

MEDCOM UPDATE

OCTOBER 15, 2008

WWW.MEDCOMTX.COM

Are You Backing Up Your Data Properly?

Here are some different Schemes



FOCUSED ON YOUR PROFITS

OFF SITE FTP

Medcom offers full FTP back up to our servers.

1. The data is encrypted on your system (256 bit AES).
2. The encrypted data is transferred to the *Medcom* FTP server.
3. The data is transferred daily to the *Medcom* back up server.
4. Weekly the ending weeks backup is archived to DVD.

A minimum of 1 month of back up data is maintained on line. 6 months worth of data is maintained weekly on DVD. The advantage of this to practice is that the **practice does nothing**. No management of tapes or CD's, and no concerns of keeping history. A limited guarantee is offered also under this scenario.

THE WORM (WRITE ONCE READ MANY) BACK UP

This is the simplest on site scheme. You simply use a write once CD or DVD-R to back up your data. You back the data up, then you label the media with a date and remove from premises.

With most practice management systems this is completely feasible due to the compact nature of their data. If you are using systems with scanned documentation and EMR records, you may not be able to use this scheme. CD's may not fully house all of the data to be backed up. Having a write once tape per day may not be economically feasible for these larger systems



SOME COMMON TERMS REGARDING BACKUPS

- Incremental Backup — a backup of all changes since last incremental backup. Therefore, the first day following your full backup will include the changes for that day. The second day's incremental would only include changes that day and so on.
- Differential Backup — a backup of all changes since last full backup. The day following the full backup would include changes that day. The differential backup for the second day following a full backup would include the changes for the first day as well as the second day since the full backup.
- Full Backup — a backup of all files in your critical file set
- On-site storage — Onsite storage of tapes should be far enough away from your system so that if your system is destroyed in an accident, your backup copy will not suffer the same fate. Fireproof safes are often a good option.
- Off-site — this refers to storage of tapes at a separate physical location (off-site services, different office building, safe-deposit box, home storage, etc.).



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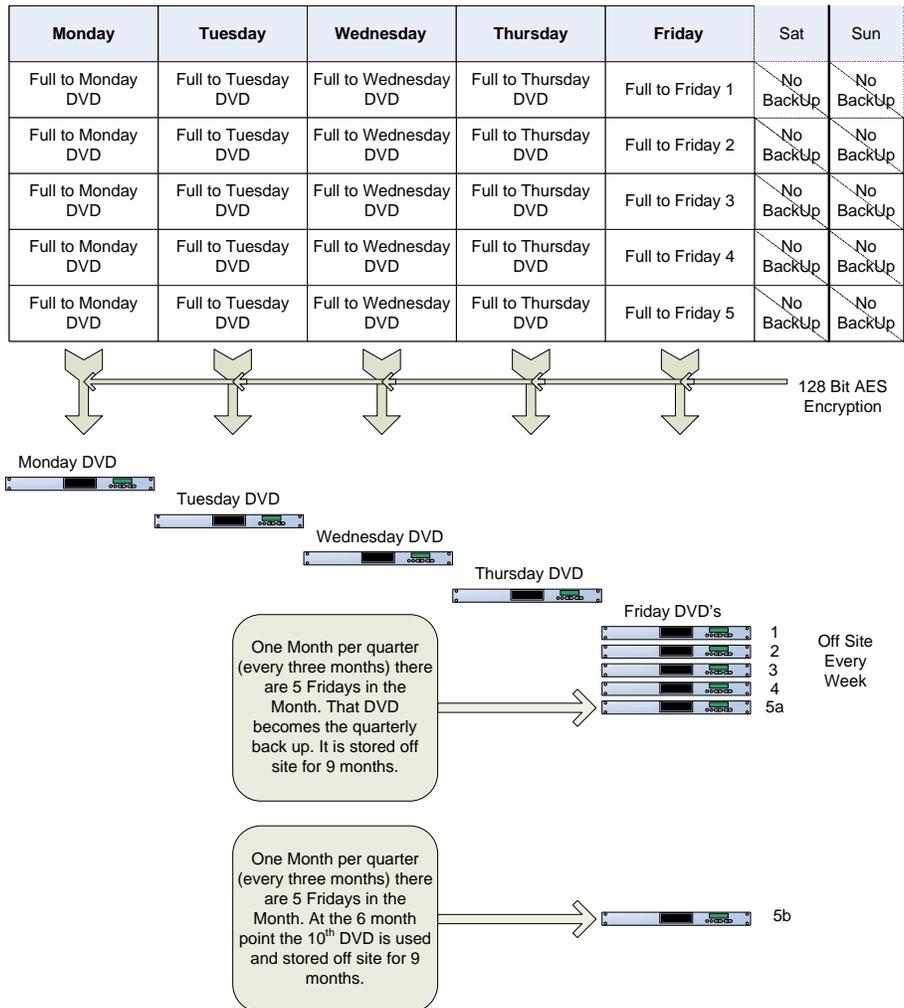
THE 10 TAPE/CD BACKUP

