



**DriveHQ**

**VS**



**Carbonite**

**The most comprehensive review and comparison  
of cloud storage services**

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# 1. Introduction

The document below is a comparison of Carbonite and DriveHQ by top experts in the cloud service industry. Their expertise, insights and hands-on business experience opens up a very different perspective. Whether you are a Carbonite fan or DriveHQ fan, reading the document below will help you better understand the strengths and weaknesses of Carbonite and DriveHQ, as well as the business cloud service requirements and solutions.

## 2. Summary

### 2.1 What is Carbonite's main advantage?

- According to Carbonite, it offers easy and unlimited backup at affordable price.

### 2.2 Carbonite's weaknesses

#### 2.2.1 Carbonite's "unlimited" backup is for consumers only. For business backup, it is not unlimited.

Since storage, bandwidth, server and electricity are not free, we can guess that "unlimited online backup" is not really possible, it must have some limits. In Carbonite's case:

- It is limited to the consumer plans.
- It is limited to each computer. Most families have multiple computers, to backup multiple computers, you need to pay for each computer.
- It does not support backing-up mobile devices;
- It cannot backup servers, external drives and network drives (unless you pay a higher price)
- It does not backup large files (over 5GB) by default.
- Most consumers only have 2 to 20GB of personal data to backup, "unlimited backup" really means 2-20GB in many cases.

#### 2.2.2 Carbonite only offers online backup service.

Most businesses need more than just online backup service. Businesses are embracing cloud services more and more. Companies need Online Storage, Cloud File Server, Online File Sharing and Collaboration, Folder Synchronization, "true" drop box folder, FTP, email and web hosting and mobile acces, etc.

DriveHQ offers all these services. Moreover, these services are all bundled for no extra charge to you. With Carbonite, you will have to order services from multiple service providers. Not only this increases your cost, but also it is harder to manage accounts from multiple service providers.

### **2.3 Carbonite lacks advanced backup features**

Carbonite's online backup is optimized for consumers. It lacks many advanced backup features, for example:

- It does not support multiple backup tasks with different backup schedules;
- Only the highest level plan (Business Premier) supports server backup;
- Carbonite supports group backup, however, this feature is very limited and is not scalable. It also lacks group backup remote management capability (it supports remote monitoring only).
- Significantly weaker support for Mac.

## **3. Detailed Reviews and Comparisons**

Carbonite was originally focused on photo storage, but changed paths in May, 2006. Their business is now focused on online backup service. Compared to traditional backup software, Carbonite's Online Backup software is more designed for consumers. The backup software is relatively simple, esp. it does not have advanced backup options. The biggest selling point is Carbonite claims it offers "unlimited backup" for an affordable price. In reality, such "unlimited" backup has a lot of "limits", nevertheless, the approach seemed to go well.

Overall, we believe Carbonite's two weaknesses are: (1) It only offers online backup service; (2) Its online backup service lacks advanced features.

### **3.1 Carbonite only offers online backup service.**

Carbonite only offers online backup service. Moreover, its service is focused on Windows. Its Mac-based online backup software does not have some features available on Windows. Carbonite also does not have backup client software for mobile devices. Nor does it have any folder synchronization software.

Today, more and more businesses are embracing cloud services. Online Backup is just one of these services. Most businesses need more than just online backup service. For example:

