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Takeaways

- Computer problems? Beware of the Geek Squad.
- Best Buy may have good prices, but their Geek Squad should be deleted.
- Never be fooled by slick language, the Geek Squad is all talk.

Did you know?

Nothing is worse than losing a hard drive with years of important data and files; so getting good computer technical help is like finding a good surgeon.

new one. For that they charge plenty. So what might be the worst case scenario or nightmare of having the Geek Squad come to your home to perform this job. Think a minute. What happened to me is that they destroyed the hard drive of my old computer and I lost the hard drive in it and, worse yet, lost over five years of all kinds of data and files.

And an interesting aspect of the Geek Squad business model is that if something bad happens and you have to bring something into a Best Buy store they do not allow their agents to physically take anything back to their store. In my case, I had to take back my old computer box, wait several days and then learn that they had destroyed my hard drive and data.

Were they so sorry that they accepted blame and responsibility? Did these military-style geeks offer compensation? No and no. They acted as if somehow it was a strange coincidence that the hard drive died exactly when their agent had removed it from my old computer, tried but failed to connect it to the new computer (that I bought at Best Buy) and then discovered when he put it back into the old computer that it no longer worked. And let me emphasize that when the agent let me know that he intended to remove the hard drive from my old computer that I was very concerned about the risk of doing that - but he insisted that there was no risk. So much for Geek Squad military-style competence.

Best Buy's Geek Squad: Conquest of Branding Over Competence**Warning - Using the Geek Squad May Be Harmful to Your Computer**Click to rate: 1 2 3 4 5 (Rated 2.9 out of 5)By **Joel Hirschhorn**

Jul 31 2006 08:52PM

[CONTACT ME](#)

Face it, the brilliance of American business is not perfecting quality of products and services, it is in marketing, advertising, and branding. That is what the Geek Squad is all about. They have nifty language, make their agents wear uniforms and drive the cutest little cars covered with advertising. They say that: "Our mission is to alleviate the world's computer problems, educate people to fearlessly embrace technology and practice the art of human interaction." Sounds so noble. Their real mission is to make money, which is just fine if their services were top quality. But my own experience and that of many others who have shared their pain on many Internet sites is that the youthful Geek Squad agents have nice personalities but lack technical competence. The result is that when customers expose their prized computers to their agents, because they need technical help, they put themselves at risk.

Computers have become so crucial in our lives and when things go wrong it is like becoming seriously ill. So naturally your instinct is to seek professional help. But the Geek Squad does seem to adhere to the wisdom of health professionals: first do no harm.

One of the Geek Squad's standard services is called data transfer. Simply put, copy data from an old computer to a

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Comments

Type in your comment below(1000 character max)

Your name

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fixxser: Aug 01 2006 09:11PM - You guys that are voting should NOT vote against the comment by GS supervisor. It really is a show of how "un-educated" he is thinking the only way to recover data is by "booting to the OS". Ha Ha Ha, that just tickled me. -4 and going

Proud Nerd cont....: Aug 01 2006 09:05PM - sorry...long winded aren't I? I was saying I would never treat a clients data with any less care than I would my own. But it is our job to make clients aware of the importance of backing up important stuff. Peace and happy computing

Proud Nerd: Aug 01 2006 09:00PM - Just a note: Saw the company I work with (Nerds On Site) mentioned briefly here, and would like to bring up the following point...Nerds are not entry level techs (I have personally been in IT for over 10 years and finally got sick of working for other people). I won't offer up an opinion on Geek Squad, there is really quite enough already here. I will say the following however...My clients are my bread and butter, I go out of my way to educate them as much as they want about technology. Some of them simply don't want to know however, and we have to respect that attitude as well. It does not make them lazy or stupid, they just want their boxes to work. I am not an expert at real estate, French cooking, or car repair yet I own a home, eat, and drive my Nerdmobile every day. That doesn't make me lazy or stupid, I am just not interested in learning those subjects. Am I in business to make money? Of course I am, but I would never mistreat a client, or treat their data with any les

David Wm. Bell: Aug 01 2006 08:28PM - If you still have that Hard Drive, you might want to contact Doug at Recovery Force in Guelph, Ontario, Canada, 866-750-3169, he can usually recover data 'lost' by computer technicians. He's pretty good and we Nerds on Site techs use his expertise regularly instead of being 'cowboy' technicians and attempting to recover using free or \$49~\$99 software from the internet. As an alternative, you might want to look at the guys who Best Buy wanted to acquire before creating geeks. (+1)

Can You Tell I hate CompUSA?: Aug 01 2006 08:25PM - I was perusing through some more of the comments and saw someone mention that for the price of the Geek Squad service you could buy a library of Do-It-Yourself books and know how to build PCs from ground up. Well, from some of the Best Buy prices Ive seen (even before Geek Squad) you could afford to get A+ certified yourself ;) (-1)



the toque: Aug 01 2006 08:22PM - I am getting tired of people not taking responsibility for their actions. Sure it sucks that your hard drive died at the exact moment the Geek Squad tech was attempting to transfer your data, but you had a backup of the data so it wasn't a problem, right?? Buy an external hard disk and make regular backups of your data, it would cost around \$100 bucks and you could use it to move your data to your new computer, thus not having to pay the Geeks to do it for you. With Hard Disks getting so large it is time for home users to be worried about Data Protection. If your hard drive had just plain died would you have written an article about (insert HD Manufacturer here) and how they should have warned you that Hard Disks sometimes die, and that you have now lost 5 years worth of data? Suck it up, lesson learned, BACKUP!

I REALLY hate CompUSA: Aug 01 2006 08:16PM - Great, now I look like a bumbling retard for spelling computer with an "i" (-1)



I hate CompUSA: Aug 01 2006 08:15PM - Im currently a CompUSA employee and am the ONLY



A+ certified technician. The other non-cert techs are indeed very little short of bumbling retards. Never take your computer to a big chain store and expect it to get fixed, because its all about the money. All the good techs work in small ma and pa shops. And for all the people who want to knock the A+, yes, on its lonesome, it means nothing. But its the perfect foundation for an education in compiter repair. Taking the test for your drivers license and passing doesnt make you a good driver, and passing your MCSE doesnt make you a good tech either. No matter what the field is, only real world experience makes you any good. The A+ does exactly what it should; give you a solid stepping stone into the field, one which almost no computer tech should ever be without.

(-1)



  **CUSA Tech:** Aug 01 2006 08:13PM - I work in the Tech Shop at a CompuUSA I have A+ which is easy to get. You have to realize that most people that bring in coputers for repair know very little about the way they actually work. We get so many people coming in who have had problems for months but now they cant get on the internet or the computer doesnt boot. Even people who have important buisness files are like I dont have a backup & there HD is clicking. They just wait so longthat thee is not much you can do for them. We dont get paid alot & we are under alot of pressure from customers & management. Underpaid & overworked its always sell sell sell. Im sure its not that different at GS probably even worse. As for the hard drive I dont see how moving it from ne computer to another is going to destroy the data on it unles it was dropped kicked (happens sometimes) or formatted. Even then recovery software could be used on it. It probably was going bad thats why this guy bought a new computer. Im sure this computer was bar!



(+1)



  **c6d.net:** Aug 01 2006 08:07PM - LOL the drive probably died coincidentally. And yeah, the A+ cert is a joke, and even back then it was a joke. Nothing beats experience. Any training leading to an A+ cert only prepares you for perfect world situations. Too bad it's never a perfect world problem :D



  **Computer Tech Man - Not related To G.S.:** Aug 01 2006 07:57PM - How else are our future enterprise admins suppose to get any field experience. Geek Squad, Geeks on Call, Nerds On Site, Make it Work... These are just a few of the companies who hire beginning level experience technicians. Thank god for these companies!!!

(-1)



  **postit:** Aug 01 2006 07:52PM - At CompUSA you have to be A+ certified but it is pretty easy to get.

  **Jason:** Aug 01 2006 07:42PM - i have had excellent service and got my computer fix and i thought it was affordable

  **George:** Aug 01 2006 07:21PM - When you pay your employees almost nothing and sell your services at a high price, you can expect that your employees will be bumbling retards with computer repair experience that only amounts to taking a computer apart to install RAM. I am willing to bet over 75% of the Geeksquad are not CompTIA A+ certified. It would be a shame if any computer retail store would pay their technicians what they are worth. CompUSA isn't much better, but at least their services are cheaper. Bottom line is that retail is more focused on revenue than their quality of services.

  **Josh:** Aug 01 2006 07:05PM - I use to be a GeekSquad Agent at Best Buy. None of them are required to show proof that they are even A+ Certified which is a joke of a certification at best.



(+1)

  **Design Box:** Aug 01 2006 06:48PM - If the computer that the old harddrive was being moved to had the power cable plugged in (without the machine running of course!!!) it will totally FUBAR your harddrive, because there is still power running through the motherboard/molex's. Also, are these special suits worn by the GS static proof? And if not, did the agent ground himself? These things do happen, but you can probably still fix the drive. If it doesn't even spin up, they probably blew the circuit board - which is power spike related. If it does spin up, then it could be easier to fix. Either way, find the same model as your fubar drive, and you can transfer the circuit board in a clean room. Here is a lesson to GS people - ONLY DO DATATRANSFERS OVER IDE to USB DEVICES. They are a godsend. You can even have a seperate USB harddrive, and copy from one to the other. If the customers computer is still operating, you can do the transfer via network, or CD backup.



(+1)

  **Jesus:** Aug 01 2006 06:24PM - Omg what kind of fucktard calls geek squad. u r teh l3r.



(-4)

  **Another Agent:** Aug 01 2006 06:07PM - I'm a geeksquad agent at an undisclosed store and I can vouch for how often our precinct fucks over customers. What our "data backup" service actually is is never explained correctly, leaving customers confused when they get back discs that they just paid \$99 instead of getting their data reloaded into their reformatted/new computer. Which is great because that data on discs is usually totally useless to them. I've had a women break down in the store because she got back discs in this manner. The prices we charge are fucking ridiculous...\$39 for a memory install is absurd anyway you look at it...I don't care how little the customer knows about computers. My favorite part about working this job is how smarmy and condescending my coworkers are and how they lament their dealings with people who know less than them. Its really great. Fucking computer illiterate people pay my wages...I can't stand that egotistical bullshit. As for this guy, its interesting to me that the whole story i



(+1)

  **M:** Aug 01 2006 05:54PM - This isn't just a problem with GS. I haven't seen a company yet that doesn't have one slow wheel on tech support. Bad people get through the cracks. Also, 5 years of data? That's a long time never to learn what a backup was, nor bother to ask about it. However, the first thing the tech should have done is check whether you backed up your data. If you didn't he should have done it for you. However if your computer had crashed, or couldn't boot into windows, it could have had a pre-existing problem you never bothered to diagnose (or have someone else diagnose). If you're reading this and have never backup up you drive or had a constant mysterious computer suddenly crashing problem checked out learn from this poor guy's mistake: back up your data. Backup your data. Backup your data.



