



## Tape Rotation Schedule

There are many tape rotation schedules adequate for proper protection. The schedule listed below is the “standard” rotation schedule that we recommend our clients use.

When selecting a tape rotation schedule one must consider the following:

- Most importantly, will I be able to restore the data I need when needed?
- How easy is it to restore the data I need? How many tapes will it take?
- How long does it take to backup my data? Does my equipment allow me to backup ALL my data in the allotted time?
- Does my strategy protect me in the event one or more tapes are defective?

We recommend you backup ALL your data every night. This provides for the most redundancy (you will have copies of ALL the data on each tape) and the simplest restore (should only require one tape). This ASSUMES you have a backup device and media large enough to hold all your desired data on one tape.

### **The Schedule:**

We recommend you begin with six tapes. Label five tapes “Monday” through “Friday” respectively. Label the sixth tape “Friday Even”.

Every day you do a complete/full backup to that days tape. On Fridays you ALTERNATE the “Friday” and “Friday Even” tape.

At the end of the month (on the last day of the month, or on the operational day CLOSEST to last day of the month) you REMOVE the completed tape, and label it “MONTH END – Month\_name”. Replace this tape with a NEW tape the next time you get to that day’s backup.

We recommend that you keep a journal of your tapes WITH your group of tapes, and record WHICH day of the week tape was removed for each month end backup. By doing this you can be sure to replace a DIFFERENT tape with each month end backup, assuring your tapes stay current/new. (Most tapes will have an operational life expectancy of roughly one year under this strategy and this assures the tapes get replaced).

- If your company operates on weekends on required Saturday and/or Sunday backups add the appropriate number of tapes to this schedule.

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## Tape Operations:

Now that you have the recommended tape rotation schedule in place, you should consider the following “best practices”.

### **Off-site storage:**

Periodically (daily, weekly, or monthly) you should bring a complete tape off-site. This protects your data from fire and/or theft. How often is determined by you, with the same guidelines described on page 1. In the event of fire destroying your tapes, how far back are you willing to restore to, as compared to the administrative effort of rotating the off-site tapes and the tapes in the office?

### **Tape Drive Cleaning:**

Know your tape drive equipment. What is the recommended tape-cleaning schedule for your drive? This varies by manufacturer and device type. Most DAT drives should be cleaned once a week. Follow the manufacture’s instructions, and call Rose CTS, Inc. if you have questions. For most DAT drives, a single cleaning involves inserting and removing the cleaning cartridge four or five times.

### **Test Restore:**

We recommend you do a test restore at least once a quarter. This proves that your system can correctly restore data, and keeps you familiar with the restore process. We suggest you make a directory with the name “test” on your target storage area (whatever drive or volume you are protecting regularly). Copy 5-10mb of data into this directory. Create a print out of the directory that lists the total number of files and bytes. After a complete backup delete or remove the “test directory” from your drive. Now use your tape drive and software to restore this directory. Verify the contents against your documentation.

By following these procedures you are taking active steps to assure the timely restoration of data in the event of system failure. Your tape backup system and procedures are ONE part of a comprehensive **Disaster Recovery Plan**. Please ask us about other components in a comprehensive **Disaster Recovery Plan**.