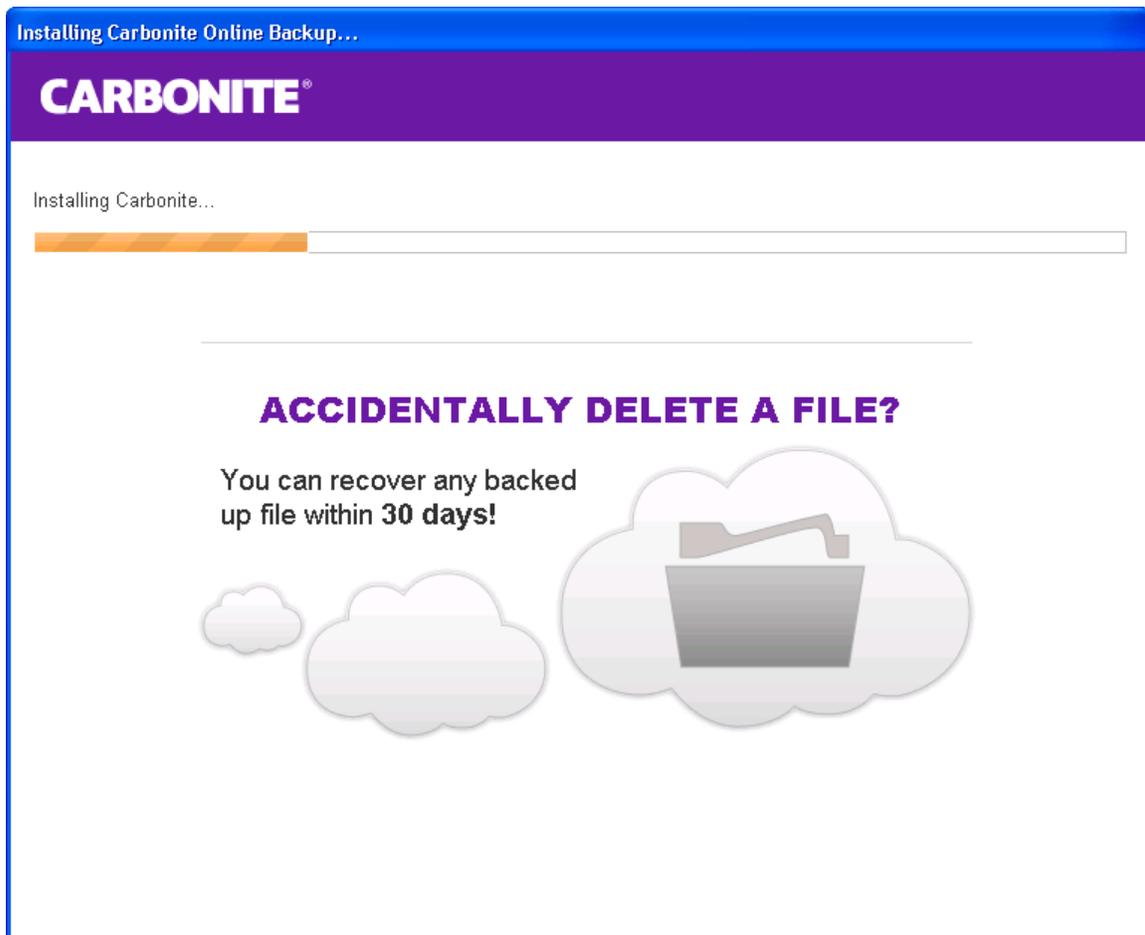
- Most businesses need an online file server for accessing files remotely;
- They need to share and collaborate among employees and clients;
- They need to synchronize folders for quick and offline access;
- They need a "true" drop box folder for receiving files from clients without requiring them to sign in or sign up;
- They need FTP, email and web hosting;
- They need to backup mobile devices, and access files from mobile devices.

DriveHQ is a one-stop shop for all core cloud IT services. Moreover, DriveHQ bundles these services for no extra charge to you. With Carbonite, you will have to order services from

multiple service providers. Not only this increases your cost, but also it is harder to manage accounts from multiple service providers.

### 3.2 Carbonite may delete your files after 30 days

According to Carbonite's documentation, if you delete a file / folder from the backup source location, Carbonite will purge the file/folder after 30 days. This probably is ok in most cases, however, if you accidentally delete your files on your computer and if you don't notice in 30 days, then Carbonite will delete your backup files. Your files will be lost permanently.

