Protecting user files with File History

Steven Sinofsky Published Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:00 PM

Backing up your critical files is something we all know we should do. Even with everything in SkyDrive, it is still something we need to do. With Windows 8, we took a new look at the way backup can work and set out to solve the perennial problem of not just restoring all your files but restoring a previous version of a critical file you have been editing through the course of a day. To achieve this, we're introducing a new feature in Windows 8, File History. Bohdan Raciborski, a program manager on the Storage team authored this post. --Steven

Note: Comments have been off topic. Please maintain community standards and focus on the topic at hand.

What is File History?

File History is a backup application that continuously protects your personal files stored in Libraries, Desktop, Favorites, and Contacts folders. It periodically (by default every hour) scans the file system for changes and copies changed files to another location. Every time any of your personal files has changed, its copy will be stored on a dedicated, external storage device selected by you. Over time, File History builds a complete history of changes made to any personal file.

It's a feature introduced in Windows 8 that offers a new way to protect files for consumers. It supersedes the existing Windows Backup and Restore features of Windows 7.

What is unique about this approach compared to a more traditional backup and restore?

Regretfully, backup is not a very popular application. Our telemetry shows that less than 5% of consumer PCs use Windows Backup and even adding up all the third party tools in use, it is clear nowhere near half of consumer PCs are backed up. This leaves user's personal data and digital memories quite vulnerable as any accident can lead to data loss. In Windows 8 Microsoft is actively trying to accomplish the following:

1. Make data protection so easy that any Windows user can turn it on and feel confident that their personal files are protected.
2. Eliminate the complexity of setting up and using backup.
3. Turn backup into an automatic, silent service that does the hard work of protecting user files in the background without any user interaction.
4. Offer a very simple, engaging restore experience that makes finding, previewing and restoring versions of personal files much easier.

While designing File History we used learnings from the past and added requirements to address the changing needs of PC users.

- PC users are more mobile than ever. To address that, we optimized File History to better support laptops that constantly transition through power states or are being connected and disconnected from networks and devices.
- PC users create more data and are more dependent on it than ever before. So we do not only protect what's currently on the system drive but also any work they have done and data they have created in the past.

When a specific point in time (PiT) version of a file or even an entire folder is needed, you can quickly find it and restore it. The restore application was designed to offer engaging experience optimized for browsing, searching, previewing and restoring files.
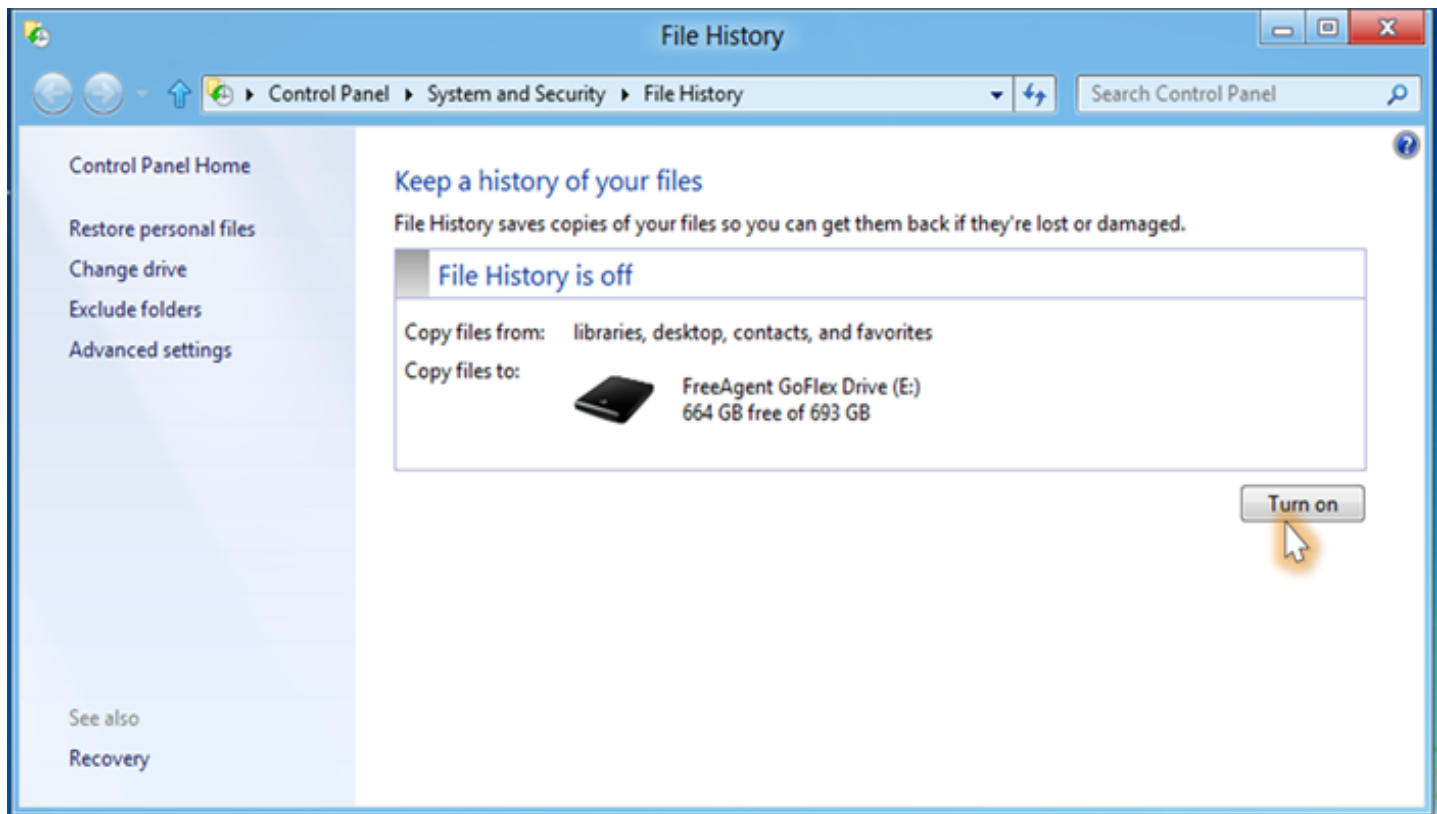
Setting it up

Before you start using File History to back up your files, you'll need to set up a drive to save files to. We recommend that you use an external drive or network location to help protect your files against a crash or other PC problem.
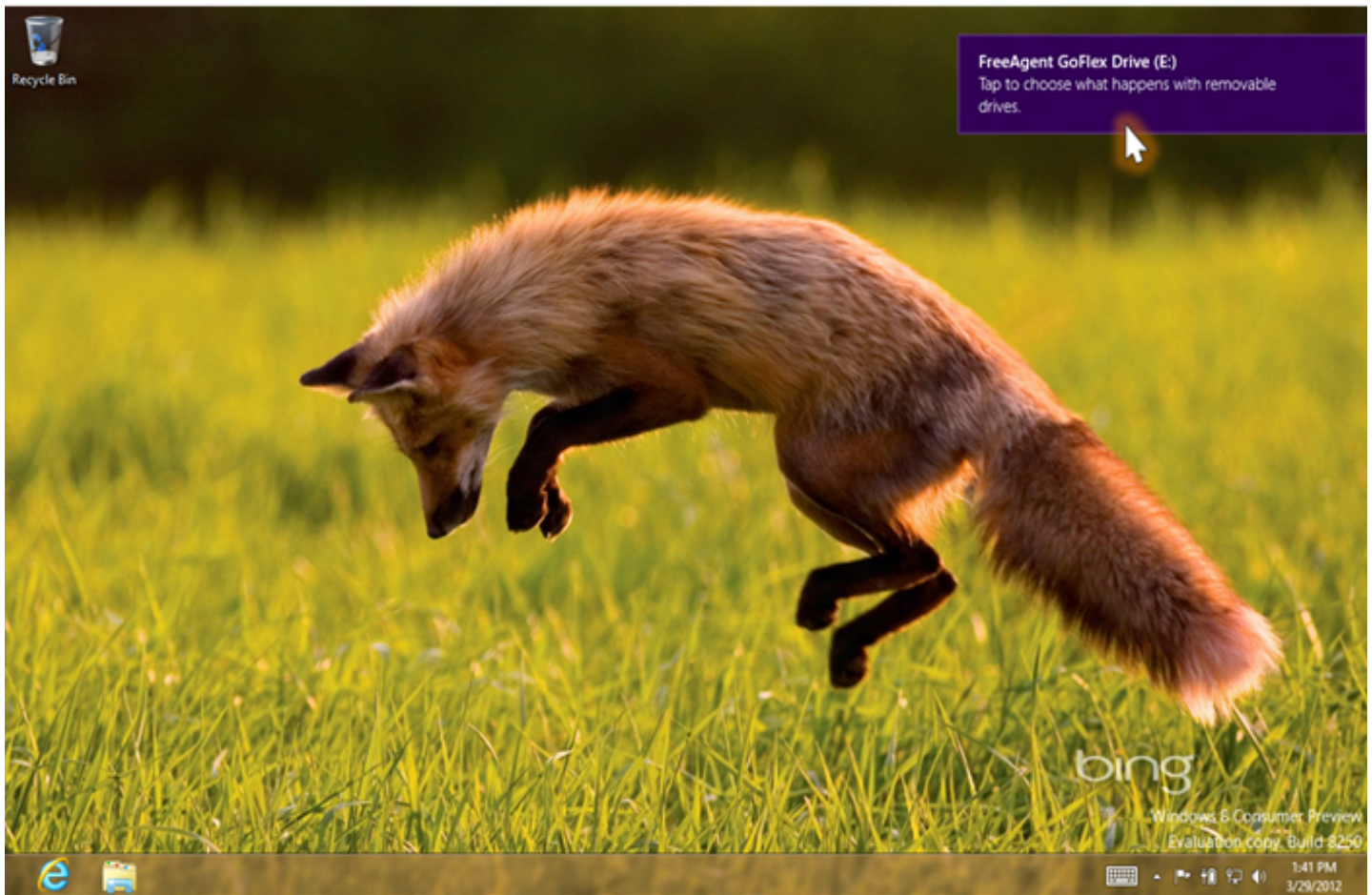
File History only saves copies of files that are in your libraries, contacts, favorites, and on your desktop. If you have folders elsewhere that you want backed up, you can add them to one of your existing libraries or create a new library.
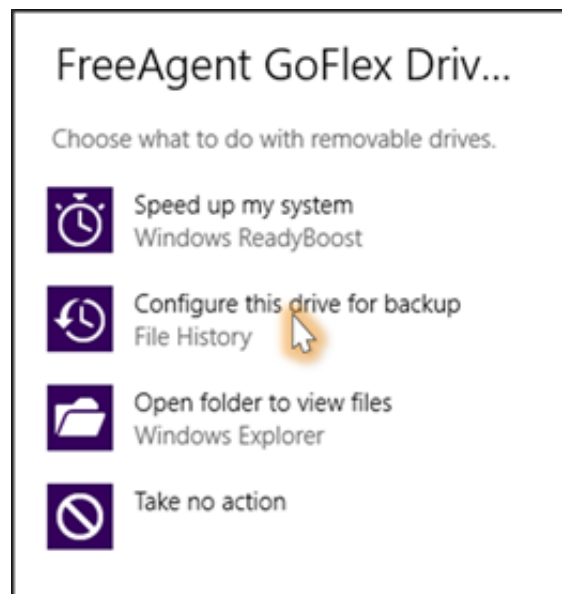
To set up File History

1. Open File History control panel applet.
2. Connect an external drive, refresh the page, and then tap or click Turn on.

You can also set up a drive in AutoPlay by connecting the drive to your PC, tapping or clicking the notification that appears...

... and then tapping or clicking Configure this drive for backup.

That's it. From that moment, every hour, File History will check your libraries, desktop, favorites and contacts for any changes. If it finds changed files, it will automatically copy them to the File History drive.

Download this video to view it in your favorite media player:
<u>High quality MP4</u> | <u>Lower quality MP4</u>

Restoring files

When something bad happens and one or more personal files are lost, the restore application makes it very easy to:
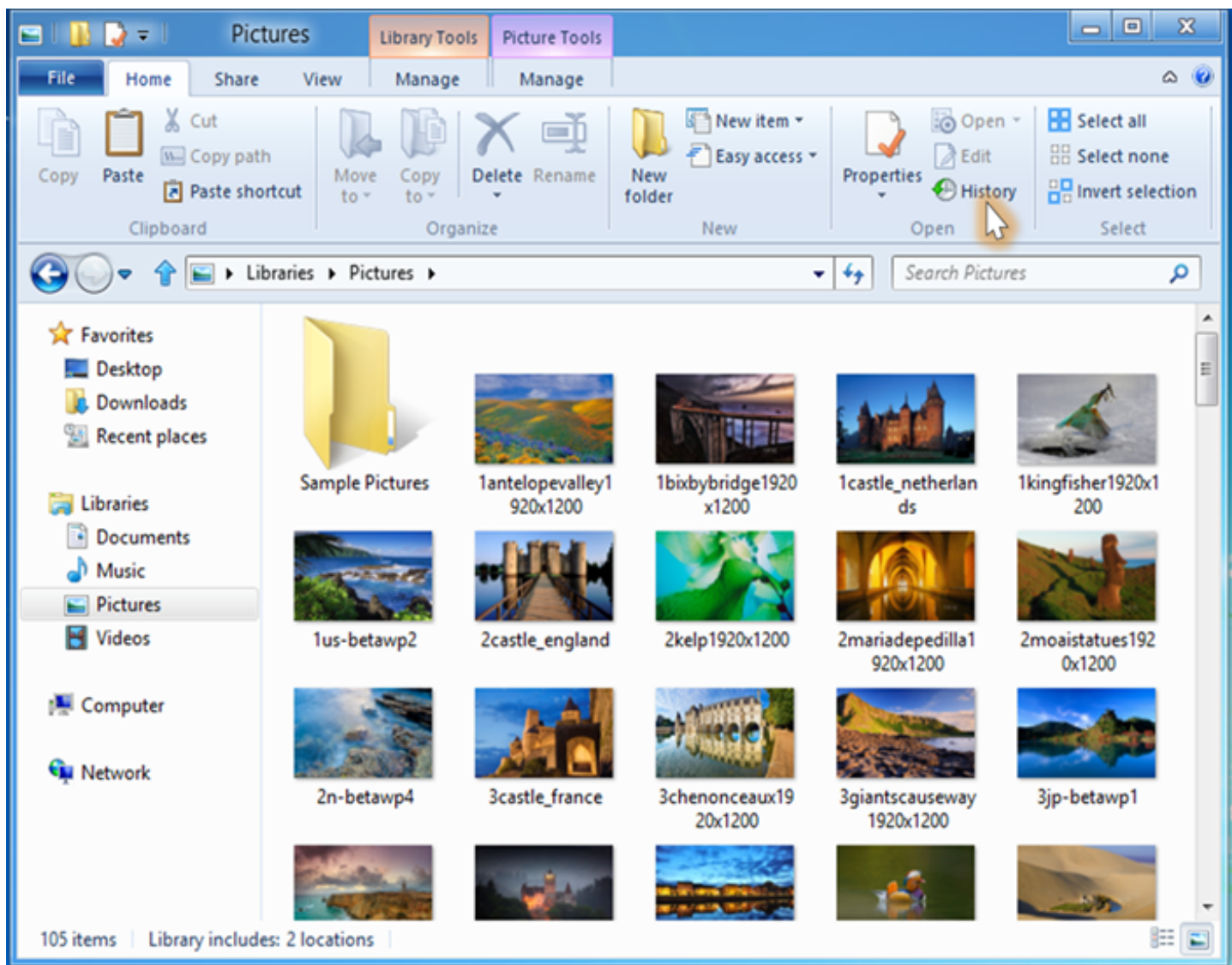
- Browse personal libraries, folders and files in a way very similar to Windows Explorer.
- Search for specific versions using keywords, file names and date ranges.
- Preview versions of a selected file.
- Restore a file or a selection of files with one tap or a click of a mouse.