(+2)

  **I hate you:** Aug 01 2006 05:50PM - You're a retard anyways. If you call use the geek squad you deserve to lose your harddrive. "And let me emphasize that when the agent let me know that he intended to remove the hard drive from my old computer that I was very concerned about the risk of doing that" ^^^ That shows your level of technical experience, let me assure you that if you drive your car on the free way that there is a risk of god taking offence and it exploding into small chunks. go home.



(-5)

  **Jason:** Aug 01 2006 05:47PM - CompTIA A+ Certification doesn't mean anything. Maybe it did about 5 yrs ago but not anymore...A+ is crap..and being a IT/Network Admin/CCNA, I wouldn't let them morons work on my computer in the first place! I've actually look at computers that the fagsquad has looked at and repaired...ie: a friend of mine took his comp to the FS a few months before I knew him, they told him that his motherboard was bad, I took out the batter disconnected everything, ran a rare earth magnet over the bios, put the battery back in, plugged in another power supply and tada! it worked!



(-4)

  **zephyrus:** Aug 01 2006 05:44PM - Don't be hard on this guy who lost 5 years of data. Maybe, like us, he had an external back-up drive. But, somehow or other, that too didn't work per the Geek Squad. First the hard drive, then the back-up drive. GS said we lost every thing due to a power surge. All we do know is that 5 years of data is gone.


(-1)


  **/dev/null:** Aug 01 2006 05:28PM - Akhtawd, that's all good and well IF the computer in question still boots. If it doesn't boot, I'd be curious to know how you'd get it onto the network. I'd like a copy of the magic tool that allows such a thing, as it would be dead useful. It's also not at all risky to remove a HDD from a machine (one that boots or not) provided you don't do stupid things such as kick it around like a hockey puck, drop it, throw it around, or see if you can make a spark between your finger and the drive. I routinely move HDDs from one machine to another in my own house (we have 12 computers; various Linux, Windows and Macs) as sometimes data transfer over the network or even over a crossover cable just takes too long and it's faster to simply pop the drive in as a slave to another machine. On a different note, as with any business (especially a chain business), quality of service will vary from location to location no matter what you do. Some places have very skilled and certified


(+1)


  **J03:** Aug 01 2006 05:21PM - Geek Squad - the title hits the nail on the head. It is all about marketing, and I constantly see systems with memory intentionally unseated (multiple times from clients bringing their systems in to GS and refusing to have GS fix their machine because of a 4 week delay or some other BS reason such as the motherboard being fried) They disconnect CPU fans, whether intentionally or just gross negligence by the agents. All in all GS needs to go bankrupt sooner then later. Another company that needs to go under is Onforce. www.onforce.com by design is the bottom of the bucket random picking of local technicians which are assigned to a job by whoever can click accept fast enough get the jobs. There are no checks and balances to see if they are qualified for the work that is to be

performed. CompUSA also runs this company, which effectively dissolved CUSA's onsite division just to support Onforce. Better to play the lottery and hope you win, to buy yourself a new computer after these id1


 **John R.:** Aug 01 2006 04:55PM - First off no one should call geeksquad seconded you should have asked to see their CompTIA A+ Certification to make sure they know what they're doing. I'd Also Like to say Anyone in Lancaster or York Countys in PA go to JSR Tech <http://www.jsr-tech.com> Recycle@jsr-tech.com

 **lol:** Aug 01 2006 04:50PM - I believe the first rule of computers is the "Last Touched Rule", which might have just been a coincidence of the hard drive going bad at the same moment... but if the company doing the service isn't prepared to be liable for at least part of it then it's not worth doing business with them in the first place. Find a real Computer Service center not some "Super Store".


 **Jessica:** Aug 01 2006 04:46PM - After what I went through a year ago to have my computer replaced (they killed my dear), I trust nothing Best Buy or Geek Squad related. When there is a website chronicling how awful Best Buy and its related entities (bestbuysux.org), you know something is wrong. I've yet to find such a page for any of their competitors.

 **Humored:** Aug 01 2006 04:34PM - Lesson learned: Backup anything important to you and don't call Geek Squad. At the price they charge you could have bought a library worth of do-it-yourself books and know how to completely build/rebuild computers from the ground up. Your loss.


(+3)

 **agent-x:** Aug 01 2006 04:30PM - i work for the geek squad and i see things like this everyday. strange how your hard drive was dead as soon as the agent took it out.. yes. but the fact that you had five years worth of data on a single hard drive is just horrible. back it up it just takes you 2 min. if you should be ranting about anything how about you go nuts on the hard drive manufacture?


(+1)

 **Learn Something:** Aug 01 2006 04:14PM - I find it funny that you used a computer to have 5 years worth of data but you didn't have a backup of this data. Here is some FREE advice. Go to Borders, purchase a book about computers and apply. I hate lazy people.

(-4)

 **Bushido:** Aug 01 2006 04:13PM - Funny, last time I checked, a bad hard drive could be the cause of a computer not starting.... and it's their responsibility to make sure you back up your data? Wow.


(+1)

 **Richard Cranium:** Aug 01 2006 04:04PM - The problem is consistency. When you call GS for onsite work you are pulling agents from a pool in your area. It is luck of the draw. Whoever is available is scheduled. Some agents are better than others. Some care about the client and their interaction with the client. Some care about the money they make. the problem is your level of service is based on the agent's level of ability. Agents are not trained specifically to be agents. There is no formal training or certification required of any kind to be an onsite agent or in store agent. Geeksquad is borrowing the reputation and ability of those agents to make money. Some of those agents are rock stars and are the best at what they do. They have the clients that are satisfied and would recommend GS to their friends. These are the people that are keeping Geeksquad on the map. There are far more good agents than there are bad ones. It is a shame when things fail and go bad but it is not always somebody's fault.



(+2)

 **chris:** Aug 01 2006 04:02PM - Try <http://www.onforce.com/> next time



(-5)



 **redross:** Aug 01 2006 03:52PM - I purchased a camera from Best Buy and purchased insurance. I didn't know it was GEEK SQUAD. It broke three days past the 30 day replacement from best buy. So Geek SQUAD had it over a month and returned my NEW CAMERA with a HUGE DENT in the front. IT TOOK ANOTHER 2 months to get it back, still not fixed correctly. GEEK SQUAD and BEST BUY are scum. AMEX wouldn't even give me my money back cause it was a THIRD party doing the work. I didn't know that GEEK SQUAD was what I signed up to and if it is under the roof of Best Buy then it shouldn't be considered a third party. SO now I WILL NEVER DO BIZ with GEEK SQUAD, BEST BUY or AMERICAN EXPRESS. I purchased the camera for two special occasions and NO ONE WOULD TAKE RESPONSIBILITY of the damage done by Geek Squad. I couldn't believe they returned a new camera that THEY BROKE in their care. THEY should have just handed me a new camera. I have been dealing with this issue for over 5

months and have given up. WILL NE



  **Michael Ross:** Aug 01 2006 03:48PM - I love the Geek Squad. So many times have I been in a Best Buy and overheard a GS tech give rather poor advice to an individual. More often than not, the advice is way too technical, and the poor customer just stands there, forced to listen how the new "N" router is an absolute must for her to check her e-mail. Likewise, I have met dozens of people whom GS has totally screwed up their PC and/or wireless router. I get to come in and look like a hero, usually getting some extra \$\$\$ or perk for helping to fix the problem in less time and for less \$\$\$\$. GS, I need baseball tickets, can you screw up someone's PC for me???

(-2)



  **Ron Ruppel...again.:** Aug 01 2006 03:46PM - I didn't realize there were GS members on this page or else this would have been in my first post. I WILL NEVER, EVER USE GS SERVICES, AGAIN. I've found that, unfortunately, it takes a little threatening to actually get things done half-assed correct by the GS. I was, how can I put this, emotional over the service I rec'd by the GS. So, I talked to the manager and told her that I wasn't going to bring any of my business to "Worst" Buy anymore. Having worked for them in the past, I was saddened to see the GS tarnish Best Buy in my eyes. So, I decided to give them one more shot. I really hate giving people another chance and having it blow up in my face. So, thanks to you Geek Squad, I no longer go to Best Buy for anything. God, you guys are terrible.

  **Ron Ruppel:** Aug 01 2006 03:41PM - Personally, I hate the Geek Squad. Luckily, I ran into one of these "computer gurus" while he was "off-duty". He's how the conversation went. Me: Hey, you work at the Geek Squad, don't you? Geek Squad member: Why, yes. Yes, I do. Me: Dude, you need to work on your f#@king customer service. G.S.M.: I do? Me: Yeah, you do. I almost rang your skinny little neck the other day. G.S.M.: Oh... Me: *slaps GSM on the back* Have a nice day!



(-2)

  **Andrew Schott:** Aug 01 2006 03:38PM - I find it amusing that there are people that claim to be GS Sup's and that A+ certs this and that are required, but I have yet to speak with a GS tech that knows a damn thing. 2 anecdotes from the Milwaukee WI area: I was looking for parts for a homebrew PVR. Wanted it over that day and not wait for shipping via a web order. Stopped in and asked for tv tuner cards. I was told by all three GS guys that what I wanted not only wasn't sold there but didn't exist. Brilliant. A while later, after the irritation of that whole BB experience wore off, I went in looking for a FM transmitter for my Rio Carbon. Saw tons of iPod specific (like everywhere else in town) but zero generic ones. So I asked a fella (was in audio dept) and he took me over to the mp3 player section in the PC dept. A GS dude came over and just would not accept the fact that I was happy with the Rio and just wanted to beam it to a stereo across the room. I was told that only iPods could do that and that's



(+2)

  **xxsiriusxburnxx:** Aug 01 2006 03:35PM - You first and only mistake was wasting time and money on geek squad, 20 min of surfing the web or talking to a local computer junkie would have had you set to fix this issue. I've had hard drives crash randomly so it can happen, important to back up your data firstly. At least this will give you some initiative to learn how to do some of these things and do them yourself, but hell you could say the same thing to me about cars and home decor, but just a suggestion


(+1)


  **GS Supervisor:** Aug 01 2006 03:27PM - As with the other agents whom have posted, I am very disturbed by what I have read. One gentleman proposed using a patch cable to transfer data? Most of the drives we get are so badly damaged they won't boot into windows. How will you transfer data, using a protocol such as TCP/IP, if you can't boot into an OS to support that protocol? Ooh wait, was that too technical, I forgot we don't know anything. Yes I am a supervisor for the GS, and I try to only hire people with an A+ or similar pro experience. Sometimes the bad ones slip through the cracks, but for the most part GS tries very hard to be as professional and courteous as any other business naturally would. To all those that love us, I am pleased to hear it, to those that hate us because of one bad experience, we can't please everyone all the time; though we would love it if we could.


(-4)

  **Agent 796:** Aug 01 2006 03:27PM - There is always a Risk for digital Information, I don't protect your informations from being in a house fire, robbed, physical damaged, Electrical Damage, Transfer corruption, or failure to keep a hdd after a service is completed! GS recommends to keep the original HDD for 90 Days! Is that scenciable thing to do in the first place? As a disclaimer for our customers, We recommend that you backup your own data first! We are not responciabile for your lost information due to lack of details to collect it.


