

Backup4all 2.3.4

Backup4all from Softland is another one of many choices in the crowded Back-up software market. The producers claim –

Quote:

Backup4all was designed to be an easy-to-use software. It comes with separate wizards for backing up and restoring. All you have to do is follow the wizards steps and the instructions on screen.

With an explorer style interface you can see all the currently backed up files, in addition to any new files to be added in the next backup. Backup selection is made through the folder tree and allows you to select individual files and folders. There are also statistics that will show the total number of files backed up, the amount of space allocated for the current backup, and the available free space on the destination. A built in scheduler also allows configuration to make unattended backups.

Some of the key features include:

Built in CD/DVD burning support so you do not need separate software to burn your backups, although you can still use the UDF format if you wish.

Version tracking, which allows you to track and selectively restore any previous state of a saved file.

Backups stored as standard zip files, which allows you to access your data with any zip compatible utility.

A choice of backup types to choose from, including: full backup, differential backup, incremental backup, and mirror backup.

After a look at the advertised features we put **Backup4all** through a series of tests to see how well it stacks up against the competition.

Test system configuration:

Intel 3.4 GHz

Intel 925X Motherboard

NEC DVD+- Writer – IDE

Lacie DVD Writer – USB

2 X Western Digital 250 GB SATA Drives on RAID 0 (2 221 GB partitions)

Windows XP Professional SP2, MCE 2005

1 Hitachi 160 GB SATA Drive (non Raid, 2 75 GB partitions)

Windows Vista, Server 2003

Maxtor 80 GB External Drive - USB

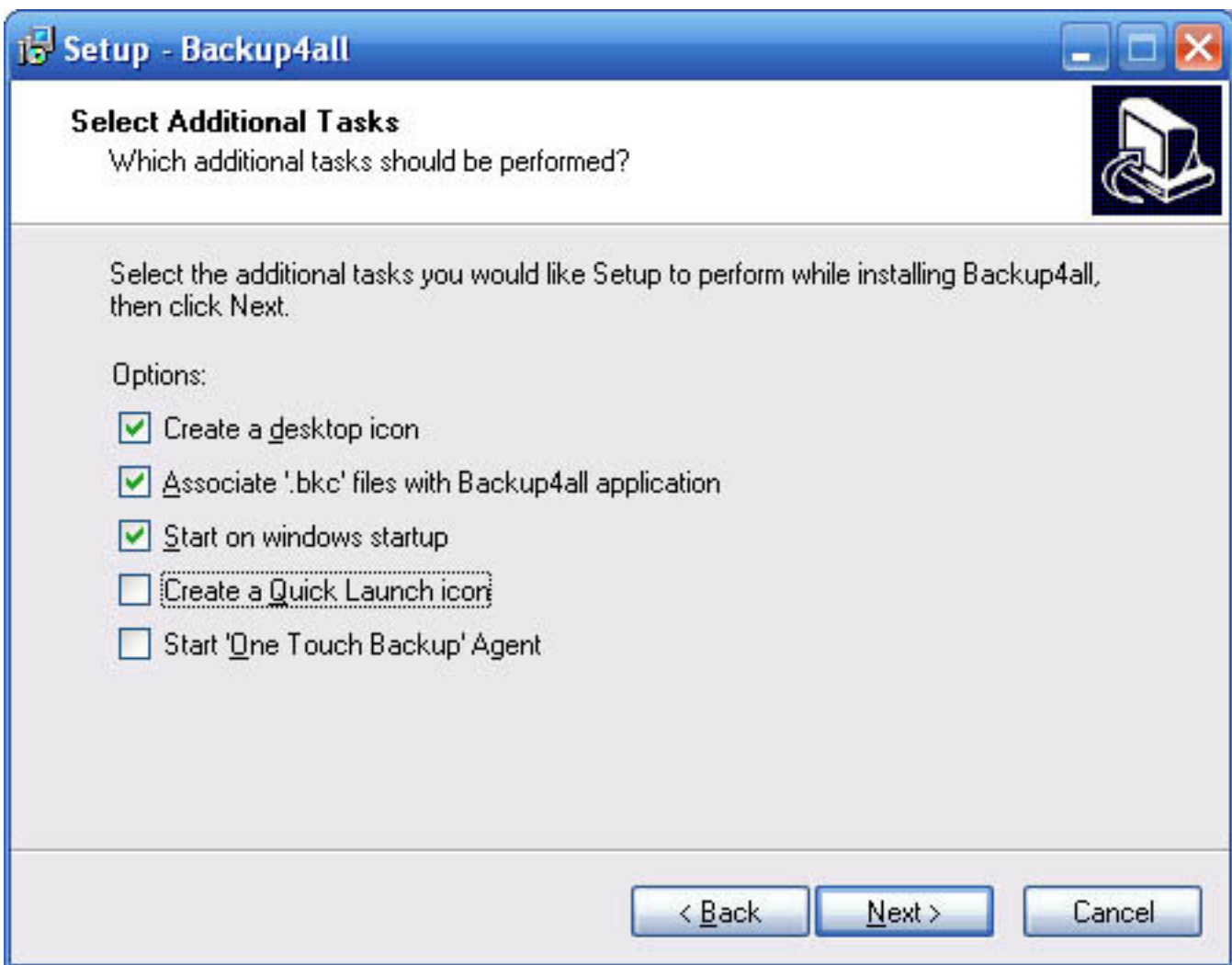
For testing we downloaded the Professional Edition Version 2.3.4, build 760.