There are 10 tapes or RW CD's in the scheme. They should be labeled as follows:

- The First Four Tapes:
1. Monday
 2. Tuesday
 3. Wednesday
 4. Thursday

- The Next 6 Tapes:
5. Friday 1
 6. Friday 2
 7. Friday 3
 8. Friday 4
 9. Friday 5a
 10. Friday 5b

The scheme is now very simple: Tapes 1 through 4 you use on their respective day of the week. Tape 5 through 8 you use on the respective Friday of the month. i.e. Friday 1—the first Friday of the month, Friday 2 the second Friday and so on. Now once a quarter there are 5 Fridays in a month. On this 5th Friday, you use alternatively the Friday 5a or Friday 5b tape. That backup then becomes the back up for the quarter and is not used for 6 months. The tape will have data up to 6 months old before it is used again.



Other Backup Issues and Concerns

1. **FULL BACKUP.** First of all *Medcom* recommends every backup is a full backup of the data. Most practice management databases are typically small enough to accommodate this process reasonably. A full backup makes recovery much faster and simpler. There is also less likelihood of errors occurring during recovery. Alternatives to this are incremental and differential, neither is recommended by *Medcom*.
2. **REMOVAL FROM PREMISES.** If the backup process is done on premises then, *Medcom* recommends the backed up data is encrypted to a minimum of 128 bit AES and then nightly removed from the site and brought back the next day. Every night, the backup for that day is removed from premises. If it is encrypted properly, there is not HIPAA compliance issue and if the data is lost or stolen there is no fear of it being accessed.
3. **OFFSITE or REMOTE BACKUP.** An alternative process is a backup to an off premises location. There are some web services available today which you can back up too. Be aware however, if you back up to these services yourself, you **MUST** encrypt the data first to be HIPAA compliant. *Medcom* also offers a FTP backup, whereby the data is encrypted at your location and then sent to our FTP server nightly where it is then transferred to our backup server. We then backup weekly to optical media. This process insures obviously that the backup is off site every night. As part of an overnight process, the size limitation for this is 2.5 Gigabytes which insures the completion of the backup process. (Backups for most practices are normally well within this size limit.)
4. **HISTORY.** This is an often over looked, but very important consideration. *Medcom* recommends a minimum of 5 days of backups, 4 weekly, 2 quarterly and 1 Six Month backup. *Medcom's* FTP backup provides this. If you do your own on site backup, the schemes such as the WORM backup and 10 tape back up, provide this as well.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1) Why is so much history needed?** Why not just back up over the same tape(s) every day? The simple answer is a case in point of an actual experience we encountered a few years ago with a client. The client developed a problem in the data. Although the symptoms of data problems were beginning to show, they were not addressed immediately. Actually, a full 2 weeks went by and then there was a catastrophic failure. When we attempted to recover the data, we found 'pieces' missing from various points in time. By having a history of backups to return to, we were able to recover the data totally with no losses. Had the history not been available, we would have lost data from the within the 2 week period of time, plus data from prior dates which was damaged and lost. In this true recovery anecdote, we actually used four (4) historical backups in the data recovery.
- 2) Why backup the data only, not the entire system?** The system can be rebuilt/restored. Data can not be so easily recreated and it is much smaller requiring fewer resources to backup. In some cases it is nearly impossible to recreate the data, but the system can always be replaced.
- 3) Why a full backup of the data every day?** With most practice management systems, the data is typically small enough to make this cost effective. This scheme thereby makes the recovery/restore less time consuming and therefore less expensive. Plus there is a major advantage of this scheme over incremental and differential methods. Those methods rely on a previous 'root' backup to recover back to. If that back up is lost or damaged, they may recover any information without it or not recover fully all data. If size of the backup becomes an issue, incremental backups may not be a choice, but it should be a last resort, not the first choice in schemes.
- 4) Why use a different media everyday?** Media can become damaged. If you backup everyday to the same media and it becomes damaged then all backups on that media are lost. If you backup to a different media every day, i.e. the tape 1, tape 2, tape 3, etc. then even if one of the tapes or CD's become damaged and you can not recover from it, then it is unlikely they are all damaged.
- 5) Why remove the backup daily from premises?** Simple; suppose there is a bad fire, flood or tornado that destroys the premises or even more common, theft of equipment. We have had several customers experience theft of equipment over the years. If you have the backups off the premises, chances are there is NO data loss.
- 6) Do you recommend optical or tape?** We typically recommend optical if the media is large enough to backup the required data. We have found over the years that the optical media, although it can also be damaged, is typically a more stable media, less likely to damage than the tape. In some cases the data may grow beyond what can be accommodated by optical media then tape is the next best option.