We designed the restore application for wide screen displays and to offer a unique, engaging and convenient way of finding a specific version of a file by looking at its preview.
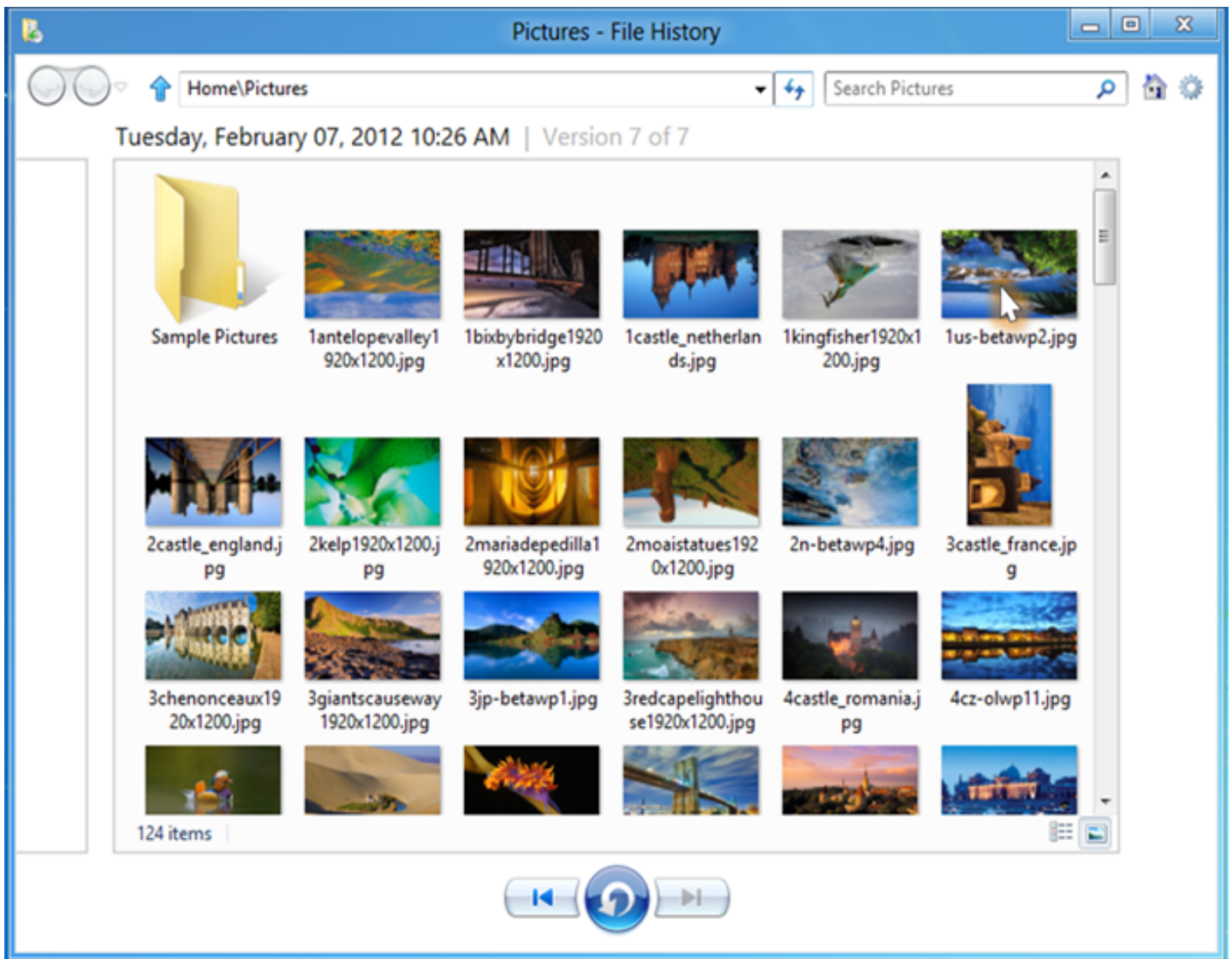
With other backup applications you would have to select a backup set that was created on a specific date. Then you would have to browse to find a specific folder, and then find the one file you need. However at this point it is impossible to open the file or preview its content in order to determine if it is the right one. You would have to restore the file. If it is not the right version, you'd have to start over.

With File History, the search starts right in Windows Explorer. You can browse to a specific location and click or tap on the History button in the explorer ribbon in order to see all versions of the selected library, folder or an individual file.

For example, when you select a Pictures library and click or tap on the History button…

... you will see the entire history of this library.

When you click on a specific file, you can see the entire history of the selected picture.

In this example, the selected picture has 4 versions. You can easily navigate to the desired version by clicking on the Previous/Next buttons or by swiping the screen. Once you have found the version you were looking for, you can click the Restore button to bring it back. The selected version will be restored to its original location.

Continuous, reliable protection

File History, instead of using the old backup model, takes a different approach to data protection.

Protect only what is most important

Instead of protecting the entire system (operating system, applications, settings and user files) File History focuses only on user personal files. That's what is most precious and hardest to recreate in case of an accident.

Optimized for performance

In the past, most backup applications used brute force method of checking for changes in directories or files by scanning the entire volume. This approach could significantly affect the system performance and requires an extended period of time to complete. File History, on the other hand, takes advantage of the NTFS change journal. The NTFS change journal records any changes made to any files stored on an NTFS volume. Instead of scanning the volume, which involves opening and reading directories, File History opens the NTFS change journal and quickly scans it for any changes. Based on this information it creates a list of files that have changed and need to

be copied. The process is very quick and efficient.

File History was designed to be easily interrupted and to quickly resume. This way, File History can resume its operation, without the need to start over when a system goes into sleep mode, a user logs off, the system gets too busy and needs more CPU cycles to complete foreground operations, or the network connection is lost or saturated.

File History was designed to work well on any PC including small form factor PCs with limited resources and tablets. It uses system resources in a way to minimize the impact on system performance, battery life and overall experience.

    a. File History process runs at low priority, uses low priority IO and low priority memory.
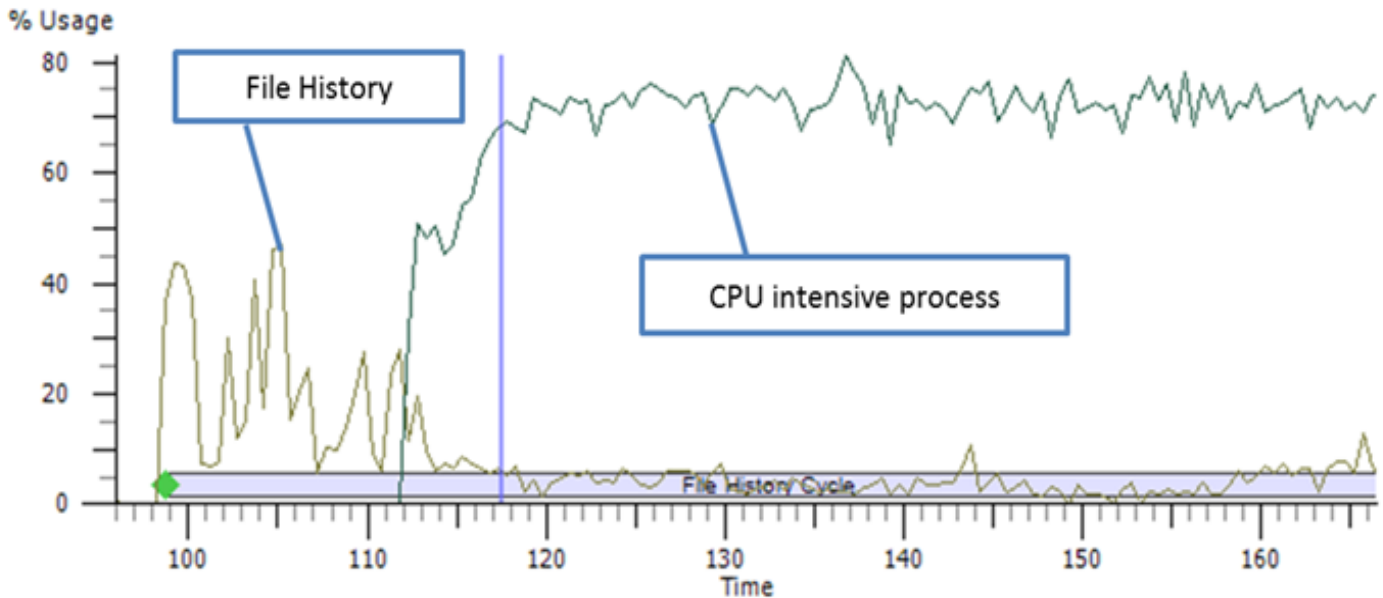
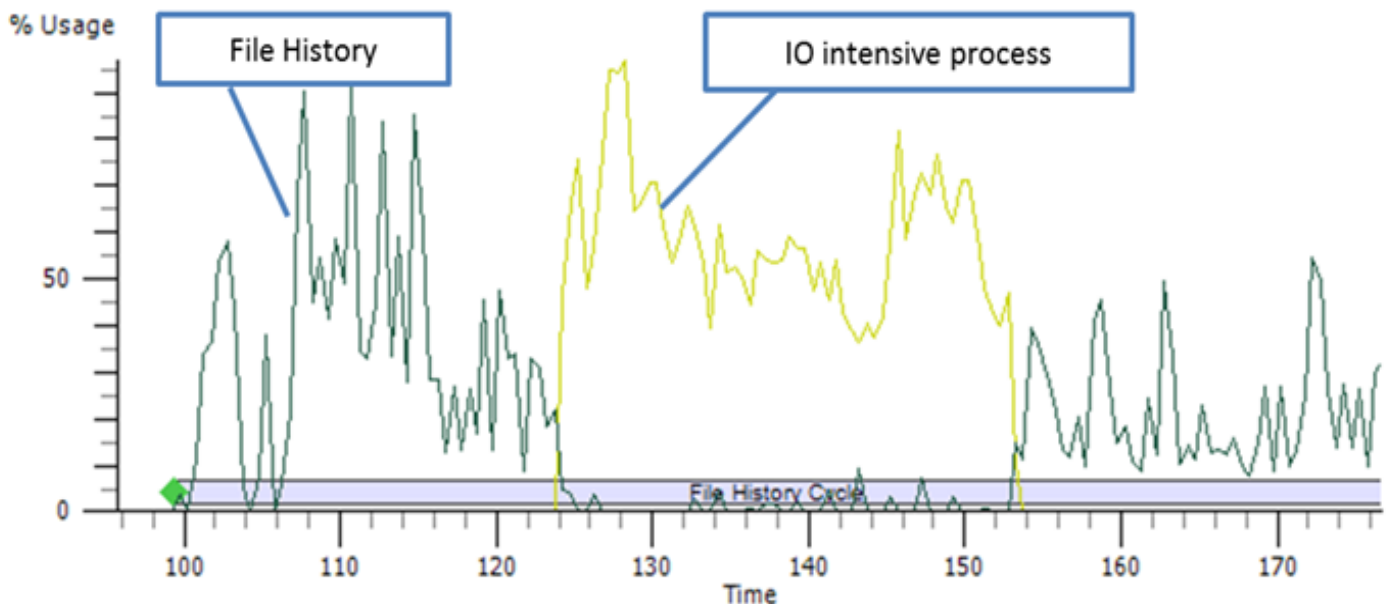Figure 1: File History reaction to an increasing workload.

Figure 2: File History disk utilization in presence of other processes with normal priority I/Os.

    a. When File History service is idle, it uses an average of 10 MB of working set. When it runs, it uses little memory and only for a short period of time. The chart below shows the working set histogram

collected using a simulated workload over a period of 4 hours with File History cycle frequency set to one hour.

Figure 3 Working set size per backup cycle, sampling every 3 min.

1. The amount of data being backed up in one cycle is throttled.
2. Any activity is suspended when the machine is sleeping.

File History takes into account:

- If the user is present, i.e. logged on and actively using the system.
- If the machine is on AC or battery power.
- When the last backup cycle was completed.
- How many changes have been made since the last cycle.
- Activity of foreground processes.

Based on all of these factors, which are re-checked every 10 seconds, it determines the optimal way to back up your data. If any of those conditions change, the service makes a decision to reduce/increase quota or suspend/terminate the backup cycle.

Optimized for mobile users

When File History is running, it gracefully handles state transitions. For example, when you close the lid of your laptop, disconnect an external drive or leave home and take your laptop out of the range of the home wireless network, File History takes the right action:

- Lid closed - When a PC goes into sleep mode, File History detects the power mode transition and suspends its operation.
- Lid opened – File History resumes its operation at a priority that makes sure files are protected without impacting overall system performance, even for gamers. It also waits for all post "lid open" activities to complete so that we do not affect the system while it is coming back out of sleep.
- Dedicated storage device disconnected – File History detects that the storage device is not present and starts caching versions of changed files on a system drive.
- Dedicated storage device re-connected – in the next cycle, File History detects that the storage device was reconnected, flushes all versions from the local cache to the external drive and resumes normal operation.

Simplicity and peace of mind

We designed File History with two objectives in mind; 1) offer best possible protection of user personal files and

2) offer ease, simplicity and peace of mind.

