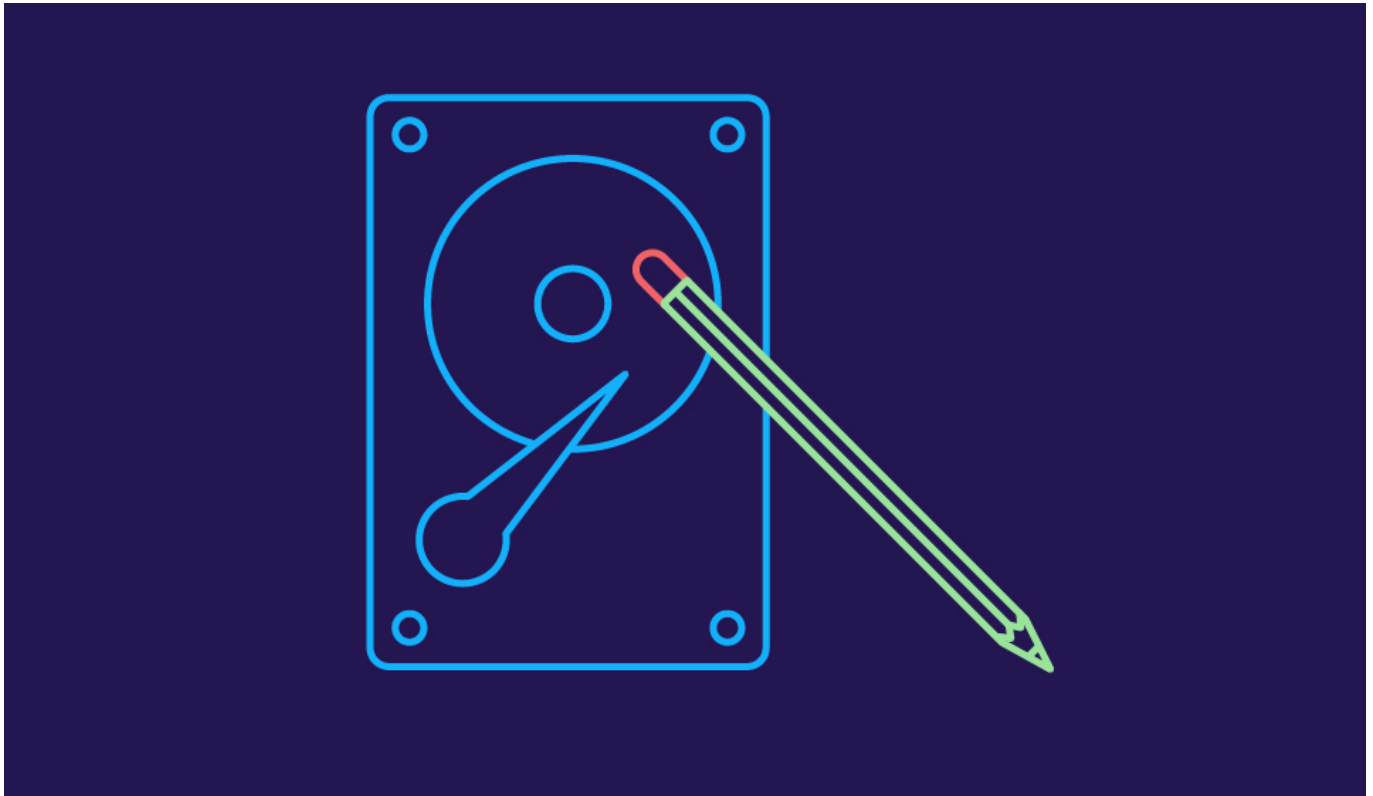


3 Steps to Truly Secure Data Destruction



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Every IT engineer knows that “deleted” data can be retrieved from old hard drives with minimal effort. But every year hundreds of businesses across the world are caught out when old, formatted drives are re-sold and hackers successfully recover information from them.

There are three steps to preventing data recovery from old drives that are being disposed of.

1. Format the drive

The first, and most obvious, task is to format the drive. Use the relevant command line or GUI tool to “delete” all data stored on each disk.

Just don't forget that formatting drives simply marks them ready for re-use. Although invisible to the file system, the files are still in place – and easily restored using an inexpensive data recovery tool.

2. Overwrite the drive

The only way to remove these “deleted” files is to overwrite them. So the next stage of the secure deletion is to fill the drive with new data, obliterating any retained information.

There are plenty of low-cost tools available to “zero” the disk, automatically writing millions of zeroes to fill all available capacity. Once complete, you can then reformat the drive, safe in the knowledge that data cannot be recovered with conventional tools.

3. Physically destroy the drive

Once the disk has been over-written and re-formatted, it can– in theory– be re-sold. But there will always be a risk that determined hackers with sophisticated tools may develop a new technique for recovering data.

The only way to be 100% certain that the data is truly gone is to physically destroy the drive. Industrial degaussing machinery can be used to realign the magnetic fields on each drive platter for instance. Alternatively, industrial shredders can be used to destroy the platters, ensuring they cannot be spun, and that there is no way for disk heads to read any residual data stored on them.

Incredibly important, but easily overlooked

The need for deleting data *before* disposing of disk arrays and associated drives is fairly well understood. Conceptually, the process is simple, but it cannot be circumvented or ignored. If you really want to keep your data safe, you will need to physically destroy each disk platter.

For more help and advice on how to dispose of your old disk arrays safely, please [get in touch](#).