Setup

Setup was surprisingly quick and no problems were encountered.

There are 4 versions of **Backup4all** available. The Professional version differs from the Classic version only in the added ability to create incremental backups and to store multiple versions for the incremental backup type. The Mirror version will only allow Mirror backups, and thus does not support the zip options. The OTB version has all of the features of Professional, but will only allow backing from local hard drives and from/to USB drives.

For this Review, we chose the Professional version in order to test out all of the available features. After accepting the EULA, we installed to the default 'C:\Program Files\Backup4all' directory and accepted the default 'Backup4all' program shortcut for the Start Menu. Next, we were presented with choices of Additional tasks for setup to perform. We chose the default selected options of 'Create a desktop icon', 'Associate '.bkc' files with Backup4all application', and 'Start on windows startup', but did not select to create a Quick Launch icon, or to Start 'One Touch Backup' Agent.



Setup completed successfully, and the desktop icon and Start Menu group were created, including a shortcut to a standard Windows Help file. The Help file is a welcome change from many programs that now come with their manuals in PDF format, which seem to be more difficult for many people to navigate through.

One thing we did notice about the setup was that once the program is installed and registered, if it is later uninstalled and reinstalled, the registration information remains and does not have to be re-entered.

Installation on Windows Vista December CTP Build 5270

We were quite pleasantly surprised to find that **Backup4all** installed and worked well on the latest Vista release. While this is still a Beta Operating system, it is nice to see that this program seems to be Vista compatible and that it will even use the Vista Aero theme without difficulties.

First Look – User Interface

On startup, the user interface is uncluttered and seems easy to navigate. To understand what the icons are for, the user must hover over the icon to get a text description of its function. Although this keeps the interface simpler, it is also a bit confusing for the new user. We decided to check out the functions of each of the icons available.

New Backup Wizard – This will launch a comprehensive Wizard that will allow you to create a new Backup using either default settings, or user defined options.

Create Like – This will create a new backup job with the properties of the currently selected one. Use this option to create a backup job template for easy customization.

Delete – This will delete the currently selected backup job.

Properties – This will allow the user to see and modify properties for the currently selected backup job including: General, Sources, Destination, Type, Filters, Scheduler, and Advanced.

Explore – This is on by default and shows an explorer type folder and file view of the current backup job.