If you want to take advantage of File History, you have to make only few, simple decisions. In most cases it will be limited to only one – which external drive to use. The rest is taken care of by Windows. The operation of File History is transparent and doesn't affect the user experience, reliability or performance of Windows in any way.
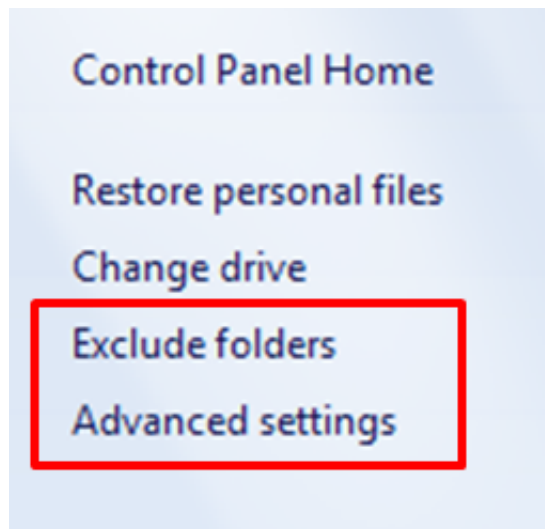
Full control

Most backup applications, including the Windows Backup and Restore that shipped in Windows 7 require administrator privileges to set up and use. This means that standard users have to ask the administrator to set it up and every time they need to restore a file, or to grant them administrative privileges. Not so with File History. File History offers full control to each individual user. Now users can decide if and when to turn File History on and which external drive to use. In fact, each user can select a different location to store their file history. And they do not have to ask for the administrator's help to restore a file.
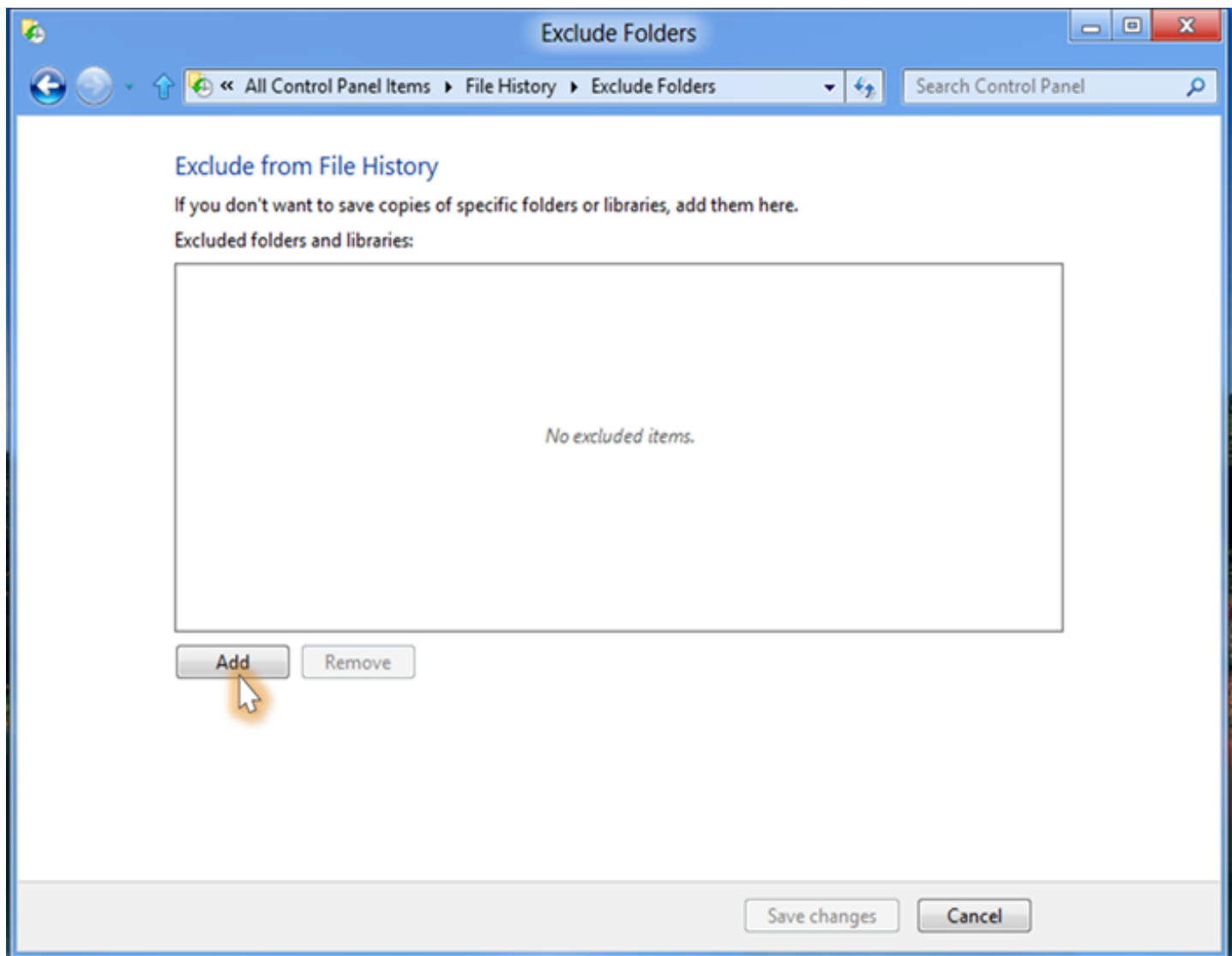
Enthusiasts and experienced PC users can use advanced File History features to control many aspects of its operation, like:

- How often you want to save copies of your files: The frequency of backups can be changed from 10 minutes to 24 hours. Higher frequency offers better protection but consumes more disk space.

- How long you want to keep saved versions: Versions can be stored forever or as little as one month. This setting is useful when the File History drive fills up to fast. You can slow down this rate by reducing the time versions are stored.

- Changing the size of the local cache: File History uses a small amount of space on the local drive to store versions of files while the File History target drive is not available. If you create a lot of versions of files while disconnected or stay disconnected for longer periods of time, you may need to reserve more space on the local drive to keep all versions. Note that the versions stored in the local cache are flushed to the external drive when it becomes available again.

- Excluding folders that you do not want to back up: Some folders may contain very large files that do not have to be protected because they can be easily recreated (like downloaded high definition movies or podcasts). These files would quickly consume all of the File History drive capacity. This setting allows you to exclude such folders.

- Recommend a drive to other HomeGroup members on your home network: This setting is covered in more detail in the File History and HomeGroup section below.

- Accessing the File History event log: The event log contains records of events that may be useful while troubleshooting File History. It may be particularly useful if you want to identify files that File History could not access for any reason.

Advanced settings can be accessed from the File History control panel applet.

Control Panel Home

Restore personal files

Change drive

Exclude folders

Advanced settings

To exclude a folder, select Exclude folders. Next, click on the Add button, browse to the folder you want to exclude and select it. Files in this folder will not be backed up starting with the next backup cycle. To start backing it up again, simply remove the folder from the list.

Exclude Folders

« All Control Panel Items ▸ File History ▸ Exclude Folders   Search Control Panel

Exclude from File History

If you don't want to save copies of specific folders or libraries, add them here.

Excluded folders and libraries:

No excluded items.

Add   Remove

Save changes   Cancel

Other advanced settings are available on the Advanced Settings page.

File History also supports new storage features introduced in Windows 8. Users who have lots of data to back up can use Storage Spaces to create a resilient storage pool using off-the-shelf USB drives. When the pool fills up, they can easily add more drives and extra storage capacity to the pool. You can find more about Storage Spaces in this blog post.

Users who use BitLocker to protect the content of their personal files can also use File History as it seamlessly supports BitLocker on both source and destination drives.

File History was designed for consumers but could also be used by enterprise customers. In some cases, File History may conflict with the enterprise policies (like retention policy). To prevent such conflicts, we added a group policy that gives enterprise IT administrators the ability to turn off File History on managed client PCs.

You will find the File History policy setting in the Group Policy Object Editor under Computer Configuration, Administrative Templates, Windows Components, File History.

Console1 - [Console Root\Local Computer Policy\Computer Configuration\Administrative Templates\Windows Components...

File   Action   View   Favorites   Window   Help

Local Computer Policy	File History	Actions
▲ Computer Configuration		File Hist... ▲
▷ Software Settings	Turn off File History	More ... ▶
▷ Windows Settings		
▲ Administrative Templates	Setting	Turn off ... ▲
▷ Control Panel	Edit policy setting.	☐ Turn off File History	More ... ▶
▷ Network		
Printers	Requirements:	
▷ System	At least Windows 8 Consumer Preview	
▲ Windows Components		
ActiveX Installer Service	Description:	
App Package Deployment	This policy setting allows you to turn	
Application Compatibility	off File History.	
AutoPlay Policies		
▷ Backup	If you enable this policy setting, File	
Biometrics	History cannot be activated to create	
▷ BitLocker Drive Encryption	regular, automatic backups.	
Credential User Interface		
Desktop Activity Moderator	If you disable or do not configure this	
Desktop Gadgets	policy setting, File History can be	
▷ Desktop Window Manager	activated to create regular, automatic	
Device and Driver Compatibility	backups.	
Digital Locker		
Event Forwarding		
▷ Event Log Service		
Event Viewer		
File History		

\ Extended \ Standard /

Minimal setup

File History is part of Windows so you don't need to install any additional software. However, File History has to be turned on, which typically requires only one click.

As described above, to start protecting your libraries, you need to attach an external drive or select a network location. File History will store versions of your files on this device.

File History automatically selects an external drive if one is available. If more than one drive is available, one with the most free storage capacity is selected.

No schedule

File History wakes up once an hour and looks for personal files that have changed. Versions of all files that have changed are replicated to a dedicated storage device. This approach eliminates the need to set up a schedule and leave a computer idle for an extended period of time. One hour frequency offers a good balance between the level of protection and amount of storage space consumed by file versions. Enthusiasts can change the frequency from 10 min to 1 day in order to increase the level of protection or reduce storage consumption.

No maintenance

File History runs silently in the background and doesn't require any ongoing maintenance. The only time when it will ask you to intervene is when the external drive is full. At this point you will be asked to either replace the drive with a bigger one or change a setting that tells File History how long to keep file versions around. By default, we keep versions of user personal files forever, but if storage is an issue, it can be reduced to a period of time that

best suits your needs.

File History and HomeGroup

File History was also integrated with HomeGroup to make it easier for someone to set up backup for all members of a home network. Here is how it works.

1. Jane wants her entire family to have their personal data automatically protected. She knows she can do this with File History.
2. Jane creates a HomeGroup on the family's home network.
3. Jane turns on File History on a computer that has a large external drive.
4. File History control panel detects the HomeGroup and asks if Jane wants to recommend this backup destination to other HomeGroup members.
5. Jane selects this option and File History uses HomeGroup to broadcast the recommendation to all HomeGroup members.
6. Each HomeGroup member can now accept the recommendation. If they do, their libraries, desktop, favorites and contacts are automatically backed up to a network share on Jane's computer.

File History and SkyDrive

File History doesn't back up your files to the cloud. While the cloud is great for storing files you'd like to access on-the-go, or for sharing files with others, backing up terabytes of data to the cloud requires a specialized service. Many cloud services today support local synchronization, where the data in the cloud is mirrored in your local file system. Sync solutions by their very nature copy changes immediately to all locations, which means accidental deletes or inadvertent changes or corruption to files will be synchronized as well. The best way to address this problem is to couple your sync service with a point-in-time backup solution like File History.

In the blog post, <u>Connecting your apps, files, PCs and devices to the cloud with SkyDrive and Windows 8</u> we discussed how SkyDrive will integrate with Windows Explorer and the file system. File History takes advantage of that integration. If your SkyDrive is synced to your file system, File History will automatically start protecting the files stored in your local SkyDrive folder. This is a great example of local backup plus reliable anytime, anywhere access. You can access your files in SkyDrive through your PC, your phone, or the web and you'll also know that File History is providing fast local backup and instantaneous access to all versions of those files.

Full system backup

Usually a full system backup is used to protect your PC against complete system loss, for example when a PC was stolen or lost or the internal hard drive stopped working. Our research showed that only a small number of users are concerned about losing the operating system, applications or settings. They are by far more concerned about losing their personal files. For these reasons, File History was designed specifically to protect user personal files.

File History doesn't offer the ability to do a full system backup but for those users who may need a full system backup it offers a good compromise. Together with other features introduced in Windows 8 it provides protection against such disasters.

If you want to prepare for a disaster, we recommend a following strategy:

1. Create a recovery drive to be used when you need to refresh or restore your PC. You can find more about it in <u>this blog post</u>.
2. Connect to your Microsoft account
3. Configure your PC to sync your settings
4. Load apps from the Store
5. Turn on File History

When your PC is replaced or needs to be reinstalled:

1. Use the recovery drive to restore the operating system
2. Connect to your Microsoft account
3. Configure your PC to sync your settings – this will bring your settings back
4. Go to the Store and reinstall your modern apps
5. Reinstall legacy apps
6. Connect your old File History drive and restore everything – this will restore your personal files

It may require more steps than a file or image restore but has some clear benefits:

- You do not restore any "no more desired" software or settings that were on your system
- You do not restore sources of some problems that you might have (or create new problems if you restore to different hardware)
- You do not restore settings that may cause your system to perform badly or fail

Those who need a full system backup can still use Windows Backup to create a system image.

Requirements

File History requires:

- Windows 8 Client operating system
- An external storage device with enough storage capacity to store a copy of all user libraries, such as a USB drive, Network Attached Storage device, or share on another PC in the home network.

FAQ

What happens when you upgrade to Windows 8 from Windows 7?
If Windows 7 Backup was active, i.e. it was scheduled and the schedule was active, then it will continue running as scheduled after the upgrade. File History will be disabled by default and users will not be able to turn it on as long as the Windows 7 Backup schedule is active. To turn it you will have to first disable the Windows 7 Backup schedule.

Can Windows 7 users use File History?
Windows 7 users cannot use File History. However, they can restore files from a drive used by File History by browsing the volume in the Windows Explorer and selecting a specific file. Files on the File History drive are stored in the same relative location, and use the same name. The specific version can be identified by the time stamp appended to the file name.

Does File History protect the operating system and applications?
File History only protects user libraries, desktop, favorites and contacts. Other files, such as operating system files, applications, and settings, are not backed up.

Can File History be used with cloud storage?
No. File History is designed specifically for consumers and does not support cloud storage in this release. Windows 8 Server offers a backup feature that can back up files to a cloud. This feature is available on the Server version of Windows and is designed for small and medium businesses.

Can File History be used by enterprise customers?
Yes. However, enterprise customers should be aware that File History may not comply with their company security, access, and retention policies. For that reason, we offer a group policy setting that allows enterprise administrators to disable the feature for an entire organization.

Will File History protect files stored on a file share?
No. File History only protects file stored on a local drive.

- If you use offline folders and folder redirection, your folders (like My Documents or My Pictures) are

redirected to a network share and will not be protected.
- If you add a network location to any of your libraries, this location will not be protected.

In closing

File History silently protects all of your important files stored in Libraries, Desktop, Favorites and Contacts. Once turned on, it requires no effort at all to protect your data. When you lose a file or just need to find an original version of a picture or a specific version of a resume, all versions of your files are available. With the File History restore application you can find it quickly and effortlessly.

--Bohdan Raciborski

Comments

Abid Din
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:21 PM
#

I'll wait for Paul to translate this ... just joking. Really nice feature. Just make sure that this feature is well advertised!

Terracotta
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:22 PM
#

New Mouse pointer?

W74ever
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:28 PM
#

Where is TellMe API for Metro apps like in WP8?

W74ever
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:32 PM
#

Also, why does he use build 8250?

dovella
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:36 PM
#

Hyper Awesome!! Congrat !!

hoytler
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:57 PM
#

Can you use a Network location for File History? It would be great to copy this data off to my local NAS.

Aaron44126

Tuesday, July 10, 2012 12:59 PM

#

I'm glad that you're leaving Windows Backup around for creating a full system image. That said, this looks like a huge improvement over the individual file backup portion of the Windows Backup implementation in Windows 7.

selfdeathtroj
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:19 PM

#

Would File History works same for all file types? If that, how history of documents, text files or sources would be displayed? Would it be something like preview of files with highlights of changes or something like that?

Also, could I set up File History for some custom folder on my hard drive?

Thanks.

c barth
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:21 PM

#

Wonderful, and much needed, feature. It is too bad that group policies can't be used to configure File History instead of just disable it. SMB's I'm sure would love to set this feature up company-wide, with their retention policies and not have to worry about it. I know lots of companies (including the one I work at of more than 200 people) that have no desktop backup solution because users are supposed to use network drive. However, users don't always use network drives, especially if they are mobile or remote workers, so a lot of data is left unprotected. We even take images of PCs when people leave just in case there was something valuable on the system.

The more I hear about Win8, the more I like it, and the more I miss not having a Home Server version of it. I have a Synology Diskstation, which I love, but I was hoping to upgrade to a Win8 Home Server. That doesn't look like it will happen now. Perhaps you could do a piece on how Win8 Pro can run as a home server now that there is no Home Server edition. Perhaps I'm missing something.

JF
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:23 PM

#

I love the Homegroup integration. It looks very simple to setup! One thing not addressed here however: how is this feature being communicated to consumers? You've done a great job making it simple to use, but that 5% of usage is not likely to significantly increase without some effort to communicate the feature. I didn't know of this feature until this blog post, for example, even though I've been using Win8 since the DP.

pjfan
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:37 PM

#

Will this backup Outlook data files? Is it possible to restrict how many versions of a large, constantly changing file like a PST will be backed up?