(-1)


 **Agent 796:** Aug 01 2006 03:21PM - The way the world works is people have special hobbies, jobs and lifestyles. As a tech for BBY, I dont change the oil in my own car, For the convenience, I take my car to the shop to have it taken care of. I know that someone there has better knowledge about cars than I do. 1. They can do it in a quicky and fast manner. 2. They have tools and oil supplied to what my car needs. 3. They can dispose of the oil properly and is usually included in the charge. The same goes for people that use computers everyday, Yes, Indeed they might know how to repair or complete a computer install. Half the time a customer comes in, its ither someone that knows lil knowledge about computers and/or does not have time to complete such a task that might take them 2-24 hours to finish. As for Backups, Lets get one thing straight, Nobody knows anothers information/data better than the owner! There is always a Risk for digital Information, I dont protect your informations from being in a house fi


 **Drdan:** Aug 01 2006 03:08PM - I bought a router and wireless setup from Best Buys and paid to have their Geek Squad install it. The came out three times and never got it to work. And then because of the length of time that passed while they tried to fix the problem, Best Buys didn't want to take back the set I bought from them. Finally after get the manager and having a real fit she took the stuff back for store credit. Needless to say i don't think muck of the Geek Squad or Best Buys. Cavat emture!


 **I.Hate.Geek.Squad:** Aug 01 2006 03:08PM - I had a Geek Squad employee come to my house 45 minutes late, and he couldn't even fix my computer... After wasting all that time and money, I found SDP ComputerHelp (www.sdpnetworks.net), and they fixed my printer, cd drive, and did all my networking remotely! And, since they are much cheaper than Geek Squad, now whenever I have a problem, I go to them.

(+2)


 **Aunt Acid:** Aug 01 2006 03:07PM - If you drive a car; get insurance. If you own a gun; get a lock. If you own a computer; BACK UP YOUR DATA!!! Ka-Ka O'kurs Kemosabe.


 **scronline.com:** Aug 01 2006 03:04PM - Yup, I can't tell you how many GS computers I've had to fix. From basic tasks that were missed (like applying a patch against the blaster virus) to more advanced things such as harddrive corruption caused by their techs that required me to do a disk recovery for the customer. Sad part is most of the time they start out as easy 20-40 minute fixes and end up costing the customer a couple of hundred. My shop charges \$60/hr for onsite residential work. I rarely have any residential call go over 2 hours but the average is about 1-1.5 hours (EVERY time it goes over 2 hours it's because someone else messed with it first) which is only \$120. Geek Squad is charging \$150 or more per house call. I'll let you do the math. My company has been in business since 1991, I personally have 15 years of professional experience along with the 10 years I tinkered before that. When hiring techs, they have to show an aptitude for the work, and then they still go through training and have acce

 **Satisfied.Customer:** Aug 01 2006 03:00PM - Geek Squad has Always helped me out whenever I had any problems and I would Recommned them to anyone. I've used them on several occasions and at different locations around the U.S. and have been satisfied everytime.



 **Dr. Ph0bius:** Aug 01 2006 02:59PM - I'd say "you get what you pay for", but the Geek Squad isnt cheap to use! As for the employees... Best Buy gets what they pay for. Why would anyone with any credentials or education/certifications go there to make what they make (yes, I do know the wage they pay, I have 2 ex-coworkers who worked there VERY BREIFLY). You could get a reputable company with technicians with credentials for the same price... but they wont have a TV commercial or technicians is dork clothes (not to insult dorks! lol).

(-1)



 **OldBBTech:** Aug 01 2006 02:56PM - I worked as a tech for BB for almost 8 months but left just before the Geek Squad invasion. While the tech in this case may have been less than competent I would place the blame squarely on the management and corporate structure of BB and GS. The old adage "promoted to highest level of incompetence" takes on a new meaning in BB. It is likely that the tech was under trained, under paid and given inadequate resources to do his/her job. It's not about people or technology at BB, its about the dollar signs. Having been behind the scenes at BB I WOULD NOT take my computer to them to be fixed. Ever. Hire the kid next door. You'll save money and have the same odds of getting a working machine.



 **I.G.S. Computer Services:** Aug 01 2006 02:51PM - Having a small business for a number of years, i've heard good things and bad things where the Geek Squad is concerned. They do hire a lot of younger

people, the good being they are probably somewhat knowledgeable about computers, but the bad being they don't have the schooling, certifications, or experience necessary to be proficient at it. I even taught at a school for a year, and some of my students were best buy employees. As far as backing up data, don't assume everyone knows how to do it, I get some of the best noob phone calls all the time. I would try a backup first, and if a customer's hard drive died, I would eat the job as I've done in the past. You are only as good as your word. If you have friends or family with computer problems, tell them to shop around, I'm pretty sure you can find a local guy with a lot of experience and better prices than GS.



  **agent 923:** Aug 01 2006 02:43PM - learn how 2 backup data its not that hard... plus geeksquad charges the world for simple tasks

(-2)



  **Agent 760 Billy:** Aug 01 2006 02:34PM - When you buy a hard drive expect it to fail in time. Anything that is man made will fail in time. Backup your data always end of story.

  **Agent 760 Billy:** Aug 01 2006 02:34PM - When you buy a hard drive expect it to fail in time. Anything that is man made will fail in time. Backup your data always end of story.



(-5)

  **Bran:** Aug 01 2006 02:34PM - I've been on the techs end of a story like this. Its too likely the customer brought in an old computer that didnt even work in the first place (probably hadnt been turned on in months)then blamed it on the techs. Dont be so quick to believe someone who knows NOTHING about computers. Customers do this crap all the time. But the Techs should have covered their butts and powered on the machine before the customer left when they dropped off the computer and MADE SURE IT WORKED. One last thing, even when you do give a person their own personal data backed up and restored, no amount of explaining can begin to make them understand how to access it again. For example, MS Excel files dont open again unless you install Excell, or your Precious Quicken files. Half the time they didnt own the applications in the first place. So what is a tech supposed to do, reinstall an illegal copy for them again, yeah right..... but wait .. they actually EXPECT you to.. go figure.



(+1)



  **agent 1159:** Aug 01 2006 02:32PM - Also, you clearly refuse to accept any responsibility in this matter. And it is YOUR responsibility to backup your own data. People such as you, whom refuse to ever accept any responsibility themselves are the ABSOLUTE WORST. This is not an issue in which you are blameless, even though you try to spin it that way. Nor is the entire company incompetent. That's like someone calling your entire family inbred morons, just because you are an inbred moron.

(-2)



  **SuckersBornDaily:** Aug 01 2006 02:29PM - geek squad is full of a bunch of hacks and wanna be techs. no one in their right mind would pay them to touch anything, i wouldnt trust them to change a light bulb.

(-1)

  **agent 1159:** Aug 01 2006 02:28PM - Worked there for two years, believe it or not, had this exact thing happen to me. A customer's drive literally died on his drive home. He got home, the computer didn't boot, the hard drive wasn't detected at all. He brought it back in, sure enough, the hard drive was completely dead, would not power on or spin at all. The fact is, this can happen. Yes, the odds are massively slim, but it happened to me. Of course, the customer freaked out and blamed it on me, having no concept of how computer components work. Electronic components can fail at any time, and it is not usually anyone's fault. I would have had to overvolt, or purposely short the drive to have made this happen. Being the store manager, of course I did not do this. No sane person would charge someone 200 bucks to fix their computer, after having purposely destroyed it. My day was made into a living hell by said customer, no matter how much I tried to be considerate, or what I offered to do for him. Ask yourself



  **Sol Rosenberg:** Aug 01 2006 02:25PM - I was a Double Agent for the Geek Squad. I left months ago because I didn't like the way things were going. Geek Squad was great when it first came into the market, but then Best Buy ruined it. They hired fools who knew nothing and basically caused issues like this. If I went to this person's house I would have recommended backing up before I did anything. If they declined then it's their own fault. The drive would have died anyway. I worked on people's computers privately for 10 years. Drives die, it happens.



(+4)

  **Bob:** Aug 01 2006 02:25PM - You shouldn't trust someone like Geek Squad with your data to being



with, and like others have said, pulling an old harddrive out of an old computer is trivial. Call someone you know if reputable, rather than calling some scam from your tv. Research is half the battle!



(-1)



  **Subsound90:** Aug 01 2006 02:24PM - Alot of flames for comments. While yes he should have backed up his data before hand, or anytime, many people don't know how. GS entire business is to help people with their computers, not give them back a paperweight and say sorry. Many people, even very intelligent people, don't want to go through the hassle of working on a frustrating peice of machinery when they can pay some one can do it in a quarter of the time. Heck the mechanics who fix my car have barely high school diplomas, and I have done repairs on my car when they are busy, but I doupt they would call me an idiot if I bought in my car for an oil change (closest I could think of to a backup) and give it back to me in an undrivable condition. Even though my car is over 16 years old, I think I would have something to say if I bought anything in for repairs and it came back ruined and the only thing the person says is "Well, it was going to die anyways so pay me". "Dead" does not always mean destroyed, I bet the

  **mike:** Aug 01 2006 02:20PM - yeah... idiot. learn how to backup.



(-5)

  **pete:** Aug 01 2006 02:15PM - removing a hard drive from an old machine IS pretty trivial. they suck, but the lost data os your fault. BACK UP YOUR DATA!!!



  **Anon Free:** Aug 01 2006 02:13PM - And even with articles telling the world how marketing dupes the general public... people still fall for the Geek Squad commercials and call them instead of a competent technician.



  **A former agent:** Aug 01 2006 02:02PM - As someone who worked for said company I have a few things to say. First and foremost, I am sorry you lost you data. Second, this is a wonderfully purposeful and readable article that is to the point but not slanderous, well done. Finally, yes Geeksquad hires brain-dead monkeys who do not know the difference between a power supply and their left shoe. There is no requirement of skill sets to be hired and as such a very competent tech may work on your computer or a cashier that wanted a raise may do the work. Generally speaking most are pretty good, but your milage may vary.

(+1)



  **Keith:** Aug 01 2006 02:00PM - I had a friend that worked at Best Buy in their Geek Squad. This friend did know what he was doing but he told me that they hired someone for the Geek Squad who didnt know anything about computers. The reason they put him in there was because the automated telephone interview that everyone goes through thought that that is where he would be best. This new employee wanted to be a floor salesman not in the Geek Squad. The reaone why they seem to "lack technical competence" is because they don't have technical competence.



(+2)

  **Brandon-Matrix PC:** Aug 01 2006 01:56PM - I have my own IT consulting biz. A lady had brought her machine to the GS and they returned it to her in WORSE shape than when she brought it in, not to mention the porking she got from their fees. I got may hands on it and first, opened the case. Clumps of dust and crap fell all over my workbench telling me that they didn't even inspect the PC's internal workings!!! What a bunch of incompetent morons!!



