CPA
Practice Advisor

On a tech engagement a year ago, I wandered into the client offices first thing in the morning to find a young man sitting, staring intently at a bax in the server rack."I'm doing the daily backup," he explained. When I asked where the daily backup tapes went, he showed me a cardboard box filled with used tapes. Sitting on the floor beside the server rack.There are three things that I know about the backup tapes for the majority of accounting offices: 1. 77 percent of all backups tapes are worthless because the data can't be restored from the tape. 2. If a fire or flood strikes the firm, the backup tapes will be destroyed along with the originals. 3. If the backup copies are lost with the originals, the firm will be out of business for weeks, if not permanently.In the early days of computing, backups were easy. The firm had only one or three computers, and could be backed up on a simple tape drive (or later, burned to a CD in a matter of minutes) at the end of each day. The system could even be automated so that it took less time and effort. In fact, it got so easy that procedures got loose. An estimated one-third of firms even stopped checking to see whether the backup data was recovered.After every natural disaster, there are companies fervently wishing they had used more than one form of backup. Today is no exception.So what kind of backup system makes sense for today's accounting firm? A three-stage backup system.

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