GRB
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:41 PM

#

One thing wasn't immediately obvious to me. Even though there's an exclude files feature, there's no "include files" feature. My son requested his downloads folder get backed up, so my solution to that was to make a Downloads library and add the downloads folder to it. Since libraries (even ones that you create) get backed up, this works great. Just the File History feature is going to make the Windows 7 to 8 upgrade worth it!

Entegy
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:43 PM
#

So, can we add more folders to back up with File History? What if I want my entire user folder to be backed up and not just my libraries? Will File History automatically delete the oldest versions of files when the disk gets full?

Is there a difference in how files are stored when backing up to a local disk VS a network? For example, the competitor, Apple's Time Machine, backs up to a .sparsebundle file when using TM over the network. This is undesirable.

Can we still make system images either automatically as part of a scheduled backup or at least do them manually?

Entegy
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:50 PM
#

Oh and another question. Does File History work without users being logged in?

AZJack
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:57 PM
#

File History looks very good. The bottom line for my use is will it work as well or better than Mac's fantastic Time Machine and if so it will be a huge improvement over W7's clunky Backup. The current Backup rarely really works well for me and is slow as heck (albeit on FW800. Mac Time Machine over Ethernet works perfectly for me and is not only easy and reliable to use, it's actually kind of fun. Again, artistic visuals make life so much more pleasant.

windows8user
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 1:58 PM
#

I really love File History. When I returned back to Windows 7, I missed it. It works easy, silent and very good. I have it already used when my system has a problem.

余啊雷
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:10 PM
#

Dana
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:18 PM
#

It's about time Microsoft addressed this. Backup has always been a crapshoot in windows. This looks

really simple and straightforward, as it should be.

Dan
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:20 PM
#

File History NEEDS to support the ability for an advanced user to add any folder they want to be backed up by it - not just libraries. I've been a massive supporter of almost every feature improvement in Windows 8. I have no issues with Metro on desktop PCs. But I do have an issue with the seeming loss of the full capabilities of Volume Shadow Copy in Windows 8.

VSS was one of the best features that Microsoft ever introduced to Windows. I was overjoyed when it made its way down to the client versions. File History looks like a fantastic advancement to the interface at first glance, but it does away with too much. I want to still be able to take full VSS snapshots of entire volumes. I want to be able to use VSS capabilities without the need for a second drive to store the snapshots.

Please restore VSS to Windows 8. It needn't even interfere with the File History interface. Keep that as is. Just give us back the old VSS controls and File History tabs in the properties of EVERY folder on a protected volume. No-one but advanced users will ever know its there anyway, so it won't complicate things for novice/basic users. Its too useful a function to remove and there's really no good reason to do so.

Please bring it back.

Ryan
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:30 PM
#

I think this is one step forward and two steps back. Why can't this solution be more like Windows Home Server or Apple's Time Machine! There are alot of important files that don't get backed up if they aren't contained in a windows library. Like if you use google picasa ... the picasa database file. This is just one example. But, I currently use Windows Home Server 2011 in my home and love it. I know that if I need to find a file that was anywhere on my hard drive anytime since last year I could find it. I would love to see Microsoft step up to the plate and make this feature more like Apple's Time machine. I think it's close ... but the implementation is off.

I had very high hopes for this feature. Maybe windows 9 will be more robust while keeping the simplicity :(.

Ehsan - Tabari
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:38 PM
#

I don't know if you really read this or not, but let me share my REAL EXPERIENCE with Windows 8 regarding file history.

Just a quick reminder that in Windows Vista and 7, there was this amazing feature called "Previous Versions" that does not exist in Windows 8 anymore. You used to enable it in the System Protection tab of Computer Properties and then you could go back in time in the selected drives. The same idea, with a bad UI implementation that actually worked. It was the BEST feature of Windows that worked out of the box without any external drive requirement.

Although never advertised, this feature could have been the best selling point of Windows for years, in comparison to Apple's stupid Time Machine, that you recently borrowed in Windows 8!

From a use case point of you, you don't go ahead and connect your Laptop/Ultrabook that runs on SSD to an external hard drive every now and then.... In my case NEVER.

The Windows 8 RP installation on my computer, a brand new iMac 27" (no SSD) has this issue that a system process occupies upto 99% of I/O and there's nothing you could do other than restarting it. If you save a file while it's in that state, it will write ZEROs in the file, wiping its content. I had my files open in the SkyDrive folder and My files were damaged.

So,

ONE, if it was Windows 7, I could have easily gone and checked previous versions and retrieved my files.

TWO, if it was DropBox, it would have had previous versions of my file, with no trouble at all.

File History is a step backwards, specially mixed with SkyDrive.

Alex
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:38 PM
#

You mentioned how you changed the Homegroup for working with file history. Will you go more into depth with this in the future? I am curious to see how you changed it.

G.T.
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:41 PM
#

Good luck with large files, videos, pictures, and reorganizing folders.

The people at Microsoft really use their minds!

D7
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 2:51 PM
#

I like to use a rolling set of backup drives. Would this work with File History ?   Or, would each backup drive just get a subset of the history, whatever was changed when that drive is plugged in ? If that's the case, can a folder or partition on the system drive be used for the primary File History archive and have that be automatically copied to whatever backup drive is currently plugged in ?

Beany
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 3:12 PM
#

I like the new feature, but i already knew about it. So instead i want to say...

Update those icons. I know these shots are from an older built of Win 8, but you seriously need new icons in the RTM. Those old Vista icons are totally out of place and dont go with Metro at all. And MS always do this... Windows is never totally consistent. In 7 you had some new icons that were cleaner looking but you still kept all the Vista icons as well - so things didn't go together. Now with 8 you have all these old dated icons from Vista and 7 all over with Metro's completely different style. It's a mess.

Atleast you're changing File Explorer buttons and getting rid of Aero, but it's not enough. ALL icons need to be updated even if it's just for the purpose of them not looking so dated anymore.

Nazgul
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 3:27 PM
#

this is a cool feature witch was really needed, it look's like a lot like apple's time machine but it's not a problem.

will it be possible to acces to different versions of a file in metro and desktop apps ? this will be a killer feature

meerkat
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 3:33 PM
#

Windows backup is a complete mess and should disappear but File history is a real success. I like the way it works without a lot of clicks. I have 2 *3TB external hdd as a space storage that I use for file history and it works great!

The idea for librairies is ok so I can add other locations.

I don't know if it is a bug or not but when i do a right click for some files > in the context menu i see "previous versions" (still some cleanup to do i guess)

When you are on this page Control Panel\System and Security\File History... In the section "See Also" I think you should use another title instead "Windows 7 file recovery"

JS
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 4:05 PM
#

hoytler: Yes, it's mentioned in the video.

AmitBrian
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 4:11 PM
#

How will this handle metro App data? From what I can tell thus far using RP, Metrow data isn't stored in the usual default locations like My Documents or Libraries. For example (and I could be wrong) but none of the information I have in my Videos or SkyDrive apps are located under the users/me/MyDocuments or My Videos directories. Will this need to be manually configured or will it work out of the box be default?

kenhes
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 4:22 PM
#

Why does a new window open to change the version? Wouldn't it make more sense to integrate it in to the preview pane of the existing explorer window?

Kerolus
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 4:31 PM
#

I like win 8 because it's very very good and it is so easy to use.

W8RPUser
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 4:53 PM
#

I think it's a good feature.

BTW, what will happen if the drive is recommended on the home group, and more than one user has the same set of photos and/or documents, etc.? Will File History store multiple versions of the same file? If

not, will it use a hash to identify the duplicates?

For example, if I copy photos from my camera to my PC, and the next day make some changes so that the tags inside the photo get updated - will file history copy the whole files again, or just the diff? If later, it sounds like a good feature, if former, aren't you wasting a lot of disk space? Are there going to be any plugins / extensions so that third party plugins can add this intelligence?

Gennaro Eduardo Tangari
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 5:05 PM
#

I hope the mouse pointer that is visible in these screenshot will not be the new pointer for Windows 8 :)

New Windows 8 features are very interesting but to me Metro seems a bad idea for a traditional desktop or notebook computer. Please Steven, for traditional computer move Metro into a separate layer!

pmbAustin
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 5:11 PM
#

Could you go into a little more detail about how file MOVES and DELETES are handled? If I wanted to restore a file that was deleted a few weeks ago, or "undo" a move of a file, how exactly would I go about that?

WinMetro
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 5:24 PM
#

If you look closely while watching the video, the desktop's watermark is that of Windows 8 Consumer Preview. So this video was probably made around the Windows 8 Consumer Preview era.

DamiTheCat
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 6:03 PM
#

I'm sorry, but, how is this improvement again?

1.File History requires a separate drive. Previous Versions does not.

2.File History only keeps track of changes for a limited number of file types. Previous Versions keeps track of changes on all files.

3.File History only works on certain folders. Previous Versions works on the entire desk.

Once again, you have managed to dumb down Windows 8. I'll pass.

John H
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 6:04 PM
#

Fantastic. Just what is needed. Glad to see you can adjust when it backs up. Other operating systems (who shall remain nameless) don't give you this option. Looks like a brilliant implementation.

AZJack
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 6:18 PM
#

DamiTheCat   Tuesday, July 10, 2012 3:03 PM

I'm sorry, but, how is this improvement again?

Exactly. Is File History going to be the real deal, i.e. a first class, well thought out, fully implemented tool or is it going to be a limited, half-baked attempt like a lot of the Metro stuff appears to be?

Ryan
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 7:01 PM
#

Can we please have the ability to create system images back?

EFS
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 7:18 PM
#

What about EFS encrypted files? Is EFS going to be deprecated anyway?

Rand
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 7:19 PM
#

So... basically File Versions is a far more limited version of Previous versions that covers a small selection of file types, and only in select folders and requires a separate HDD to work.

Yeaaaah, okay. I'm sorry, but giving us a replacement that does nothing better and offers only a small subset of the existing functionality isn't exactly something to be proud of.

iFiredog
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 7:29 PM
#

"File History silently protects all of your important files stored in Libraries, Desktop, Favorites and Contacts"

For those using Windows Live Essentials, it's vital to maintain a backup of their contacts. This statement seems to suggest that this is being handled by File History. Is this in fact the case?

merkat
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 7:32 PM
#

@Rand @AZJack @DamiTheCat, doing a backup on the same drive is useless, instead of complaining be smart. If your HDD crash you lose everything, is this what you want ?! Then, if you want to save other folders you need to create a librairies, not a big deal.

Schikitar
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 8:27 PM
#

I'm a school sys admin and whilst there are some great things about this, there are some very limiting aspects to the implementation. For example, we are mostly a 1:1 school with Lenovo X220T tablets - our students have two partitions, C: drive for OS and Apps, D: drive for their data. Often we'll have a student come up and say something like; "I was working on a document and I changed it and accidentally saved it!" - because we were smart we had enabled Previous Versions on their entire D: drive and without the

student having to do anything we could simply restore the file from any point in time up to roughly a month ago. Brilliant! With File History this looks like it's going to be more difficult and as admins we won't be able enable Previous Versions-like behavior and it will be up to the unreliable students to setup their own File History (hoping they have implemented it correctly) and crossing our fingers that they are plugging in external drive of their own regularly (something else to carry around now)!

As a consumer and home user Win 8 looks okay, but in a school environment it is looking worse and worse - and that's coming from a MS supporter. It just seems like in competing with Apple, MS are becoming Apple and the main issue with Apple is they produce single-user environments with little thought to multi-users and enterprise users who are secondary and/or forgotten to aid the simplification of 'the device'. I hope this 'dumbening' doesn't continue into Windows 9 - I'll use Win 8 at home but at school we'll be giving it a miss which means hundreds of kids won't be exposed to what MS wants them to be exposed to...

DarienHawk67
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 8:45 PM
 #

Finally. A good post on a useful and much-needed feature. Good implementation and forethought on not requiring admin rights to setup for individual users. On this, I say "congrats" to MSFT. Now to address the ugly Metro notifications. They just look so out of place.

Bradavon
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 9:14 PM
 #

@ Schikitar: File History is as well as Previous Versions, not in place of it. The Windows 8 Release Preview at least still has the Previous Versions tab.

Plus File History is a Home User feature, not an Enterprise/Business feature. Windows has other methods for Enterprise/Business users.

Bradavon
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 9:17 PM
 #

I'd like the ability to use File History on the same drive I've got the file stored on. Not for backup purposes (I use SyncBackSE to natively copy the files/folders across, so I can already navigate them as normal folders in Explorer) but for revision purposes.

But I guess I can still use "Previous Versions" for that.

Bradavon
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 9:21 PM
 #

@ Ryan:

Windows Backup is still in Windows 8 I believe, it's under something like "Windows 7 Backup & Restore". It's considered a legacy feature but is the same as it is in Windows 7, including imaging.

Bradavon
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 9:27 PM
 #

@ pjfan: Good question?

I imagine you just need to add the folder the Outlook PST is in to a Library (or create a new one) because the blog doesn't say Outlook is supported but like you say I imagine it will backup a ridiculous amount of PST revisions.

I suspect Outlook was ignored due to the size of such files and the fact the world is moving more towards storing e-mails/contacts/calendars in the cloud anyway. Both Hotmail and Exchange are designed to work in this way.

Bradavon
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 9:30 PM
#

@ Entegy: All your questions are already answered in the blog :-)

Ex Tentions
Tuesday, July 10, 2012 10:26 PM
#

@Microsoft

Is it true that not all files in the libraries will be backed up?

Please give the exact list of filename extensions which will be backed up then.

From the prior posts and questions, this feature is looking less and less good. If I want peace of mind, I'll stick with Backup or Robocopy.exe. Previous Versions worked great, why did it have to go? Should have just kept Previous Versions but allowed the use of an external drive for the storage.

Me
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 12:23 AM
#

Oh, Time Machine comes to Windows after all.

Timdom
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 1:42 AM
#

So why this does not have metro UI?

Sockatume
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 1:58 AM
#

How does this work under Metro? Is it even available on WinRT or does it depend on the crusty old "legacy" desktop?

Darren
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 2:42 AM
#

@Timdom: Microsoft probably realized that fast and fluid Metro is great but incapable for this kind of operations. I guess it is too limited. But hey, it is fast and fluid, so what else do you want? For serious file operations you still need crusty legacy desktop win32 api. Live with it.

neko

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 2:50 AM

#

Microsoft, please listen to loyal customers and give an option to disable Metro on desktops/laptop computers. Give users a choice and you'll win.

Stephane

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 2:59 AM

#

File history ? Why not in theory. In practice ? Will not work. Windows client backup has gotten worse with every version since XP and that is just one step forward.

But that is just the side show. In theory, any new system that allows more users to have a backup of their file is good (even if the proposed scheme is technically mediocre at best: Cobian Backup did the same thing, or even better since you could sync to SFTP, years ago). The problem is that you've removed persistent shadow copy which is a VERY valuable tool (even if it was not helped by it's UI and tools). Worse, you're removing it from the server version as well which basically means that now users have no self-service way of recovering their own files on a file server.

Well done, MS, not only are you making Win8 the worse desktop version of Windows to date, but you seem to be willing to make sure that the server OS will be crap as well.

余啊雷

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 3:11 AM

#

sreesiv

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 3:29 AM

#

Great... You should have summarized by saying File History protects files in Libraries, Desktop, Contacts, Favorites and Skydrive sync folder (if available); if I understood it right.

Assume that there is no need to add the Skydive locally (file system) synced directory to one of the Libraries to get it enabled for PiT (File History) backup.

Assume that for the HomeGroup Scenario, the other members of the group do not have to manually point to Jane's (originator's) network share for PiT backup. Once a member accepts the invitation it will be transparently/automatically done for him.

