



Protecting Your Computer



Large Digital Libraries Require Regular Backups

(NAPSA)—According to a recent study, Americans are not backing up their digital photos, music, documents or other types of files. The study found that nearly one in three consumers don't see the need to back up their files, while nearly a quarter (22 percent) don't back up files because it's "too time consuming."

"The issue appears to be a combination of lack of awareness of storage options and ease of use," says Tim Herbert, director of market research for the Consumer Electronics Association (CEA). "Generally, consumers don't know how to back up their data and if they do, they're failing to back up data because they claim it takes too much time."

The average American adult has 1,800 digital files, totaling 310 billion digital files nationwide. With another 1,060 being added per user in 2008, the total number is expected to hit just under 500 billion by the end of the year. Photos (85 percent) and music (67 percent) comprise the largest percentage of stored files; home office documents (59 percent) ranked third.

Research results show that consumers are satisfied with their storage options. Eight out of 10 respondents reported using their home computer as their primary long-term storage option. For backup, over three-quarters (77 percent) burn their files onto a CD or DVD. Over a quarter (29 percent) copy their files onto more than one device, such as having a file on a computer and a portable MP3 player.

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From photos to MP3s to work documents, regular backups help protect digital files.

CEA offers several tips for consumers to keep digital files safe:

- If you are saving content onto a CD, DVD, USB flash drive or other removable device, keep an extra copy off-site, such as an office. This ensures your contents' safety in case your home is damaged by events such as a fire, flood or earthquake;
- Use an online backup service to protect your content from disasters and/or hardware failures;
- Scan and clean your backup drives. Viruses can spread to removable drives and other network connections, damaging your music and photos;
- Regularly defragment your hard disk drive. This will ensure that your computer is running faster for longer with less wear and tear; and
- Establish a regular backup schedule. Many external hard drives come with software that can assist in the backup process and help maintain a consistent schedule to ensure data gets saved even if you forget to.

For more tips on how to protect and archive digital content, visit www.DigitalTips.org.