



IT Risk Bulletin

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The Importance of Backing-Up

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All of us have experienced it: the power blinks, and you lose the document you have been working on. Your computer crashes, and the only resolution is to system restore, effectively losing all of your documents, photos, and music. Whether you back up your files to a shared drive or an authorized cloud service*, it is important to take steps to protect your data and to avoid losing it.

According to [Linux](#), there are four basic reasons why you might lose data. Mitigate their potential with a good plan.

- **Save to the "server."**
Although the era of computer crashes and the "blue screen of death" seems to be over, hardware failures still occur. To ensure that your files are safe, always save your data to a back-up system, like your server or an authorized cloud service. Working from your desktop can be tempting but risky.
- **Keep your software up-to-date.**
Bugs and vulnerabilities lurk in all software. In the event a bug/vulnerability is detected, software companies will release new versions/updates to patch these bugs. Always keep your software and devices up to date.
- **Frequently check yourself.**
Humans make mistakes. To prevent these mistakes from affecting your data, periodically perform self-checks that all documents have been backed up and that none exist in draft form on your desktop.
- **Take action before it's a problem.**
Hardware failures, software bugs, and human action are fairly predictable, allowing us to prevent the destruction of our data as a result. However, unpredictable natural disasters can wreak havoc on our computer systems and data, or "ransomware" could try to hold your data hostage. In the event of the unexpected, the importance of backing-up becomes paramount. We have to take action before the unexpected occurs.

*UAB Health System has not approved a cloud service for use by employees.