Mac Time Machine still remains a big gimmick and a hog. :-) Just a poke at the opposition... LOL

Tom A. Mason

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 3:54 AM

#

Once upon a time I was wrote software for OpenVMS on Alpha and VAX, and one of the greatest features of the system was the journalling provided by the RMS file system: every time you made a change to a file the old file would still be available. Looking in the directory you'd see:

Myfile.txt;1

Myfile.txt;2

Myfile.txt;3

etc

It was simple and effective

blog
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 4:21 AM

 #

Great Sometimes i see very nice and easy created blogs but in the most ways they are very usefull like your blog.

http://jennapatterson.com/

jalf
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 4:29 AM

 #

Great. Now if only it, oh, I don't know, allowed me to back up my files. Seriously, virtually everyone I know, computer-savvy or not, have data outside of /Desktop, Documents etc. For historical reasons, or because those locations have moved around randomly from Windows release to Windows release and users just can't keep up, or because when users decided on a place to store their data, corresponding Windows folders/libraries did not exist or were not accessible, or because Windows has always followed the naive belief that "C:\ is big enough to store ALL the users files, and that just does not match reality.

So... the first thing a backup solution needs to do is face reality: "We'll back up your files, if you move them to a different location than where you *want* to have them" is useless. If I have to move my files, I can just copy them to a backup location manually. If you want to provide an automated tool, then let me specify which folders I want backed up.

Anything else is pointless pie-in-the-sky thinking. It'd work very nicely, provided you had different users who behaved differently; if Windows itself hadn't spent the last 20 years conditioning its users to be as inconsistent as possible. But you don't. A backup system that refuses to back up the files that the user wants backed up is a complete waste of everyone's time.

Goran
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 5:03 AM

 #

What version of windows 8 will support "File History" and will there be some limitations the same way that Windows 7 home was with regards to backup features(no network backup)?

Laz
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 5:12 AM

 #

Hmm, no good. I really like windows 8, but this feature misses the point.

Most home users do not have an EXTERNAL DRIVE OR NETWORK LOCATION, just a laptop\desktop\tablet and an internet connection.

My nan would not know how to set up an external drive.

Most home users are more concerned about getting back an overwritten document, not an hdd crash, therefore all user files surely should be backed up locally, automatically and transparently first, with the whole 'external drive' bit kept to save a backup of the backups, in case of an hdd fail.

I can't remember the time I had an hdd fail on me anyway...i certanly DO remember the time I accidentally clicked 'SAVE' though....so why the stupid restriction on 'external storage'?

From Apple
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 5:29 AM

\#

File History = Time Machine by Apple

Esben
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 5:40 AM
\#

This is an absolutely great feature! Can't wait until Win8 is out!

Steven Bill
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 5:50 AM
\#

"Those who need a full system backup can still use Windows Backup to create a system image." This is the best part. I only create a full system image every now and then. I'm glad this thing will still work in Windows 8.

GregH
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 6:04 AM
\#

The feature is great – the UI design is Vista looking bad with that 2005 gel restore button – I can't stand that you don't design things properly.

Why can't we upgrade our computers at RTM - if it is the final version? General availability feels like another very long waiting game – I feel like I have been waiting a year for Windows 8.

Vlad NC
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 6:10 AM
\#

@Bradavon   I currently use W8 RP I have system protection on all drives, but there is no "previous versions tab" anymore.

@Microsoft, please bring the "previous versions" feature back. I don't want to create dozens of libraries just for file history.

If I forget to add a folder to a library, it won't be backed up. And of course I will discover that only when I need the backup.

As such, I do NOT "feel confident that [my] personal files are protected."

What we really needed was "shadow copies/previous versions" with:

  - the ability to save the snapshots to a different drive/share;

  - the ability to EXCLUDE folders, EVERYTHING should have been included by default;

  - a better UI for previous versions.

You failed. The Time Machine solution from Apple is better, since it backups EVERYTHING. I repeat. You failed. If you need a patent for a similar solution, just buy the rights to use the patent.

Just one example. As a software developer I need to modify c:\Windows\System32\drivers\etc\hosts from time to time . This file won't be backed up by file history. So I do not have "peace of mind" that my system will be fully protected in the event of drive failure.

So, the only reasonable solution for full backups on Windows still is Windows Backup. And most Windows users won't use it, because you didn't do anything to make it easier to activate and use.

@Microsoft, please fix the blog software so that sign-in works on the first try and comments are not lost.

Darren
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 6:25 AM
 #

The entire read is more like a very limited versioning system for selected filed. It is usefull to some extend but is also very limited. It should be incorporated into some more featurerich application.

It should be like this:

1. Versioning is good as people fear to lose or overwrite things accidentally. This is a perfect solution for libraries. User should be able to choose where to put the versions (local, external, cloud). If cloud, files should get encrypted automatically.

2. Full and incremental backups. These should be disaster recoveries. These can be stored on local drive (if no other medum is present) but should nag the user to store them externally or even cloud. Again, if cloud it should get encrypted automatically. These should be complete images with users option to deselect certain files and folders. Recovery should be possible by complete image recovery or only restore certain folders or files back to local disc.

3. User should be able to control intervals to certain extent to adapt the system to his needs.

Vlad NC
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 6:32 AM
 #

Oh, bravo Microsoft. Bravo.

It seems you did not only remove the "previous versions" feature, you also removed the Windows Backup application from a clean Windows 8 install. At least on Release Preview.

So now, to have proper backup, I have to buy both a Windows 7 license and a Windows 8 upgrade license.

Bravo.

I searched the entire installation for the backup utility, I also checked in "turn Windows features on and off", and it's nowhere to be found.

If you copy Apple, at least do it right and include the ability to perform full system backups, like Time Machine. And I'm saying that as an Apple hater.

I was very excited about buying a Surface Pro Tablet, but this bullshit with removing the backup features puts me on the fence.

Jackie Chan
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 6:39 AM
 #

@Vlad NC

1) Copy your comments before posting them = safe. 2) Use "Create a system image" feature (top left side in the light blue section) in the Backup and Restore section of the Control Panel, every few weeks. 3) Don't hate Apple.

They say a full system image can still be done in Windows 8.

Geoffc1
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 6:44 AM
 #

I agree with Ryan's comment - there's a lot to like about the W8 File History feature, but it completely ignores applications that have their own databases, e.g. Adobe's Lightroom.

I've got used to the elegant and simple-to-use client PC Backup function of Windows Home Server (which covers all files and provides a bare-metal restore). Moving to W8 on my current hardware will mean that I will continue to use WHS for backup.

However, because WHS does not support backup/restore of client PCs that use EFI/GPT technology, that will mean that I will have to use a combination of File History and some other method of backing up application data.

Frankly, that makes it a bit of a kludge, instead of the current "set it and forget it" method of WHS.

Jackie Chan
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 6:46 AM
#

Backup is called "Windows 7 File Recovery" in Windows 8. I don't know if this will have this name in the RTM.

kaustubha
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 7:36 AM
#

@apple u r right; MS will never understand smart users need

that's why apple says os x is most best os and it will be; because it thinks towards feature

Windows 7
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 7:39 AM
#

Just use Acronis True Image on Windows 7. Far better than any of this nonsense.

Vlad NC
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 7:58 AM
#

@Jackie Chan

Thanks, I found it.

CJR Connect
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 9:09 AM
#

Windows Backup was used so rarely simply because it was limited and unreliable. You could never be sure that what you backed up would actually restore if you had to replace the hard drive or the whole PC.

While File History, like many other supposedly new features of Windows 8, looks like a good idea on the surface, pun intended, the limitations of the Libraries implementation alone make both features next to useless.

Why is it that just about everything Microsoft redesigns lately ends up with fewer features and more restrictions?

merkat

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 9:09 AM

\#

With Reset / Refresh and system restore, full backup is useless and should be remove from Windows 8

DBallanco
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 9:13 AM

\#

I can't wait to pay $2.99 for the File History Metro App!

csnazell
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 9:14 AM

\#

On the one hand we have the Metro team pushing those of us who want to use structured storage to use SQLite which necessitates storing everything in our app's local data area despite MSDN saying not to.

On the other hand we've got the File History team pretending that Metro apps' local data areas don't exist and not including them by default in the the areas File History backs up.

Either way the user loses. Please guys have a chat with one another occasionally so stuff like this doesn't slip through the net.

Martin
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 9:49 AM

\#

I thought I'd try the much advertised Windows 8 search function to find 'file history' as I wasn't sure where to look. Go to the Start screen, type in 'file history' .. no results. Try 'backup' .... still nothing. I found it in the control panel in the end, but was disappointed I couldn't search for it.

I wonder if Microsoft has a policy to ensure that a useful feature is removed every time a product is updated or revised to make sure they aren't anti-competitive. It just seems bizarre that, say, Outlook *.pst files are not backed up. I'd have to add the relevant folder to a library, which is non-trivial for non-techy users as it's a hidden folder in an obscure place. But it keeps people like me in work making sure real backups are done. Could there not be an option in the interface to 'backup data for common email clients', such as Outlook, Windows Live Mail & Thunderbird?

qiziq
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 10:12 AM

\#

I am not a techie, but here are my concerns: While I applaud the approach of making the backups more or less automatic, for the WMC enthusiast, the DVR recordings are going to eat up valuable memory and HD with what amount to VERY LARGE files. (I have dealt with this issue with third party applications.) Furthermore, if the user's proccessor is not fast enough, he or she will not be able to continue with other applications without sluggish performance.

Also, if the intent is to work around the average user's lack of discipline, it should be recognized that he will also probably not be working with an external storage device.

AZJack
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 10:14 AM

\#

"Either way the user loses. Please guys have a chat with one another occasionally so stuff like this doesn't

slip through the net."

Good Point. That's one of the real problems at Microsoft. Did the people who developed Outlook 2011 chat much with those who produced Outlook 2010? I don't think so. Whether Office or Metro there doesn't appear to be any one, single, artistic, user-oriented person in charge of projects. Considering how much talent there must be at Microsoft that is really a trajedy.

Trevor Sullivan
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 10:32 AM
 #

Impressive feature! Looking forward to actually making some use of it! :)

Cheers,

Trevor Sullivan

TheCyberKnight
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 11:00 AM
 #

What if I always live in the Metro world on my tablet?

Is there a proper Metro UX for File History or do we have to revert to the "Desktop" mode?

JamesJohnston
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 11:14 AM
 #

I don't have a lot of free time, and retaining the ability to quickly recover in the event of a hard drive crash is critical. With Windows 7's backup utility, I can do a system image backup and then restore quickly - to the exact system configuration I was using before the crash. Now, you are proposing I do this:

"When your PC is replaced or needs to be reinstalled:

1. Use the recovery drive to restore the operating system

2. Connect to your Microsoft account

3. Configure your PC to sync your settings - this will bring your settings back

4. Go to the Store and reinstall your modern apps

5. Reinstall legacy apps

6. Connect your old File History drive and restore everything - this will restore your personal files"

Are you joking? While some users might have cluttered, unreliable with "no more desired" apps and settings, that does not describe my computer. You're saying if my hard drive crashes, I should additionally spend a few days tracking down and reinstalling all my apps? I use dozens and dozens of these so-called "legacy" apps. I don't have time to try to recreate my complicated system configuration. I just want it to come back as-is. And the "modern" apps won't be used much - I need to be able to view numerous partially-overlapping apps at once on my dual-monitor system, which is apparently now a "legacy" feature. (Because, who would need to view more than two apps side-by-side on a single monitor, right? Jeez.)

OK, but you say "Those who need a full system backup can still use Windows Backup to create a system image." That's nice. But then you say "If Windows 7 Backup was active, i.e. it was scheduled and the schedule was active, then it will continue running as scheduled after the upgrade. File History will be disabled by default and users will not be able to turn it on as long as the Windows 7 Backup schedule is

active. To turn it you will have to first disable the Windows 7 Backup schedule."

Personally, I think the new File History feature looks useful - I definitely am interested in giving it a try. But it sounds like I have to sacrifice the ability to do a full system backup. That's not going to happen, because opening myself to the risk of spending a week reinstalling apps because of a hard drive crash is not a backup solution.

Call me when you have Visual Studio fully ported into Metro and you have your entire developer base at Microsoft developing all the Microsoft products in this Metro version of Visual Studio. Until then, you're just full of it, because your developers will still be using "legacy" desktop programs to do development. Start eating your own dogfood!!!!

kenhes
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 11:16 AM
 #

@Martin (why can't we reply?)

When you search in Metro, be sure to move down the list on the right. It should/and probably will default to the first category with actual results. The category you need is "settings".

To people wondering why it doesn't backup their metro apps.....if you have a MS account, these will automatically be synced from the cloud. Not sure what a non MS account would do though.

Alex Kven
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 11:18 AM
 #

On my pc, I just use Microsoft Skydrive to backup my files. That way, my work is backed up as soon as possible from the time I complete it, as I complete it, rather than every hour.

Darren
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 11:49 AM
 #

@Martin: Microsoft believes in the telemetry god.

@AZJack: MS people are busy fighting each other to get good reviews (www.vanityfair.com/.../microsoft-downfall-emails-steve-ballmer). There is no time to think about improvement for the end user when your team is after your a**.

@JamesJohnston: Believe it or not: The very same company designed a Windows Phone os which has no option to completely backup and restore the phone. Similarily you can only backup your personal stuff via Zune. It is not possible to backup complete data and restore them on another phone, in case it got lost or stolen. And we are talking about the year 2010-2012.

MS is so far behind everything, even laughing at them is no fun anymore. It is sad to see how they are trying to boost sales by offering the new os so cheap that people will realise it does not have any value. Sad. So sad.

I would not want W8 for free. It made to w8 for windows 9.

Ioannis Kirmitzoglou
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 12:38 PM
 #

To all the people complaining about the lack of custom folders support; just create a new library and add all the folders you want to backup to it. File history will back up ANY filetype and ALL files in your

libraries.

Simon
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 1:59 PM
#

Well; this is rubbish. A serious reduction in functionality and a poor user interface - this makes no sense given that you had a superiod solution technically and usability wise, you just didn't expose it sufficiently. Anyway, at least there'll be third party products like Acronis around to fill in this gap.

Simon
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 2:00 PM
#

Well; this is rubbish. A serious reduction in functionality and a poor user interface - this makes no sense given that you had a superiod solution technically and usability wise, you just didn't expose it sufficiently. Anyway, at least there'll be third party products like Acronis around to fill in this gap.

ling ho
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 2:48 PM
#

wow , what an amazing software.

dont worry about all the hate, i will buy 100 copies on the fast fluid softwares.

no forget this time 1.mark as answer 2. thanks for input 3. log uri

Steffo
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 3:06 PM
#

Microsoft should make it possible to burn the backup software to a bootable CD/DVD, like Acronis. I think Microsoft should look more into how Acronis have solved it in their True Image Home. I don't trust Microsoft built-in backup. It has been crap for a long time now. Some files are excluded and so on. In Windows 7 if You remove the backup manually the backup tool stop working. Nice "feature". I will stay with Acronis until Microsoft start to create a backup software worth its name....

pmbAustin
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 3:15 PM
#

System reset/restore provides you a way to restore your system.

Ideally there should be a one-button "reinstall all my metro apps, or any that aren't installed" from the store. I don't see that in any obvious place though. If a drive crashes and you need to replace it, or you replace your entire machine/tablet, getting your metro apps and settings back should be as trivial as possible.

Obviously desktop applications are a different kettle of fish. But you know what would have been nice? If Windows would somehow keep track of the installer for a given app for you. And the answers you gave to it. So that it could be run again, with the same keys, locations, etc., easily, in the event of a reset/refresh/restore or entirely new device (obviously that knowledge would need to be backed up in the cloud somewhere, or to a backup device like an external drive).