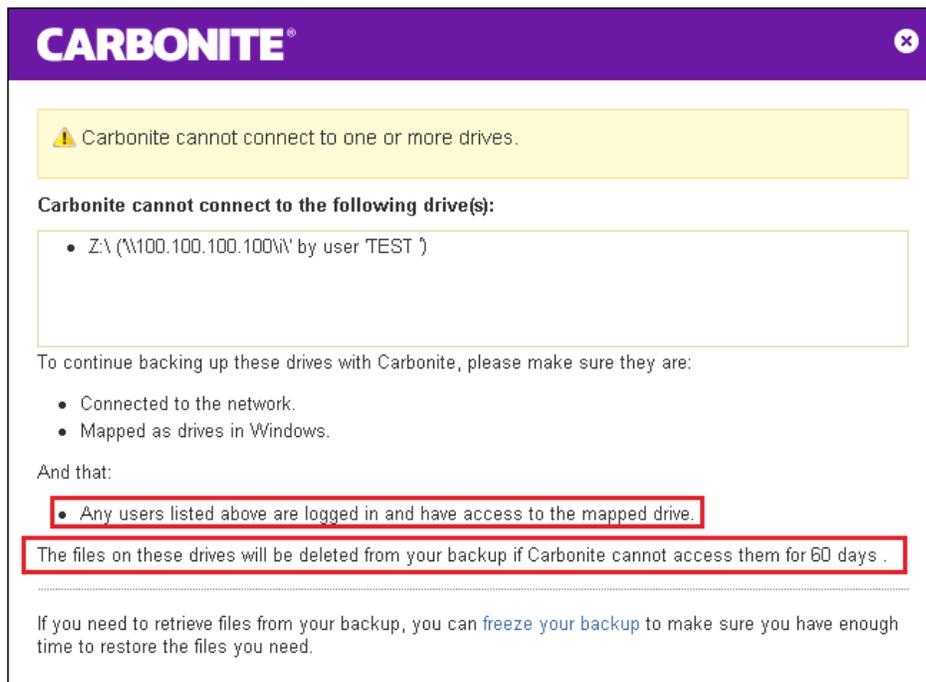


With DriveHQ Online Backup, if you delete your files from the source folder, it will not delete your files already backed up to DriveHQ automatically. You can manually purge such files by logging on DriveHQ Online Backup client software, go to Manage Tasks screen, select a task and edit it, then click on "Delete un-used files on server".

### 3.3 Carbonite will delete your files after 60 days if you backup external drive or network drive

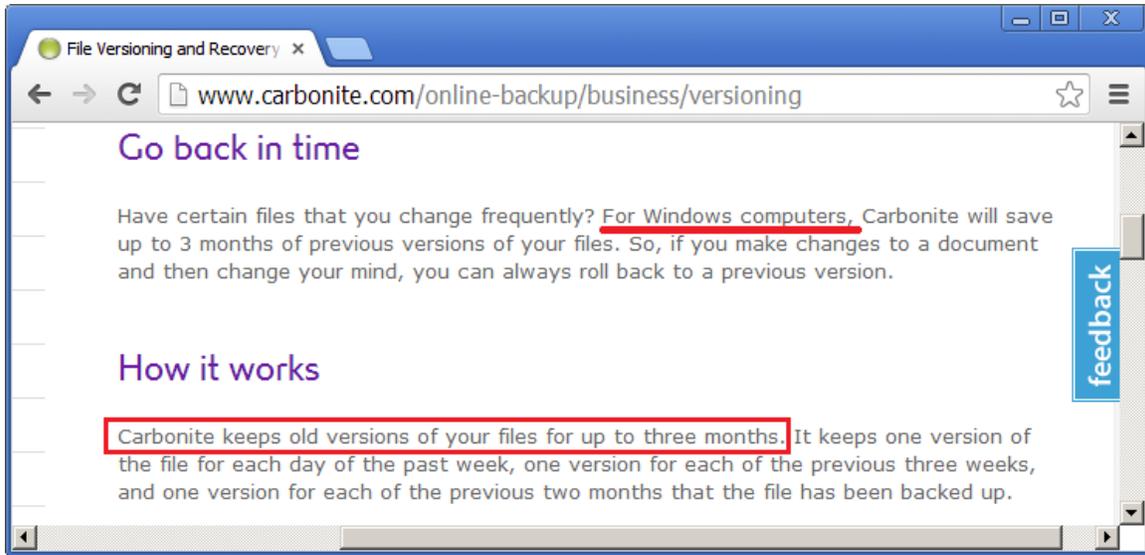
Carbonite does not back network drives or external drives for the home plan. For the more expensive business plan, you can backup external drives and network drives. However, if you disconnect the external drive / network drive, Carbonite will freeze your backup.