  **Mick:** Aug 01 2006 01:54PM - Sorry posting twice here and im looking at some of these posts and it seems that some of the people have no clue what they are talking about. I agree with his Post %100. and if you had any Idea about computer systems and changing over drives you would understand, I for one in my 10 years of building computers have never had a drive die on me while transporting it to a new system.

(+1)

  **m.r.t.:** Aug 01 2006 01:46PM - Short-hand version of this article: I have a 5 year old hard drive that I didn't back up, and now my data is lost. Best Buy sux.



  **Mario Aeby:** Aug 01 2006 01:36PM - "[...] lost over five years of all kinds of data and files" Thou shalt backup important data regularly, and this definitely doesn't mean "every 5 year or so"!

(+3)



  **zlemonz:** Aug 01 2006 01:28PM - I speak from many years of experience that sometimes hard drives can and do fail just from moving from one machine to another. I've had hard drives fail on me just

from being powered down after being on for many years. The reality is, hard drives fail all the time and usually when changes are happening. I guess that's why we are supposed to back up all the time, not just when something is changing.



(+3)

  **ArthurH:** Aug 01 2006 01:28PM - I've been fixing computers for a living for many years now, and I have had customers computers die on my desk many times. Computers are screwy sometimes and you never know when they are going to crash. It is extremely important to have some form of a backup if you have any valuable data, I always recommend an external USB hard drive. Judging by your article it seems the Geek Squad could use some improving, but dont put all the blame on them, it is YOUR responsibility to backup YOUR valuable data.



(+5)

  **OnSite Computer Services:** Aug 01 2006 01:27PM - I would not put it past them, either. It is obviously a smart business decision to have a waiver signed, and if the reasons need to be explained, well then... We use waivers, it would be silly to not have one, if you are intelligent enough to realize that this stuff happens all the time. It would be very easy to be sued by a customer that does not understand what we do for a living, without a waiver.



(+1)

  **Craig bryan:** Aug 01 2006 01:23PM - I don't think the point is if he did or didn't back-up his data. I think that the Geek Squad should be responsible for losing the data (unless there is a disclaimer somewhere in the fine print that voids their responsibility).

(+1)

  **Evan:** Aug 01 2006 01:18PM - So many problems: 1) If you are ignorant enough to buy your computer from Worst Buy, well, then, you deserve every misfortune that befalls you. 2) Technology, especially personal computer architecture, is typically composed of a very closely knit system---which means that if one small thing fails, the entire system can easily fail along with it. Swapping hard drives is never foolproof, but at the same time, there's not much a Geek Squad agent could do to make it go any better or worse in terms of data recovery. Judging by your story, it would not have mattered who swapped the HD's---the end result would have been the same. The Geek Squad is an easy scapegoat for you because they were the ones charged with performing the swap, but logic tells us that there is another culprit; which leads me to: 3) As other have pointed out, if you went 5 years (or 5 months for that matter!) without backing up data that is valuable to you, then you shouldn't be in charge of said data managem



(+1)

  **narc:** Aug 01 2006 01:17PM - neg



(-2)

  **Narc:** Aug 01 2006 01:13PM - childish....



(-6)

  **I H8 GS also:** Aug 01 2006 01:11PM - Obviously you were too stupid to even get into the "military-style". Would you take your grandmother to get her hip replaced by a bunch of acne-faced dropouts? ALWAYS make backups and NEVER trust sticky fingered teenagers. And quit saying military style every other word, its very annoying.



(-1)

  **LOL!** Aug 01 2006 01:10PM - I called you a flamer, not a flammer... WTF is a flammer?? Go back to your difficult wallpaper changes, you moron! LOL!

(-3)

  **BlenderStyle:** Aug 01 2006 01:04PM - Yeah, BestBuy freakin' sucks. Once a co-worker of mine bought a copy of Quicken from BestBuy and couldn't activate it online. She called Intuit (the makers of Quicken) and they told her it was a pirated copy. Thanks, BestBuy!



(-9)

  **Narc:** Aug 01 2006 12:55PM - ...at least you didn't cuss this time. Sigh, you call me a flammer and here you are. The biggest flammer of them all, your here just to try to cause trouble. Have fun!



(-5)

  **ex-GS-emp:** Aug 01 2006 12:53PM - This coming from an ex-Geek squad employee. There were



some things that did happen exactly like that. May not have been a hard drive but some other part. If the computer was old enough, the transportation/removal/"shock" of the drive "could" have killed it. But I will also say that I can not speak to the smarts of the agent that worked on it. He could have hid something as well.

  **tired of reading...:** Aug 01 2006 12:53PM - first of all, i work for bby but not gs, at first i also thought that gs is a VERY expensive service for something that i can do, for example, i recently added some ram to my laptop, gs charges \$40 for something that only takes me less than 2 mins to do, but what most people dont know is that with ram upgrade you also need to reset your system memory, and gs does that, it took me 30mins to find the correct setting for my comp, so for your avg soccer mom the \$40 isnt really that expensive for the time and trouble that she could have saved. but for their other services im not sure...



(-1)



  **LOL!** Aug 01 2006 12:50PM - Narc is a perfect example of Gov't waste. Sitting on his fat arse, posting to sites, while our tax dollars pay his salary! Way to go, you silly 486SX2 nut!

(-4)



  **John S:** Aug 01 2006 12:49PM - It appears you were having problems in the first place. It could be you waited a bit too long to call the Geek Squad? It is always a risk you take not backing up your important information. If information is so important to a person. Do not be lazy or cheap. Buy a external hardrive and save your information!!



(+1)

  **tech that repairs ltops that fail to be repaired properly under the "best buy warranty":** : Aug 01 2006 12:47PM - (add to previous article) people's cpu/memory and breaks plastics, removes rubber feet, scratches cases and sits on lcd panels. just my two cents



  **OnSite Computer Services:** Aug 01 2006 12:46PM - Chewy, you should try MiniPE. That app you mentioned is on there, as well as EasyRecovery Pro. Check it out, it's a life saver!



(+5)

  **tech that repairs ltops that fail to be repaired properly under the "best buy warranty":** Aug 01 2006 12:46PM - i work for a warranty ASP and regularly get computers in that have extended warranties purchased through best buy and not the mfctr. when best buy fails to fix it, they wind up coming here and i have to explain to them had they gotten the warranty directly from the mfctr. then we could cover it under warranty. i am sure there are many happy cust of geek squad, and many competent techs there too, but in my exp, i have seen just by removing an old hdd from a pc, or moving the pc to a diff part of the cubicle, the hdd can crap out. they were ibm drives if it matters. anyhow, i agree with the gent that said calling your customers idiots is suicide. that's what we're here for, to fix the "idiot customer's" computer. customers should get proper service for what they pay. the only customers i have a problem with are the blatant liars....."well i had 1gb of mem when i brought it in" sir it only had 512.....etc. i swear, we must have a parts fairy that comes at night, downgrades

  **Narc:** Aug 01 2006 12:46PM - Onsite Computer Repair: It seems with are both navie, i want my customers (I also own a small business on the side) to know how to backup their data, and a few do. However you want to run a business that you are happy with people not knowing how to backup data. Well we both have a wonderful dream world we live in.

(-1)



  **Chewy:** Aug 01 2006 12:44PM - It could easily have been a drive that was on its way out anyways. If the drive is still recognized by the bios and not clicking then try using GetDataBack for NTFS or FAT32 to recover the files. I can say that I like to see it when Geek Squad makes a mistake b/c they are my competition; however, in this case I don't necessarily think its their fault.

  **narc:** Aug 01 2006 12:43PM - LOL!, i do apologize to you if thats the way it seems. Actually its just a slow business day, and i do have a job. I work for a local government, and im the network admin. I have worked my way through the ranks as a pc repair tech, and i did go to college for this kinda stuff, However i built my first computer back in 1993 (486 33mhz) I however am a little over weight, but not fat. Have a nice day.



(-2)

  **bob:** Aug 01 2006 12:43PM - who buys a computer at best buy?



(-2)

  ;-/: Aug 01 2006 12:42PM - There are some idiots on this site! I have seen MFTs get corrupted by bad IDE cables! Do not say that only dropping the drive will harm it... PS, bad cables, many other factors... If you work on computers, get a new job!



(-2)

  **rcorrino:** Aug 01 2006 12:39PM - Your first mistake is trusting Best Buy. I shop from their stores (because of the cheap prices) but ALWAYS assume that service ends when I walk out the door (except for returns). I never even ask the salespeople questions on their merchandise. I do all my reserch beforehand....



(+4)

  **LOL!:** Aug 01 2006 12:38PM - Narc, you faggot! You would not hire anyone because you sit on your fat arse all day posting flaming crap, and because you don't work, you are poor! Go back to your hole, boy!



(-1)



  **Ex-Agent:** Aug 01 2006 12:28PM - I kinda liked it as 'hite', Narc.

(-4)



  **OnSite Computer Services:** Aug 01 2006 12:27PM - "Its also our job as IT, IS, or DP (data process) whatever your called, to inform people and tell them how to do this if they don't know how!" Obviously. But people do not come to a computer shop for coffee. They come because something bad happened. Aside from renting a billboard, it is very difficult to reach them until they come through the door. When they do come, backups are a priority, and I always persuade them in that direction. People have lots of data for many reasons. Music, photos, etc. 5-10GB is not uncommon.

(+3)



  **dillon:** Aug 01 2006 12:27PM - If YOU didn't backup YOUR data then it's YOUR fault!

  **Jason:** Aug 01 2006 12:26PM - Granted I would not use GS either, but unless the technician physically dropped the drive as he took it out, there's not much that could have been his fault. Sounds like it was a drive that was on it last byte.



(-1)

  **Narc:** Aug 01 2006 12:19PM - my how close the T is next to the R....typo...



(-4)

  **Narc:** Aug 01 2006 12:18PM - sigh, onsite computer services: i would not hire GS to do work for me, nor would i hite you. If people had 5 - 10 gigs of information that needed backed up, they should have already had it backed up over the years. They are not idiots if they didn't know it could be done. They are idiots if they knew it could be done and never did anything about it. Its also our job as IT, IS, or DP (data process) whatever your called, to inform people and tell them how to do this if they don't know how!



(-1)

  **Dave McAllistair:** Aug 01 2006 12:14PM - I really have to say, all of you people that are saying that not knowing how to back up your data is an excuse for not backing up your data are totally wrong. This isn't a question of technical knowledge. The fact that your computer may break down at some point, is, at this point in our society, common knowledge to all but the very most ignorant. Joel, 5 years? It's your fault. Suck it up and move on.



(-6)



  **Master:** Aug 01 2006 12:14PM - It seems ignorant to call someone an idiot who refers to their computer as the modem and does not understand how to do backups. Just because some of you are into computers, does not make others who are not stupid. Ya, I expect my grandmother to understand magnetic fields in the hard drive. Morons.

(+4)



  **Ex-Agent:** Aug 01 2006 12:11PM - I noticed that you didnt contact corporate. 1-888-BESTBUY. Take your complaint to them if the store doesnt give you results. Just be sure you read everything you signed-- as you'll find some interesting disclaimers in there.

