

## **Survey reveals teachers' laptops are vulnerable to data loss**

A survey by Equinet, a leading provider of eLearning technology for schools, has revealed that whilst most schools regularly backup administrative information, 70 per cent do not have a robust policy to protect information held on teachers' laptops. Given the increasing popularity amongst even the least ICT-literate staff of using laptops to create lesson plans and materials, this oversight places many schools in a vulnerable position.

“Admittedly in the past it was difficult to back up teachers' laptops,” says Equinet Product Marketing Director, David Abbot. “ICT staff would have to rely on teachers remembering to copy their important data manually to central servers. But now there can be no excuses: fully automated backup systems are available that cater for PCs and laptops as well as servers.”

With Equinet's BackupPilot system, client software is installed on each laptop and this then automatically performs backups whenever the laptop is connected to the internet – whether at the teacher's home or on the school network – removing the need for manual intervention.

Although the survey has shown that most schools – some 85 per cent – backup server information, a significant number of schools admit that student coursework is vulnerable, with only 60 per cent of schools saying this is definitely backed up.

“Conversations we have had with students confirm that coursework does get lost, and they know they are best advised to make their own copies,” says Abbot.

The survey also discloses that even when information is fully backed up, few schools have sufficiently robust systems in place to make it easy to restore lost information, with 30 per cent of schools admitting they were unable to recover data. Only 10 per cent of survey respondents said they use new remote backup technology, which Equinet believes is a key reason why recovery rates are so poor.

Lack of automation and cost are cited as the biggest barriers to better backup systems – factors that indicate there is little awareness of the systems now available:

“Although modern solutions offer schools totally automated backup systems that can completely do away with the need for manual backups and tapes, the two methods aren’t necessarily mutually exclusive” Abbot comments. “For schools where cost is an issue, automated systems can be used very effectively alongside existing tape-based systems. This approach is ideal for any organisations that do not want to make too large an initial investment.”

Full results of Equinet’s survey are available at: <http://www.equinet.com/survey-schools>

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### **About Equinet**

Equinet was founded in 1998 and led the way in the manufacture and supply of devices giving schools the peace of mind to make full use of the internet. Using the company’s ability to deliver cost-effective, integrated hardware and software solutions, Equinet has developed a range of products with the twin themes of accelerating internet access to enable effective distribution and use of eLearning materials – complemented by enabling eSafety of pupils and security of both school network infrastructures and data.

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