

Re: Backup Software recommendation

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/WinXP/microsoft.public.windowsxp.general/2008-03/msg05031.html>

- *From:* "Bill in Co." <not_really_here@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Sat, 22 Mar 2008 15:02:02 -0600
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Brian A. wrote:

"Daave" <dcwashNOSPAM@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message news:umprgQBJIHA.484@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

Anna wrote:

Anna wrote:

So should "PT" or for that matter anyone else desire more detailed information as to why I believe the Casper 4 program is the superior way to go, I'll provide add'l info on the program.

"Daave" <dcwashNOSPAM@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message news:eMegOf6iIHA.5280@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx

I'm all ears.

Daave:

Well, we'll assume you're also all eyes...

The following is predicated on the basis that a user is seeking a reliable program to backup his or her *entire* day-to-day booting HDD, including the XP OS, all the user's programs & applications, as well as user-created data, in short – *everything* that's on

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one's
"source" HDD. And wants an effective simple-to-use
program to do this
on a systematic routine basis and do so reasonably quickly.
So that
if & when the day comes when the user's primary HDD fails
to boot or
otherwise dysfunctions because of a corrupted OS or
becomes
physically/electronically defective the user will be able to
easily
and reasonably quickly restore his or her system. To that end
we've
found this Casper 4.0 program really fills the bill in this
regard.

This type of comprehensive backup system can be achieved
through the
use of a disk-cloning (or disk-imaging program). A backup
program
that one could use on a daily basis should the user want. A
program
that will create a precise copy of one's day-to-day HDD so
that
should that HDD fail or the system becomes unbootable
because of a
corrupt OS, the user would have the wherewithal to restore
his/her
system to a bootable, functional state with a minimum of
fuss. What
better backup system can one have?

The disk-to-disk cloning program we greatly prefer is the
Casper 4
program – see
<http://www.fssdev.com>

The program is extremely simple to use even for an
inexperienced user,
reasonably quick in operation, and quite effective. There's
virtually
no learning curve in undertaking the disk cloning process as
one
navigates through the few easy-to-understand screens with a
final
mouse-click on the button on the screen which will trigger
the
disk-cloning process. After undertaking one or two
disk-cloning
operations it should take the user no more than 20 seconds or
so to

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get to that point.

But the truly significant advantage of the Casper 4.0 disk cloning program compared with other disk cloning programs that we're familiar with, e.g., Acronis True Image, is its ability to create *incremental* disk clones following the creation of the original (first) disk clone. Employing what Casper calls its "SmartClone" technology the program can create subsequent disk clones of the source HDD usually at a fraction of the time it takes to create a "full" disk clone. This results in a decided incentive for the user to undertake frequent complete backups of his or her system knowing that they can create "incremental" disk clones in a relatively short period of time. Understand that this "incremental disk clone" is a *complete* clone (copy) of the "source" HDD.

So, as an example...

Let's say the user's interest is in backing up their system on a daily basis or perhaps every two or three days or so. Following the first time the user would use the Casper 4 program to clone the contents of their internal (boot) HDD to another HDD (internal or external), it would probably take no more than three minutes or so to thereafter perform the disk-cloning operation. Obviously the amount of time would, of course, be dependent upon the amount of data being cloned. But because of Casper's "SmartClone" capability the amount of time to complete the disk-cloning operation is extremely short in comparison with other disk-cloning programs such as the Acronis one. Again, bear in mind that the recipient of the clone – the "destination" HDD (internal or external) – would contain the *complete* contents of one's internal HDD (presumably the boot drive). Since that destination drive would be a copy of the

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source
HDD, its contents would be immediately accessible and potentially bootable. Naturally its contents could be cloned back to an internal HDD should a restoration of the system be necessary. Again, what better backup system can one have? And again – because the Casper 4 disk-cloning operation takes a relatively short period of time to complete there's a strong incentive for the user to more frequently keep their backups up-to-date than they might otherwise do.

The Casper 4.0 program is also capable of scheduling the disk-cloning process on a daily, weekly, or other time period selected by the user so that should the user prefer he or she could arrange for automatic backups at pre-determined times.

There's a trial version available (see above link) although it's somewhat crippled but it should give one a good idea as to how the program works.

The downside to the Casper 4 program as compared with the Acronis and most other disk-cloning programs is the cost of the program which comes to \$49.95 for the program + \$9.95 for the "Casper Startup Disk" (the program to create the bootable CD containing the Casper program – needed to access the program in the event of a failed HDD). So it's more expensive than the others. But in our view, well worth the additional cost considering its overall effectiveness and the fact that one will be using the program many, many times over the weeks & months ahead. We've introduced the program to many users and I can't recall a single person who regretted his/her purchase. AFAIK, the program is available only through download from the developer.

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Another possible downside to the Casper 4 program (depending upon one's interests) is that it's really not designed to create "generational" copies of one's system. Some users like to maintain complete copies of their system at various points in time. To that end a disk-imaging program (such as the Acronis one) is more practical since to accomplish that objective using a disk-cloning program such as Casper 4 the user would obviously need a fair number of HDDs to serve as the recipients of the clones at these various points in time. But based on our experience I would say that the vast number of users are simply interested in maintaining only a current up-to-date copy of their system and have little or no interest in maintaining "generational" copies of such. But that may be a consideration for some users.

So I would recommend that any user who is interested in a comprehensive backup program should try the Casper 4 program to determine if that program meets their needs.

I always thought the reason to choose cloning was it would give you a perfect copy of the hard drive on another hard drive that you could simply swap. If instead one chooses to clone those contents again back to the original drive, I'm not quite sure how this would be seen as preferable to restoring an image.

IMO it's a stack of Casper hype. Both Acronis True Image and Norton Ghost can do the same job and much more for an approximate same cost. Cloned drives are not meant to be used as restore/recovery disks. They are as stated by many, an "exact" disk copy of another disk that is interchangeable "of the moment" should the original fail for any number of reasons. It would be a senseless waste of time to use a cloned drive for restore.

Perhaps, but I'm not sure that is necessarily true, is it? It depends on

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the time involved in making and restoring the clone back to the source drive, doesn't it?

OR one could do the same thing (probably more expediently) by just imaging it instead of cloning it (which is what I've been doing with TI)

I believe Casper can also do an image operation too, like TI can, so in that one sense, they're comparable.

But I guess one difference might be that Casper allows you to clone the drive, and very quickly as changes are made on a day to day basis, which I don't think TI can do.

Again, I only have only been using Acronis True Image 11 up to this point, and doing the full image/restore bit for my system drive (using an external USB hard drive enclosure for backup), with good success, although I'm tempted to consider trying Casper too.

Images are created for the purpose of restoring a disk volume, partition, directory, folder or file should the need arise for any number of reasons. One doesn't need more than a single disk volume/partition with enough space to accommodate 2 copies of an image while it is being created. One can choose if they so wish to replace aka overwrite a present image with one they manually start or one that's scheduled, which brings it to the reason for space accommodation. The previous image is left untouched until the new image is created, once the new image is completed the previous copy is deleted to accommodate space for the next replacement aka overwrite.

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Brian A. Sesko { MS MVP_Windows Desktop User Experience }
Conflicts start where information lacks.
<http://basconotw.mvps.org/>

Suggested posting do's/don'ts: <http://www.dts-l.org/goodpost.htm>
How to ask a question: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/555375>