When you unfreeze your backup, it pops up a message telling you that you must connect your external drive and network drive and you must log on Windows for backup to happen! If you don't connect your external drive / network drive, then your files will be deleted after 60 days. Please see the screenshot below:



### 3.4 Carbonite Online Backup may not keep your old file versions.

As documented by Carbonite, Carbonite keeps old versions of your files for up to three months. It keeps one version of the file for each day of the past week, one version for each of the previous three weeks, and one version for each of the previous two months that the file has been backed up. See the screenshot for more details:



The problem with this design is you will always lose file versions after 3 months. For example, if you have a file that you just made some changes today, then 3 months later, all older versions will be gone. More dangerously, if you have an older version file that is over 3 months old, and you made some new changes today. Then you will only have one version saved in Carbonite.

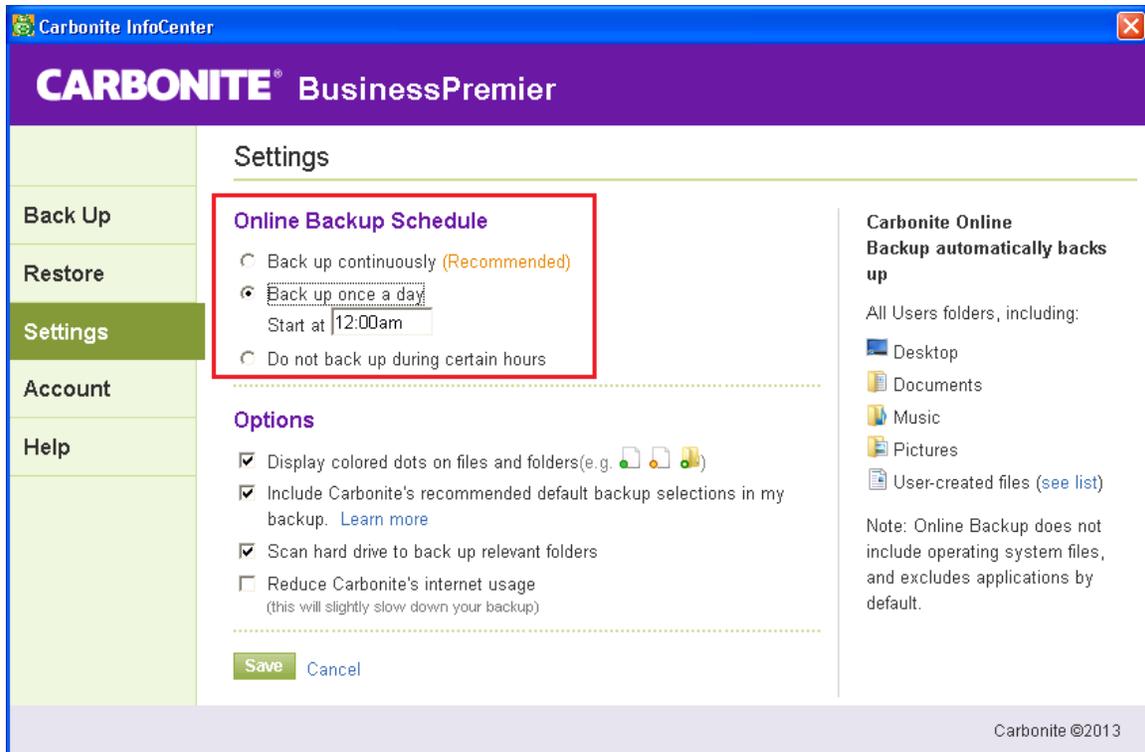
With DriveHQ Online Backup, by default, it keeps 10 versions of your files. The system will not delete your older versions automatically. Moreover, you can change the maximum versions to keep; you can even create multiple backup tasks and set different maximum versions for different tasks.

Also to note, Carbonite's Online Backup for Mac does not support file versioning.

