

A holiday wish: More security and accessibility

Consider encryption devices, password-protected flash drives, synchronization services.

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It's the holiday season. You've got better things to think about than your computers' security and data accessibility.

Many "tech toys" can help secure your computers and let you [store](#) and [access](#) data anywhere and anytime. Here's help choosing a device or service based on your specific needs.

SECURITY

Problem. Computer security is a constant concern. Basic techniques involving use of passwords can help. (See "Are your electronic patient records secure?," *Psyber Psychiatry*, [August 2004](#).)

Still, notebook computers are easy to steal, and desktop computers can be stolen or infiltrated. To secure your data, you need encryption to supplement password-restricted access. Also, you should regularly save and copy data in an alternate location.

Solutions. The Authenex [HDLock](#) is a universal serial bus (USB) key that encrypts your hard drive's contents. The device uses "two-factor authentication," a security method that blocks access until you provide something you have (the key) and something you know (the password). Without both the key and password, encrypted data cannot be accessed. If you lose the key or forget the password, an online support section provides a one-time password.

If more than one person needs access, the Silex Technology [FUS-200N](#) USB fingerprint reader is more appropriate. This device and its accompanying software:

- provide secured access for multiple users
- encrypt files and folders
- and force users to show their fingerprints before allowing access to selected programs, such as your medical records program.

The FUS-200N is more accurate than other fingerprint recognition devices because it uses electricity rather than light patterns to record fingerprints.

Another option, the [DiskOnKey Classic 2.0](#) USB flash drive, includes a small built-in microprocessor that lets you run your electronic medical records program or other applications from the key. [CapMed](#) uses this key to allow consumers to store their medical information on the [Personal HealthKey](#) device.

See [Table 1](#) for more information on these security enhancement programs.

STORAGE

Problem. When shuttling between home and office, it makes sense to carry files on a USB flash drive. These devices are great for transporting documents because the computer sees a flash drive as just another disk drive.

Flash drives, however, are easily lost—and no psychiatrist wants to be sued for losing sensitive information.

Solutions. Some USB flash drives, such as the Sony [Micro Vault](#), offer password protection for files and folders. Another option, the Trek [Thumbdrive Touch](#), has a built-in fingerprint reader to guard your data ([Table 2](#)).

If you already have a favorite USB flash drive, add quick- and easy-to-use encryption software to your home and office computers. [AxCrypt](#), a free Windows-compatible program, lets you encrypt and decrypt files with a simple right-mouse click. A similar program, [Fairly Good Privacy](#), is Mac OS-compatible ([Table 1](#)).

SYNCHRONIZATION/REMOTE ACCESS

Problem. You need to access critical files in both your office and home computer from either location.

Solutions. Internet-based synchronization services can simultaneously update files on both computers ([Table 3](#)). [fusionOne Plus](#), for example, keeps files, contacts, e-mail, and calendars in sync. Contacts and calendars can also be accessed and synchronized via some mobile phones. What's more, FusionOne Plus provides an online backup copy of your files.

[LogMeIn](#) provides free secured remote access to your office files from any computer. After you install a server program on the host computer, you can run programs and open files via a Web browser. The LogMeIn Pro version, which costs \$12.95 per month, adds the ability to synchronize computers, transfer files, and distribute them over the Internet.

[GoToMyPC](#) allows you to access files and programs on a host computer and also allows Pocket PC PDA viewing as well as remote printing, but it does not provide file synchronization.

For direct computer-to-computer connection, [pcAnywhere](#) and [RealVNC](#) allow you to access files and programs on the host computer. Unlike GoToMyPC and LogMeIn, however, these programs do not offer additional password protection by verifying the user's account.

The \$200 PC Anywhere program will encrypt data between computers, whereas the free RealVNC program only provides password security. PC Anywhere synchronizes file, whereas RealVNC only helps you run the remote computer. RealVNC has enterprise versions and is developing a personal version with additional features.

Online storage can help you avoid synchronization issues. [Xdrive](#) has desktop software that creates a virtual drive for storage. When starting your computer, the software will automatically connect via the Internet to your Xdrive account. You can also change the settings of your electronic medical records program or document editing software to save data only to this Internet drive. This way, your data will always be backed up to a safe location even if your home or office computer is stolen.

Table 1
Programs, services that enhance data security

Product	URL	Cost	Requirements
AxCrypt	http://axcrypt.sourceforge.net/	Free	Windows 95/98/ME/NT/2K/XP
DiskOnKey Classic 2.0	http://www.diskonkey.com/prod_dok2.asp	\$99.50 (256 MB), \$159.90 (512MB), \$329.90 (1GB)	Windows 98 SE, NT 4.0, 2000, ME, XP Mac OS: 9.x, 10.0.x, 10.1.x, 10.2.x, Linux 2.4.x
Fairly Good Privacy	http://www.securemac.com/fgp.php	Free	Mac OS System 7 and later

FUS-200N	http://www.silexamerica.com/us/products/fingerprint/fus200n.html	\$149	Windows XP, 2000
HDLock	http://www.authenex.com/products_hdlock.cfm	\$79.95	Windows XP, 2000

Table 2
Secure flash drives

Product	URL	Cost	Requirements
Micro Vault	http://www.sonystyle.com	\$45.99 (256 MB)	Windows 98, 2000, ME, XP and MAC OS 9.0 and higher
Thumbdrive Touch	http://www.thumbdrive.com/touch.htm	\$69 (16 MB), \$299 (256 MB)	Mac OS 8.6 and above, Windows 98, 2000 and ME

Table 3
Programs, services that facilitate remote data access

Product	URL	Cost	Requirements
fusionOne Plus	http://store.yahoo.com/fusionone/	\$69.96/yr	Microsoft Windows 95/98/NT/2000/ME/XP
GoToMyPC	https://www.gotomypc.com/	\$19.95/month or \$179.40/yr	Microsoft Windows 95/98/NT/2000/ME/XP
LogMeIn	https://secure.logmein.com/go.asp?page=home	Free	Windows 2000, XP, or Server 2003
LogMeIn Pro	https://secure.logmein.com/go.asp?page=home	\$12.95/month	Windows 2000, XP, and Server 2003
pcAnywhere	http://www.symantec.com	\$199.95	Windows® XP Home/XP Pro/ 2000/NT 4/Me/98
RealVNC free edition	http://www.realvnc.com	Free	Windows 9x/2000/ NT/XP, Linux, Mac OSX

Disclosure

Dr. Luo reports no financial relationship with any company whose products are mentioned in this article. The opinions expressed by Dr. Luo in this column are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of CURRENT PSYCHIATRY.

This presentation suggests Miss T has:

- Guillain-Barré syndrome
- a neuromuscular or intracranial problem
- a factitious or other psychiatric disorder
- a spinal cord tumor

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