Roger Jolly

Wednesday, July 11, 2012 4:46 PM

#

Is the login password screen final? I think it has too much solid color and no theme. Windows 7 login password screen is much better suited. I'm trying to use it without a picture password (typical desktop use) but it is ugly and has no theme...

Darren
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 5:09 PM

#

@Roger Jolly

Yeah it is final. And fast and fluid and immersive. And its METRO.

Kevin Menzel
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 8:04 PM

#

Was there some reason to not keep Previous Versions kicking around?

thx0x472
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 8:35 PM

#

@JamesJohnston

I totally agree with you on this.

"Personally, I think the new File History feature looks useful - I definitely am interested in giving it a try. But it sounds like I have to sacrifice the ability to do a full system backup. That's not going to happen, because opening myself to the risk of spending a week reinstalling apps because of a hard drive crash is not a backup solution."

I scheduled the Windows Backup to create a system image every day at 3:00 AM to prevent me to have to recreate my complicated system configuration in case of a disaster. The Windows Backup is also saving data files along the system image.

What I would like to be able to do in Windows 8 is to let the Windows Backup taking care of the system image exatcly the way it is now (every day at 3:00 AM automatically), and let the File History taking care of the data files. I woudn't mind to be forced to use two separeted external drivers for that.

random windows 8 hater
Wednesday, July 11, 2012 10:46 PM

#

I likw windows 8, I love everything Microsoft and specially Steven Sinofsky does, I Love Metro UI, is fast, fluid & fun.

NoCustomerAnymore!
Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:32 AM

#

Unbelievable... This post shows a bunch of Screenshots of the same OS.

Every one has different design, old icons, new icons, glass buttons, metro style stuff.

One Window has massive white space, the console window is crunched together and has XP elements.

What the F... is this? This is 2012 and not 1994! You will beat apple? lol, Think about it!

Vasu Miriyala
Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:44 AM
#

Sounds promising features...however trying to get clarity wrt to below points

1) Does it protect files when ecrypoted by 3rd party tools like Sophos etc withtout any issues ?

2) Does it has something for compression or saves full sizes over network if share is selected ?

--- Thanks, Vasu

On a very different note.
Thursday, July 12, 2012 6:09 AM
#

Metro needs a notification center. In Windows 9, please add it.

Darren
Thursday, July 12, 2012 6:15 AM
#

Windows 8 needs Windows 9.

Entegy
Thursday, July 12, 2012 9:55 AM
#

@JamesJohnston

You can still make a system image in Windows 8. As mentioned in the post, the Windows 7 backup utility is still there and can be used instead of File History.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:14 AM
#

@hoytler

Yes. File History supports network locations on NAS, File Servers or other PCs. In a HomeGroup, one user can set up a network location and recommend it to other HomeGroup members. Other users can simply accept the recommendation to start using it.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:15 AM
#

@selfdeathtroj

File History backs up all files types. However it depends on specific file type preview handlers when it displays a preview of a file version. Windows provides preview handlers for most common file types like photos, video or office documents. Many applications that use a proprietary file type also provide preview handlers.

File History will show a stock icon for any file type that doesn't have a preview handler.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:16 AM
　#

@pjfan

Yes, File History will back up Outlook PST files if they are located in My Documents library (as it is configured by default by Office 2010).

Currently there is no way to restrict the number of versions or exclude individual files.

File History offers a way for users to control how it uses the disk space. Instead of specifying how many versions you want to keep, users can decide how long they want to keep versions around. The option that would be most applicable in this case would be to keep saved versions "until space is needed". When this option is selected, File History stores versions until there is no more room to copy new versions. At this point only the oldest versions are removed and only as many as it is needed to make room for the new ones. This option guarantees that versions will be stored for as long as possible given the capacity of your external hard drive or a network location.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:18 AM
　#

@selfdeathtroj, @GRB, @Entegy

File History allows addition of arbitrary folders. Users who store their personal files in folders outside of libraries will need to create a new library or add these folders to an existing one. This can be done by right clicking on a folder and adding it to a library. The process is very simple and similar to "including a folder" found in other backup applications.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:18 AM
　#

@Entegy

File History stores files exactly the same way on an external hard drive or a network location. Files are stored in exactly the same format and relative location. Versions are identified by a timestamp suffix.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:19 AM
　#

@Entegy:　Does File History work without users being logged in?

No. File History works in a context of a user session and only when a user is logged on.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:21 AM
　#

@Alex: how you changed the Homegroup for working with file history

The changes were subtle. File History uses the HomeGroup broadcast protocol to advertise a recommended location to all HomeGroup members. It takes advantage of HomeGroup store and forward broadcast capabilities, so such messages can be delivered to all HomeGroup users, current and future or users who's machines were not connected when the broadcast was sent. It also uses HomeGroup permissions to make the recommended location only accessible by HomeGroup members.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:22 AM
  #

@D7

File History can use only one target per user at one time. When one target gets full you have a choice to a) replace it with a new target and start fresh, or b) migrate all versions from the old target to the new one.

First option (a) is recommended when you replace the target with one of the same capacity or if you do not need immediate access to old versions but want to archive them for future use. In this case, File History will take a new backup of your data and then continue to store versions of changed files.

Option (b) allows users to keep their entire file history as if the target was never changed. It of course requires the new target to have larger capacity.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:23 AM
  #

@AmitBrian

Many metro style applications either store user data in libraries or in SkyDrive – both locations are protected by File History. Application defined roaming settings/data are stored in SkyDrive and re-downloaded if destroyed. User data stored in AppData is not backed up.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:24 AM
  #

@pmbAustin: how file MOVES and DELETES are handled

Versions of files are identified by their path. When a file or a folder is moved or renamed, the path changes. File History treats the new path as a new object and starts protecting it as long as it is part of a library. Versions under the old path are kept until they need to be pruned. Files that are moved or renamed are not backed up again. For example, after importing pictures from your camera, you can rename the folder and File History will detect the rename and simply keep note of the new and old names without having to re-copy the data.

There are two ways to restore a deleted path:

- Traversing to the original path in the UI, if you remember that.

- Searching by a keyword in the file contents or by searching by partial file name

Undoing a move is exactly the same as restoring a deleted file.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:25 AM
  #

@EFS

File History doesn't protect files encrypted by the encrypted file system (EFS). Files stored on a volume encrypted with BitLocker are protected.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:25 AM

\#

@.Firedog

Windows Live Mail stores all contacts in your Live account in the cloud so they are always protected and always available.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:26 AM

\#

@Ex Tentions

File History protects all files in user libraries as long as they are on a local NTFS volume. The only exception is encrypted (EFS) files.

To summarize the exceptions:

File History doesn't protect files

1.　　　on a volume that is not formatted with NTFS

2.　　　on a remote volume (like a network share)

3.　　　 that are encrypted with EFS

4.　　　That are currently locked. File History will retry and back it up once the file is unlocked.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:29 AM

\#

@Stephane, @Ex Tentions, @ Vlad NC

Here is how File History relates to Previous Versions.

Was Previous Versions feature removed from Windows 8?

One of the Previous Versions features allowed end users to configure scheduled snapshots and to restore file versions from snapshots that were already created. It was designed for restoring data on file shares on Servers.

The usage of this feature on the client was low and had a negative impact on the overall system performance and battery life. On the client we have replaced it with File History. The VSS service that is responsible for taking snapshots is still there. 3rd party backup applications can still create an on-demand snapshot for backup purposes. Previous Versions feature is still available on the Windows server. Users who access network shares on a Windows server will still be able to access Previous Versions from the File Explorer UI and restore previous versions of files on a network share.

Why File History requires an external drive or a network location while Previous Versions didn't?

Previous Versions was designed to provide a way to restore a point in time version of a file or a folder. It was never meant to serve as or replace backup. In fact, in case of a hard drive or entire PC failure, all previous versions are lost as well. The number of versions stored by Previous Versions is limited by the amount of free space available on the local drive and thus unpredictable.

File History was designed to protect users against data loss including hard drive failure or entire PC loss, along with providing a version history in a more efficient manner with a more intuitive restore UI. For this reason it requires a redundant storage device; an external hard drive, USB drive or a network location.

Is File History just a new UI for Previous Versions?

No. As mentioned, it is a new implementation that is designed to be much more efficient from a CPU and battery life point of view, and is also designed to protect against media loss or data corruptions.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:30 AM
#

@jalf

Users do not have to move any folders to take advantage of File History protection. All they need to do is to add these folders to an existing or new library. This is as simple as right clicking on the folder name and selecting "Include in library".

For example if you store all your projects under c:\projects and all your finances under c:\finances, all you need to do is create two libraries

Development

Finances

and add each folder to an appropriate library. Once it is done File History will automatically start protecting c:\projects and c:\finances. The effort is similar to what you would have to do to include these folder in any other backup application.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:31 AM
#

@Goran

File History will be available in all client versions of Windows 8. Any Windows client user (including Windows RT) will be able to use File History to protect their personal files to a network location.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:32 AM
#

@Ryan, @Vlad NV and others

Users who need a full system or image backup can still use the Windows Backup and Restore. They can be found in the Control Panel under the header Windows 7 File Recovery.

@Vlad NV

Search results for File History or any backup related keyword can be found under the Settings section.

kenhes
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:51 AM
#

I guess I'll be buying a usb 3/ Thunderbolt external hard drive! And I need to make room for it on my desk! :D But I can see the sense of keeping backup data separate from the source.

At the moment I use SyncToy to regularly backup to a second internal hard drive. It doesn't do past versions.

All HAIL MICROSOFT
Thursday, July 12, 2012 11:52 AM
#

ALL HAIL MICROSOFT ALL HAIL MICROSOFT YOU OWN ME ALL HAIL MICROSOFT ALL HAIL MICROSOFT ALL HAIL MICROSOFT ALL HAIL MICROSOFT ALL HAIL MICROSOFT

Mark522010
Thursday, July 12, 2012 12:03 PM
  #

This looks really amazing! A basic backup solution good enough for most users data. Quite frankly, I am surprised that the UI is "desktop" and not "metro."

You briefly mention restoring to a new computer but there isn't much detail. I use Windows 7 backup and found it very difficult to restore onto a new computer. Because I happened to have given the new computer a different name the restore function would not work (though that is not the message it gave me) and it took me over a week to get my data back. How well does File History handle this situation?

JamesJohnston
Thursday, July 12, 2012 1:32 PM
  #

@BohdanR: "Users do not have to move any folders to take advantage of File History protection. All they need to do is to add these folders to an existing or new library."

What if I add my entire user profile to a library (e.g. C:\Users\JamesJ)? Some applications create new directories and files directly under my profile. Given that the Start menu offers a link directly to that path, I have sometimes found myself in the habit of placing files directly under that path myself. I would like those files to be backed up as well.

"File History doesn't protect files That are currently locked. File History will retry and back it up once the file is unlocked."

Fail. Wasn't that the point of the VSS service? I leave Microsoft Outlook open 24/7. So you're telling me that my PST file with all my mail isn't going to be backed up because Outlook has it locked?

@Entegy: "You can still make a system image in Windows 8. As mentioned in the post, the Windows 7 backup utility is still there and can be used instead of File History."

@BohdanR: "Users who need a full system or image backup can still use the Windows Backup and Restore."

Right, but my point is that I would like to use full system backup AND file history at the same time. From what I read, that will not be possible. I can use Windows 7 backup to do a full system backup, OR use file history, BUT NOT BOTH. I'd like to use file history for the files - it sounds improved in many ways. But read my previous comment for why I feel full system backup is still so important and why I can't give that up.

It's also concerning that full system backup is apparently "legacy" functionality and will probably be removed in next version of Windows.

"Our telemetry shows that less than 5% of consumer PCs use Windows Backup" (and presumably a full system backup)

All hail telemetry! What if telemetry shows a similar percentage of people aren't tracking their personal finances well and can't manage money? (I wouldn't be surprised if someone said 5% or less are actively using Quicken, MS Money, or a manual way of doing the same.) Should the world just dumb down or discontinue those products, making it impossible for those of us more responsible to get an accurate financial picture?

Don't break things for the few of us who are actually responsible in life.

JasonBrock
Thursday, July 12, 2012 2:05 PM
  #

Microsoft Press Announcement: Tekzilla shows off some of the updates and explain why you should upgrade to Release Preview from Consumer preview if you're running Windows 8! [HD]

Link: revision3.com/.../e3-2012-microsoft-press-announcement

Alexander
Thursday, July 12, 2012 2:16 PM
  #

Great job so far. I really love all the new stuff that you added (except the metro interface, but I'll get used to it). Also could we get better window managing options? Like when we right click the title bar of an application it would be nice if there would be an option which will allow the application to always stay on top.

S1
Thursday, July 12, 2012 2:24 PM
  #

As I understand it File History backups up data to one particular location (such as an external hard drive). I currently back up my data to two separate external hard drives in case one gets corrupted. Is that possible with File History, i.e. can I backup my data to 2 separate external hard drives? If not, any suggestions as to how I could do this?

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 2:31 PM
  #

@S1

I'd highly recommend using Storage Spaces. You can read more about Storage Spaces in this blog post blogs.msdn.com/.../virtualizing-storage-for-scale-resiliency-and-efficiency.aspx

csnazell
Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:06 PM
  #

@BohdanR

"Many metro style applications either store user data in libraries or in SkyDrive – both locations are protected by File History..."

I'm sorry, but:

#1

"Many" < "Most".

#2

This statement is true if, and only if, the Metro app is document-based.

#3

If the Metro app uses a structured storage mechanism such as SQLite, which Microsoft recommends, the app *must* store its data in AppData due to the restrictions placed on it by the Metro environment.

A quick inspection of Microsoft's own Metro apps indicates that those that aren't document-based, including Mail, store their data within the user's AppData area, and thus would not be covered by File History. In the case of Mail this would mean that any email received from POP accounts would be lost at a system reset.

AndyCadley
Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:31 PM
  #

@JamesJohnston: Even VSS can't reliably snapshot database-like files such as Outlook PST files without the application's help, because it's not possible to determine if the file is currently in a consistent state when it's locked. You might get a copy of an open file, but there's no guarantee that it'll actually be usable.

AZJack
Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:39 PM
  #

Thanks BohdanR [MSFT, you've given more real feedback than on any other BW8 topic I can remember. My impression is that you really care about what the readers are posting.

bibsdhbibiefw
Thursday, July 12, 2012 3:39 PM
  #

@BohdanR

Windows 8 Metroidism sucks

NM
Thursday, July 12, 2012 4:35 PM
  #

Dear Sir, This is truly a wonderful feature.

I really like this feature & looking forward to it.

The BitLocker Protection for Both the drives i.e., source & destination drives is truly awesome.

On a side note, This is for all the Apple scycophants:-

This feature was initially introduced in Windows Server 2003 known as 'Volume Shadow Copy'. The same was copied by Apple & renamed as 'Time Machine'.

NM
Thursday, July 12, 2012 4:45 PM
  #

Sorry for the typo error, I meant Apple sycophants.

Ex Tensions
Thursday, July 12, 2012 5:49 PM
  #

@ BohdanR [MSFT]

Thank you for answering so many questions (above), I appreciate it.

