



## Thinking about donating that old computer?

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You just bought a new computer for your office. Congratulations! The old computer is just sitting in the doorway. Used as a doorstop, it is just in the way. Many times people think that reformatting the hard drive and reinstalling Windows means that the data on the hard drive is gone for good. The fact is that there may still be old data on the drive that someone could recover using recovery software. Often our clients want to give an old PC to an employee or ask how to recycle it. Here are some tips to get the most out of your donation and protect yourself.

The question of what should be done with your old computer can be troublesome. Computers contain hazardous materials and you cannot dispose of them in your regular trash. Still, you do have a few options. You can either recycle or donate the hardware for reuse. However, you need to determine if it is possible to reuse the hardware.

If you were just replacing your computer because it

was getting to be old and it is under 5 years old you maybe able to donate the computer and actually be able to take a tax deduction for a qualified organization to refurbish your computer for a non-profit organization. Many of these computers end up in schools and community centers across the country. This helps these groups to be able to provide computer and internet access and provide training classes.



However to be able to donate the computer you must leave the system intact and have a technician clean all of the personal information from the drive. Drive wiping software can easily do this but can take a few hours to finish. You need to be able to provide the original software

media and documentation as well.

If the computer does not function normally or is older than 5 years, you need to recycle the computer. You should have a technician destroy the contents of the drive, preventing someone else from retrieving it. It is important to note that formatting the drive is not enough. The reason being is that formatting the drive is pretty much the same as replacing the index pages to a book but the original pages are all still there. After removing the hardware, you can bring the computer to a local electronics store that sells computers or contact your local municipality. Most of these organizations will take the computer for a nominal fee.

If you need help finding a recycling center to recycle your hardware or a qualified computer company that refurbishes the hardware as a tax deductible donation please ask an M&H technician, call us at 866-9MH-TECH, or email us at [support@mhconsults.com](mailto:support@mhconsults.com).

## How To Prevent a Hard Drive Crash

There are a number of things you never want to happen to your belongings. You never want to lose your cell phone because, in this day and age, that essentially cuts you off from the rest of the world. A car problem? That takes quite a sum of money to fix and while it's being repaired, and you have no way to get to where you want to go. But, for many people, the absolute worst thing that could happen to them is a hard drive crash. Basically, to a great many people, this is a fate worse than death. When your drive crashes, there is a very good chance that you could lose all of your software and files forever. So how do you ensure that you do not lose your music, videos and pictures? Here is how to prevent a hard drive crash:

**Using anti-virus software.** Often times, hard drive crashes are caused by viruses and corrupted data. You can get anti-virus software free from the internet, but they are hardly worthy defense systems. If you really want your computer to be secure against malicious software and programs, you should invest in a paid anti-virus program. They might be costly but they sure do work and will most certainly make it tougher, although not impossible, for viruses to attack your computer.

**Performing system maintenance.** An effective way to prevent a hard drive crash is to perform the necessary system maintenance to keep your drive working efficiently. Your computer stores many files and most of them you actually do not need. Make sure you delete your temporary files and temporary internet files to make it easier for your hard disk to function. This can be done by looking for the option on your browser and looking for the disk clean-up function (or something similar) in your computer's "Accessories" folder. Also, performing "Disk Defragmentation" regularly greatly eases the strain on your hard drives processing capabilities.



## Backups and New RDX Removable Disk Technology Andrew Hashem

People have always stored their data in many ways. A doctor's office may keep files for their most recent patients right in the office. Schools keep student diplomas stored in their basements. Most are hard copies of data they have on their computers and in the office. Backups are always a great resource to have in any office environment. Most users store their data on the server. There it can be shared and backed-up if their computer crashes. Getting data off of a failed hard drive is costly and not 100% possible. All of the servers we work on have a backup solution, whether it is an online backup or done right in the office.

There are advantages and disadvantages inherent to each type of backup solution. Online backups are kept safe off-site, in case there is a fire or damage to the server. The downside of this is if the server loses internet connection, then the backup fails and has to restart. Also, depending on the size of the backup, it could take hours to complete and can include exorbitant monthly costs. Restoring files from an online backup after a hard drive fails can also take as

long as a backup, especially if you need the files sooner rather than later. There is a multitude of on-site options as well. A server can be set-up with two hard drives, where one is an exact copy of the other. This is very



helpful in case one fails.

Currently the most widely used backup method utilizes tape drives. Unfortunately, they are being phased out by the major manufacturers. Their warranties are expiring and it is hard to find companies that still sell them. The most commonly used drives were developed by Iomega in 3 sizes: 35GB, 70GB, and 120GB. These drives also required special software and the tapes are not interchangeable with other drives.

RDX is a hard disk-based storage format developed by ProStor Systems Incorporated in 2004. These are

small disk drives in a very rugged case. When plugged into a computer they are shown as another drive, meaning you can easily drag and drop files right onto it and they work with any current or future backup software. The hard drives were tested in extreme conditions, with an archival life span of 30 years with 99% reliability.

RDX drives are very durable. They can be dropped from one meter and still work. They can be shipped without risk of damage, and docks and disks are all interchangeable.

We at M&H Consulting strongly recommend backups for all of our clients. Just in case disaster strikes, backups are a great step to get your business back up and running.

If you have any questions about how to better protect your devices or think it may be infected by a virus, please call M&H Consulting and we can help provide you with information on how to best utilize the internet for your business. You can contact us at 866-964-8324 x4 or email [support@mhconsults.com](mailto:support@mhconsults.com).

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