(-3)



  **IT-Expert non-geeksquad:** Aug 01 2006 12:10PM - If youve had your hard drive for over five years, it is no suprise that it died. Hard drives use magnetic fields to store data and with time magnetic forces fade, meaning that every hard drive that uses magnetic technology will brake eventually. Thats right, they dont last forever. If you're data was so important perhaps YOU should have backed it up, in case something like this happens. It's not rocket science, get a flash drive or external, stick it in your usb, and drag the files over. Ive had a few hard drives die on me, fourtunately I was able to recover my lost data from the backup previously created. GeekSquad may have shlitty service but in this case I think you're to blame for the loss of data.

  **OnSite Computer Services:** Aug 01 2006 12:05PM - Many people simply do not realize that the drive can and will fail, because it has not happened to them yet. So suddenly, they are idiots? Perhaps if it is so easy to call people stupid for not knowing something that you do, maybe you should humble yourself by finding a new career path that you don't know much about so people can call you an idiot. I do 5 or so data retentions daily on average. I do most of them on the network. Occasionally, we do have to pull the drive, but that is very rare. Think what you want, but to call my customers morons for not knowing something is flat wrong. It is why I am here, and it is how I get paid. Talking down to the customer would be suicide. "Excuse me Mrs. Smith, but you are an idiot for not backing up your data." Ya, I can see my business really thriving with comments like that. Some of you could use a humbling experience or a good kick in the a\$\$.



(+1)

  **OnSite Computer Services:** Aug 01 2006 12:04PM - You and I can say there is no excuse, for us, there is not. Again, many technically ignorant people show their colors here. If a customer has 5-10GB of data and a CDRW, you mean to tell me you would waste everyones time with CD backups? Ugh! The simple act of moving a hard drive obviously exposes it to situations that can wreck it... Dropping it, bad cable, etc. If the system is working in the first place, and the "Agent" pulls the drive to move it into another system without copying the files... Give me a break. I would feel like a complete a\$\$ if that "Agent" was me. Of course, if I had someone come in that made \$13 an hour to back up my data, I guess then yes, it is his fault. Yes, there are USB devices that can do the job, TerraStations and the like. A laptop and a competent tech can take care of the job very easily. But to call the people that pay you to get your valuable advice such as "You really need to backup" idiots, that is not right. Many people simply do



(+1)

  **Caspian:** Aug 01 2006 12:03PM - Joel, in anything, especially electronics, expect Murphy's Law to rule supreme. It's unfortunate that you lost your data, but eventually something bad -will- happen.



(-2)

  **Lee Dickey:** Aug 01 2006 12:00PM - If you had that Hard Drive for 5+ years and did not have a backup of your important data, then you have no one to blame but yourself. Honestly, removing a hard drive from one computer to another is not dangerous as long as it is not dropped. Now do not get me wrong, I am sure there are plenty of idiots pretending to be computer technicians working for Best Buy @ their Geek Squad name. I can tell you though that this is most likely a terrible coincidence that your hard drive failed. Next time, get a DVD or CD burner and back up your stuff. Hard Drives are mechanical and typically do not last as long as yours did when it died.



(-1)

  **Lee Dickey:** Aug 01 2006 12:00PM - If you had that Hard Drive for 5+ years and did not have a backup of your important data, then you have no one to blame but yourself. Honestly, removing a hard drive from one computer to another is not dangerous as long as it is not dropped. Now do not get me wrong, I am sure there are plenty of idiots pretending to be computer technicians working for Best Buy @ their Geek Squad name. I can tell you though that this is most likely a terrible coincidence that your hard drive failed. Next time, get a DVD or CD burner and back up your stuff. Hard Drives are mechanical and typically do not last as long as yours did when it died.



(-1)

  **Lester:** Aug 01 2006 11:57AM - I've worked in IT for 10 years, onsite service similar to what GS does, and it really sucks when you're doing the simplest thing and something stupid just goes wrong for no apparent reason. I've completely wired and set up a 100 node network from scratch with no problems, I've swapped out a stick of ram, while strpped and grounded, and had the machine just die. The bottom line is computers suck and they're evil, and they're out to get you.



(-1)

  **CommonSEnse:** Aug 01 2006 11:56AM - This rant makes you sound stupid.



(-1)

  **Ex-Agent:** Aug 01 2006 11:55AM - The point that cut off is one of the Geek Squad pillars is: Educate. That solves the problem. The problem with that solution is the management does not factor in time for this-- and often there are recalls, confused/frustrated people, and occasionally slander. This could be fixed with giving the Agents some space to do thier job and take care of the users. :)



(+4)

  **geoff@madcowstudios.com:** Aug 01 2006 11:54AM - First off, GS is being intrusted with the clients DATA. Don't step up to the plate if you can't walk the walk. That means you occasionally eat crow - even though it's not your fault. That's why you would offer a 100% satisfaction guarantee - we do. Know what you're doing, show up on time, do what you say and then some. And didn't GS get hit with a lawsuit for pirating their diag software, so I guess it's not ethics we're talking about here.



(+3)



  **BrokenFury:** Aug 01 2006 11:53AM - I worked at a Geek Squad and heres the deal. People do not take good care of their computers and other things. We would have hard drives die randomly or just turning computers on. I since have moved on, but let me say this. . . we are not the bad guys.



(-1)

  **57th Sig:** Aug 01 2006 11:50AM - This person has obviously spent no time in the military. MILITARY != COMPETENT. It's a slice of our society - just like the rest of the world, there are competent & incompetent people in our armed forces. And really, comparing the 'geek squad' to a military organization is pretty asinine. The issues the writer faced with geek squad are unfortunate, but all the 'military' appellations are unnecessary and distracting. Does any editing of these articles occur? NO DIGG.



(+8)

  **Narc:** Aug 01 2006 11:48AM - all the ex-Gs and current Gs agents are getting pissed about this read. I have have a run in a with a few gs agents and a few customers of gs agents (which i had to fix the problem) GS is a laughing matter and i have read to many stories of GS taking the computers to their store then going across the street to drop them off at a "real" computer repair shop....gs - no way in hell would i ever call them!



  **Ex-Agent:** Aug 01 2006 11:45AM - Things fail. It happens. The most time efficient method for an Agent-- who is working on a timeframe-- to do the transfer is by hooking it up to the original computer. It also allows him to do other work. If the hard drive died? It was going to die. It had nothing to do with what the Agent did unless he physically abused it during the move. Who is to blame for the data loss? The manufacturer of the equipment. The user for not performing any sort of maintenance on it-- including backups. The Geek Squad agent for not picking another method of the backup. As far as Im concerned-- there are many factors and no one single factor is to blame. I don't like the way Geek Squad does business. They didnt treat me or my coworkers well-- but I wholeheartedly believe this was NOT thier fault. The Agents I know are hard-working, intelligent, and ethical. I can't say the same for Segement managers that push them to do things that are not feasible and lead to ignoring one of the Geek Squad

  **Former GS Agent:** Aug 01 2006 11:44AM - Obviously, much has been said here. However, I feel the need to add my 2 cents. First off, people can make mistakes and contents of a hard drive can be lost without a physical problem existing on the HD. Usually these are rare, but on occasion they do happen. The fact that this story is posted illustrates one very large failure of the GeekSquad: communication. Though the goal of the GS's laughable appearance and funny titles is to make the customers feel more comfortable, sometimes the agents are unable to communicate at a level comfortable for the customer. In this case, there was no proper explanation at the time of the data loss that a hard drive had failed and that this was due to equipment failure and there was nothing that this GS agent or any other technician could do to prevent it. After having to deal with the limited labor budgets and result-driven mentality of BB, I know that we don't have the best people as agents. There are some excellent ones, and there are some ver



(-2)

  **sailor:** Aug 01 2006 11:44AM - "You buttheads that blame the customer for not backing up his data are ignorant." You just proved that you are ignorant. Relying on your computer to keep your data safe is idiotic, it can't do that. I don't know about others, but I format and clean install my system at least every 6 months. I do this to keep it running properly, so I won't have to call some "geek squad" jerk to come fix it for me. Backup and back up often!!! That is the only thing this article says to me!



(-1)

  **chadalicious:** Aug 01 2006 11:43AM - Pulling a hard drive is probably the last resort of data migration - this should be reserved for a non-booting OS, etc. Two things: 1. Every time I've ever done this, either for a paying customer or friends/family, I've given them the standard caveat of "This may not work, you could lose your data, are you comfortable with that risk? Have you backed up lately? What's that? You don't know what a backup is? Go buy a USB drive/some blank CDs and we'll make one." 2. I agree with Hirschhorn's assertion that the prime directive of being a tech should mirror that of doctors: "first do no harm." I've learned the hard way over the years that the best backout plan is to leave everything exactly the way it is in case something goes horribly wrong. The new server doesn't work? Turn it off and plug the old one back in. Same principle applies to home PCs. If migrating to a new machine, there's absolutely no reason to take the old one apart.



(+4)

  **Bob the geek:** Aug 01 2006 11:39AM - This is what happens when you hire guys who claimed they touched a PC once or recent grads of an "acclaimed" tech school at min wage to work on electronics. Hey half the time they ship it out anyway. Did you try using your HD on another machine or play with the settings? It may not be fried, just misinstalled.



(+3)

  **sailoe:** Aug 01 2006 11:38AM - If you were storing data on your drive for 5 years, you deserve to lose it. Computers are not immune to crashes, power outages, lightning strikes, power surges...etc..etc. Get a backup system setup to store your data, and do it often. Don't rely on the Geek Squad or anyone else to save your ass. Learn how your box works and learn to do it your self.



(-2)

  **Steve:** Aug 01 2006 11:35AM - OnSite Computer Services: We're not talking replacing hardware, complex data migration, we're talking about backing up "stuff" - probably Office docs and the like. There is no excuse for a user to NOT be able to look in their documents folder, find those things, and back them up. None. Maybe that wouldn't have been ALL his data, but I'm guessing a good chunk of it! It's like saying, "yeah, well, I never got into using a telephone because dialing is just so confusing!"



(-1)

  **Narc:** Aug 01 2006 11:33AM - hahaha onsite computer service: your comment is a joke. You can back things up onto cd, usb flash drives, external hd's network resource. All which don't have the customer opening the case. you sound like an employer that needs to be smacked around a little.



(+4)

  **anon:** Aug 01 2006 11:33AM - Onsite, this isn't 1998. Those who "don't know about backups" are either stupid or lying.



(+1)



  **OnSite Computer Services:** Aug 01 2006 11:27AM - You buttheads that blame the customer for not backing up his data are ignorant. It is very easy to blame the customer, but many customers come to people like us to have these jobs done. The "agent" had no business opening up a system that needed a backup, since there are plenty of tools (MiniPE, Network Safe Mode) that you can use to transfer over a crude network. If it is running, and the data is not backed up, you have no business opening the machine, period. And to the dolt that said there is no money in this business, my business did 250k in sales and service last year. If that is not money to you, perhaps I should fold and work for the man like you do. One of the worst problems with IT people is the ability to talk down on anyone that does not have IT skills. It's BS. If you go to the doctor, are you an idiot because he knows something you don't? Get a life.

