

## Crash-proofing digital data

### Security: Back up computer files to safest building in B.C.

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Imagine you're about to type the final sentence of your great Canadian novel when your cocker spaniel -- we'll call him Trouble -- jumps up and knocks a cup of coffee into your laptop.

The screen goes dead and a strange, burnt electronics smell rises from the machine as your heart sinks.

Did you back up your data?

The scenario is played out in various forms -- business presentation, PhD dissertation, iTunes collection -- thousands of times a year.

Guy Robertson, a Vancouver disaster-planning and records-management consultant, says that at least once a week he hears from a desperate person who has lost valuable files.

"They're looking for that magic bullet that will recover their data, but if they don't have a reliable backup system in place, there's nothing that can be done," Robertson said.

"The files are gone. It's a hard lesson to learn," he said. "Death, taxes and losing an important computer file -- the three things you can depend on in life these days."

Now a Victoria company has launched an online service that automatically and continuously backs up all the data on your computer for just under \$30 a month and stores it in an encrypted form in one of the most secure buildings in B.C.

"It's called continuous data protection," said Christopher Weston, the vice-president of CUBE Global Storage, a 27-year-old data-storage firm now marketing its new LiveBackup data-protection service.

"The minute you hit 'save,' it automatically backs up in a cache and it's sent encrypted back to the site. You don't have to hit backup ever and you don't need to schedule it ever."

Weston said the data is stored in servers in the company's building in Victoria that is described as the "Fort Knox of storage centres . . . Earthquake, flood and fireproof, the building has one million cubic feet of storage space and is so secure that it's been named the safest building in the province and designated as a post-disaster centre for the Victoria region by Public Safety Canada."

"Chances are that it won't be a natural disaster, but something smaller, but just as



CREDIT: CanWest News Service

Christopher Weston works in one of Canada's most secure buildings.

devastating, that will cause you to lose data," said Weston.

"It can be one file or your entire system and it can be personally and professionally devastating."

Weston said he's targeting the new service at "road warriors" -- business people who take their laptops on the road -- and home businesses. But he's working on a cheaper version for students and also to make the system compatible with Mac computers. It only works now with PCs.

The company said it offers the only service of its kind in B.C. "with a long history of protecting the most valuable physical and virtual assets for hundreds of clients in one of the safest buildings in the world."

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