified as the number one priority for CIOs in 2011 according to Gartner's Agenda survey: Within four years top IT executives expect to have 43 percent of their IT environments running in the cloud. The reason cited most often was the need for cost savings to reallocate IT expenditures to fund infrastructure changes and new projects. As organizations are looking to the cloud to find efficiencies, data backup is a perfect candidate. With cloud backup, organizations can maintain control over their data, but have the actual storage drives off-site at a cloud services provider. By using a cloud vendor that offers agentless technology, organizations can encrypt and compress data before it is transferred off-site. There are significant cost, space and energy savings in taking this approach. In fact, you can eliminate hardware, software and maintenance costs. Backup operations are streamlined and automated, resulting in additional time and personnel savings. Another significant advantage to cloud backup is the ability to centrally manage backup for all of your remote sites and branch offices, which solves a number of complex challenges for IT, including bandwidth allocation, security and disaster recovery.

## **2. Enhance Security**

One of the big advantages of using cloud backup is to take advantage of the enhanced security features offered by leading suppliers such as Dobson Technologies. Data loss is a potentially crippling challenge: A study by the Ponemon Institute estimates that the average cost of a data breach is more than \$200 per record. The same survey showed that 84 percent of respondents expressed increased concern or anxiety due to the loss of data. The reality is that many small and mid-sized businesses don't invest in the technology solutions to adequately protect data. With a cloud backup supplier, security should be a number one priority, so you want to make sure your cloud backup vendor offers important security features such as advanced encryption, digital signatures, configurable password management, adaptive protection features and agentless backup architecture. The idea is to have proactive and adaptive protection against privacy and security breaches with continuous data protection.

## **3. Leverage Deduplication Technology**

Deduplication is a critical component of any successful backup strategy. If you think about how data is created and stored in your organization, you realize how much duplication can add to waste and inefficiency: A Power Point presentation or video, for example, that is being saved by dozens of employees and thus being backed up dozens of times can be an unnecessary burden on your storage infrastructure. In choosing a cloud backup supplier, data deduplication is one of the features you should require. The important questions to ask: Is the data backed up only once? Is the data compressed before transmission to save on bandwidth expenses? What is actually backed up – you want to make sure the technology solution only backs up new and changed block-level data in order to be most efficient.

## **4. Process Validation**

Because data is so important to an organization, one of the major concerns in going to a cloud backup solution is ensuring sufficient control and monitoring. By using cloud backup changed and new data are backed up either daily or continuously into the cloud. The important features to consider in process validation are reporting, preferably on a daily basis; monitored backups, and data destruction with digital certification.

## **5. Ease of Scalability**

With data storage requirements growing so rapidly, scalability has become a critical concern for businesses. The idea of adding new disks or even tapes for backup no longer makes sense in an environment where space consolidation is critical and costs need to be managed. By using a cloud backup solution, businesses are able to eliminate hardware, software and maintenance costs and can grow their backup in a cost-efficient manner based on what is actually needed. There are no concerns with utilization rates, server sprawl, data sprawl or the lead time necessary to add new equipment or software. Another important benefit, depending upon the cloud vendor, is the opportunity to manage data throughout its lifecycle. Dobson Technologies, for example, offers online and nearline storage platforms to enhance scalability and ensure that archived data is stored in the most cost-efficient manner possible while still being readily accessible.

## **6. Data Recovery Speed and Options**

Getting access to backed up data when you need it is critical. Ideally, a cloud backup provider will provide a wide range of options for data recovery and will have a state-of-the-art infrastructure to ensure backup and restorations are handled speedily and efficiently. With a private cloud service, for example, a business can have its own private network – LAN and/or WAN – to process backups and restores at higher speeds. With a hosted cloud service you should look for centralized control, an intuitive user interface, one-step point-and-click recovery, plus single-file and single-message restores. Another critical option is bare-metal recovery, which can restore backup drives that have been destroyed by anything from corrupted programs to natural disasters.

## **7. Regulatory Compliance**

One of the other important challenges in managing data backup is in making sure that your organization is capable of delivering and responding to the potential myriad requirements of regulatory compliance – as well as electronic discovery. Often the data required has to be produced quickly: In backup solutions that rely on tape stored off-site, this can often take days, putting the company at significant risk.

The regulatory world has become far more complex over the past few years, with additional scrutiny through Sarbanes-Oxley plus specific compliance requirements in most industries, such as HIPAA in the healthcare market and Gramm-Leach Bliley in financial services. Not many small and mid-sized businesses have chief compliance officers, so there is a benefit in knowing that your cloud backup plan is fully in compliance with the full range of applicable regulations for your business. It's one less challenge for your finance and IT teams to worry about.

## **Conclusion**

Given the seven reasons listed above, it is no surprise that cloud computing services are one of the most compelling trends in IT. According to a recent report by Forrester nearly 40 percent of small and mid-size businesses plan to employ cloud backup within the next two years. Nearly 70 percent of the respondents said they plan to move toward cloud-based backup to reduce costs while nearly half of the respondents said they are more comfortable with the security of their data in these new environments.

Forrester researchers noted while small and mid-sized businesses have benefited from on-premise backup/recovery solutions, they now realize that backup-as-a-service can contribute even more to their objectives of lowering their costs and improved assurance and support. "As a result, going forward, the fastest growth in the highly active backup/recovery market will be solutions in the form of a managed service," the report predicted.

To ensure your business's success in moving to a cloud backup solution, it is critical that you choose a backup cloud provider that is a leader in delivering all of the critical features, functions and services you will require. It is also critical that your cloud provider invests in its own infrastructure to ensure that it will be able to deliver on the efficiencies, scalability, speed and performance that you will demand now and into the future.

Dobson Technologies provides a full range of cloud backup and recovery services for small and mid-sized businesses as well as enterprises, offered in three types of packages based on your needs and requirements: Public cloud, private cloud and hybrid. Our Cloud backup is based on an agentless architecture, which means customers don't have to install software on every piece of equipment to be backed up. Private cloud backup can be used by organizations that cannot relinquish control of their backup data or who have invested in creating their own data centers.

In addition, as companies are turning to Dobson Technologies for cloud backup, they are also finding that many of the benefits of cloud backup are also applicable to cloud-based hosting for their entire infrastructure, including storage and applications. We offer businesses the opportunity to host all of their business operations from the cloud, which minimizes risk, maximizes security, improves business continuity and offers the advantage of built-in backup. It also enables organizations to take advantage of Dobson Technologies' industry-leading and private facility infrastructure: With two world-class, geographically separate data centers, we have created a physical system with no single point of failure so your data is always secure and available on-demand.

Clearly the shift to cloud backup is picking up speed. For many companies, it's not about whether to move to cloud backup, but how quickly. At this point, with the range of solutions offered by leading vendors such as Dobson Technologies, how much longer can your business really afford to not make the move?