### **3.5 Carbonite's backup scheduling feature is very limited**

Carbonite Online Backup only supports real-time backup and daily scheduled backup. As shown in the screenshot below:

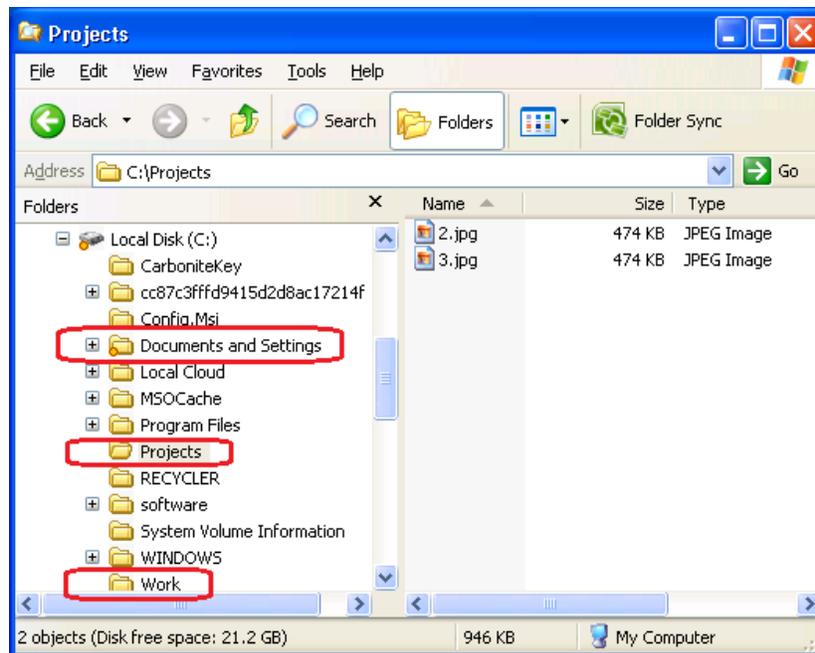
- Carbonite does not support weekly scheduled backup and monthly scheduled backup
- It cannot schedule the backup task to run on a particular day of week/month.
- It does not support multiple backup tasks, nor can it set different schedules for different backup tasks.



DriveHQ Online Backup supports multiple tasks; you can also set different schedules for different backup tasks.

### 3.6 Carbonite Online Backup is not really easy

Carbonite claims its online backup service is very easy. In reality it is not so true. Carbonite Online Backup automatically selects folders and files to backup. By default, it backs up users' data, but not files in Windows system folders and program files folder. This seems to make sense. However, as we tested Carbonite Online Backup and noticed that it only selects the "Documents and Settings" folder. It does not automatically backup folders in the root directory of c:\ drive. For example, in our test, if you create two folders: c:\work and C:\project, and if you save your work or project files in these two folders, then neither folders are backed up automatically. Please see the screenshot below:



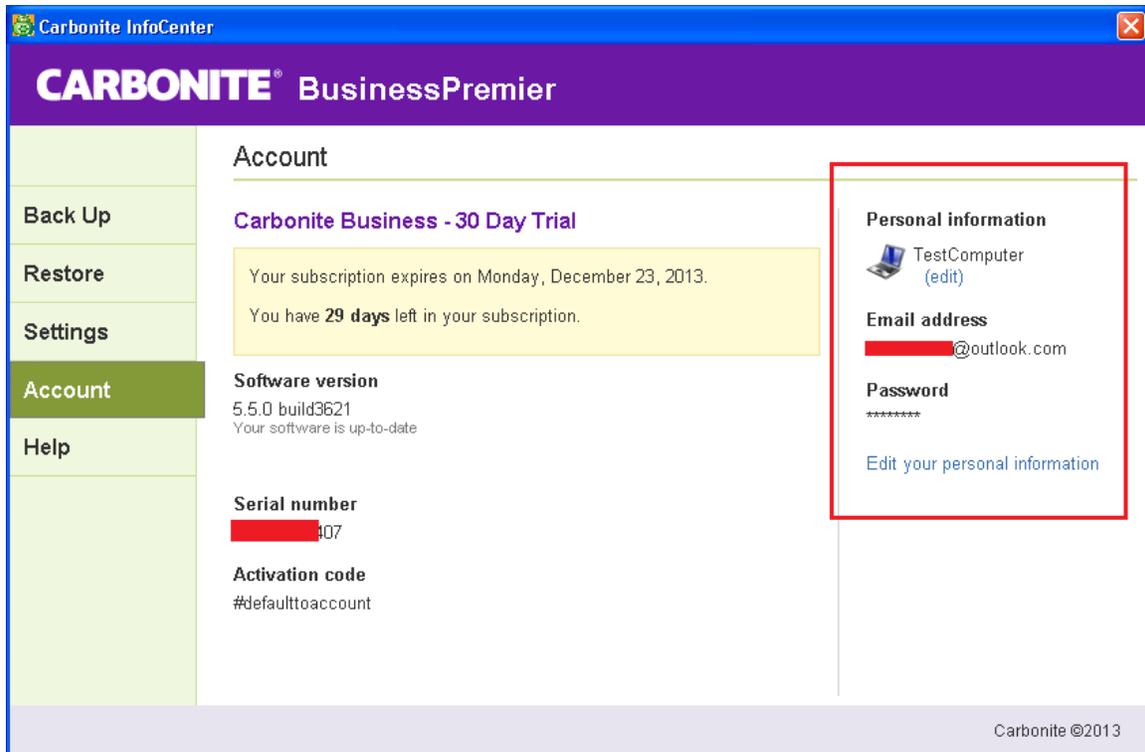
As you can see from the folder icons, Carbonite does not automatically backup folders created in the root folder of C:\ drive. If you believe Carbonite Online Backup is easy, you could have left some very important files without backup.

