WOULD YOUR BACKUP GET YOU BACK?

Having a backup and being able to restore from it are two different things. These are the questions to answer about Microsoft 365, Google Workspace, and your computers before the day you need them.

COMPANY _____ FILLED IN BY _____ DATE _____

Tick a box only if you know the answer, and it's the one you'd want. Take the unticked ones to whoever runs your backup.

WHAT YOU CAN'T LOSE

A backup starts with knowing what's worth backing up.

- [ ] **You've listed where your work lives.** Mailboxes, shared files, the accounting system, the programs your trade runs on, and the laptops people save things to.
- [ ] **You've decided what comes back first.** If everything went at once, which system would you want on its feet before the others?
- [ ] **You know how much work you could stand to redo.** An hour's? A day's? The answer sets how often a backup has to run.
- [ ] **You know how long you could be down.** The answer sets how quick a restore has to be.

MICROSOFT 365 AND GOOGLE WORKSPACE

Your mail and files being in the cloud doesn't mean they're backed up.

- [ ] **You have a backup that's separate from Microsoft or Google.** The recycle bin and version history help with a recent slip. They live in the same account and empty themselves in time, so they aren't a backup.
- [ ] **It covers mail, files, calendars, and contacts.** And the shared places too: SharePoint sites, or shared drives.
- [ ] **New people are covered without anyone adding them.** A backup that only knows the accounts from the day it was set up has a hole that grows.
- [ ] **You know what happens to a leaver's data.** Deleting an account can delete its mail and files with it. Decide what's kept, and where, before the account is closed.
- [ ] **You've asked how each kind of thing comes back.** Straight into the account, or as an export you download and put back yourself? Either can work. Find out which before you're in a hurry.

COMPUTERS AND SERVERS

Whatever isn't in the cloud is on a disk somewhere in the building.

- [ ] **Files that live only on one computer are backed up, or moved.** The desktop and the downloads folder count.
- [ ] **Servers and databases are backed up in a way that suits them.** A database copied while it's running may not restore cleanly. Ask how yours is handled.
- [ ] **The backup doesn't depend on someone remembering.** No swapping drives, and nothing to click.
- [ ] **One copy is away from the office.** A backup drive beside the server shares its fire, its flood, and its burglar.

KEPT SAFE FROM AN ATTACKER

The first thing an attacker goes looking for is the backup.

- [ ] **At least one copy is locked.** The word for it is immutable: until the lock ends, nobody can change or delete that copy, an admin included.
- [ ] **The backup has a sign-in of its own.** With multi-factor sign-in, and not the admin account that runs everything else.
- [ ] **Copies are encrypted.** Where they're stored, and on the way there.
- [ ] **You know how far back you can go.** Some trouble isn't noticed for weeks. Check how long copies are kept.

PROVEN, NOT ASSUMED

A backup nobody has restored from is a hope.

- [ ] **Someone has restored a single file lately.** And opened it.
- [ ] **Someone has restored something big.** A whole mailbox, a shared folder, or a full computer.
- [ ] **You timed it.** Now you know how long a real restore takes for you.
- [ ] **A missed or failed backup alerts a person.** And that person does something about it.

ON THE DAY

The middle of a bad day is the wrong time to work these out.

- [ ] **You know who to call.** And the number is written down somewhere that isn't your email.
- [ ] **You know who is allowed to ask for a restore.** And how they show they are who they say.
- [ ] **Restored files land beside the live ones, not on top of them.** So you can check them before you swap anything.
- [ ] **The steps are written down.** Somewhere other than the system being restored.

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