



Broadband Supports Safe and Secure On-line Data Storage

Broadband Backs Up Merseyside Business

Like most companies, much of the information needed to run the business of Widnes estate agent Calvert & Co is stored on its computers. This includes 'mission critical' data such as details of current and past listings, lists of prospective buyers and financial records.

Graham Calvert, the company's MD, believes that "because we already use leading edge technology to help give us an edge, we know from experience how important it is to have the right support systems. We've therefore gone for on-line back up of all our data."

The company is using the FireSafe-Online service of a Liverpool software company, The Really Useful Machines Company (Rumco). This utilises the high speed of broadband connections to regularly transmit compressed and encrypted data from customers' PCs to two separate storage sites in the North and South of England. All users have to do is to identify the software they use, and which therefore needs backing up. Once backed up, the encryption means that they alone can access the data.

Barry James, Rumco's MD, believes that "the problem with traditional data back up is that most solutions are DIY packages and many people just don't have the 'know how'. Even if they do, back up devices such as tape drives can also fail. On-line back up requires almost no skills on the part of the user, and - thanks



Calvert & Co cater for all aspects of buying, selling and renting property in Widnes

"On-line back up - thanks to broadband - can be much cheaper and more secure than local solutions"

Key Facts

- **US research suggests that 90% of companies who lose important data go out of business within two years**
- **On-line services can provide an easy and effective means of backing up important data**
- **Encryption can ensure that not even the on-line back up provider can read customers' information.**



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Graham Calvert agrees, noting that “FireSafe Online is not only saving us time and effort - it’s giving us better security against all the usual hazards of business life by securing our precious data off-site. We won’t be going back to the old way!”

Broadband Creates Sounder Sleep

Karin Parkinson, Director of Deeside-based recruitment company Haigh Davies, is now sleeping soundly at night. The reason, she explains, “is secure back up of our computer files each week. In recruitment, your business is based on a big contacts database which you need to access very quickly as vacancies come up. So computer problems mean an immediate loss of income - at least a £1000 a week in our case I’d say. And it would be very expensive to have to rebuild our database from scratch.”

Back up at Haigh Davies is done weekly, with files being sent over a broadband link to their service provider, Databax. Karin observes that “the service has already paid for itself. We had a problem with one of our computers and were able to download the files from Databax onto another one within hours.”



*Interviewing at
Haigh Davies*

Back Up Reduces Business Risks

80% of all business data is now stored on computers. This data can be lost in a variety of ways, but usually by accidental deletion of files, failure of hard drives or loss of computers through fire or theft. Backing it up is therefore crucial to business continuation. The University of Texas Centre for Research on Information Systems found that (in the US) “of the companies that lose their data in a disaster, 90% are out of business within 2 years.”

However, company specific back up solutions may not be ideal. If there is only one site, there is a danger that fire or other problems might destroy the original data and the back up(s). Back up devices, such as tape drives, can also fail. Off-site back up reduces these risks by automatically transferring data on a predetermined basis to one or more secure machines in other physical locations over broadband.

Further Information

The Northwest Regional Development Agency wants the region’s people and businesses to benefit from the new opportunities created by the digital revolution. It has worked with partners to establish Digital Development Agencies in Cheshire and Warrington, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Greater Merseyside and Lancashire to achieve this at local level. The agencies help identify ICT priorities for their areas, work with local organisations to identify projects to address them, and secure the resources to make these projects happen.