



# HOW TO PROTECT YOUR DATA FOR LESS

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## DO-IT-YOURSELF VERSUS OFFSITE EXPERTS

On the surface, it may seem cost-effective for an organization to handle its own data protection, including tape and media storage and critical information backups. By not paying a vendor for such services, substantial savings should be realized. So the reasoning goes. But in reality, it is often less expensive and less stressful to engage outside, offsite data protection experts to do the job. There are a number of reasons why.

First, when the costs of labor, space, transportation and other resources are considered, there is not much of a price differential between assuming, internally, the burden and responsibility of data protection and contracting it out to a reputable third party. Moreover, any initial savings are frequently negated by the diversion of internal personnel and other resources from the organization's core business, resulting in a loss of focus and productivity.

Contracting with data protection experts, on the other hand, provides considerable advantage. Because data protection is their core business, they most likely have greater efficiencies, a suite of best practices and a wealth of knowledge-based experience to draw upon. Such capabilities bring added data protection benefits in areas such as security, retention, ease-of-access and disaster recovery that ultimately save time and money.

## AFTER A DISASTER, YOU'RE ONLY AS GOOD AS YOUR BACKUP

In protecting your data, it's wise to remember that the cheapest price isn't always the least costly. A case in point is this finding from a study conducted by Coopers and Lybrand: Companies with no recovery plan in place have only a 10% probability of surviving a disaster.

Dramatically improving those odds is dependent upon storage, which is the basis of any backup system and the key to an organization's recovery in the aftermath of a disaster. What makes a disaster truly terrible is not being able to recover. That's why it's more imperative than ever to have a viable contingency plan that includes storing critical backup data offsite.

Here, cutting corners to save a few cents makes no sense at all. Disasters—fires, hurricanes, floods, furnace and steam pipe explosions—by their very nature, often come when least expected. So, if

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Disaster Recovery is about expecting the unexpected, compromising preparedness to save a little in cost would appear to be the height of penny wise/pound foolishness.

Merely storing the information is not enough. It needs to be organized and indexed, securely protected at an alternate site, easily accessible and able to be tested. These elements are vital, should a disaster occur, to ensure a quick, efficient recovery of systems and data. After all, the longer it takes to recover from a disaster, the more costly it becomes. To put that in perspective, a study by International Data Corp found that companies, on average, lose \$84,000 for every hour of downtime. But beyond the dollars, there could be an even greater price to pay in terms of lost momentum and opportunity.

### **WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN DATA PROTECTION**

There are a number of characteristics to look for in choosing a data protection provider. Price, while certainly a major consideration, must be weighed in terms of service quality. Regardless of the upfront cost, you will pay a higher price in the long run if the service is flawed and compromised. That said, there are a number of important data protection elements to look for and consider. These include:

- Customer Service Responsiveness
- Storage Expertise
- Reliable, Flexible Rotation
- State-of-the-art Facilities
- Real Time Tracking
- Round-the-Clock Accessibility & Monitoring
- Hot Site Delivery (for testing purposes)
- Best Practices
- Overall Resources

Customer service means being available 24/7 to answer questions, execute schedules, lend IT support, and, in emergencies, provide fast, guaranteed pickups and deliveries, including Disaster Recovery Service runs. It means drivers equipped with laser scanners and portable printers, ready to give customers what they need, when they need it.

Storage vaults providing the best tape and media protection are not just secure, but also climate and environmentally controlled. Equipped with advanced fire, smoke and heat detection systems, they maintain constant temperatures between 65 and 68 degrees and relative humidity levels of 35 to 45 percent.

To protect against fire, look for an off-site facility that features either an FM200 fire suppression system with a 4-hour fire rating (best for sensitive tapes and media) or a pre-action water sprinkler system (suitable for most film and sound materials).

FM200 is a gas agent that, when activated, removes all oxygen from a room, causing a fire to

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be contained and smothered. Pre-action water sprinkler systems feature pipes that are water-free until heat causes the wax on a sprinkler head to melt, whereupon a condenser rushes water to the immediate area affected. These systems provide the highest standards of fire resistance protection while eliminating or significantly reducing the potential for water damage.

For secure electronic backup, it's vital that the access system be web-based and password-protected, with the data compressed, encrypted and stored off-site in SAS70 Type II hosting centers. SAS70 Type II is a widely recognized auditing standard that includes the testing of operational effectiveness.

To facilitate accessibility, monitoring and accountability, advanced barcode tracking technology should be in place that allows descriptive information to be quickly matched with a case label and location. Containers should also have verifiable control seals to prove that the contents are intact and there has been no tampering.

### **HELP FROM GRM**

As a leader in data protection, GRM provides information management best practices, professional expertise and unparalleled customer service. Data is protected and clients are served through offsite, fortress-like vaults, 24/7 security monitoring, FM200 fire suppression systems, advanced barcode tracking and guaranteed deliveries within 3 hours in the case of emergencies.

With GRM, your data protection and all associated tasks are executed by trained, knowledgeable personnel with data protection experience. This ensures the correct handling of materials and a quick, cost-effective response in the event of any disaster incident.

Through credible retention, GRM helps companies keep their information in compliance with government regulations (i.e. Sarbanes-Oxley, FINRA, HIPAA, FRCP) and avoid fines, penalties and sanctions (which can be significant) for non-compliance.

Complete Disaster Recovery programs are developed and implemented according to specific needs. Solutions include prompt information delivery, continuous security with intrusion detection and data encryption, accurate damage assessments, offsite hosting and long-term recovery support.

GRM also offers "live" around-the-clock customer assistance and, through eAccess, around-the-clock, remote inventory control. FREE TO EVERY GRM CUSTOMER, the eAccess interface allows you to search data, make requests, generate reports and much more from any computer with a web browser.

Additional data protection services include:

- Daily, Weekly and Monthly Tape Rotation according to your schedule and needs
- Fast, reliable pickups and deliveries with complete GRM chain of custody

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- Customized Transport Containers
  - Data storage products
  - Server Storage & Relocations Data testing Media, hard drive & legacy equipment certified destruction Electronic “Disk-to-Disk” backups – data is compressed and encrypted while in transit and at rest Facility/vault backup power in the event of an outage

## **CONCLUSION**

In selecting a data protection provider, consider all the factors, including price, but not just price alone. Consider convenience, responsive customer service, security, climate-controlled locations, round-the-clock accessibility, industry expertise, advanced, innovative technology and overall resources. These qualities all have value that ultimately impact an organization’s operations and bottom line. Compare. Do the math, and factor in the intangibles like relief from stress, worry and uncertainty, which come when an organization is in good hands, providing benefit beyond measure.

For very little more than what your company is already spending to handle its own data storage, you can gain all the additional advantages of engaging a reliable, quality data protection provider like GRM. Given the value gained in productivity, better use of personnel, greater information protection and overall peace of mind, this is the best and surest way to protect your data for less.

## **MORE ABOUT GRM**

GRM Document Management is a leading provider of lifecycle records and information management solutions. The company brings proprietary innovation, blended integration and new levels of cost efficiency to document storage, data protection, digital/electronic document management and certified destruction. With over 24 years of experience, GRM has earned the trust and continued business of more than 5,000 customers—large and small, domestic and multinational—representing a wide range of industries. Clients are served from state-of-the-art, climate-controlled facilities in major U.S. markets and internationally throughout China.