



Whole Disk Encryption (WDE) Considerations

As a best practice more companies are moving to whole disk encryption to protect their client data from criminals and themselves from litigation.

Options if buying new equipment:

1. Windows 7 Ultimate comes with BitLocker, a WDE application.
2. Dell will now ship both desktops and notebooks with pre-installed WDE

If updating existing computers:

1. Test your hard drive to make sure it's up to the task. Up to 20% out there are not.
2. Make sure your Boot Sector has not been modified by a Virus or Disk Ghosting software.
3. Backup EVERYTHING. 3% of computers fail even after passing the drive test.*
4. Allow plenty of time, encryption takes between 2 and 4 hours pending on drive size.

Once you have WDE installed, make sure to backup your data frequently because data recovery from a crashed encrypted disk is difficult and expensive, if possible at all.

So why do it at all?

There's the obvious, it may be required and most organizations require you to sign off you've done it. And then there's the one alluded to by the Connecticut Attorney General, 45 states require you to notify every customer of a data loss if it's not encrypted. This type of notification puts the very existence of a small business in jeopardy.