Fordp
Thursday, July 12, 2012 6:55 PM
  #

Are you guys determined to reduce every single bit of functionality Windows has? This looks like a good solution, but in fact its much inferior to a true engineering solution like VSS and 'Previous Versions'. This is nothing but a simple file copy engine that works based on filenames only. No block level support, no redundancy, no copying of locked files, no resilience and no management. All you had to do was -

1. expose the underlying implementation (which has had years of testing on both client and server versions) in a meaningful UI

2. Provide a system level service for file backup that other apps could integrate with. And use if for all your own apps, such as Office/Metro apps etc. 99.99% of users have no possible clue where apps store their settings, and even if I manage to find out, just restoring a file isn't enough to restore an app's state. Instead, apps should be able to backup/restore themselves and manage versions

3. Allow backups on any folder/file/app. I should be able to right click on anything and let it be backed up. Not have to add it to a library.

This would be a proper solution to the problem, instead of what this article describes. This process appears typical of Win 8 - take away actual features and replace them with something that looks pretty but isn't worth anything.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 7:25 PM
  #

@JamesJohnston

If you wish to use a full system backup (Windows Backup) in conjunction with File History, please turn on Windows Backup after you have turned on File History. To do that, go to the Control Panel and open Windows 7 File Recovery. You'll see two options 1) Create a system image and 2) Set up backup. Select one that works best for you.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 7:33 PM
  #

@Vasu Miriyala

Re 1) File History will protect files encrypted by 3rd party software as well as DRM'd documents, password protected ZIP files, etc... It is however user's responsibility to keep passwords, pass phrases or keys needed to decrypt these files after they were restored.

Re 2) File History doesn't compress data in flight or at rest. Users can configure drives where File History stores file versions to use compression. For example, if the selected external hard drive is formatted with NTFS, users can set the disk property "Compress this drive to save disk space".

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 7:37 PM
  #

@JamesJohnston

You can add your entire user profile to a library and File History will do its best to copy all files in this folder and its subfolders. Please note that File History will include temporary, intermediate, application files, databases, and logs if these exist within the profile.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 8:08 PM
  #

@TheCyberKnight

For Windows 8, the File History restore application runs on the Desktop only.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Thursday, July 12, 2012 8:28 PM

#

@Mark522010

Restoring all your data on a new PC is very easy with File History, even if you changed a user or computer name. When you connect a previously used File History external drive to a new PC, File History will try to match the new computer and user name to an existing backup on this drive.

If the drive was used only by you and both names (computer and user) match, File History will select this backup automatically, without any questions asked.

If there is no match, File History will ask you if you want to use an existing backup or start using this drive as a new user. Because you want to restore your data, you should check the box to indicate that you want to use an existing backup. At this point File History will present a list of all users and computers that used this drive in the past. All you need to do is to select a user/computer name combination that best matches your previous computer and turn File History on. From this point, all versions of your files created on a previous computer will be available for restore and all new versions created will be appended to your file history.

You can now restore all libraries, favorites, contacts and the desktop with few clicks. Open the File History restore app and click the Restore button at the bottom of the window. Libraries and latest versions of all files will be restored to their original location.

Nitz Walsh
Thursday, July 12, 2012 10:22 PM

#

Previous Version was fantastic as while it was useless if you hardware failed, there are plenty of instances - in fact I would say the majority in my IT career - where the file was removed or modified accidentally by the user.   I would always astound people when I showed the previous versions tab and they could easily recover a file they had accidentally wiped or overwritten. The fact that it used VSS as well meant the HD space lost was minimal, and of course it worked across any drive where you had system restore running.

Like Mesh Client->Skydrive, Search, Media Center etc, this is yet another step back.

BTW, while not relevant to this topic, Neilsen has the latest Q2 2012 smartphone market share:

blog.nielsen.com/nielsenwire

Windows Phone 7 has 1.3%. Let that sink in - 1.3%. Windows Phone 6.5 has over double that.

So yes, let's continue to hitch out wagon to this runaway train! Metro everywhere, it can't fail!

...unlike the only product we currently have it on, and the one where it's the most suited by far. You know, the one that's completely bombed in the marketplace.

Alex Kven
Friday, July 13, 2012 12:24 AM

#

This is really cool. Great job! I hope I can jump on the Windows 8 $15 train.

Just one (or three?) question: What's with this NTFS change journal? Can I access this journal in .NET applications? Does skydrive use this journal?

nowuniverse
Friday, July 13, 2012 2:22 AM
#

@Steven Sinofsky

Sorry for being off topic but I have one concern to address.

Reading details about many apps in the store. I saw there are many cool metro apps that won't support Windows RT devices (ARM processors) such as Accuweather,Sketchbook Express... It's kind of disappointing since I have seen a lot of my favorite metro apps won't make its way to Windows RT. It again sparks a question about what is the use of Windows RT? It can't run other desktop apps, now it comes with less Metro styled app compatibility especially for games... Things like Fruit Ninja which according to the detail from the store only has x86 support. It's funny because this game was originally created and runs smoothly on other ARM platforms such as iPad or Android. Why not ARM support for Windows RT? How about Accuweather app? This app is just showing information, temperature... what components or why it's so hard to develop these kinds of app with compatibility for both x86 and ARM architecture?

p249434876
Friday, July 13, 2012 3:34 AM
#

This is really cool. Great job! I hope I can jump on the Windows 8 $15 train.

Just one (or three?) question: What's with this NTFS change journal? Can I access this journal in .NET applications? Does skydrive use this journal?www.diesel-generatorset.com

Darren
Friday, July 13, 2012 3:36 AM
#

Why is there the legacy desktop app "Winzip" in the Marketplace?

Windows 7
Friday, July 13, 2012 5:12 AM
#

@Darren, it should be called "Metrozip"

Joe blogz
Friday, July 13, 2012 6:44 AM
#

Win8rp File History doesn't let me choose any drive other than my 4gb usb drive I use for readyboost!?

S1
Friday, July 13, 2012 7:30 AM
#

@BohdanR

Re: File History + Storage Spaces. Thanks for your previous reply re: using Storage Spaces if you want to back up to more than one external hard drive. Just so I am clear, if I attach 2 external hard drives and create a "two-way mirror" Storage Space:

1. Can I still use File History to back up to this Storage Space?

2. Can you confirm the "two-way mirror" will mean I have a copy of the File History backup on both external hard drives?

Thanks.

Geoffc1
Friday, July 13, 2012 8:10 AM

\#

@BohdanR - please can you answer the point made by csnazell: how is File History going to deal with mail messages stored by the Metro Mail App? It is storing these messages in the user's AppData area. The same is true for Windows Live Mail - it also uses the AppData area.

I hope that your answer is not going to be "they are stored in the Cloud", because in my case, they aren't.

gamoniac
Friday, July 13, 2012 8:26 AM

\#

Disk wipe/file shredder needed --

It would be really great if Windows has a bulit-in utility that can securely erase files and wipe clean hard drives/USB drives so that we don't have to resort to third party or unsupported public project like HDDErase that can take hours of unpleasant blank screen to wipe a small 80GB HDD before one donates or sells one's old computer. I know there is a lot behind the scene and there are many scenarios to handle, but it is such a basic and commonly used task. It will do the community a lot of good and saves thousands of man hours worldwide... So please?

Ink Brother
Friday, July 13, 2012 9:07 AM

\#

I'm still using win xp as my operating system in mo computer shop. but in my private computer at home i use windows 7. All of my important files are there so what i do is do a backup of the backup files that i have. But with this innovation it will be a lot easier and also a confident way to secure my files. I'll be looking forward in buying this. Thanks for the info!

LD
Friday, July 13, 2012 9:48 AM

\#

This looks good, too bad MS is forcing Metro on us. Looks like they can't even give Metro away:

www.computerworld.com/.../Windows_8_falls_further_behind_Windows_7_in_pre_launch_stats

Face it MS we want the ability to kill metro.... completely. I also wouldn't mind having gadgets back.

Jimmy Band
Friday, July 13, 2012 9:56 AM

\#

Isn't there a clock tile app in the store? I wish I had a clock as a tile.

@Jimmy Band
Friday, July 13, 2012 11:29 AM

\#

There is a clock app in the store. Search World Clock, but it doesn't have a live tile so it's pretty useless now.

Dan
Friday, July 13, 2012 12:53 PM
\#

@BohdanR

Surely the idea of creating a new library just to back up data is overly clunky? There was someone earlier who mentioned wanting to keep a backup of the hosts file. Are you seriously suggesting that the best implementation of backup is that we create a library and add C:\windows\system32\drivers\etc to it? That creates one hell of a messy library!

Surely it would be simpler to do what every backup utility has done since the first backup utilities and give us an option to select specific locations to back up within the backup application? It makes no sense to remove such functionality. Sure, hide it away in an advanced menu, so the options don't overwhelm novices. But if this is meant to be a serious backup tool, then it really needs to be a full-featured backup product, capable of handling the most basic of backup operations.

Creating a new library and filling it will unrelated file locations - just so you can perform a backup - smacks of a bodge or workaround. It doesn't come across like the feature has been well thought-out or implemented.

Darren
Friday, July 13, 2012 2:27 PM
\#

Looks like Acer is really looking forward to Windows 8:

www.theinquirer.net/.../acer-halves-pc-sales-estimates-and-cautions-over-windows-8

"Acer, which has been battling with Dell for the number two spot in global PC market share, has revised down its growth forecast from 10 per cent to five per cent. Kevin Lu, an investor relations spokesman for the company told reporters that is due to the weakening economy and a more cautious view on Microsoft's upcoming Windows 8 operating system.

According to Lu, since Apple's Ipad came on the scene distributors are increasingly conservative when it comes to building up inventory for Windows 8. Lu, like many of his counterparts in rival firms, cited the weakening global economy for the steep downward revision in Acer's sales forecast.

Microsoft's Windows 8 operating is expected to appear at the end of October, with OEMs such as Acer getting their hands on the operating system at the end of August. However Acer's caution with regard to Windows 8 is something of a blow for Microsoft, as the firm's operating system releases have generally been regarded as giving hardware sales a boost."

EW Metro
Friday, July 13, 2012 6:51 PM
\#

ew windows 8 with metro, no thanks.

BohdanR [MSFT]
Friday, July 13, 2012 7:47 PM
\#

@Geoffc1

Windows 8 Mail stores all user mail data in the cloud and caches it on a local disk in the user AppData area to provide access when the computer is not connected to the Internet. Data in the cloud is protected and always available. Windows Mail does not have an option to delete mail from the server after it was downloaded so there is no risk of losing mail when user's hard drive or computer fails.

AZJack
Friday, July 13, 2012 8:27 PM
#

"Data in the cloud is protected and always available." meaning when a user can connect to the internet and/or when W8M is operating. That seems to imply that if I take my personal laptop into my office at work (where I have no WIFI or easily available Ethernet) and I need to read something in my saved mail I'll see nothing on the screen. I that true?

btriffles
Friday, July 13, 2012 9:32 PM
#

@BohdanR:

Please see the following article and associated comments to understand why the File History approach is suboptimal:

arstechnica.com/.../a-step-back-in-time-with-windows-8s-file-history

In summary, you should have leveraged shadow copies and other existing technologies to create an initial full image (VHD) and then store block-level incremental snapshots. This would have the following benefits (and more):

-Much more space efficient (incremental blocks), allowing more data to be backed up

-Complete system protection allowing full restoration (including AppData and other things not in a Library)

-No problems with locked files (or EFS I believe)

-Better tracking of the history of moved/renamed/deleted files

Obviously, it's too late to redo everything, so here are a few suggestions for the current system:

-Leave the option to use the existing Previous Versions and shadow copies, if desired.

-Add an "Include Folders" feature. I shouldn't have to abuse the Libraries system to make up for deficiencies in the backup software.

-Allow backups to the same drive (with a sufficient warning). While this won't protect against hardware failure, it protects against user error (e.g., accidental file deletion), which is probably much more common.

-In the restoration UI, don't place the Restore button between the Back/Forward navigation buttons. Its current location will make it slower to move between Forward and Backward, and will increase the chance of accidentally hitting Restore. Restoring is logically distinct from navigation.

gero1.com
Saturday, July 14, 2012 1:14 AM
#

Great job so far. I really love all the new stuff that you added (except the metro interface, but I'll get used to it). Also could we get better window managing options? Like when we right click the title bar of an

application it would be nice if there would be an option which will allow the application to always stay on top.

Darren
Saturday, July 14, 2012 1:21 AM
#

@btriffles: Good points.

How ever we have to assume there won´t be any changes to W8 anymore.

But at least MS cannot tell they have not been warned. W8 will fail and I wonder if that blog still will be accessible then so the world can see that Microsoft deliberately has chosen to ignore the criticsm. There will be no one left to blame but Ballmer and Sinofsky for the most epic fail in MS history. Hopefully this will force them to ressign and bring back the strengths of Microsoft and Windows.

G. Winston Natoli
Saturday, July 14, 2012 1:26 AM
#

@BohdanR wrote

"Windows Live Mail stores all contacts in your Live account in the cloud so they are always protected and always available."

+1

WL Mail (regardless of supporting a no Live ID/no MSFT Account/no sign-on to Windows Live services = no cloud mode) design intent *is* (and always has been) to operate in the Live ID/Microsoft Account sign-in mode. Afaik, that intent/recommendation has not changed when using a 'legacy' WL Essential application (e.g. WL Mail 2011) on Windows 8.

In fact it makes even more strategic and beneficial to use the same Win8 MSFT Account to sign on to Live services when using any WL Essentials 2011 application to ensure common data availability for Contacts/Calendar (WLMail and Messenger) and integrated SkyDrive files (WL Photo Gallery pics-album/Mail photo e-mail/album) amongst the provided user account Win8 Metro apps (Mail, Messaging, Photos, SkyDrive, People) and/or other connected devices.

...winston

msft mvp

Geoffc1
Saturday, July 14, 2012 4:02 AM
#

@BohdanR - thanks for your reply. I appreciate that you are taking the time to answer the questions here. However, your answer to my question is what I feared. If I use File History, then in order to protect my mail messages in Windows 8, I will HAVE to use the Microsoft Mail App. My preferred mail client is Windows Live Mail - which does NOT store messages in the Cloud. The Microsoft Mail App currently has too many shortcomings (e.g. no IMAP support, no creation of extra storage folders) to be useful.

And where in the Cloud would my messages be held? As part of my SkyDrive storage?

Then there are the privacy concerns that some folks might have about this...

csnazell
Saturday, July 14, 2012 7:18 AM
#

@BohdanR - thanks for confirming the lack of POP support in the Mail app will continue.

As a general comment, when I'm told all my data is in the cloud, what I hear is "your data is only accessible from your home".

62% of the UK's landmass (government figures) has no mobile broadband because it's not sufficiently flat enough for the networks to economically provide coverage. To provide coverage in my home town for example, the networks would have to quadruple the number of base stations to match the existing 2G network.

The cloud is great for storing data if you can guarantee it's there, which thanks to the laws of physics concerning the propagation of radio waves, you cannot.

kris
Saturday, July 14, 2012 1:03 PM
 #

Bohdan You are rocking guys. Even I am kind of English guys I can hear your voice. You and scottgu (not here) Are amazing and have a good voice.

Thanks

thomas allen markwirh sr.
Saturday, July 14, 2012 2:14 PM
 #

i just got to get a exseral drive. thank!!!

server lease
Saturday, July 14, 2012 3:41 PM
 #

Assert the leading range of Xeon group following employee servers and member of staff serving at table parts in New Zealand, If you are looking in favor of on-site hardware and software repairs/maintenance, servers fresh or following employee, member of staff serving at table parts, member of staff serving at table support, following employee laptops and desktops, or absolutely data backups and security we will be able to go through your needs. If you're gone a cluster of servers we're are your amount lone cream of the crop. . Please visit our spot and knowing many more in favor of Miki pro.

