The business impact of downtime and how Mac reduces this risk
Always delivering so much more than customers expect

Nearly all businesses rely on a stable, reliable, and secure IT system to ensure efficient operations and optimised productivity, service, and communications.

And although many large organisations typically have enough resources to quickly recover from downtime – and carry on with business as usual once the underlying issue is resolved – smaller and mid-size businesses don't always have this same luxury where the consequences of downtime can potentially prove disastrous, and in some instances, signal the beginning of the end.

Downtime is an inevitable reality all businesses will experience at some point – it's unfortunately impossible to avoid altogether. Asking basic questions around how downtime and serious data loss could potentially impact your business, how it will recover, and what plans you have in place to recover from this eventuality, will help guide and make decisions around investing in the necessary measures to mitigate risk and minimise potential impact of downtime.

Simple steps to mitigate the impact of business downtime

1. Regularly back up files

Scheduled backups ensure that you have at least one other copy of your important files that can be easily restored if the originals get deleted or damaged.
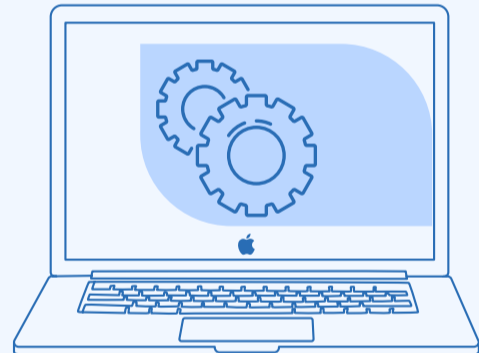
There are three basic backup methods:

1. **Manual backups** – This method is straightforward and free, but because it's manual, it can be time consuming and labour intensive and more often than not easy to overlook or delay. As such most businesses generally opt to use a built-in operating system app.
2. **Automated backup features** – These are either built into the operating system or acquired separately and installed onto your device. You let the application know what to back up, how often, and where, and from then on, backups are automatic. If you have a Mac, the included backup software is called Time Machine and it lets you back up to a locally connected external drive that runs hourly.
3. **Cloud backups** – Online backup using a Cloud backup service is simple and conveniently solves the problem of getting backup data offsite. Another advantage is that your backed up files are available to you wherever you are and at any time and are generally accessible using any mobile device. With iCloud you can store your documents, presentations, and other files in iCloud Drive, and access them on all your devices and on the web. Your files stay up to date everywhere.

File backup versus full system backup – It's important to note that most of the time, a backup operation involves copying only the files. A system backup goes farther and copies applications, the operating system, and related configurations. A full system backup allows you to recreate your entire system should it ever crash but special software is needed that can handle that kind of backup. Something that your IT department or service provider generally will oversee and manage.
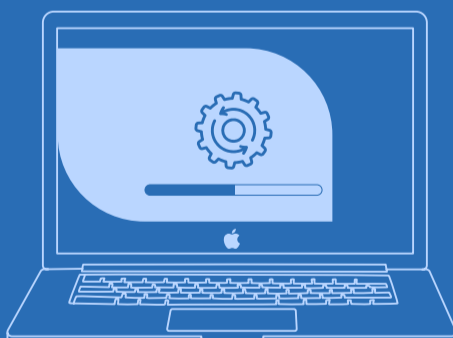
2. Invest in reliable equipment

While it may be tempting to purchase lower-cost products and services, doing so greatly increases the risk of system downtime. Investing in high-quality equipment is a simple, effective way to ensure that system errors are avoided.

Higher quality products will last longer and perform more efficiently. Even though some equipment may seem less expensive at first, ongoing maintenance will inevitably cost you more in the long run and it will also have a shorter lifespan.

3. Keep hardware and software up to date

Updates and patches for operating systems, hardware, and applications are regularly released to address new security threats and address existing vulnerabilities. Check and ensure that all devices that connect to your organisation's network, both personal and business owned, are up to date. Preventive maintenance should also be prioritised by your IT team.

Outdated hardware and software are two of the main leading contributors of system failures. Don't put off upgrading if you're not confident in the reliability of your devices or other infrastructure components.

Macs are a long-lasting investment that not only minimise downtime risk but also deliver ongoing savings when looking at the Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) associated with providing:

• **Application licences**
• **Device management**
• **Endpoint security**
• **Support requests**
• **Hardware repairs**

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