



Your Tech Quarterly

Bringing tech knowledge to your home or small office.

OCTOBER 2008

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

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"My computer will not turn on and all my pictures are on there." -- heard all the time.

Recommended Providers



Hurricane Season

Every September the southeastern United States welcomes an onslaught of semi-unpredictable weather. With the past few seasons bringing several direct hits, our awareness and preparation has drastically been improving. Those of us in the path now stock gas cans, generators, canned foods, battery-powered radios, flashlights, water, and other storm survival gear. But one thing is often overlooked during this potentially destructive time:

OUR DATA! Besides the usual computer hardware failures, hurricane season is the time when many lose the digital data most hold dear to their hearts. Flooding and leaky roofs can completely destroy your accounting information, resume, address book, music collection, and family pictures. Just as Spring is associated with cleaning up the house, Summer should remind you to take a look at protecting your data.

Dear Reader,

This is the first run of this newsletter, but it has been long overdue. There are three primary reasons I feel a need to produce this:

1. **Demand** - Each time I am called to rescue years worth of pictures and documents, I am reminded that the incident *could/should* have been prevented. I will offer articles or links to information which will benefit my target audience, and I will give my opinion on topics such as, *"Should I buy a computer with Windows Vista on it?"*
2. **Smart Friend** - I use software and hardware on a daily basis that I find noteworthy. My colleagues and I regularly discuss tech trends and products and procedures we are using, and we like to share our finds. I intend to funnel the information relevant to home users and small office/home office (SOHO) users to you. Feel free to email me with general questions, and I'll do my best to answer them all. Don't be surprised if I respond with help on how you can find the answer, rather than my providing you with the answer itself. *If you need a service provider in the tech realm, I can probably recommend someone.*
3. **Recommend** – This newsletter will serve as an outlet for my raving about products I am using. I am a great cheerleader for good products – especially free ones! I will usually recommend products or services I use myself.

I will also be introducing you to a colleague, client or service provider I find to be honest, reliable, and friendly. I pick my service providers based on recommendations, and many of you may share the same needs.

I look forward to sharing information with you and hearing your feedback. Thank you for reading.

Aaron Weiss

Related Affiliates



More Information on Online Backup

- [Lifehacker: Carbonite vs. Mozy](#)
- [Lifehacker: Best of the Hive Five](#)
- [Guide to Online Backup Services](#)
- [The Economics of Online Backup](#)
- [The Best Online Backup Services](#)
- Google "carbonite Mozy xdrive" or "Online Backup" or Click [here](#).

Online Backup – Free or Really Cheap

The problem

Computer data can be destroyed just as fast as it is created. Your [QuickBooks](#) files, family photos, thesis paper, and recipe collection are incredibly important to you. Image if they disappeared before your eyes. Scary, right? Tears starting to well up? Well, this is often an unfortunate reality. I, myself, learned this lesson many years ago in college, when I had to re-write a paper because my floppy disk was killed by a failing disk drive. It was a complete loss and a horrible experience. Now, make sure to note that there are ways to recover data most of the time, but you can plan on spending at least several hundred dollars for data recovery – even thousands – not to mention the anxiety it brings. If you think you're exempt from having data loss occur, you are absolutely wrong. It is just a matter of time. Fortunately, there exist a few automated solutions, which backup your data to a secured off-site data center for FREE or next to nothing. So now, there is no excuse.

The players

I'm going to list a few reputable, highly-esteemed, secure, tech-tested online backup utilities that can be used for personal or commercial use. What I hope to happen is that you will seize the opportunity and finally take some action to protect your beloved data.

Carbonite was my first love in the online backup world. Their product is simple -- \$50 a year for unlimited backup. All activity takes place while your connection is unused or at scheduled times, so you won't notice any slowdowns. It runs on Windows XP and Vista just fine, and you need to check their site for Mac or Linux compatibility (Mac version is being beta tested now). I've recommended this product to friends and business associates for a while now, and I've seen it save people. In one instance a good friend had his business laptop stolen from his truck. It contained his planner, address book, quotes, QuickBooks files, and tax information. He called me. I told him to buy a new laptop and that I'd help him with his data. An hour later he called; I logged onto his computer remotely, reinstalled Carbonite and immediately started restoring his data. Another hour later, he was back running in full stride. You can download a free of trial of Carbonite (no credit card required) [here](#).

