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Genie Backup Manager Professional 5.0

REVIEW DATE: 12.09.04



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By [Sheryl Canter](#)

Genie Backup's best features are that it is easy to use and flexible in choosing items for backup. You can select by filename or from a useful set of presets: e-mail repositories and settings, Microsoft Windows settings, Internet Explorer settings and cookies, Favorites, Windows Address Book, desktop files, fonts, and media playlists.

The program offers full integration with St. Bernard Software's Open File Manager and will bundle OFM for an additional \$25. This allows you to back up your Registry from within Windows. The preset options let you back up the entire Registry or just selected keys.

The e-mail programs supported in the preset list include Microsoft Outlook, which is especially useful since there is no way to back up account data in Outlook 2003 except by first importing it into Outlook Express. Backup of Outlook Exchange files is not currently supported, but is planned for a future version.

Genie Backup offers a third way to select items for backup: by program. This feature, new in Version 5, lets users write XML-based scripts to back up program settings, data, or entire program installations. Some prewritten scripts are included with the program, and more are available from the company's Web site.

The weakest part of Genie Backup is its interface, which, despite an attempt at clarity, remains convoluted and disorganized. Basic features like saved backup jobs can be hard to find. You can rename a job, but there's no way to save a job under a new name (so you can start with previous settings).

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The program also has numerous small bugs—none showstopping, but enough to be annoying. For example, once you select programs to back up using the script facility, if you deselect the programs, the settings aren't saved.

As with Backup4all, when Genie Backup can't back up a file, it silently skips that file and writes the error to a log file, and you can't test backup settings before the backup is actually written. In Genie Backup, the problem is compounded when you run a verification of the backup. When the verification procedure can't find a file (because it wasn't written), it prompts you to load the disc that contains the file. The only way to dismiss the prompt is to click on Cancel—and this aborts the verification. Thus you can't get a full verification report if any files were skipped during backup, and skipped files are a common occurrence when writing to optical media because of filename constraints.

Genie Backup has an outstanding feature set, and for the most part works very well. The convenience of the built-in presets, the power of the scripting facility, and the welcome ability to create spanned backups to optical media in native format outweigh the small problems we encountered. Still, we hope the developers take the time to smooth out these glitches before adding more functionality.

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December 16, 2004

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My first impressions of GBM 5 were pretty good. I liked the well thought out GUI's and the options available. My first backups to CD-RW went well. I then tried to backup to DVD-RW and had it fail each time. I have been working with Genie Soft e-support for a month now and there is no resolution. The recommendation is to wait for the next release. This has significantly dimmed my enthusiasm for the product.

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