- 7) What are your recommendations on backing up to a separate hard drive on the system?** This is better than nothing, but just one step above that. Yes you can get a lot of backups on the hard drive, but what if it fails or is stolen? They can all be lost. Additionally, unless the backup is an external drive it is not feasible to remove the backup from premises. The only way we recommend this as a media is if there are multiple external hard drives and they can and are removed from premises as part of a scheme similar to ones listed. The most dangerous scenario with this scheme is that many times the backup simply replaces the prior (yesterday's) backup and there is no history (See faq #1!).

"Complete Medical Solutions" Since 1991

MEDCOM ORDER FORM

MEDCOM FTP BACKUP SERVICES



Medcom backs your data up daily.

- Your computer encrypts the data first (256 bit encryption, HIPAA required 128 bit).
- The encrypted backup is transferred to *Medcom's* FTP server where it is housed.

Medcom maintains copies for 6 months.

At the end of 6 months *MedCom* removes the backup from the backup system. If you would like the oldest copy on CD, it is a \$50.00 charge every 6 months for the copy.

Medcom keeps weekly historical copies up to the 6 month mark. Weekly it is archived. The backup does not run on Saturday or Sunday night.

Limited Guarantee:

If you have a database failure and we do not have a backup to 'roll' back to within the described backup plan, then repair of the data is free if it is repairable by *MEDcom*. In addition, the backup cost for that month is refunded.

Medcom guarantees to have daily backups of your data, but does not guarantee backup failure as a result of internet outages, your Server not being available or if PC's other than your server in your office have the database locked open (this is easily solved on your part by just making sure the PC's are out of your system every night before leaving). Acts of God also void the guarantee, i.e. Power Outages, Tornadoes and floods to name a few.

STANDARD PRICING FOR DAILY BACKUPS

SETUP - \$75.00

MONTHLY RATE—\$50.00 per Month

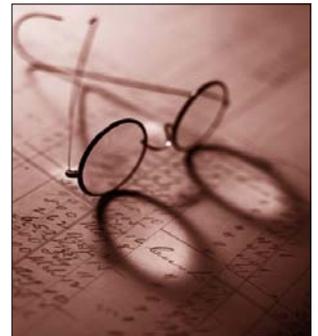
TEL: 817-329-9812
FAX: 817-442-1692

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Electronic Check: Fill out the information below with your routing and account number. Be sure to select the option you would like, please write the amount the check is to be processed for and sign. FAX to 817-442-1692

Check By Phone: Simply call and provide us your routing and account numbers and the support plan you wish to purchase. We will confirm the amount with you and process your check. No paper check is necessary. We will email or fax you your receipt.

Check: Simply fill this form out and return with check via U.S. Mail to us.



Order Information

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SINCE 1991

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E-mail: management@medcommail.com

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