(+3)

  **extremesanity:** Aug 01 2006 11:20AM - With no backups you were bound to lose your data. Failures are imminent, it is only time.


(-2)

  **OGMike:** Aug 01 2006 11:19AM - An Engineer - I never specified GS; just PC Repair people in general. I agree, GS as a corporate entity is poor. But, once again, I have had good and bad experiences with individuals. As for me...I help when I can and when the customer wants to learn. Personal choice I guess.


  **Technibble.com:** Aug 01 2006 11:17AM - In addition to my last comment below, a lot of people are saying that "he should have known better than getting Geeksquad" because... "Everyone knows they are way overpriced" Well, there are more people that don't know they are overpriced than those who do. How


do you think computer makers like Dell make a living? Us computer literate people know about all the newegg.com type sites and know where to get them cheap, dont expect the general public to be able to. "Geeksquad are incompetent" Ok, you go for a bank loan. Do you goto the major bank or do you trust the smalltime shady loan shark? In most peoples eyes Geeksquad look very professional with the TV advertising, cars etc and people expect they can trust them over the geek who works out of their bedroom. Once again, im not defending GS at all. Im just pointing out that Joels mistake was an honest mistake.

(+3)


 **Tesdall:** Aug 01 2006 11:15AM - It really hurts to see all these idiots post their comments. Its also sad to see that a GeekSquad makes more than me (special agent). But thats alright because i work in a much better enviroment. ANYWAYS, a hard drive can crash for many a reasons, 1. He tried to hook the HD up to your new machine while the machine was on and shocked it, 2. Hd's can live on the brink of dying and just him removing the power from it could let it "die" and dropping it, well if it worked before he took it out, then it didn't when he put it back it, well there is your problem. Im a network admin for a local goverment btw, and i know my stuff (hardware)


(-1)

 **An Agent:** Aug 01 2006 11:15AM - Well, working for GeekSquad, I can say this: Your Mileage May Vary. The particular store I work at is about half and half - half of the agents are actually considerably intelligent guys, some college educated engineers and computer science types... and then half people that shouldn't even be on GS, usually promotions from elsewhere in Best Buy. Most of them come from the computer department, but we've had agents promoted from Cashier. These people are generally clueless. That said, we strive to keep the idiots away from customer computers, they mostly just answer questions for people about routers and check computers in. Other stores, however, do have a balance that tilts further in favor of idiocy. It's just the way it goes... Joel - if you didn't make a single backup in five years, I'm sorry, but it's your fault. If you were concerned about the drive being damaged when the Agent removed it, either 1) you are clueless about computers, so you should try not being so har


 **Ryan:** Aug 01 2006 11:15AM - Hey idiot, if your data was so important, 5 years worth of stuff and you didn't back it up, you are the only one to blame. How would you in your right mind take the chance of having them swap a hard drive are even transfer it from one drive to the next and not make a back up. All the Geek Squad is concerned about is trying to find a way to tell you need new hardware that is how they make there money. Nobody at the Geek Squad know's how to fix a damn computer they just break it and charge you for it.They couldn't fix there way out of a wet paper bag. All they care about is when they are going to spark that joint up they have in there car when they get off. I have worked IT for the military for 5years now and comparing us to the Geek Squad is a insult you idiot. You are the greatest example of the Geek Squad's customer base which they will love you forever because you keep coming back DUMBASS.

(-4)


 **An Engineer:** Aug 01 2006 11:12AM - OGMike.....No one is in PC reair for money, because there is no money in PC repair. I have a salary job that keeps me comfortable and I do PC repair because I get kicks out of new hardware and fixing broken stuff. I only charge for parts and software and I usually get a free dinner out of it as well. With that said, how does GS help people if they make a mistake and then make the person pay for it?.....Helping the customer..... I remember Best Buy talking about this a while back. Except it was along the lines of screwing customers by hiding severly discounted items and in some cases stopping the sale of discount items all together. If this is their mentality with normal customers I wonder what they teach the GS workers in training....Maybe the store should rename itself to Best Rip Off...

 **OGMike:** Aug 01 2006 11:11AM - What the hell? I get ding'd for saying we should help people?

(-2)

 **NoNameNow:** Aug 01 2006 11:10AM - 5 years and you never backed anything up. You are stupid.



(+4)

 **Technibble.com:** Aug 01 2006 11:09AM - I have been working as a onsite computer technician for the last 5 years and what happened with GS is appalling. Also, the "U SHOULD HAVE BACKED UP UR DATA COS I KNOW HOW TO" posts are pretty stupid. You have to remember that alot of people dont know how to and its quite normal. Joel was being responsible (maybe not 5 years worth though?) and got a supposedly competent technican to do it for him to minimize the risk of him doing it himself and screwing it up. Geeksquad is in the wrong and should offer some compensation, at least a replacement harddrive and fire the tech.



(+3)



-   **se:** Aug 01 2006 11:07AM - What's with the "military style" terminology in the article? Sure Geek Squad sucks, but it ain't military you dolt, it's business! (-2)
-   **AV:** Aug 01 2006 11:06AM - There are plenty of people who have good experiences with the Geek Squad. What I have found (as a former employee of them) is that many of the agents in stores in large cities just don't have the training they need. The company won't pay for it either, because they are so tightly budgeted. I have noticed that stores that are in more rural areas tend to have better trained, more personable agents. (+1)
-   **gruv:** Aug 01 2006 11:02AM - buying a \$100 external hard disk and actually backing up your own data and installing your own HD would have been cheaper than going to GS, or go to a real professional!
-   **OGMike:** Aug 01 2006 11:00AM - An incredulous programmer - 'morons' are what the rest of us call 'customers'...the ones that PAY our salary! Dagoth - I'm not in PC repair for the money...neither should ANYONE in PC repair. You WILL not get rich. Do it to help the customer. Seems most of America has forgotten that... (+1)
-   **GSITPro:** Aug 01 2006 10:58AM - This is just one customers issue. There are morons that work at GS but I am an IT professional that works there nights and weekends and I can tell you that drives go out all the time, new or old and five years old its likely it did just die. Drives are routinely removed and attached to a PC via an external drive box all the time with no issue. Saying to do the data backup with the drive in the PC is lame. Pulling out an HD is not a big deal at all. I am sorry you lost all that data but shiznit happens, you should have been returned some of your money but you are paying for the time they work as well. (-3)
-   **OGMike:** Aug 01 2006 10:56AM - I AM A geek...gamer...techie...trekky...whatever...titles don't bother me. Just learn what I try to teach. Really...isn't that what the tech savvy SHOULD be doing for the rest of the world? Don't hoarde the knowledge! Help! (+1)
-   **An incredulous programmer:** Aug 01 2006 10:56AM - In my experience the 'crucial data' portion of the drive is probably less than 2GB (not including mp3s, mpgs, etc)... you know... the files that people scream "oh dear go, no!" about. and on the average incompetant user, it's probably less than 100MB or word, excel and powerpoint docs, plus e-mail and bookmarks... there's pretty much no excuse for GS not backing this stuff up, unless best buy acknowledges any technical advice the 'geeks' give is not part of thier service, nor should it be treated as correct. It seems to me they are not pointing the truth of thier service out, implying that it is much more than it is and that customers are getting burned by verbal insinuation. Morons are entitled to good service, too... in fact you'll find they generally need more and better service than those guys you like dealing with. (+2)
-   **Dagoth:** Aug 01 2006 10:55AM - Only a complete idiot would ever get a Best Buy moron to do anything to their computer. If you have a warranty with them, then fine, but make sure you get your data first. These are people maybe making \$13.50 US an hour. What did you expect. (-3)
-   **bleh:** Aug 01 2006 10:52AM - sounds like a personal problem, Hirschhorn. (-3)
-   **TechFor12YearsPart2:** Aug 01 2006 10:50AM - I'm too wordy..... anyhow, is it really the mechanic's fault? No, I don't think so (-2)
-   **The real agent 411:** Aug 01 2006 10:50AM - WTF!! I am so sick of these incompetant customers thinking they know everything. Hard drives just dont fail by touching them. Here at geek squad stand alone stores we are the pride and joy of the orginal geeksquad. NOT, heres the real truth. Best buy agents are idiots because they are hired off the street. Every best buy agent wants to work at a stand alone geek squad. We use free tools and take advantage of the customers. We use adaware, counterspy, webwoot spysweeper (trial version) and free scanners like trendmicro.com. We are a complete rip off and im sick of

working for thsi company. I believe everyone should know the truth about us. We have law suites pending against bestbuy geeksquads for using software illegally to remove viruses and spyware. We get a dam CD to do everything for us. CUSTOMERS BEWARE WE SCREW YOU OVER. Start pay is at 13.50 and special agents get around 16.00.



  **TechFor12Years:** Aug 01 2006 10:48AM - I have more personal pride than to work for anything with the title "Geek" in it (unless it paid REALLY well) however the symptoms that you are describing really are not convincing me the Geek Squad is completely to blame. I believe Akaji is correct in saying that less than 1% of hardware failures may be designated to drive swapping however there is little that I can think of which would have destroyed your hard drive that the Geek squad would be interested enough to do to you. Im sure you are a very important person and everything however equipment failures cannot be attributed to human error that easily. Yes, he could have dropped it or something or possibly thrown it in the microwave confusing it with food of a similar shape but it is the author of the article who has done the wrong thing. The estimated life of a harddrive is 3-6 years, you should have known that and you should have backed it up. If you drive a car for 250,000 miles and ask a mechanic to remove your axles is it re

(+3)



  **Steve:** Aug 01 2006 10:48AM - I agree 100% with those saying you should have backed up your data. It's YOUR responsibility. Working in IT myself I've had brand new drives fail hours or days after unboxing a new computer. The moral of the story is a hard drive can fail at ANY TIME without warning. The fact that the computer was being worked on is moot. Shame on you for not taking steps to protect your own information.

  **AeroSquid:** Aug 01 2006 10:46AM - There is no risk in physically removing a hard drive unless you are very careless with it physically. OP is a moran for not backing his shit up.

(-1)

  **An Engineer:** Aug 01 2006 10:46AM - Akaji...I used Cat 5e+ because I'm lasy I jsut wanted to designate Gigabit transfer rates. Since a cat 5 at 100Mbps would probably take a long time. And yes this only applies if the person has a NIC capable of Gigabit transfer rates. DVD-R = 4.7GB so use winrar and break up the data into two files on each DVD. Done. No writer, well you can share them among comptuers over a network and I'm sure the GS could bring a laptop with a DVD writer. If the GS tech used a drive installation Tool by the manufactuer of the HD it should be simple. As long as they have a list of the file systems each OS can use and size limitations. External HD would be good for small to medium data under 20GB. But with over 200GB of stuff an internal drive would be the quickest solution if done right.



