Why It's Important to Not Rely upon Dragon NaturallySpeaking's & Dragon® Medical Practice Edition's Built-In Backup

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Far too often Speakeasy Solutions receives phone calls from clients who report that their Dragon NaturallySpeaking or Dragon® Medical Practice Edition user profile has become corrupt. The support call that does not end in complete satisfaction for our client is always a concern.

Unfortunately, despite our efforts, some users continue to rely upon Dragon's automatic backup. It is, sadly, unreliable. However, as I am always fond of quoting: *"an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"* – Benjamin Franklin.

Moreover, computer hardware can fail, and therefore any data residing on a storage device is at risk to being lost.

How Does a Dragon User Profile Become Corrupt?

Any piece of data on your computer can become corrupt, and a Dragon User Profile is not exempt from this possible fate.

Data can become corrupt if there is a computer crash, application crash, as well as operating system or application update. While the latter situation is rare, it can happen. The most common culprit is computer or application crash. Hardware malfunctions can also result in data corruption.

To avoid data upsets, Speakeasy Solutions always encourages the following:

- Restart your computer once per day.
- Stay up to date with the latest patches for operating system and applications – ensure that such patches are applied after a computer restart, without any other applications running.
- Close all applications before restarting the computer.
- Wait for your computer to settle before starting applications after a restart of the computer.

- Mind that your computer specifications meet the **realistic** minimum specifications for the applications used. Speakeasy Solutions' PC specifications for Dragon can be found here.

The Theory Behind Dragon's Backup & Restore Functions

Dragon performs a regular backup of your user profile according to the frequency you set in Dragon's Options. The default location of this backup is on your hard drive, and this can be changed in Dragon's Administrative Settings.

If you are on a network, it is wise to set the automatic backup's location to the network rather than the default local drive. This will give you some level of protection should your main computer become compromised.

If your user profile becomes corrupt, or, despite all other efforts is not as accurate as it once was, the Restore feature enables you to return your user profile to a previous backup point. Prior to Dragon NaturallySpeaking version 12, Dragon creates a user profile of the same name appended with "*Restored*"; Dragon creates the restored profile based on its most recent backup.

As of version 12, you choose the restore point (i.e. at the time the user profile was created, after a certain function was performed, or the latest backup). Please be aware that restoring your user profile will not create an additional user profile (unlike previous versions of Dragon). Restoration is irreversible, and if you have modified your vocabulary or created custom commands between the chosen restore point and your currently saved user profile, you will lose this information. As a tip, if you are about to restore your user profile, place a copy on your hard drive or a network location in case you wish to salvage any custom commands that you have recently created.

Unfortunately, it happens on occasion that Dragon does not perform any automatic backup whatsoever. In this instance, restoration will yield no results.

Both the manual backup and restore features are accessed under Dragon's **Profile> Manage User Profiles> Advanced** menu. Engage a manual backup on occasion to ensure there is a restore point.

How to Be Certain You Have a Backup of Your Dragon User Profile

In order to be certain that you have a backup of your Dragon user profile, perform an export of your user profile as regularly as possible (i.e. once per month). Exporting is accessible under Dragon's **Profile> Manage User Profiles> Advanced** menu. Export a copy

of the user profile to a network location or a USB memory stick or other storage media device.

Speakeasy Solutions recommends exporting a "known good user profile" at such time when you have a seasoned user profile comprising of all commands and vocabulary items. You would not overwrite this export, but retain as added security. Other regular exports may be overwritten any time.

If you have an automatic data backup system in place, include your Dragon user profile in this regular backup. However, do be careful as evidence of a corrupt user profile may not be immediately apparent and therefore not all backups can be relied upon; a backed up profile can become corrupt in fairly short order again and again. Thusly, exporting a "known good user profile" is highly advisable.

A manually exported user profile can be imported any time it is required – particularly during profile corruption, or loss of profile.