Mozy is another player who is held in the highest regard among us techs. Mozy offers a free version which will backup 2GB of data or a personal use unlimited backup version for \$4.95/month (\$55/annually). Their commercial version, **MozyPro**, is affordable and diverse. Signup for Mozy [here](#).

XDrive allows for 5GB of data storage and allows you to share selected files with your friends and family. XDrive is a service of AOL, so take that for what it's worth (meaning you're either an AOL user or you won't go near it). Signup for XDrive [here](#).

Pick One

Now, take your pick. This is your data we're talking about. If you need assistance with the setup, your computer tech can surely help you out – expect that cost to be about \$50-75 (that's what I charge for remote setup). It might be worth having someone check to make sure it's installed properly and backing up all your files – like your Outlook PST file which Microsoft shoves deep in some hidden folders instead of your My Documents folder. Don't forget to check to make sure it's working on a regular basis (i.e. weekly, monthly or quarterly).

More Information

If you're still confused or not convinced, the links to the left show few articles on these services. www.lifehacker.com is my favorite source for tech info on products, tips and tricks.

Educate Yourself

- [Slashdot.org](#)
- [Sans.org](#)
- [Astalavista.com](#)
- [The Elder Geek on XP](#)
- [Lifehacker](#)
- [MS TechNet](#)
- [Ubuntu Linux](#)
- [Electronic Frontier Foundation](#)
- [Security Focus](#)
- [Snopes](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)

Favorite Online Tools

- [DNSStuff](#)
- [Zabasearch](#)
- [Get The Human](#)
- [Lipsum](#)
- [Fatwallet](#)
- [BugMeNot](#)

These Make Me Laugh

- [Dollar Hot Dogs](#)
- [Songs to Wear Pants to](#)
- [The Onion](#)
- [Improv Everywhere](#)
- [Zefrank.com](#)
- [Overheard Everywhere](#)
- [All Your Base](#)
- [LeekSpin](#)
- [Tom vs. Oprah](#)

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Introducing...

Aaron Weiss Editor-in-Chief



Since you may be receiving this newsletter from a friend or colleague, you may not know who I am. I am Aaron Weiss, the editor and primary author of this newsletter.

I have a broad knowledge base in the computing arena, but I would say my specialty is in retail computing and small office/home office. Where many computer people prefer to work with larger businesses, but I prefer to work with home users and businesses with about 5 computers or less. I also find data recovery to be rewarding, and my ultimate passion is for computer forensics.

I have been using computers since I was five years old (1983). I used an Apple IIe in elementary school, and my parents brought me home an IBM/PC 80286 16MHz. Although I do not recall this story, my mom claims that I had taken the entire computer apart within hours of bringing it home and later reassembled it. This began my great love affair with computers. I spent time in the early nineties exploring the Bulletin Board Systems (BBS) of the day. I learned a great deal about geek-hood, hacking (in the traditional and non-traditional sense), and computer repair.

In my undergrad studies at the University of Central Florida, I studied computer programming and worked at Best Buy. At Best Buy, I primarily worked as the lead store computer tech and held the supervisor position prior to moving back to South Florida. Working with seven extremely knowledgeable technicians allowed us to absorb each other's particular knowledge. I excelled at customer service and was known among my team to come up with the absurd solutions which solved the difficult, strange problems.

In 2002 I completed a Graduate Certificate in Computer Forensics and volunteered regularly with the local sheriff's office's Computer Crimes squad. I have continued to pursue an education in Computer Forensics through various programs, and I perform forensic acquisitions, protect and recover data, and provide a bit of computer support.

I work full time with our family business as the office manager, network administrator, and wear several other hats. This experience gives me the unique perspective of being part of the target audience I intend to reach through this newsletter. In fact, many of the products I will recommend are time tested through use at our office.

Thank you for hearing my story. If you'd like to know more about me or to contact me, you can view the following links:

www.abbytesolutions.net

www.linkedin.com/in/aweiss  profile