Statistics – This shows the statistics of the current backup job and included helpful information such as time of last backup, changes since last backup, total size to backup, and free space on destination drive.

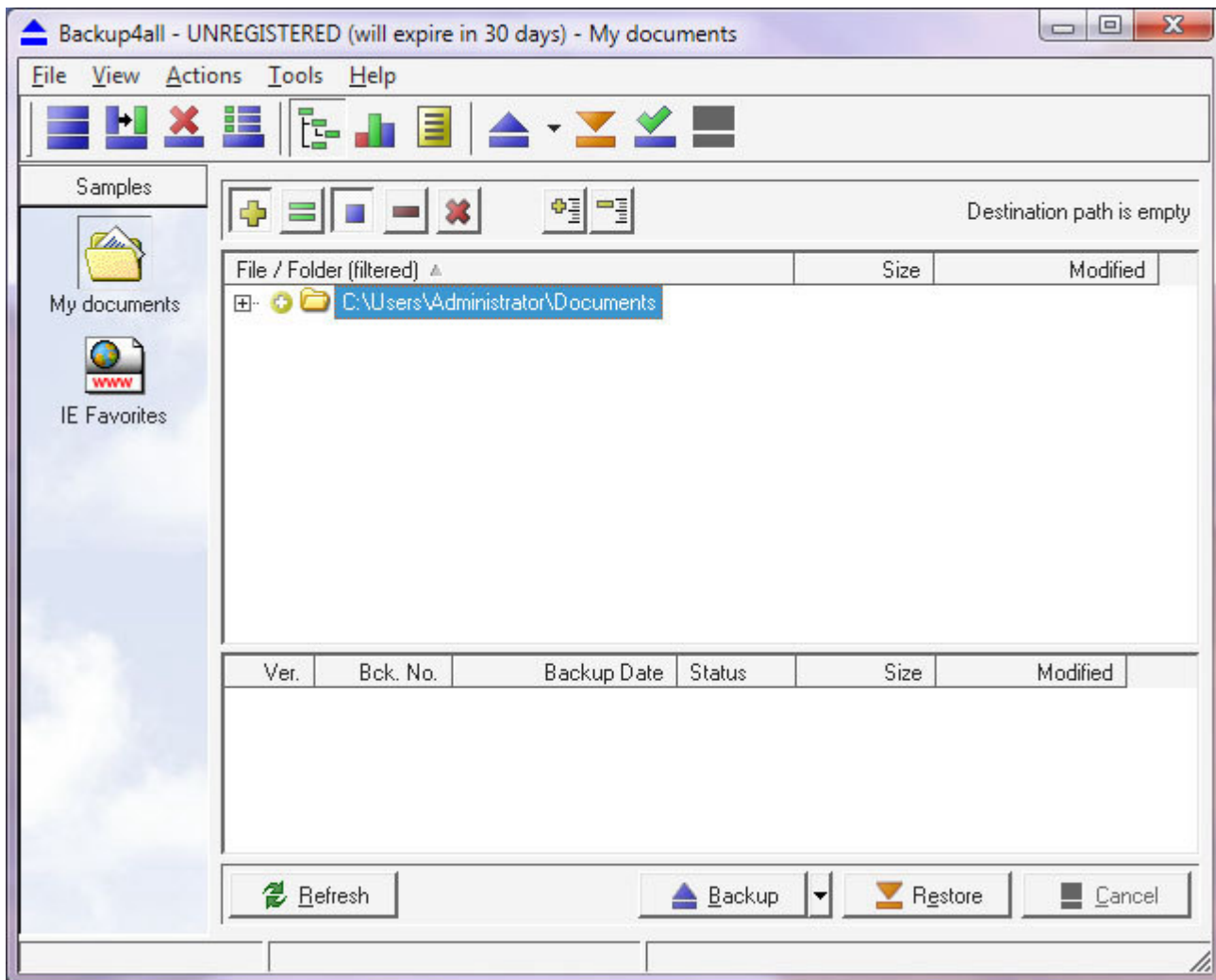
Summary – This shows a general summary of the selected backup job.

