

By Dr. Alan J. Pierce
pierceaj@optonline.net

The Clickfree Backup System Product Review

What is clickfree automatic backup?

A system that will perform computer backups for you without you loading software or selecting files. Storage Appliance Corporation, the creators of clickfree, has two different backup product lines that use built in internal software to automatically backup files on your PC. You can check out their full product line at <http://www.goclickfree.com>.

Their \$9.95 backup solution:

Is a 3 DVD disk set that will automatically backup your music, photos and videos, or office files.

You just place the disk that is designed to

backup one of the above types of files into your computer's DVD burner. The disk has the active software necessary to start itself and perform the backup. These disk packs come in 3, 5 and 10 disk sets. A single disk can record 4.5 GB and if that isn't enough room to backup your files the software will tell you how many disks you will need to complete the session. The disk cannot be used for incremental backups. Once a disk is created it can be used to restore, view, or share the files that it contains. You will however need to use a new disk the next time you want to perform another backup.

Their \$129.99 backup solution:

Is their 120GB clickfree hard drive that will automatically backup your

entire computer system. At press time they have 120GB and 160GB capacity units on sale. You just plug the drive into one or two USB ports and "it will automatically find and backup over 350 file types including: all of your photos, videos, music, presentations, emails, email



attachments, artwork, spreadsheets, all documents, tax returns, accounting documents, favorite websites". If you want to play an active role in the backup you can add or delete the types of files you want to backup. These drives provide incremental storage, which means that the next time it is plugged into your computer it will find your new files and add them to your backup.

Did the clickfree systems perform as promised?

What I liked:

Their 120GB drive delivered all that their company representative promised. When my computer was on I just plugged in the unit to two USB ports. One for power and the other for the data feed. Approximately one minute after plugging it in its opening window was displayed on my screen. It started a countdown to give me time if I wanted to play a greater role

in the backup process before it started its fully automatic backup. When it completed this backup I plugged it into a second machine and it did a separate backup of that machine's contents. When I tested a clickfree DVD backup disk it also performed as promised.

What I didn't Like:

The drive has a location for a 5 volt DC power cord. However, they don't provide one with the unit. Instead they have a double USB plug so if a single USB port doesn't provide the necessary power you plug both ends into two separate ports. I expect that most computer newbie's will find a USB power surge message quite frightening and reason enough to reject this backup system. I received a power surge message from both of the notebook computers that I tested. The double USB plug solved the problem; however I performed my incremental tests using my own 120 volt AC to 5 volt DC power adapter. Wish they supplied one.

The box of the clickfree photo DVDs indicates 2,000 files/DVD* capacity. This notation is quite misleading since photo and video files tend to be quite large. You might need a few disks to fully backup your photos and videos.

Rating:

Four stars but I would recommend the more expensive clickfree hard drive solution. I think in the long run it will prove much less expensive.

Dr. Alan J. Pierce is co-author of Introduction to Technology Glencoe McGraw-Hill 2010 and a TechDirections Magazine Columnist. Visit www.techtoday.us for past columns and resources.