

Small Businesses Are Leaving Physical Data Vulnerable to Potential Breaches

According to the 2022 Shred-it® Data Protection Report, even though the vast majority (91%) believe that physical and digital data protection are equally important, many small business leaders (SBLs) (53%) assert that digital risks are the greatest data protection risk to their business today. This may have driven SBLs to prioritize more digital security measures to protect their company's most sensitive information, like deploying anti-virus programs (40%) or frequent software updates (28%).

However, as SBLs prioritize digital risks, their organizations are left exposed and more vulnerable to physical risks. Only 27% of SBLs indicate that they collect and destroy sensitive materials when no longer needed (e.g., printed materials, computers, hard drives). This may suggest that SBLs need to prioritize protecting their company's sensitive physical materials, in addition to putting more stringent digital safeguards in place.



Actions Taken by SBLs to Keep Sensitive Data and Information Safe



PHYSICAL

27%

Collect and destroy sensitive materials when no longer needed (e.g., printed materials, computers, hard drives)



DIGITAL

40%

Deploy anti-virus programs

28%

Provide frequent software updates

25%

Implement two-factor authentication

24%

Deploy automated security defenses to detect, investigate, and remediate data security threats



BOTH PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL

28%

Limit sharing of data with third parties

27%

Provide data and information protection awareness training for employees

23%

Conduct vulnerability assessments

23%

Implement and enforce record retention and destruction policies

20%

Establish incident response plans

