



**Safeguard Your Data- Hardware options for Data Backup**  
**By Jennifer Ohl, Midwest Software Specialists, Inc.**

**Creating Backups**



If your maintenance program data is stored on a network drive, then most likely, it is backed up routinely by your IT department. You should find out if this is indeed the case. If your IT department is not responsible for this task, then we recommend that you back up your data on a daily basis using the backup utility within your program. I usually hear some groaning when I mention the daily backup, but are you willing to lose more than a day's worth of work? Most Mp2<sup>®</sup> and EAM<sup>®</sup> users are not. Your software will not perform the backup automatically, so it usually works best to do it at the same time each day. After a short time it will become part of your daily routine. I will gladly assist if you need my help to set up this task on your program.

**Storing Backups**

If your IT department is performing this task, make sure you are aware where the backups files are stored and that you are comfortable with the naming convention. File names such as: "Jan31\_2008\_MP2" or "0131\_2008\_MP2" are easy to understand and will sort in order.

If you are performing the backup yourself, be sure to create a new name each time you backup your data. The Mp2<sup>®</sup> Access program will create the following file name: "ACC2000BAK", for example. If you don't change the name, you will be saving your data each day to the same file. If that backup fails, then you will lose all your data. Therefore make sure you do not override your backup by using the same file name.

**Verify Backups**

Backups can and do fail. Perhaps the media failed, maybe you ran out of space and could not save everything in one location, or maybe there was another problem or glitch. Therefore, it's important to confirm that your backups are being completed successfully. Always check to make sure that backup files are in the right directory. A quick way to verify that the backup succeeded is by looking at the file size. We also recommend that periodically you restore a small amount of data to your program (a week or month's worth), verify that the data looks correct in Mp2<sup>®</sup> or 7i<sup>®</sup>, then you can remove it.

**About the Author**

Jennifer Ohl is a maintenance and reliability consultant based in Chicago and Miami. She was Regional Manager of Consulting Services for a leading maintenance software manufacturer and subsequently founded her own company, Midwest Software Specialists in 2001. For twelve years, Jennifer has been helping companies implement maintenance systems that reduce costs and increase profits. Jennifer has an MBA in Finance and Operations and a BA in Business.