

Backups and Cloud Storage



Front Range PC Users Group

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Definitions 1

A search using Google with the search criteria:

online backup

returned >192 million results

A search using Google with the search criteria:

cloud storage

returned 189 million results

Do we have a "language" problem here?

Definitions 2

Do you know the difference between:

Cloud storage

Cloud backup

Remote backup

Online backup

Online storage

?????????

Definitions 3

Definitions from Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloud_storage

Cloud storage is a model of networked online storage where data is stored on virtualized pools of storage which are generally hosted by third parties. Hosting companies operate large data centers; and people who require their data to be hosted buy or lease storage capacity from them and use it for their storage needs. The data center operators, in the background, virtualize the resources according to the requirements of the customer and expose them as storage pools, which the customers can themselves use to store files or data objects. Physically, the resource may span across multiple servers.

Definitions 4

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_backup

A **remote, online, or managed backup service** is a service that provides users with a system for the backup and storage of computer files. Online backup providers are companies that provide this type of service to end users (or clients).

OK, that's a lot of words. How about this simpler (and, perhaps, inexact) definition:

Data storage at a remote location with upload and download via the internet.

The Good News and the Bad News 1

Selected from: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Online_backup

Advantages

Perhaps the most important aspect of backing up is that backups are stored in a different location from the original data. Traditional backup requires manually taking the backup media offsite.

Unlimited data retention.

Most remote backup services will use a 128 - 448 bit encryption to send data over unsecured links (i. e., internet).

The Good News and the Bad News 2

Disadvantages

Depending on the available network bandwidth, the restoration of data can be slow. Because data is stored offsite, the data must be recovered either via the Internet or via a disk shipped from the online backup service provider.

Some backup service providers have no guarantee that stored data will be kept private — for example, from employees. As such, most recommend that files be encrypted.

It is possible that a remote backup service provider could go out of business or be purchased, which may affect the accessibility of one's data or the cost to continue using the service.

Which Service is Best? 1

There are many services available. You have all probably seen the TV advertisements for Carbonite. You may also recognize Dropbox and/or Mozy.

For the most complete comparison, connect to:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comparison_of_online_backup_services

There are more than 40 services listed in that Wikipedia article with the most complete list of features, but no pricing. It includes server locations (by geographic region, such as US or Europe)

Which Service is Best? 2

Two other websites that offer comparisons and reviews with pricing are:

<http://online-storage-service-review.toptenreviews.com/>

<http://www.onlinebackupservices.co/compare-services/>

Do You Need Cloud Storage?

Here are a few questions that may help you decide:

1. Is the storage for you as an individual or for a business?
2. How important is your data (in either case)?
3. Do you really need offsite storage?
4. Are you satisfied with the security the provider claims to have?
5. Are you satisfied with the business viability of the provider?
6. How much are you willing to spend (or how much can you afford)?

There may be other questions, but your answers to those questions will supply you with the basics for making your decision.