



PC410: A Division of Science Translations

Managed IT Services, PC Service and Sales in Central Maryland

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What's an Image Backup?

When you back up your computer, what are you copying? And why? Protecting your data against mechanical failure is not the same as protecting it against accidentally overwriting the only copy of your checkbook with a secret sauce formula. The recipes are very different.

Backup and disaster planning is based on re-assembling your computer and your stuff on a repaired computer, or starting over on a new computer. Different kinds of backups make copies of your data files (good for moving to a new computer), or the entire hard drive (good protection against a hard drive failure). It's best to have both types of backup, but if you're keeping it simple, choose an Image Backup.

What's an image? Snapshot is a better description—an image backup copies an entire drive from your computer to something external, usually an external hard drive. The image contains everything needed to put a new drive in the computer and put every file and setting back the way it was, as of the day of the backup. Images are too big for cloud storage, nearly always.

**Boss made me backup the server.
Said an 'image backup' is the best.
OK, done. Can I go home now?**



What happens when the drive in your system dies? You bring it to me for repair, with whatever backup you have. Then, this happens:

1) If you have a data backup, ONLY, I'll install a new hard drive, reinstall Windows, reinstall all the patches, reinstall all your software, recreate your email program settings, and then copy in your data. That's if you kept a list of the programs you've been using, with license numbers. If not, you can buy new licenses or learn new programs. Painful, and most shops will charge a substantial amount for all that work. Oh, and it takes a few days in the shop to do all that.

2) Or, there's an image backup, and it's under a month old. OK, we install a new drive, restore the backup, update patches, and a same-day repair is both possible and inexpensive. And your programs and data are all back the way they were on the date of the backup.

3) And then there's the 'no backup of any kind' scenario. That's when we have the discussion about data recovery done by a third-party company that does clean-room drive repairs. It works, but it's expensive.

Image backups are the best protection against hardware failures, theft, and destruction by fire or malware. They result in affordable repairs. They're your first backup. If they're your only backup, most users should run them weekly. If you also backup data files to the cloud, a monthly full-drive image backup is excellent; disconnect the backup drive when you're not creating a backup, so it's safe when the computer is zapped, stolen, or encrypted by ransomware.

There are a lot of choices for image backup software. Contact us for installation services, or see our current recommendation [here](#).



Windows 7 Bug-Fix Support Ends

Microsoft's Windows 7 operating system will be reaching its "Mainstream Support End Date" on January 13th 2015. What does this mean?

Mainstream support covers requests to change the product's design and features as well as providing updates that are not related to security. These types

of support will end on the 13th of January, but it is not a security risk until the end of the "Extended Support End Date", which will be January 14th 2020. Windows XP reached the end of extended support in April 2014, and no longer receives security updates. We have a list of the end-of-support dates for the most-used Windows products [here](#).

Contact US

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