

TOP 10 Cringe-Worthy Data-Failure Candidates

ERROR

Data:

it has to be captured, transmitted, massaged, stored, archived, backed up and ultimately recovered. It's also growing in excess of 50% per year, and playing an ever-increasing role in the 24x7 digital economy.

The **UGLY TRUTH** is that we are drowning in data, but it's absolutely critical to the efficiency and effectiveness of every organization, public or private sector. So if you haven't yet experienced a cringe-worthy data failure – the temporary or permanent loss of important digital information – then you're among the lucky minority. Whether through hardware, network, server or software issues, or simply human error, essential data gets folded, spindled and mutilated every second of every day. And, too often, lost.

The following may not be the best cringe-worthy examples of data failure, but they were the ones that best represented the hundreds of examples submitted to us recently.

#10 The Wrong Session

“ OK, so my shift mate and I were tasked with restoring data from tape to our iSeries test bed partition during our 4P-1230A shift.

Monday night, we start the restore to a test library. There are about 13,000 objects and will take several hours to do. Boss neglected to mention that it was a lot of data too. So much so that the partition started to fill up. We got warnings at 85% and 90%. We looked and saw that about 12,500 objects were restored. All of a sudden, almost all of the objects looked like they were restored and storage on the partition was critical at 95%. We killed the restore and deleted the files in the library.

Tuesday night, we were asked to reattempt the restore. I told my boss the same thing would most likely happen but he said to do it anyway. And the same thing happened — objects restoring, partition filling up, killed restore and deleted files again.

Wednesday night, my boss says “third time is the charm,” me grumbling under my breath “this is a stupid idea.”

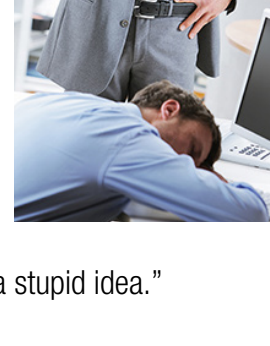
But we march on...

And the same thing happened — objects restoring, partition filling up. We tried another tactic, by opening a second session and trying to see if the files we needed had been restored yet while trying to delete files we did not need.

BAM!! We get a critical storage message — system at 95%... I am frantically switching sessions back and forth to see which files to delete when I flip to the wrong session and end up deleting a bunch of files from an actual data library.

OMG!! So I had to call my boss and explain what happened. He got the Tech Support team for the iSeries on the line and had them restore the missing data from tape.

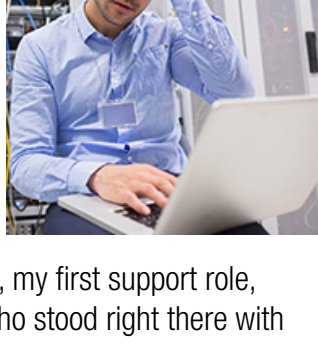
I came in the next day and met with my boss. He basically told me that if that had happened on production, I would have been let go when I came in today. Since it was test and they were able to restore from tape, I just got a memo in my personnel folder. One of the worst days of my career. ”



TODAMAX Sep 30, 2015 at 5:28 PM

#9 Hot-Swap Catastrophe

“ It was my first network support position for a very large company: 2 data centers, 2 Cisco 6500s in each data center, 2 supervisor cards in each 6500. Lots of failover, right..... Sup 1 died in one of the 6500s, failed over to sup 2 just like it was supposed to. My turn to be on call when the new sup card was delivered. Our support vendor for the Cisco equipment assures us that we could hot swap the failed sup, and then bring it back on line. Still pretty simple, right? Pulled the card out, slid the other card in and..... the entire data center loses all network connectivity, and of course the Sun servers that contain literally TBs of data do not like it when they lose connectivity to their cluster. I might even have cried – I was so panicked and scared. I might have just cost the company millions of dollars. This was in 1999, my first support role, and I “get to” talk to the CIO of the entire company, and several C levels. I worked for a lady who stood right there with me, even though she didn't know if I screwed up, or if it really was a hardware failure. Best boss I ever had. I spent 2 weeks with senior level engineers from the company and from Cisco and the support vendor, trying to duplicate the failure and never did. ”



Terry6552 Sep 30, 2015 at 8:16 PM

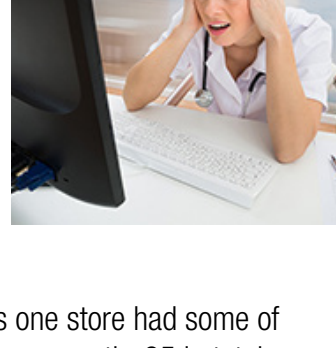
#8 Check The Logs

“ Ok – this may take a minute – but these are the facts.