(+2)



  **backup guy:** Aug 01 2006 10:45AM - Backups! It's your fault if the data got lost if you did not have any backups of your data. Don't blame them for losing your data, because it is you who lost your 5 years of data. Listening to someone whine about data loss when they don't have backups is annoying. Shut your piehole.

(-1)



  **OGMike:** Aug 01 2006 10:41AM - 'Charlie' I agree, but, don't take away my work! LOL

(-1)

  **An Engineer:** Aug 01 2006 10:39AM - Akaji....I've had static ruin memory sticks. But yes it is exaggerated. I mention capacitors because image if the GS idiot removed the plug and immediatly pulls something out. In theory it could cause damage. The only reason I mentioned all the stuff is because I'm sure GS people do not take percaution against all of those thigns and hence their hardware fail rate is much higher than 1%. After all they need to break stuff to get paid more...

  **charlie:** Aug 01 2006 10:39AM - Learn to work on your own computer.

(-1)



  **Akaji:** Aug 01 2006 10:38AM - "An Engineer" Using pretty words like CAT 5e+ doesn't make you special. Use "network connection" like the rest of us. CD-R/DVD-R aren't large enough to hold the 9GB of data that GS claims it will backup (also, not everyone has a writer). Insert a blank hard drive? That'd likely be as disastrous as is what happened, considering the competence of the GS techs. The best choice would be to use an external HDD to do it.



(+2)

  **Akaji:** Aug 01 2006 10:35AM - "An Engineer" Static electricity buildup is very much exaggerated and



insanely easy to avoid... what kind of an idiot doesn't unplug the computer from the wall before opening it up?... capacitors are a non-issue... ESD protective bags are handy to have, but you can also use any non-or-low static surface. Besides, shouldn't a Geek Squad be extremely careful and take even potentially unnecessary precautions before removing hardware?

(+1)



  **An Engineer:** Aug 01 2006 10:34AM - Zing.....So I guess it's Joe's fault the Geek Squad person removed the hard drive from his comptuer before a backup. Here are three methods to do backup: Cat 5e+ connection, CD-R/DVD-R, or insert a blank Hard Drive to copy the data to. If it "takes too long" then charge the person for another hour. I'm sure some will pay a little more instead of losing all their data.



  **Steve:** Aug 01 2006 10:33AM - I can almost guarantee you the dude at the Geek Squad tried to pull the drive while the computer was still powered up. A fully functioning drive can easily get hosed by yanking the bus cable while the machine's powered on. The GS are known for doing such idiotic things.

(-1)



  **Akaji:** Aug 01 2006 10:32AM - 10 bucks says that Zing is the dude who just modded down every post. What a tard. You expect people who have no technical knowledge to backup their computer themselves. Hirschhorn was smart to think that he SHOULD backup his data, so he called up a "professional" IT group to do it for him. Instead of backing up his information, they freaking blew it up. He is not at fault, just as you and I would not be at fault for not doing.. something.. with a car that you're supposed to do yearly (yeah, I don't know anything about cars, so I don't blame people who don't know anything about computers).

(+2)



  **An Engineer:** Aug 01 2006 10:29AM - Akaji 1% if the user is protected from static electricity, the comptuer is unplugged from the wall, the capacitors have powered down, and ESD protective bags are used to store the hardware before it is inserted into a device again, and the user understands how to hold electronic devices.

  **Jimmydatech:** Aug 01 2006 10:29AM - Said before....backup, backup, backup. If you lost data because you did not backup, it is your fault. Period. If your data is so vital and critical it is imperative that the user learn to at least drag the important files onto a CD. Windows XP even has that built in. The tech should have used a network or external drive to move the data, but if it got lost, I have no sympathy for the person who did not have the foresight and motivation to back up "5 years worth of data" . You had 5 YEARS TO LEARN HOW!



(+3)

  **OGMike:** Aug 01 2006 10:28AM - Sorry...got a little wordy! d) Geek Squad (the Agent in particular), should have had the courtesy to call the customer and inform him that he would be late; e) Compensation for a failed hard drive, or for the data lost? Once again, refer to c, but, an outright apology WOULD have been expected!; f) I have experienced first hand the Geek Squads work, both good and bad, and it really depends on the individual, more than the corporation; g) Just remember..To err is human, to really foul things up requires a computer. Thus endeth the sermon. Amen!

(+1)

  **Sterling_Aug:** Aug 01 2006 10:28AM - I guess because of your story and many others like it that used other tech support companies is the main reason I ge so much business in my area fixing computers. I do not lose data. I have recovered data rom hard drives that even the computer BIOS would ot recognize. I have cleaned viruses, trojans, and spyware that others have failed at claning, and I charge only \$30 per hour (a lot less than the GeekDuds).

(+1)



  **Zing:** Aug 01 2006 10:26AM - From what I read, the only person who is at fault is you Joel Hirschhorn. You failed to make backups (for 5yrs) of that super important data you needed. Thats 15 strikes against you right there. Second, you call removing the hard drive and hooking it up to a second pc is "risky". Guess what, its not. I do it on a weekly basis and 98% of the time have no problems (no im not with geeksquad). The few times that I DO have problems is because the old drive is no longer working well enough for me to remove data off of it. The real truth of all this is that YOU are the idiot. You who would rather blame somone else rather than take responsibility for not thinking ahead. Get a life Joel Hirschhorn.



(-1)

  **paulie:** Aug 01 2006 10:25AM - Joel Hirschhorn: You have to be the biggest moron I've come



across. That takes some kind of skill when you consider that I work with prison inmates. Next time you take a machine that costs many thousands of dollars in for repairs, at least check the credentials of the people doing the work and get a few references. You would have found out that the Geek Squad is very much the laughing stock of the tech community.

(-8)



  **An Engineer:** Aug 01 2006 10:25AM - I have been building and repairing computers for nine years now. I have run into numerous weird issues from the advent of new hardware, new OS, hardware failure, a virus, software problems, and of course user error. In all of my years of working on computers I have never lost data on someone else's computer that I was working on. I've had hard drives fail on my personal computers resulting in data loss but hardware shall fail. Why the Geek Squad worker did not backup the data before he/she removed the drive seems like lack of experience to me. What Best Buy most likely does is give basic training to new hires that in no way covers all of the basics. End result is rookies are sent out to fix computer issues and they end up making a mistake and causing a bigger problem. Or worse yet, is Best Buy's established practices are purposely risky increasing the probability of a failure that will yield more money. A few years back my family dropped a home computer off at CompUSA to get it

  **OGMike:** Aug 01 2006 10:24AM - Being a PC Tech at a mom and pop shop, I feel for the gentleman that lost the data AND Geek Squad. The fact is: a) 5 years of data and no back up is NOT uncommon; most people just don't know!; b) removing the old hard drive and connecting it to the new PC is not in and of itself hazardous, although we prefer to use an external drive enclosure for that task. Oh, and, using a crossover cable? It just takes too long; c) I am sure if one reads the paperwork from Geek Squad, the same paperwork I am sure they have you sign BEFORE they even touch your PC, it should state (I would HOPE!), that they will do their utmost to safeguard any data, transfer or backup if at all possible, and restore it to the PC; HOWEVER, data backup is ultimately the responsibility of the customer. It might sound harsh, though I am not trying to be; c) If the data is that valuable, there are many companies that specialize in recovery of data from failed hard drives. d) Geek Squad (the Agent in particular), should ha



(+1)

  **Tom Davidson:** Aug 01 2006 10:24AM - I'm horrified by the callous "GS" responses here. Yeah, drives sometimes die -- but that's why, if you charge to transfer data, you copy to an external source. The "Squad" is woefully undertrained.



(+1)



  **an incredulous programmer:** Aug 01 2006 10:23AM - I have to agree with Akaji, I find failures most often occur under a heavy load (during use) or during electrical irregularity (power regulation or not), often times a reboot *confirms* a problem during diagnostics, but it doesn't *fail* then. Honestly, most of the time things fail during installation for me is factory defects or assembler incompetence (not universally true, but true enough).

(-2)

  **LC_:** Aug 01 2006 10:20AM - To the author, You are a moron. You need to invest more time into researching these types of things. The same could go true if you had Best Buy install a car audio system. All Best Buy is, is a business looking to make money. Once they get your money, they could care less about how your purchase is actually maintained. If I want computer work performed, I go to a computer repair shop that specializes in these services. If I want my car audio system installed, I go to a car audio installation shop that specializes in these services. You have no one to be mad at except yourself for falling prey to these con-artists.



(-2)

  **not surprised...:** Aug 01 2006 10:20AM - "So much for Geek Squad military-style competence"? This article makes it sound like they are RIGHT ABOUT AT that level. Military style competence. Maybe like the Army, the Geek Squad needs to recruit less from Category IV people. <http://www.slate.com/id/2133908/>



  **Wary customer:** Aug 01 2006 10:18AM - At the very least, there's a process improvement lesson to be learned here. When a customer brings a machine in, it should be verified in the customer's presence that the machine is in working order. Since the hard drive is a fairly fragile piece of equipment, why remove it unnecessarily? Use an external drive to create a backup image, and work with that. When even a little electrostatic discharge could fry the drive's board, why risk it? That's like doing open abdominal surgery when laparoscopy would suffice. If anything, the replies of some alleged Geek Squad "Agents" make me wary of having any service done at Best Buy. When someone brings a computer in for service and the hard drive no longer works when a Best Buy employee or a third party agent contracted by Best Buy removes it, it is simply bad business to attempt to blame the customer. I don't care if he dribbled the computer into the

store like a basketball -- if Best Buy didn't confirm the PC was in working order befo



(+1)



  **Akaji:** Aug 01 2006 10:18AM - I work in IT and it is my experience that less than 1% of hardware failures occur when swapping equipment out if done correctly.

(+2)



  **357Samurai:** Aug 01 2006 10:17AM - I work in IT and it is my experience that 90% of hardware failures occur after the machine has been powered on, or when swapping equipment out, i.e. placing hard drive in a different computer.

(-1)



  **real tech:** Aug 01 2006 10:14AM - I've heard many horror stories about Geek Squad... I am a technician my self (not for GS) and can tell you that you need to back up anything you consider important data. And yes, hard drives can fail when you least expect them. On the other hand, consider a second opinion before you take it to any repair "agent". I have fixed many problems that Geek Squad agents have created due to negligence or lack of expertise. I've had a customer who spent over \$700.00 on repairing his laptop with GS and on top of that they lost his memory and scratched it up pretty bad. But GS is not the only company that has a record of problems such as this. To the person who posted a coment under the name "Another Geek Squad Agent": Shame on you for representing your company in such way. Thanks to people like Mr. Hirschhorn is that you have a job. If you can't handle it go back to playing videogames in the comfort of your room and feel better about being called a computer technician, "agent",



  **Anonymous does not forgive!:** Aug 01 2006 10:13AM - As a technician I am appalled by everyone assumption that the hard drive failed simply because of its age and that the technician was completely not at fault. The simple fact that removing the drive was his 1st option to me indicates he may not even have the correct skills required to do such a task. The files should have been transferred via another method. External drives, local networks, ect should have been employed well before any cases were cracked open. Also, real techs drive Vans not Beetles.