Backup – This allows the user to make a backup, and select the option of either an incremental or differential backup.

Restore Wizard – This will launch the wizard to guide the user through restoring a previously saved backup.

Test – This will allow the user to test a backup using CRC32 to check file integrity.

Cancel – This will allow the user to cancel the current backup operation.



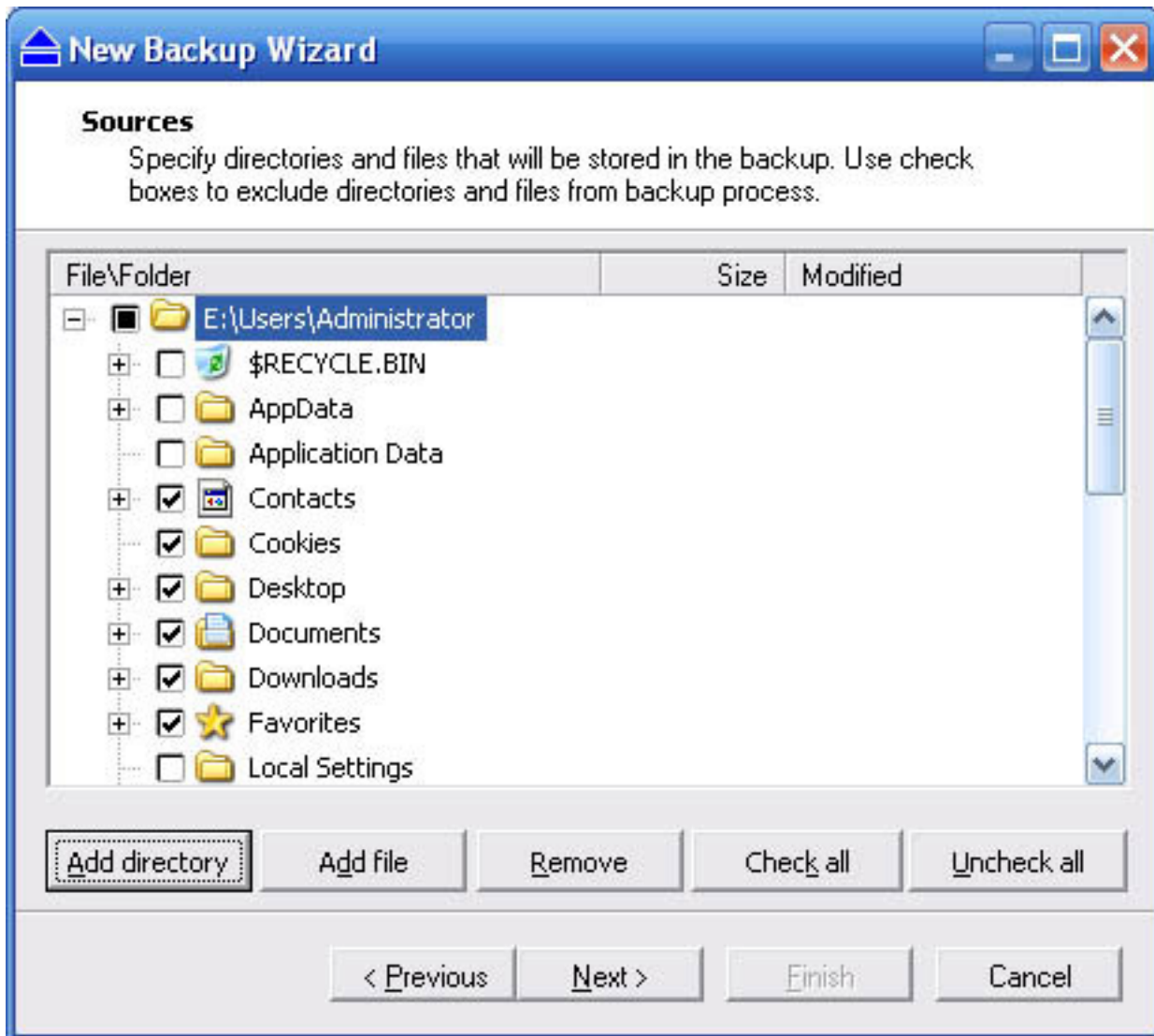
Creating a Backup

After exploring the available options, we decided to make our first backup using the backup wizard.

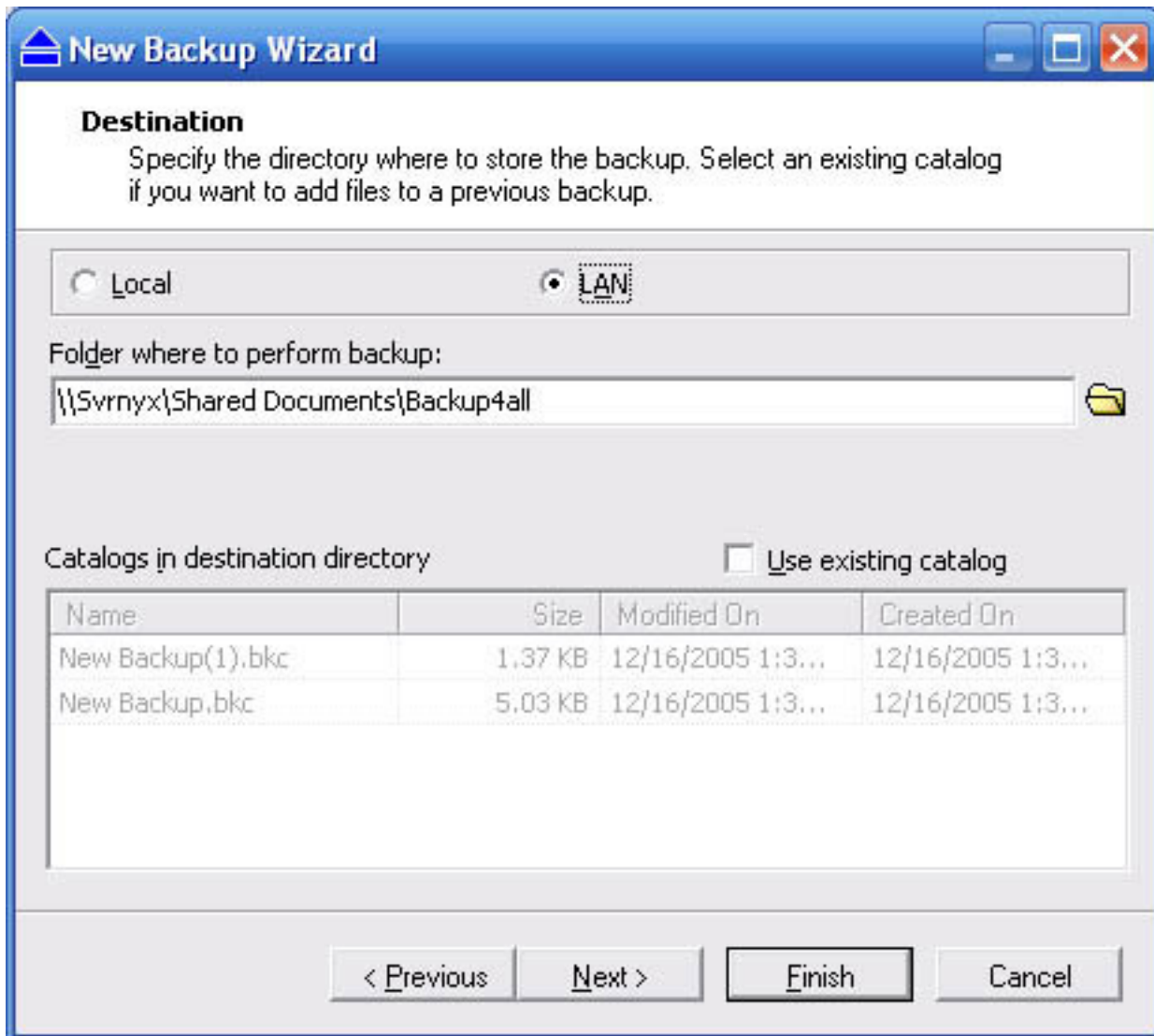
Upon starting the wizard, we entered the name "Test" for our backup, chose "Sample" as the group, chose an icon image for the backup, and typed in a short description.



