

Re: Somewhat OT: Data backup using Blu Ray

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- *From:* qrk <SpamTrap@xxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 29 Nov 2008 19:28:14 GMT
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On Sat, 29 Nov 2008 10:39:56 -0800, Joerg
<notthisjoergsch@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

BobW wrote:

"John Devereux" <john@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:87skpammcu.fsf@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

"BobW"
<nimby_GIMME_SOME_SPAM@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
writes:

I need to backup a 340GB hard drive.

Has anyone here used Blu Ray for this purpose?

After reading a bit about the subject, it appears that there are four types of Blu Ray writable formats:

BD-R (25GB write once)
BD-R DL (50GB write once)
BD-RE (25GB rewritable)
BD-RE DL (50GB rewritable)

It seems that these discs can cost anywhere from \$12 (BD-R) to \$50 (BD-RE DL).

It would be nice to find a less expensive method of backing up this 340GB drive, but perhaps this is the most reliable and compact method.

Any other ideas?

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Backup to a hard disk. Either to a portable USB one, or to another machine (via local network or the internet once you have a remote copy to synchronize to).

You can also get network attached disk drives (e.g. "Big Disk").

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John Devereux

John,

The issue is the reliability of hard drives.

I had about eight old hard drives that I decided to backup onto this 340GB drive. Only the newest ones (< 2 years old) worked properly. One wouldn't spin up unless I shook it. A couple of them had a bunch of bad sectors and thus resulted in some lost files. Two were completely unreadable and unrecoverable. All of these old drives were working perfectly before I put them into storage.

I have five USB<->IDE boxes. In order to recover their data, and I used several techniques to recover the data from these:

- tried different brands of USB<->IDE boxes
- ran CHKDSK/F and/or CHKDSK/F/R (in a command window)
- ran defragmenter (this turned out to be a useful tool as it gave me a list of files that couldn't be defrag'd, and then I could merely delete them and complete the backup)
- used xcopy/s to do the final copy, in a command window, because Windows XP gui had a hard time copying all the large files because (I think) it would attempt to copy to RAM first.

So, I want a backup format that will last a lifetime (or at least for the rest of my life). Hard drives aint gonna cut it.

Just a word of caution: Optical media might not last that long either. So far they've held up ok here but I did have the occasional CD that delaminated or developed a "purple cloud" and became unreadable. No idea how secure blue ray will be in that respect and I guess it's too new for anyone to say.

Sometimes it also helps to really peruse the data to be backed up. As an example many of my client directories contain projects which in turn

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contain all the datasheets of every single part used in the design. Because that's what the client wanted. For example I use jelly bean parts such as the BAV99 on almost every design. However, it doesn't make much sense to back up umpteen copies of its PDF file. In fact, most parts are so ubiquitous that this stuff doesn't need to be backed up at all.

CD quality is all over the map. Taiyo Yuden CDs are still considered to be high quality and are recommended for backup you care about. The store shelf disks like Verbatim, Sony and other common brand CDs are not considered reliable for backup. If you use store shelf CDs, you need to find out who really manufactured the disk (there are tools to read the real manufacturer data). Modern cheap CDs are much better than 8 years ago when CMC and Ritek put out disks that would rot in a year or two. Those two companies supplied the bulk of the CDs found on store shelves and were responsible for the bad rap CDs got.

DVDs are supposed to be much better. Specs say they should last 100 years (CD spec is something like 20 years). DVD media is laminated between two plastic sheets, CD media is protected by a thin coating on the top surface where the label is.

I use an external firewire connected hard drive for monthly backup. The drive stays off when not needed. I don't know why people keep their backup drives turned on and accessible. Seems like you're asking for trouble should you do something stupid or the OS goes crazy. My daily backups are on a memory fob which allows me to sync up my work and home computers.

Just be glad floppies are a thing of the past.

Mark

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