



File #86

Platform: Win/Unix

Making Sure Your Backups Are Good



eCommerce Industries, Inc.

Is Your Data Safe?

The information on your DDMS system is vital to your business. Unfortunately, you can lose this information in a number of ways. Some dealers lose computer information in disastrous ways: floods, fires, or lightning. Others lose information through simple, everyday user errors.

To guard against losing vital information, you need backups. And you need to verify that those backups are good. We'll explain how to verify your backups here for each platform. We'll also discuss tape life, and proper tape storage.

You need to decide how often to verify, and establish a company policy: once a week, perhaps, or twice a month.

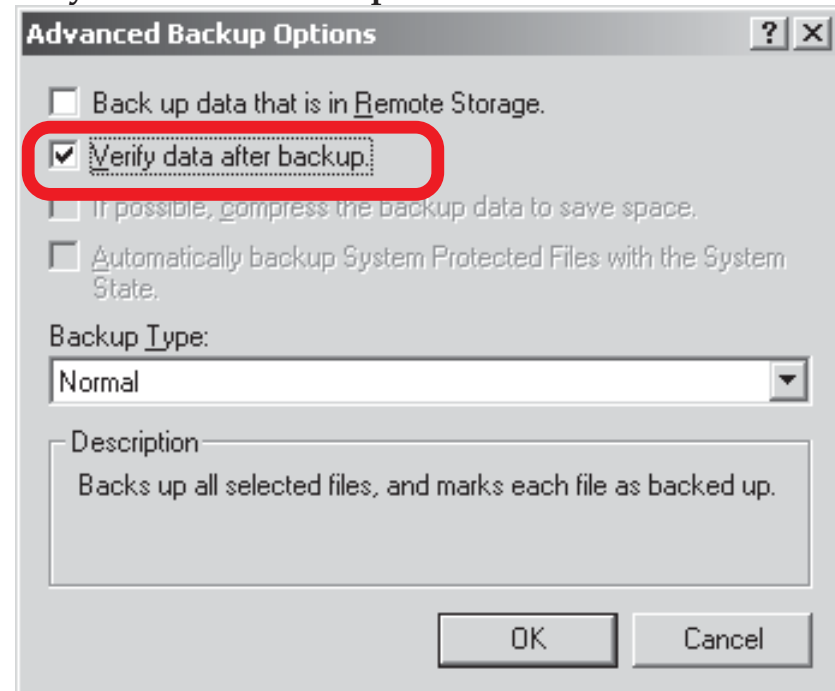
Note: Before backing up your DDMS files, *shut down TBL Server*. Running TBL Server during backup is a top cause of backup problems.

Verifying Backups on Windows 2000

After selecting the files to back up and clicking the **Start Backup** button, Windows displays the Backup Job Information dialog box. Click the **Advanced** button.

In the Advanced Backup Options dialog box, click

Verify data after backup as shown here:



When Windows verifies the tape, it records the results in a backup log. To view the log, return to the backup program, click the **Tools** menu, and select **Reports**. Select the backup date, click **View** or **Print**, and review the log. *If there are any errors or skipped files, contact Support.*

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Verifying Backups on UNIX

When you back up your system by selecting 4 on the Keyop menu, you're using a daily backup script to back up your files. To verify the backup, you need to modify the script so that it creates a log file, and then view the log after each backup. Your backup script currently uses this tar command to back up:

```
tar -cvf/dev/rmt0 ./*
```

Change this tar command to read like this:

```
tar -cvf/dev/rmt0 ./* > /home/keyop/dailybackup.log
```

This modified command creates the file `dailybackup.log` within the `/home/keyop` directory.

When you do a full system backup from the keyop menu, use the following steps to verify the tape:

- 1 Go to the UNIX shell.
- 2 At the # prompt, type **smit lsmksysb** and press ENTER.
- 3 When the smit program opens, accept the default number of blocks to verify in the second field, and press ENTER.

If there are any errors or skipped files, contact Support.

Retire Old Tapes to Protect Your Data

To make sure that your backups will work if you need them, you must consider tape life. Every time you use a tape, you wear away some of the magnetic media that holds your data. Opinions vary on how many backups you can reliably make on a tape, but the documented life for QIC tapes is about 5000 backups.

Tapes also degrade with time, whether you use them or not. Their shelf life varies widely, depending on care, temperature, humidity and many other factors. Published opinions on shelf life range from one to 30 years.

You should check with the manufacturer of the tapes you use, and follow their recommendations regarding the number of backups and shelf life. Create a company policy for retiring tapes at appropriate intervals.

Protect Tapes by Storing Them Properly

Even if you retire your tapes regularly, they can be unreliable if you mistreat them. To care for your tapes, follow these rules:

- 1 Keep tapes in an environment that's reasonably free from dirt, dust, fingerprints, food, cigarette smoke and ash, and airborne pollutants.
- 2 Do not drop tapes.
- 3 Keep tapes out of strong sunlight, and avoid contact with liquids or extreme heat.

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- 4 Do not store tapes on radiators, window sills, televisions, electronic equipment, or machinery.
- 5 Put tapes back on their storage shelf when they're not in use. Do not store them flat, like plates; place them on edge, like books.

Use the Right Tape for Your Drive

You must use the correct tape for your drive, or none of the recommendations for verifying backups and retiring tapes will help. When you get a new tape drive with a larger capacity, you must purchase new tapes for that drive.

To select the right tape, you must know which tape drive you have, and then select tapes the manufacturer recommends for that tape drive.

This is ultimately your responsibility, but we can provide you with a few guidelines.

DDMS tape drives come in two basic types: QIC and DAT. QIC (quarter-inch cartridge) tapes are large, about 4" x 6". DAT tapes are much smaller — about the size of a cassette tape.

DAT Drives

DAT drives sold by DDMS have small tape opening with the name Seagate on them. Use tapes with a DDS 3 format, and a length of DDS-125.

QIC Drives

Some older QIC drives do not have doors. These drives were made by Wangtech. If you have one of these and do not know its capacity, call DDMS Support for assistance.

QIC tape drives with doors are made by Tandberg. They come in three sizes: 1200MB, 2.5/5GB, or 5000MB. To determine which size you have, first look at the bottom of the door. If the bottom of the door says 2.5/5GB SL4, you have a 2.5/5 GB drive.

If the bottom of the door has no writing, open it, and look for a small label on the inside of the door. This label indicates whether you have a 5000GB or 1200MB drive.

The 2.5/5GB and 5000GB drives can store 2.5GB uncompressed or 5GB compressed. You can use the following tapes with these drives:

- Imation Magnus 2.5
- Verbatim DC9250
- Sony QD9250

A 1200MB (1.2 gigabyte) drive can use any of the following tapes:

- Imation Magnus 1.2
- Verbatim DC9120
- Sony QD9120