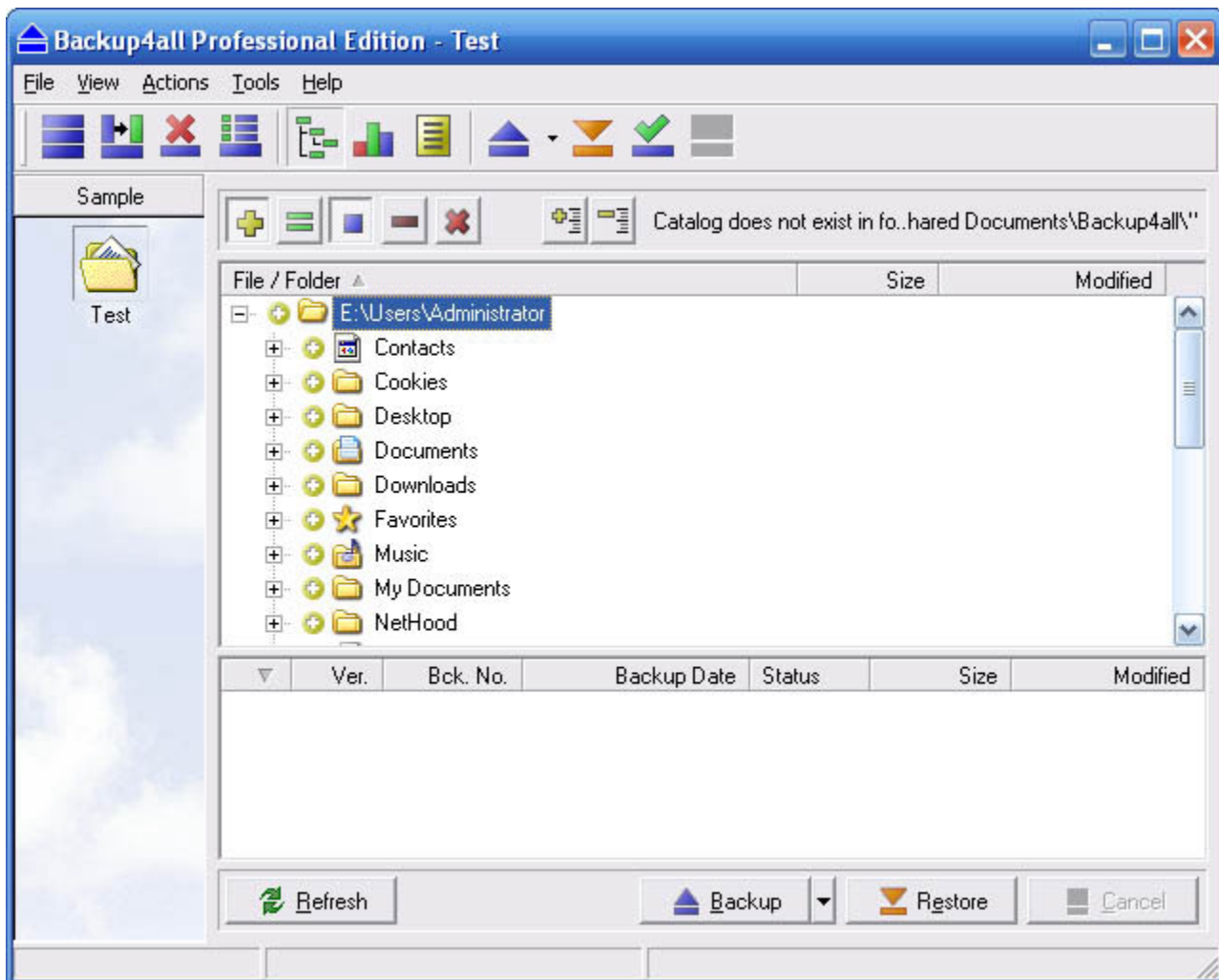
The next screen allowed us to select our backup source, adding the Administrator Folder from a local drive. Using the explorer interface we then easily selected individual folders and files to be included in the backup.



