

*“Due to human error, the wrong files were deleted. There were no back-ups for the customer databases and invoicing.”*

It's essential to identify the centrally held information in your business (the information that your employees need), as well the information that's crucial to the success of your business. You should develop secure procedures from the start and have effective security arrangements. You might also need help from specialists to protect your computer networks.

Businesses use computer software for a variety of tasks, including planning, managing orders and production, invoicing and maintaining customer databases. An equipment failure, computer virus, a small fire or water damage, for example, can destroy a substantial amount of important information.

Keep your business activities confidential – careless handling and storage of documents, drawings and files increases the risk of 'information leaks'. If you hold information about people outside you're business, there's a risk that this material could get into the wrong hands.

## Tips

- Make sure you back-up files regularly and store them away from other files in suitable facilities or in a separate building.
- Provide employees with clear instructions on how to archive and copy important or confidential documents, and make sure you monitor how these instructions are followed.
- Use back-ups in case of computer and IT system failures, and look at manual methods for performing the most significant operations.

## Useful links

British Computer Society

**[www.bcs.org](http://www.bcs.org)**

Business Link – Keeping your systems and data secure

**[www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=RESOURCES&itemId=1073791308&r.s=sl](http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action/detail?type=RESOURCES&itemId=1073791308&r.s=sl)**