

If you're still backing up to tape, let us tell you a cautionary tale:

You run a backup every night. The tape is changed by the IT team at end-of-day and taken off-site.

In the middle of the afternoon on a Friday, there's a fire in your building. You evacuate; the fire marshal won't let the IT team go to the server room to retrieve today's tape, for good health and safety reasons.

By Friday evening, the fire's been extinguished and you're able to get back in. Unfortunately, there's fire and sprinkler damage to the server room; the equipment, and the most recent backup tape, are unrecoverable.

1. Buy a new server.
2. Buy a compatible tape drive.
3. Install an operating system.
4. Install the backup software.
5. Restore from the last available tape.
6. Recommission the restored applications.



Unfortunately, it's Friday evening. No-one who opens on Saturday will carry the right kit, so call you can do over the weekend is plan. Here's the timeline:



- Monday AM: Order server, tape drive, controller card, cables. Pay extra and compromise on specification to get next-day delivery.
- Monday PM: Contact software vendors, get hold of OS and backup software and appropriate licence keys.
- Tuesday PM: All the parts are here; start building and installing.
- Tuesday night: Catalogue the backup tape and start the restore.
- Wednesday AM: Restore complete. Files are available; start working on recommissioning email.
- Wednesday PM: Email restored. Back up and running at last.

The trouble is –

You've lost three working days, and your data is only current to the previous Wednesday; all the work you did on Thursday and Friday of the preceding week is gone for ever.