The next step was to select the destination for our backup. We chose to try the LAN option to create a backup on a networked server. On our first try we could not access the folders on the server, however, once we went through Windows Explorer Network locations and logged on the server through it we were able to then access the server folders through the wizard. Once the server was accessed we also noticed that we could choose to use catalogs created from previous backups.



At this point we were offered a number of user customizable options for the Type of backup, Backup Filters, Scheduling options, and a number of advanced options. With our source and destinations already selected, we chose the simple route and used the default settings. Upon clicking Finish, our backup job was now displayed in the main program window.



Deciding to take the plunge, from the Backup button we selected 'Make Full Backup'. For this test we made a small backup of 33.5 MB. The backup was completed to the network server in less than 10 seconds including a test of the backup integrity. Using the default compression, the actual backup zip file was 28.5 MB, or 85% of the original size. As a secondary test, we backed up a 2GB DVD iso image to a locally attached external USB drive that took a little over 6 minutes to complete.

Restoring a Backup

For our final test, it was time to see how easy the restore process was. We clicked on the Test backup job in the backup pane, and then clicked the Restore Wizard Icon. We decided to restore the backup to an alternate location in order to compare the backup job, accepted the default options and clicked Finish. Our 33.5 MB backup job was restored from the network server in less than 4 seconds. Our secondary backup job of 2 GB was restored from our external USB in less than 5 minutes. Both jobs passed an integrity check.

Conclusion

Overall, we were quite impressed with **Backup4all**. Its performance was quite good, creating backups and restoring data in a reasonable amount of time. Using a standard zip format is also a big

plus, allowing restoration of files with any common zip utility, as is the ability to password protecting the zip file. The Mirror Backup type, while using more space and not allowing security, has the advantage of faster speed and easier access to backed up data. Built in CD/DVD support is an advantage for those who don't wish to use third party software, although UDF support is also offered (this is not supported in the OTB version). The ability to install and run on the latest test version of Windows Vista is also a big plus.

The advanced features allow many user customizable options, including a powerful filtering engine, a choice of full, incremental, and differential backups, and a Built in Scheduler. The network backup feature is a great addition and is a welcome feature considering the huge increase in home networks. **Backup4all** also includes compatibility with many 'One Touch' USB drives to make customizable 'One Touch' backups.

Although the user interface is a bit confusing for the novice user at first, after spending a few minutes learning the controls, it is very easy to navigate and use.

Final Score

Because of its wealth of features, we were quite impressed with **Backup4all** and have rated it **8** out of **10**. The only factors that kept it from achieving a higher score were the inability to natively log onto a network drive, and the inability to create a drive or partition image.

Backup4all Classic is available from Softland for \$30 as a download, or \$39 for the download and CD version. Prices for the Professional and Mirror editions as well as Network licenses are available from the **Backup4all** [website](#)

PROnetworks would like to thank Softland for providing us with Licenses for the Professional version of the application