(-2)



  **Put yourself in their shoes...:** Aug 01 2006 10:13AM - You're kidding right? First off most people don't know how to back-up. Should they...absoutley. However, given the fact that most people don't is a reasonable assumtpion that any tech should make when servicing a computer. Therefore, before you do any work you tell them that they could loose their data if the hard drive is corrupt, you tell them that it could take awhile to restore their data. The most important thing in any busines is communication; that is the crux of this whole mini-debate. What everyone so far fails to mention is that their was little accurate communication and this leads to fustration. If someone tells me while I'm doing something on their computer that they have reservations about ANYTHING, I explain myself in the simpilst of terms on what I'm doing and why. I love the comment "compared to some companies, we charge very little" Tell that to some poor sob who has to pay for the service AND pay for the replacement part. It does add up and not everyone is we

(-1)


  **Akaji:** Aug 01 2006 10:13AM - Oh yeah, one thing I forgot to mention. "Geek Squad" is a misnomer. They have about as much technical competence as the average student helpdesk worker at my college (which is next to none).


  **Mike:** Aug 01 2006 10:11AM - Ok, so all these smart GS people blame you for not backing up your data. Ahem. Isn't that what he PAID Geek Squad members to do? If the whole point of hiring someone is to back up your data, and the data is lost, there should be liability. That's like telling someone you'll vacuum their house and them burning all of the carpets.


(-2)


  **Akaji:** Aug 01 2006 10:11AM - Geeksquad is, quite simply, a ripoff. I perform most of the things that GeekSquad does for upwards of \$120 *FOR FREE* (for friends and family, as well as many random people at my college). Heck, I'd build a computer, including ordering all the parts myself, for the same price GS charges just to install Windows (\$250). Obscene prices for Geek Squad... (In-home prices) \$129 to clean out the PC case... \$129 to create a system restore CD... \$129-159 just to install a single piece of software, with the user having to purchase it... \$249 for a Windows install w/drivers w/user provided software (total >\$450). I've basically boycotted all Best Buys that provide GeekSquad "services" (using that term about as lightly as I possibly could...). I really feel sorry for people who don't do enough research on these things before paying an arm and a leg for services that most true geeks would gladly do for a few bucks.

(+1)


 **AFK:** Aug 01 2006 10:10AM - If the Geek Squad people were so technically compitent would they really be working at Best Buy? Lots of horror stories coming from their service and also a lot of excuses. Oh, and the chances of a HD being damaged by a car ride is so astronomical as to be absurd.


 **mtbjunkie:** Aug 01 2006 10:09AM - Did you ever try File Scavenger on that drive? I have always retrived my data off broken drives with this. Unless of course the geek shorted the board, then you will need to find the exact same drive and switch boards. good luck, thats what you get for trusting this dumb service and DIY.

 **Ben Truyman:** Aug 01 2006 10:09AM - Backup or not, BestBuy is most likely still at fault; and should reimberse. I HIGHLY doubt shock damage is the culprit here. I've travelled from Wisconsin to Illinois so many times with my computer in the backseat driving for 3 hours straight and never experienced any problems. To top that off, one harddrive isn't even mounted, it's just sitting in a bay. From what it sounds like, the Geek Squad "tool" agent removed the drive while power was still going to it. Or vice versa, he installed it into the other computer when he thought it was off, possibly the monitor was off or not plugged in or whatever. This can blow out harddrives in an instant, and depending on the severity, anything else on that rail. Still...copying data from an old computer isn't that hard..


 **An incredulous programmer:** Aug 01 2006 10:09AM - There is a large difference between 'plausible deniability' and 'wholly innocent'. The geek squad offender in question is completely at fault... now you can claim that the policies of the organization exonerate him, or that 'standard practices' regarding backups would have prevented this problem. I think the military analogy is fitting, though: institutionalization of incompetance tempered through rigorous procedure. Perhaps data transfer should include (without option) backup of said data, not only to remove irate customers, but also to minimize the problems of having some inexperienced IT clown trash your system. Personally, I recommend learning this stuff yourself, as computer repair shops are about as trustworthy as jewelers, but with a repugnant air of superiority (regardless of your level of expertise).

(-1)


 **IT, but not Geek Squad:** Aug 01 2006 10:09AM - I've read the other comments - basically that Joel should have backed up his system before the Geek Squad showed up. I disagree. He's paying the Geek Squad for their expert service. They should have asked him if he backed up his data before they started, or they should have backed it up for him.


 **Independent Geek:** Aug 01 2006 10:07AM - Backup. Backup. Backup. It has been said before, but hard drives fail all the time. I see it every day. Experienced IT people take a chance helping others because so much can go wrong even when you do everything right.

(+1)


 **darthtruculus:** Aug 01 2006 10:06AM - I used to work for the Geek Squad, and I think Hirschhorn, IF that's his real name, is smoking something. Hard drives fail. Period. End of story. GS didn't destroy your HD. BTW, GS has you sign a waiver saying your data could be lost, so this is all on you, holmes! Here's a rule of thumb: if the data is important, it should already be backed up at least once (better yet, multiple times). But hey, people love to complain!

(-4)

 **Starlight:** Aug 01 2006 10:06AM - I don't work for Best Buy, but I've replaced a lot of hard drives for friends and family, which is a relatively simple operation. Unless the Geek Squad person dropped the drive or something else obviously wrong, I wouldn't blame them. Computers can be fickle things and if you have an older hard drive, sometimes weird things like this happen. However, I doubt your data is truly lost, probably the head on the drive crashed and Best Buy doesn't do data recovery that would require taking apart a hard drive. There are a lot of good ones out there and one of them recovered data from the Challenger disaster. It's pricey, but if you need what was on your drive, at least it's an option.



 **Jason:** Aug 01 2006 10:05AM - Hey vman, Mac's use standard hard drives. They die the same as those found in PC's.

(+3)



 **Eponymous:** Aug 01 2006 10:04AM - Anyone using Best Buy for technical support deserves what they get. I wonder what it's costing Geek Squad to do blog monitoring and spin management. (Assuming this precipitates any "real folks, not corporate skills" comments, consider: a company so solidly dependent

on brand management to make a bunch of mallrat gearheads look like actual IT professionals would be insane not to monitor the web and manage their online PR.)



(+1)

  **daxumaming:** Aug 01 2006 10:04AM - hard drive not working at the moment it's unplugged from the old pc, weird... never happened to me.



(-3)

  **haimtime:** Aug 01 2006 10:01AM - So it is HIS fault for not backing up. What about the wait and lack of professionalism that he had to endure, not to mention the price of \$150 or some highway robbery like that to back up files. If someone with no computer literacy thought everytime he had to back up files it would cost \$150 dollars, I wouldn't do it every year/2years/etc, I would do it once. To the geek squad people, I don't think he is blaming you, but rather the company you associate yourself with. This stuff happens all the time at mom and pop shops, but the difference is you are branded by a large corporation that portrays a reputation of being able to fix anything



(-1)



  **mm:** Aug 01 2006 10:01AM - No problem, just restore from your latest backup. The one you made before you had any major work done to your computer.

(-3)



  **Asia:** Aug 01 2006 10:01AM - I'm embarrassed at how "Geek Squad" agents have handled their responses to this post. In all respect to the author - if he called geek squad to copy data, it's obvious he (the author) would have limited knowledge of what he should be doing with is data. I am not a computer specialist, but I do know enough about computers and would never suggest Geek Squad to help anyone, I would much rather refer a professional. Geek Squad should have "advised" the author to make a back up, that was where the error was. Not in the ignorance of the author, but in the non-advice by an expected "professional." In this case, the author viewed this agent as a professional (bad move with commercial geeks) but now you are probably a wiser consumer.

(-1)

  **Akhtawd:** Aug 01 2006 09:58AM - Who says there was no backup? That is not the point ... the point is the incompetency shown by the so called "Geek Squad" in pulling out the hard drive and attaching it to the new one. There are far superior ways to transfer data than that very risky one and one of them is simply to use a cross over cable and assign local ip's to the systems ... another one maybe to use a external drive ... another one is to use a tool like rsync or emcopy ...anyway you can only expect the "Geek Squads" to know this if they are really "Geeks",

  **A very Frustrated Agent:** Aug 01 2006 08:42AM - Hmmm...so many things to say and so little time. For one, any Geek Squad member posting on here who is condemning the client's should be terminated...they are the ones who keep us in business. If it wasn't for people who didn't know what they were doing, we wouldn't have jobs. I agree with all of you...if this gentleman's, or anyone else's data is that important, they shouldn't go a week, let alone 5 years, without backing it up. That is just waiting for something to go wrong. Now, Mr. Hirschhorn, I am sorry that your hard drive failed, but it happens. Have you never had anything else you have owned break unexpectedly? I'm sure the answer is yes. As you can expect with anything that is made on an assembly line, you never know how long it is going to last. I know you say we overcharge for our services, but if you truly thought that, you wouldn't have called us out to do the job. Compared to some companies, we charge very little...this is one reason we charge flat rate

(-8)


  **Disturbed Angel:** Aug 01 2006 07:01AM - I'd comment on this, but it would take far too much time to point out all the inconsistencies of the story. Seems to me (One persons opinion) that if your data were valuable to you, you would not go 5 years without SOME form of backup! Also to 'believe' that a hard drive will last you more than 5 years without having to be replaced? Well you are taking your data in your own hands. Having dealt with Geek Squad I've found them to be complete professionals, technically intelligent, and willing to seek assistance from other co-workers if something is 'beyond there knowledge'. Next, at least they had the courtesy to advise you the agent was running late. When was the last time the cable company, electric company, UPS, FEDEX, or any other services informed you their service personnel were running late? AND why was he running late?? Probably because the client before you needed more assistance then what was originally setup for - that is why they call it a "total solution

(-2)

  **Not a geeksquader:** Aug 01 2006 01:37AM - Mr. Hirshhorn, As it is obvious you know little about

hard disks: 1. A hard disk can live on the brink of failure for months, generating error messages that you probably don't even know where to look to find. 2. It's entirely possible that the failing hard disk died coincidentally with the removal and installation into a new PC...not because it is "risky", but because Murphy's Law is always in effect. Bad things happen, and at inopportune times. 3. It is not any more risky to remove a hard disk from a PC than it is to change the battery in your smoke detector. The only thing the "Geek Squad" could have realistically done to directly cause your disk to fail would be to drop it far enough to generate a damaging shock force. 4. Considering your inexperience with hard disks: If shock force damaged the disk, it's more likely that it happened while driving your vehicle over bumpy asphalt to BestBuy with your computer riding haphazardly on a floor mat like an old VCR.

(+17)

 **Geek Squad Agent:** Aug 01 2006 12:07AM - "pround geeksquad member," if you really are an Agent of the Geek Squad, you should be ashamed of yourself for posting that.. or anything in the name of the company for that matter. Now we look like a bunch of condescending adolescent oafs. Congratulations.

(+1)

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