

A thought about Backup.

How many photos, documents, MP3 files do you have on your computer and no where else? Have you important documents or your final draught thesis just ready to print in the morning?

I have lost count of the number of occasions where we have a computer in to repair and find that the owners do not have backups of the files on their machines.

Hard drives do not last for ever, they should last for at least 3 years but a surprising number do not. Sometimes due to physical damage, sometimes due to the actions of viruses or just to production faults.

The price of external hard drives has come down a lot allowing for a cheap solution to the problem. Some have their own software that allows for a 'press button' solution, it will sometimes even turn the machine off for you.

As a rule of thumb it is important to have those photos and important documents stored in at least 2 places. DVDs are cheap, but a word of advice check them at least once a year, especially as in a few years time with a new generation of Blue Ray DVD Drives and new operating systems it may be that the old disks are no longer readable.

USB memory sticks come in all shapes and sizes, but they too can suffer breakdowns.

With Hard Drives there is special software that can be used to recover files, most of the time it works. But on occasions the only way to get data back is to send it to the forensic companies and that can be seriously expensive.

It is ironic that computers were heralded to do away with paper. The new range of Epson Inks proudly boast that their prints will last over 90 years!