Sarah K.
Saturday, July 14, 2012 4:48 PM
 #

@Geoffc1, I guess you misunderstood. He said Metro Mail app does keeps offline records in AppData folder which can be included in the library to enable history as well as it shadow the data on cloud.

@Darren et el., if you think there is no improvements in terms of performance and feature set in Windows 8 home/pro/enterprise and server editions when compared to Windows 7, then let me save you the effort; Windows 8 will pervade "at least" 10 times more than your beloved employer's crappy Apple OS. So you don't need to troll and stop plaguing willya!

Darren
Sunday, July 15, 2012 12:45 AM
 #

@Sarah K.: Don´t feed me, fangirl. I´d never buy crappleware.

But with Microsoft trying to follow the same path there will be times ahead when W8 won´t even be worth trolling anymore.

Metro in its current implementation is not a feature it is a plague. And those kinds of legacy improvments that have been made, have been made available as servicepacks in the past. The truth is: Nobody needs W8 and hardly anybody wants it.

Geoffc1
Sunday, July 15, 2012 3:04 AM
　#

@Sarah K - no, I don't think I did misunderstand Bohdan. He (like others on the Windows 8 teams) seems to working from the assumption that users will store all their data in the cloud. That's why he said that mail messages are cached on the device. Since they are cached, there is no need to bother having a backup mechanism on the device to handle backup of mail messages - they are "protected in the cloud and always available".

However, the point is that I DON'T store all my data in the cloud. In particular, while I use an IMAP-based mail server provided by my ISP, it only holds recent mail. My mail archives (of nearly 20 years) are NOT held "in the cloud". This sort of usage pattern is not covered by File History, nor, it would seem, by the design of the Windows 8 Mail App.

Now, it is certainly true that I could include my AppData folder as a library, and have File History work overtime tracking all the changes that happen (including temporary files and IE files). According to Peter Bright's article on Ars Technica: "File History works with whole files. You nominate a disk or network share to be the File History repository, and it creates a replica of all your backed-up locations. Each time a new version of a file is copied to the replica, it gets renamed to include a timestamp in its name. This allows multiple versions of the same file to coexist within the same folder. Files are stored whole, so a minor change to a large file will result in a lot of disk usage".

This then sounds like a bad idea to include my AppData file as a library and use it with File History. It sounds like a kludge - forcing a square peg into a round hole.

Geoffc1
Sunday, July 15, 2012 3:10 AM
　#

That reference to "my AppData file" in the last para of my comment above was a typo; it should have read "my AppData folder"...

Oscar
Sunday, July 15, 2012 4:12 AM
　#

@Darren,well at work my colleagues,did try W8

what a joke,to all those simpletons, that are mesmerized,by

w8,just check IE,which version is/are,and the constant updates

because of the vulnerabilities.

In our outfit,always we recommend our corporate clients

to dump IE and install any other much more secure and safe browser.

The hackers and spammers are liking their the lips,to teach a lesson or two

to DHs like Steve Dickmissing or Monkey S.Ballmer or embalmer.

alvas rawuther
Sunday, July 15, 2012 4:46 AM
#

I'd really love 8 better if the search panel searched everything by default instead of just apps or files or settings - like in Windows 7. It doesn't take anything away from the design, yet adds.

heissm
Sunday, July 15, 2012 8:01 AM
#

Why is there the need to put everything into a library that should be backed up? Would'nt it be easier to just let the user select the folders they want to have in the FileHistory?

Its Windows!
Sunday, July 15, 2012 8:48 AM
#

Tips for Windows 8: Launch Metro apps from the desktop

itswindows.com/tips-windows-8-launch-metro-apps-desktop

Oscar
Sunday, July 15, 2012 9:55 AM
#

@ Sarah K,Are you the one from rent a crowd or boot licker at MS.

what about if you are just getting more than a

free copy of W8 when it goes RTM,the boys from

hacker alley will flog keys and why not full version

so tell us more.

Disaster
Sunday, July 15, 2012 1:32 PM
#

Yuck. The UI of Windows 8 is a disaster.... blends XP, metro dialogs, 2d and 3d elements thrown together with no consistency...

Fredrik
Sunday, July 15, 2012 3:35 PM
#

Please don't remove the gadgets in Windows 8. Windows 8 feels like a tablet OS, not a desktop OS and it will become even worse if you remove the gadgets. I love my new Mac more and more after reading this blog.

server lease
Sunday, July 15, 2012 4:08 PM
#

We assert the leading range of Xeon group following employee servers and member of staff serving at table parts in New Zealand, so create MikiPro a call if you're gone parts or want to deploy a cost

operative member of staff serving at table solution. Rackmount enterprise IBM xSeries servers are our speciality, so as to process if you're gone a cluster of servers we're are your amount lone cream of the crop. . Please visit our spot and knowing many more in favor of Miki pro.

OS X wannabe feature
Sunday, July 15, 2012 8:03 PM
#

This is blatant rip off of time machine but it's no where near time machine. Why can't you guys just make a perfect or better copy of OS X? flip 3d, taskbar and now this? ugly rip offs

SLx64
Sunday, July 15, 2012 10:22 PM
#

more importantly, they've announced vaporware with no solid availability of any hardware on the horizon..... I'm bored. And I need to make my living, I'll just move on to something else. Bye bye Ballmersoft

chili01234
Sunday, July 15, 2012 10:48 PM
#

Earn money

オンラインカジノ

L e n n y
Monday, July 16, 2012 12:16 AM
#

@Darren, @Oscar and other trolls

You surely will never touch a computer running W8 then what are you doing on b8 blog? Paid troll eh? now you can go back where you came from and kiss their iButt ! Btw, how much did they pay for this cheap act ? An old saying: "He who try to buttkiss the man in iGrave, gets his sorry ass kick'kethd" so GTFOH willya... ;-)

Fredds
Monday, July 16, 2012 5:58 AM
#

Darren: +1

Thomas Bale
Monday, July 16, 2012 8:23 AM
#

So windows backup has always been worthless and most people dont understand that they need to backup data.

But to me this just sounds like VSS (which is suggested to be on another HDD anyway). So in essence many of us have been doing this for years, just without the GUI.

Darren

Monday, July 16, 2012 11:48 AM

#

I have learned a new management defnition today: To Elop a company aka the Elop Effect: <u>communities-dominate.blogs.com/.../coining-term-elop-effect-when-you-combine-osborne-effect-and-ratner-effect.html</u>

That made me think about what Microsoft is doing currently. I would name it "Mee too management" or "Management by Kindergarten": Instead of focusing on its own strengths it envies on Apple and tries to mimick Apples success:

Apple has an iPod -> Microsoft wants one too, Apple has a multi touch mobile phone -> Microsoft wants one too, Apple has an appstore -> Guess what, Microsoft wants apps too. Apple reinvents the tablets -> Well....... Here is SURFACE. Apple store -> Microsoft Store and so on and so on.

Actually management by Kindergarten was common for Microsoft through for decades (Internet Explorer, Bing) but now they are pushing it to an extreme level: To MS core products. The products that allowed them to fund all their past failures and still earn tons of money to please the share holders.

I don´t believe Microsoft will be elopped. But they will realise that Management by Me too is not sufficient to become market leader. 1.5% market share with Windows Phone should be enough of a warning.

<u>pmbAustin</u>
Monday, July 16, 2012 1:05 PM

#

I agree with @alvas rawuther

My biggest pet peeve is that if I search for a setting, it shows me a page that says nothing found... because it defaults to Apps.

That's fine and all, but if there are no Apps found, default to the first category that shows any results! Don't make me have to life my hand off the keyboard to go over to the mouse just to click on "Settings". Ugh.

I understand the desire to not combine or mix results on the same page... but just let it default to showing the first category with results, and it should be MUCH more usable.

LukaszWizla
Monday, July 16, 2012 1:25 PM

#

@pmbAustin, @alvas rawuther Not so long time ago I made a mockup of how it should work and sent it t oMicrosoft. Sadly they just redirected me to Microsoft forums. Here it is <u>http://dl.dropbox.com</u> /u/60408703/ Search%20improvement.png (delete spaces)

Windows 9 for the people
Monday, July 16, 2012 1:45 PM

#

EW EW EW Windows 8 with metro on it, no thanks, better start working on windows 9.

<u>Alex Kven</u>
Monday, July 16, 2012 1:46 PM

#

@Darren

" ...The truth is: Nobody needs W8 and hardly anybody wants it."

I guess nobody NEEDS Windows 8 (yet), but there are still many people who want it. Really, people love iPad apps, and if people can make Metro apps as well, then this version of Windows will work. I, in fact, want Windows 8, and I hope to buy a Windows 7 PC so I can get Windows 8 for $15. I have a good attitude about this, and I am excited about this exciting new platform to build cool new apps that lets the app's cause shine without all the clutter of other apps or the desktop in the way. It will be hard to make the initial change, but we will all get used to it.

Darren
Monday, July 16, 2012 2:03 PM
#

@Alex Kven: If Metro is the future I am happy to stick to retro.

Alex Kven
Monday, July 16, 2012 2:07 PM
#

Again, @Darren

About the elop effect...

Microsoft has an anti-elop weapon. People will still buy Windows 7 because they can get Windows 8 Pro for $15. This is a smart move by Microsoft. It allows Windows 7 to be obsolete, but can continue PC sales even prior to the release of Windows 8, by bribing customers with an offer they cannot refuse: Windows 8 PRO for ONLY $15 (Thank you Microsoft!). To put this into perspective, to upgrade from Windows 7 Home Premium to Windows 7 Professional (Pro) costs $90. Won't this hurt full price sales of Windows 8 Pro? No, not after February 2013, and it's only available for individuals anyway. Business still need to mass license Windows 8 Pro for their pcs. So I can guarantee that the Microsoft economics team saw elop coming, and are doing something about it.

Ratros
Monday, July 16, 2012 2:16 PM
#

Another "Ugliness Reevolved" article... Oh, my fault. It's not ugly, it's "fast, fluid, immersive and fun".

nowuniverse
Monday, July 16, 2012 3:26 PM
#

@Steven Sinofsky

New version of Office offers very cool ribbon UI with touch mode, metro icons, typography as well as very nice sliding animation. Don't know if Windows 8 will have that cool experience.

Darren
Monday, July 16, 2012 3:52 PM
#

HERE COMES THE NEW OOOOOOOOOOOFFFICE.

Anyone with an intact brain would believe Microsoft would show us an Office suite which is perfectly adapted to touch based Windows 8 resulting in an overwhelming fast and fluid, immersive touchy experience.

Yeah, right. Look at the start screen after office installation:

cdn3.sbnation.com/.../theverge49_1020_gallery_post.jpg

And here is what The Verge is saying:

www.theverge.com/.../office-2013-screenshots-features-preview

"A Touch Mode feature is present in each Office 2013 application, but it does very little"

Goodnight Microsoft. I think this is no kindergarten management, this is management by monkeys.

Windows Fingerprints 8
Monday, July 16, 2012 5:16 PM
#

Windows 8 with fast, fluid, immersive and fun with metro crap on it. You'll have fingerprints all over your screen, oups... hangon, excuse me, just a second! this garbage is not working.

www.youtube.com/watch

cdn.memegenerator.net/.../22547783.jpg

cdn.memegenerator.net/.../22595302.jpg

I get it....

Give us a real OS!!! Not this piece of garbage.

Anon
Monday, July 16, 2012 5:21 PM
#

@Darren

Why do you bother posting here or even visiting this blog if you are not interested in the software. All of your posts are poor in taste, and frankly, sound childish.

AZJack
Monday, July 16, 2012 5:35 PM
#

"Yeah, right. Look at the start screen after office installation"

Are the pictures not big enough for you?

Fredds
Monday, July 16, 2012 6:56 PM
#

+1 Darren ... everything belonging to Microsoft sucks.... For example take this simple comment form... Even my 14 yrs old can make a working webform with 2 fields!!! There is no notification when session timeout occur and comments is discarded when posted after 15 minutes of the page load.. The page refreshes itself with no notification in case its rejected (either its due to session timeout or spam filter)...

Man they can't make a proper blogging web application.. you are expecting too much from them.... tut tut... Google is the master of web.. Apple is software and hardware gaint.. Intel and other hardware vendors know what they are doing.. M$ is just a theving beast and now it has no room anymore ...

Windows Fingerprints 8
Monday, July 16, 2012 7:20 PM

#

@Darren

@Anon

Well I dont share your opinion about the "microsoft sucks" statement, Im sure Microsoft is not that innovative as others companies, but I think Windows 8 with all the "touch this, touch that" madness is going the wrong way, if you see the idea backwards it seems that the natural evolution is from the touch screen to the mouse pointer, but "the future" is not the Touch madness, and that's what is killing Microsoft, the company itself is full of monkeys as Ballmer and Sinofsky, almost all the design team for the interface, I hate the lack of vision of Windows team, they think that Metro Ui is a revolution, but is not, it's all crippled, and it sucks.

But... I share your opinion that even Google and Apple are doing a better job right now.

Mark522010

Monday, July 16, 2012 7:28 PM

#

The file history app appears to be in perfect harmony with Microsofts new philosophy - make it easy for the masses.

90%+ of users don't even know what a library is, much less how to do one. If you asked the general public, making an app that automatically saves the pictures of the kids would be the number one request and Microsoft has listened.

As with all of the built-in apps, it is lacking in advanced functionality, but will be perfectly acceptable to most users. I hope that more feature-rich apps will be appearing soon, but I am worried that the Metro environment may prevent the advanced functionality I need and developers may ignore my needs as they march towards the Metro/Appstore future.

Darren

Tuesday, July 17, 2012 1:23 AM

#

@Anon: This entire W8 is childish. Windows 8 and Windows Phone is nothing else than toys and designed by Fisher price:

s1.hubimg.com/.../233000_f248.jpg

images.mytoys.com/.../2184661-l.jpg

You know that popular saying about paying peanuts that will get you monkeys? Well if you make toys.............

So it is perfectly normal to be childish on this blog.

@AZJack: "Are the pictures not big enough for you?"

No I want BIGGER tiles on my 40'' screen. Best thing would be 1 tile per screen. As telemtry says that most users click ony one tile. So we can get rid of all the other tiles.

But this was not the point: The point is that Microsft is telling us that the live tiles on start screen are great because they can present so much information and that all the apps only have to be adapted to take full advantage of that great new feature.

And here comes the maker of Windows 8 with his great officue suite and they are showing us the same ugly useless big worthless static tiles like any other legacy application from 20 years ago. What ever they do they do it half baked or even half hearted.

My say is: Do it 100% right or leave it. I am tired of this half baked cr*p which is only good for Microsoft contradicting itself.

Alex Kven
Tuesday, July 17, 2012 9:45 AM
#

I hate the criticism and trolling here on such off topic things. Is this a blog post about Microsoft Office or the Surface? And is it your job to meet every word Microsoft says with criticism?

Nitz Walsh
Tuesday, July 17, 2012 10:09 AM
#

Well, the Office 2013 preview reviews are out. If there's any consensus I've seen (other than "THIS is the touch support? You've got to be kidding me) is this:

"What the heck? What's with all the WHITE? Good lord this is ugly."

Seriously, what are you doing MS? You've taken the "minimalism" and "chrome-less" concept and run if off a cliff. It's an obsession now, and the result is an interface that looks like it was hacked together in Excel in a day. It's shockingly ugly.

Maxin Inn
Tuesday, July 17, 2012 10:30 AM
#

Hey, Office 2013 is out. What I want to say something about the UI you can borrow.

1) A thin border with glow is amazing. PLEASE do not use that thick (6px) border with single color. That is awful.

2) The scrolling in office 2013 is also smooth and modern. It should be used in Windows 8.

3) The whole-white background is a little harsh. There might be some light gray selections.