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Isaac M. O'Bannon • Jul. 26, 2012

While many tech savvy and productivity-focused small businesses and accountants have been moving to cloud-based solutions, most small businesses in the United States are still using bookkeeping and business management software that is installed on their own computers or servers.

By doing so, they're exposing themselves to one of the greatest risks their business can face: Lost data from a server crash, fire, storm or flood. Fortunately, a new survey by [Sage North America](#) shows that most of them are at least backing up some of their critical financial data. Unfortunately, most of them are storing those backups in their office.

Hurricane Katrina should have been a warning for all small businesses that they should use either an online backup solution, or at least move the backed up data to a different location. Another key finding in the Small Business Disaster Preparedness Study was that most small businesses do not have an emergency preparedness plan.

“Backing up on-site may not be sufficient to protect small businesses from natural disasters — particularly if the business is located in an area prone to earthquakes, hurricanes, fires or flooding,” said Connie Certusi, executive vice president and general manager of Sage Small Business Accounting Solutions. Other potential threats to data include theft and hardware malfunctions.

“Data loss could have a serious impact on operations and crisis recovery. The development of a preparedness plan that includes solutions for protecting critical information, such as backing up off-site, could be the difference between getting a business on its way to recovery and worrying about its survival.”

The survey was conducted of 504 small businesses across the U.S., and examined how U.S. small businesses back up important financial data and prepare for

unexpected crises.

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