

# THE IMPORTANCE OF BACKING UP DATA IN A DENTAL OFFICE

by Darby TechForce



The moment you realize you've lost important files is awful. Whether it was a project you spent hours working on or a digital album of vacation photos, knowing your precious data has disappeared into the ether is frustrating and devastating. Now imagine how it would feel to lose all of the data that keeps your dental office running smoothly. Your patient records, digital x-rays, payroll information, and inventory lists – poof! Gone.

For dentists, data loss is more than an inconvenience. It can put your office out of commission for days or even weeks as you re-install software and upload patient and practice information. Not only does this take time away from building your practice, data loss puts your patients' protected health information at risk, which can result in hefty HIPAA fines and damage your reputation. Backing up your data to a secure, offsite location is the best way to retrieve lost files with minimal downtime to your practice.

## What it means to back up data

Backing up your data means making a digital copy of the operating system along with the files, folders, programs, and settings on your dental practice computers. In the event of a data loss, you'll be able to retrieve this copy and restore your network.

## The biggest mistakes dentists make when backing up data

In theory, making a copy of your important files seems simple. But 9 out of 10 dental practices aren't backing up their data properly. Here are the biggest mistakes dentists make when backing up data:

- They use unreliable media such as DVDs or CDs
- If backups aren't automated, they forget to back up regularly
- They fail to back up all of the necessary files to restore their systems fully
- They don't check to see if their backups are working properly
- Employees take portable backups out of the office, which can be lost or damaged. Removing backups from the office is also not HIPAA compliant. Backups must be stored in a secure location.

Improperly backing up your data can result in a huge loss for your dental practice in the event of a server crash, cybersecurity threat, human error, or malware attack on your network. Luckily, taking steps to back up your data the right way is simpler, faster, and more affordable than you might think.

## How to properly back up data in your dental office

The importance of properly backing up the files in your dental office cannot be understated. Not only will it minimize costly downtime in the event of a data loss, HIPAA requires it. The HIPAA Security Final Rule mandates that healthcare providers securely back up exact copies of electronic protected health information and be able to restore that data through a disaster recovery program, like [RapidRestore](#).

The HIPAA rule also requires providers to store backups offsite and to perform back ups frequently. The [American Dental Association](#) recommends daily backups of system data to avoid a devastating loss and to regularly test all backup methods to ensure reliability. If something ever happens to your office, like a fire, flood, theft, or storm, you can reconstruct your entire system from these remote backups. You can back up your data to a local device or copy your files and folders to the “cloud”.

## Don't let a data loss slow your practice down

By backing up your files to the cloud, your most important files are safely stored in multiple locations around the world and are readily available for quick recovery. With the cloud, backups are automated, which removes the chance of human error. There's no need to worry about space constraints or external servers that can fail, either.

At Darby TechForce we built our own HIPAA compliant cloud-based backup service specifically designed for dental practices. With [DataSafe](#), we do more than store your files in a secure place. We constantly monitor and manage your backups to make sure they're working properly. If anything looks off, we fix it without you having to lift a finger. By entrusting us with your important data, you'll have all the files you need to fully restore your system should disaster strike.

Give us a call at (800) 886-2093 to chat with one of our friendly dental tech experts.