

Windows Backup for Organizations doesn't actually save data files  
Not a disaster recovery option, but good enough for a migration  
Microsoft continues to take what's familiar to ordinary users and offer it to enterprises. The latest functionality is Windows Backup for Organizations.

First, it's important to clarify that this is not a comprehensive backup solution for a device. It won't image a disk, send copies of files to another location, or enable a standalone PC to be rebuilt in the event of a disaster. Instead, it is a tool to back up Windows 10 or 11 settings and restore them on a Microsoft Entra-joined device.

It will also back up the list of installed apps from the Microsoft Store and will restore them to the user's Start Menu.

Microsoft is aiming the tool at administrators who deal with resetting or migrating devices (assuming users are running apps from the Microsoft Store) and states that it will "smoothly transition devices from Windows 10 to Windows 11 using a saved backup."

While it is possible to back up from a supported version of Windows 10 22H2 or Windows 11 22H2 or later, it is only possible to restore to Windows 11 22H2 and beyond. In addition, while backups can be performed by devices that are Entra-joined or Entra Hybrid-joined, only Entra-joined devices can restore settings and Microsoft Store apps to the Start Menu.

The backup policy is enabled via mobile device management (MDM) or Group Policy, and administrators will be relieved to know that it is an opt-in feature, disabled by default.

Once activated, the process is "designed to be seamless and user-friendly," according to Microsoft. The backup scheduled task runs every eight days unless manually triggered.

Microsoft tweaks Windows Out of Box Experience for enterprises to adjust control freakery

OneNote for Windows 10 support clock counts down

Windows Security Update turns smooth NDI streams into jittery messes

Microsoft continues Control Panel farewell tour

Microsoft expects IT departments to restore systems via the Out-Of-Box Experience (OOBE). A user signs in during OOBE and is presented

with options to restore their profile. Restoring via other methods is not currently supported.

As mentioned, the process does not back up files (so if the user has some desktop wallpaper that they simply must keep, tough). The backup data itself is stored in the enterprise's tenant, and the feature does not support cross-tenant migration. Cloud PCs are also not yet supported.

Overall, it's simple stuff, and ordinary users have had similar functionality for some time. It will, however, make life easier for admins dealing with this particular scenario. According to Microsoft, "Windows Backup for Organizations helps reduce migration overhead, minimize user disruption, and strengthen device resilience against incidents."

Of course, an admin who doesn't already have a plan in place to deal with the impending end of support for many editions of Windows 10 likely has many more things to worry about than how to transfer user settings to a new device. ®