

Desktop Backups/TaskZip

By Debbie Hauert, Desktop Support

Imagine, if you will, coming in one morning to press the button to turn on your computer and all you hear is an ominous "click...click...click". No, you haven't entered the Twilight Zone,



but you have entered the world of *computerus mortis* (dead computer). You immediately call your friendly neighborhood Help Desk Analyst who asks, "Have you backed up your data?" Your heart sinks and you suddenly feel sick. "No", you reply.

Unfortunately, this scenario is all too common. We know we should back up our data, but seldom do so. It's such a hassle trying to find floppy disks, zip disks, or writable cd's. Then, you have to remember where you put all your files on the hard drive and take the time to copy them to your disks. Finally, you have to remember to do all of this on a weekly basis.

One of the goals we have set in Desktop Support is to implement a backup solution that is easy to load, reliable, cost-effective, and user-friendly. After giving the problem a lot of thought, we realized the solution would require changing the way desktop computers are setup as well as utilizing a software application to run the back up jobs.

We researched several different "*freeware*" back up utilities (software MCCCDC doesn't have to pay for) and finally settled on a utility called TaskZip. Some of the more prominent features of this application include:

- Full Backups
- Incremental Backups
- Scheduled Backups
- Backup to a folder on the network, hard drive, zip drive, or floppy
- Backup of individual files or of the contents of a folder
- Direct copy or zipped copies
- Password protected backups

For the past year, TaskZip has been installed on all new computers as well as those brought to the Desktop area for diagnostics or reconfiguration (those computers changed to the Windows 2000 Operating System). In addition to installing this utility, we have been partitioning the hard drive into two separate areas and instructing computer clients to save their data to the "D" partition (conveniently named "DATA"). Saving all data to one area will make it easy to find the folders to backup rather than search throughout the hard drive and "cross our fingers" that no files have been missed.

Our goal is to have the backup utility installed on all computers in the building by the time the transition from Windows NT to Windows 2000 is complete (hopefully over the next 6 months). An instruction sheet is in development to assist computer clients with setting up their backups.

Network back ups are still a concern that needs further research by the server area. Backing up to a server on the network would be optimal because a tape backup of the server's hard drive is usually done on a daily basis. What that means is the client would, 1) retain their original files on his/her hard drive, 2) a copy of your files would be on a server hard drive, and 3) a copy would be on the tape back up. It would be highly unlikely that an event would happen that could destroy all three copies so the safety of your data is virtually guaranteed.

Aside from developing a schedule to back up everyone's data without compromising network speed, there is a need for a backup server. Again, the server team is researching possible solutions in the area of Network backups for desktop files. However, when a network/server solution becomes available, rest assured your Desktop Support team will be ready to implement our back up solution so you will never have to worry about losing your data again!