So, I come in to work, and all is hunky-dory. No issues. About 11am, I get a call from a user stating that their Outlook inbox is “weird”. So, I go take a look see. Every header is there, but the content just says cannot display. EVERY message. We had a separate Exchange Mailstore for archives, and that was ok. So, I tell them I'll check the server, and I'll be right back. On my short 30 ft. walk back to the office, the phone rings - another user, same issue. And another. Then our boss, the high and mighty CIO walks in and says “My inbox looks strange. I can't see any email.” Ok then. My then useless SysAdmin was just walking in the door, to start his 9 am shift at 11, and I'm already combing the Exchange logs...

So, here's the brief - one of the Exchange Mailstores was corrupt. The other 2 were fine. This one store had some of the C-Level execs, and a bunch of back office people (this was a small hospital). If I remember correctly, 95 in total. The event logs showed errors going back...wait for it...3 weeks. This was the final straw. So, all data in that time was gone. Backups? Oh yeah, I'm getting to that - mostly failed for the last 2 weeks. Again, the SysAdmin's realm of responsibility. In the end, all was back up, email was restored as far as we could, then we upgraded to a 3 tier Exchange 2013 Enterprise with backend DAG.

Lesson — CHECK THE LOGS. Test the backups, follow the policies and procedures — and if they're not there, write them. ”



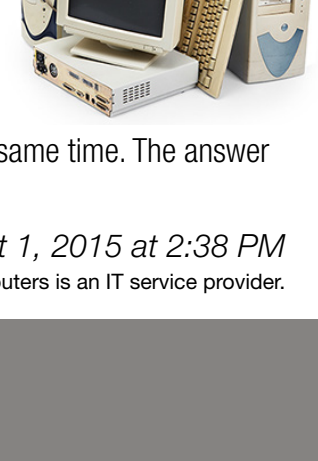
The Creamer Oct 1, 2015 at 8:53 AM

#7 Eject! Eject! Eject!

“ When I first started in IT I was given the job of recovering a large company's HR data from a server crash. It was backed up to numerous floppy disks (this was the late '80s, real early '90s). They were using the exact same floppy disks they were given to use for backups a few years prior. The server was set (for some reason) to skip any reporting of backup errors. The disks had worn out to the point where they were completely useless.

It was blamed on IT because “they weren't told” that disks would wear out.

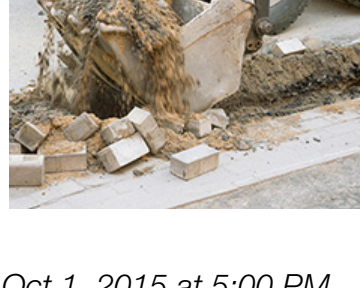
I was also called in late one night to help pry floppies out of a disk drive. The system told them to “insert disk 2,” but DIDN'T tell them to eject disk 1 prior to inserting the next disk. They made it to 3. I asked them how in the world they were able to fit 3 floppy disks in at the same time. The answer was “it wasn't easy but we just pushed real hard.” ”



Donelson Computers Oct 1, 2015 at 2:38 PM
Donelson Computers is an IT service provider.

#6 Stereo Backhoe Backup

“ Working for a \$1B credit union, we were in the process of adding on to our main office. This would quadruple our office space, and for some reason it was IT's responsibility to oversee the construction. This on top of everything else we normally handled, had my boss on edge. In the middle of a construction inspection, a city crew working on something else put a backhoe through the fiber bundle feeding our side of town. Took down every internet connection and application we had, including our home banking. The same city crew did the same thing again, a few days later. Took another month or so, but my VP had a nervous breakdown. Literally. ”



Fleetwood Oct 1, 2015 at 5:00 PM

#5 Dissing The Dishwasher

“ The company dishwasher had been messed up, and without telling the IT team (we had left for the day), the users decide to allow the dishwasher installer to shutdown server room power for 32 minutes... UPS can handle 30 minutes of power loss for servers.

IT team gets alerts and looks into it...

The DC is corrupt, but we resolved the corruption remotely.

Everything looks fine, IT comes in extremely early the next day just in case, runs IT maintenance and notices issues with Mail Server, it cannot send or receive anymore. Mailboxes aren't mounting after a while, we try restarting EVERYTHING. Mail Server databases are officially corrupt. There's a backup from the previous day, but all emails from yesterday would be lost.

