Cloud Backup Solutions Deliver Accessibility, Scalability and Peace of Mind

Any company that has lived through a ransomware attack or lost data to a natural disaster knows firsthand the importance of the 3-2-1 backup rule. Make three copies of important data, on two different types of media, with one copy offsite. Increasingly, wise organizations have turned to cloud backup solutions for their offsite backups.

Traditional backups typically involve backing data up to a remote server or onto a tape drive, which is then transferred offsite. Those solutions work relatively well. But they can prove expensive and require substantial setup and maintenance from IT staff to ensure security.

With cloud backups, on the other hand, data is stored in the cloud, on network of servers in various locations. This offers a number of key benefits. However, organizations need to conduct research into the various cloud backup solutions to find the right fit for their needs.

Cloud Backup Delivers Key Advantages

Many organizations that move to cloud backups do so for the benefit of increased accessibility. Tape backups, for instance, can store a large amount of data cheaply. However, restoring from a tape backup can take a great deal of time. Likewise, locating necessary data among the backups can prove difficult.

On the other hand, cloud backups are designed to ease the process of finding and restoring data. Users access backed up data from any device with an internet connection. Additionally, administrators can often monitor and manage all aspects of backup and data storage from anywhere using web-based tools.

Another key advantage involves scalability. The IT department no longer needs to budget for expensive servers and guess at future data needs. Instead, as the organization grows, adding data storage requires little more than a click or two or a quick call to the cloud provider. Providers also typically offer flexible pricing options, tailored to the organization's needs.

In addition to accessibility and scalability, cloud backup solutions offer flexibility not usually available with older backup options. For instance, many cloud backup providers offer features such as data syncing and instant restore.

Things to Look for in a Cloud Backup Service

Because options can differ significantly from provider to provider, organizations looking for a backup solution need to do their homework. First, know what data you need to back up and where it lives. Additionally, determine an appropriate backup schedule, based on industry regulations, applicable legislation (such as HIPAA) and business needs.

With this information in hand, look closely at the services each cloud provider offers. For example, consider the following:

- Comprehensive security and compliance options – You should have the ability to deploy multi-factor authentication (MFA) for accounts with access to backed up data. Additionally, look for solutions that deliver end-to-end, 256-bit or greater encryption. And ensure that the cloud provider can comply with applicable regulations.

- Data restoration – Does the Service Level Agreement (SLA) include guaranteed recovery? And can you recover data to the desired degree of granularity? For instance, users should have the ability to restore single files without restoring an entire file server.

- Automation – Automating the backup process and backup lifecycle management lightens the load on technical staff and ensures that backups occur when they need to.

- Monitoring – Look at the data management features offered. Does the provider offer round-the-clock monitoring and reporting to keep you abreast of any issues that might affect your data?

- Support for multiple platforms – Look for a backup solution that can handle the various applications and operating systems in your environment. Ideally, you will use a single backup solution to back up all data, regardless of where it resides.

Data Backups Essential to Business Continuity

An effective business continuity plan begins with a solid backup and recovery strategy. Cloud backups offer the flexibility necessary to operate in a complex data environment. But it can prove challenging to find and implement the right solution for your organization. eMazzanti will help you assess your data environment and tailor a solution to your specific needs.