

## Mark Anthony Germanos

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**From:** Mark Anthony Germanos [mag@cameronparkcomputer.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 15, 2007 8:06 PM  
**To:** mag@cameronparkcomputer.com  
**Subject:** Would you trust your valuable business data to a free backup service?

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## Would you trust your valuable business data to a free backup service?

Let us run your network  
while you run your business  
September 15, 2007

**Dear Mark,**

That is what many unsuspecting small and mid size businesses are doing these days. The promise of unlimited space for a backup at little to no cost in some instances seems too good to be true, and it is. There are many companies out there that are promising to backup your data for free. Now as a small business owner yourself I ask you, what would happen if you gave away your products and services for free? You would not be in business for very long.

While some of these companies are promising to backup your data for pennies, there are other companies out there offering online backup software for a bit higher of a price and some people just can't seem to figure out why there is such a difference.

As businesses have been seeing a rise in the need for more efficient backup and disaster recovery policies, the market has seen a number of companies rise up to help fill this void. How do you choose which company to allow to backup your valuable business data? Here are a few things to look for when selecting an online backup service:

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### Opening Notes



I've recovered mission-critical data at three clients so far with the Intronis eSureIT Online Backup Service. This service lets us automatically backup our business' mission-critical data after-hours and offsite, with the best security available. It isn't free. If you want something worthwhile, you have to pay.

- Microsoft Small Business Specialist

### Support



With technology there will always be a need for technical support. You need to be sure that the company that you are doing business with offers technical support both over the phone and through email. Although many of the cheap/free services say they offer support, good luck getting any when you need it.

### Security

There are many ways in which security comes into play with regards to online backup. First and foremost you need to make sure that the company that you choose to do business with offers high levels of encryption. Encryption can come into play when the backup is started on the end user side, it should be sent to the company using an SSL connection and the company should not keep a copy of your encryption key. You will be safest with a company that is up front and tells you that they DO NOT keep a copy of your encryption key. This insures that they are within compliance and that nobody can access your data unless they are authorized to do so by having your encryption key. Many of the cheap or free services will maintain a copy of the encryption key within their servers which is not considered secure at all.

### Redundancy

If you are choosing a company to backup your data, wouldn't you expect that company to be practicing what they preach? For maximum security and protection you should be sure that the company that you have backing you up is backing up themselves. As a backup company, one data center or in some cases a couple of servers in their closet is simply not enough. If you want to be sure that your data is available to you when you need it you should work with a company that backs itself up.

### Data Retention

What would happen if you accidentally deleted a file on your computer that were backing up and didn't realize that until a few weeks later? If you are working with a viable online backup company you would be able to get that file back. However with many of the cheap/free online backup services, if you were to delete a file on your end they will delete it within their servers in as little as a few weeks and sometimes days. Because these cheap services have very little revenue coming in to support the cost of doing business, they need to find ways to keep the usage down on their servers. With a

I am using text provided by John Santagate of Intronis Technologies. This helps explain why you shouldn't expect a free or cheap online backup service to keep your business in business after a disaster.

Getting back to the question in the subject line...the answer is **NO!** Read on to find out why.

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service that might cost a little bit more you will find that they will be retaining data on their end until you tell the backup software it is time to delete the files.

### **Bandwidth Utilization**

Bandwidth has a cost. In the instance of the cheap online backup services they will limit the amount of data and speed of uploads and downloads in order to minimize cost. With a legitimate online backup service you will be allowed to transfer as much data as you need without incurring any slow downs or penalties.

### **SQL and Exchange**

Many businesses today are using SQL servers and Exchange servers and will require that this vital part of their business is backed up. Some services will charge additional fee for SQL and Exchange and some will not even offer them as options. You will need to find a service that supports backing up of both SQL and Exchange without additional cost.

### **Microsoft Small Business Specialist**

Some have asked what the blue rectangle means. That is the Microsoft Small Business



Specialist logo. The knowledge I gained while pursuing this certification helps me keep businesses like yours in business. Software doesn't exist for software's sake. Rather, software is a tool that businesses use to help themselves run more efficiently.

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