IT tries running ESEUTIL to try and do small repairs or mount it. Nothing. IT then restores the old mailbox using Veeam recovery. Everything finally mounts correctly, IT then uses Exchange Recovery from Veeam and ESUTIL /P to restore the emails for that day. All of this takes days due to network and RAID 6 slowness. Everything is resolved, IT gets reprimanded. Business as usual.

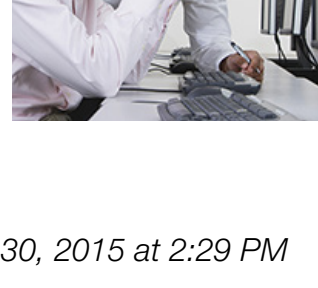
I guess it comes down to, sometimes the smallest decisions (installing a dishwasher) can cause large issues (everything being corrupt). I think the most important thing is that the IT team ALWAYS needs to know of any potential shutdowns or scheduled outages. ”



AlexDaNoob Oct 15, 2015 at 3:52 PM

#4 Do Not Delete DNS

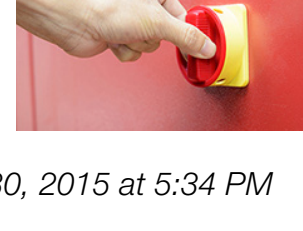
“ The biggest one I've had was last year when we were having some networking issues. While troubleshooting the issue, we found that we had several DNS entries that were no longer valid (users had left/computer renamed). In a moment of weakness, I suggested that we delete all DNS entries out rather than hunting through all of them to find the ones that weren't valid. I assumed that the next time the user logged in, it would re-authenticate to DNS and we would have a nice clean list again. I then got to go tell the administration that nobody would be able to log on and access the network until we went hands with every machine, dropped it from the domain and then rejoined the domain again. That made for a fun two days. ”



BenJATC Sep 30, 2015 at 2:29 PM

#3 You Shut Down What?

“ The boss was giving the new guy the nickel tour of the data center. The new guy thought he would be helpful and turn off the lights on the way out by hitting the big red button next to the door. (That would be the big red, Emergency Power Off switch to shut down the entire data center.) ”



Scott8259 Sep 30, 2015 at 5:34 PM

#2 Locked The Keys Inside

“ We were moving locations and our IT Director was paranoid that the servers would get damaged if we let an outside company move them. So he rented a U-haul truck and loaded all of the servers into it and then locked it with one of the most impenetrable locks he could find....too bad my coworker placed the keys inside a box that was also loaded in the truck. He had to tell our boss and then find a way into the truck and after that, they had to find their way to the unemployment office too. ”



bertoruiz27 Sep 30, 2015 at 1:07 PM

#1 Click-THUNK...Click-THUNK...

“ A designer lost a bunch of media files that were stored on a 2TB HDD in their workstation.

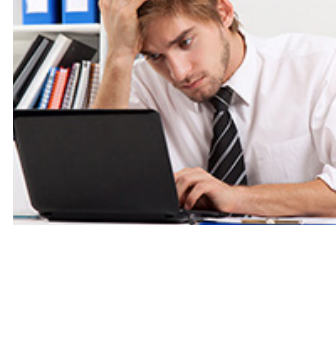
“Hey, what does that sound mean?”

“What sound?”

click-THUNK...click-THUNK...click-THUNK

“Oh, that sound....Oh, [EXPLETIVE DELETED].”

Why IT or bad configured the disk standby with no backup and no redundancy is beyond me, but the bad news came with a hefty recommendation for at least RAID1 on the disk and daily incremental backups of the drive contents. ”

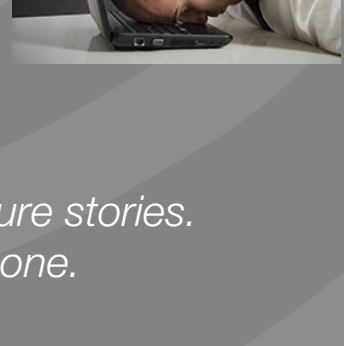


PirateLes Nov 2, 2015 at 5:00 PM

Technology is complicated and if it can go wrong, at some time – often the worst time – it will go wrong. Now that data has become even more important in the 24x7 digital economy, cringing is increasingly not an option.

Fortunately, there are a variety of backup and recovery options that provide:

- flexibility
- efficiency
- maintenance simplicity
- ease of installation
- scalability
- guaranteed SLAs
- security
- data resiliency



It's okay to enjoy somebody else's cringe-worthy data-failure stories. It's better when you don't have to worry about becoming one.

1-866-766-2186

www.seagate.com/data-protection