Also, by default, Carbonite does not backup files over 5GB. You will have to manually select these files for backup. For average users, this could be very challenging as a lot of users may not know this, or may not know whether they have files over 5GB, or where to find such files to be included for backup.

If you still have to manually select some files and folders to backup, then Carbonite Online Backup is not easy at all.

### 3.7 Carbonite Online Backup does not support log off

In a very strange design, Carbonite Online Backup does not support log off. As you can see from the screenshot below. While it is true that users should not log off if they want to backup their files, not allowing users to log off certainly is strange. It could be viewed as **a security bug**; or at least, users may need to log off and log on as a different user account. With DriveHQ Online Backup and FileManager, it can be accomplished easily. With Carbonite, you will need to reinstall and reconfigure the software from the scratch.



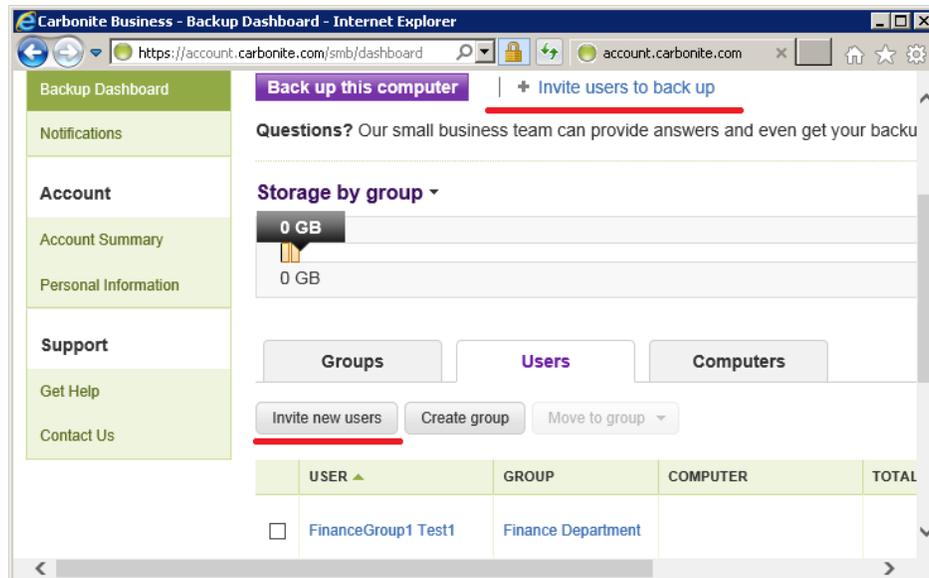
### 3.8 Restoring files to a different computer is very difficult

You can backup a computer using one user account. However, the restore feature only allows you to restore files from the same computer you backed up your files. To restore files to a new computer, you must transfer Carbonite (service) to a different computer first. If you want to restore one file to a new computer but keep the original backup task on the old computer, Carbonite Online Backup does not support it.

With DriveHQ service, restoring files cannot be easier. You can restore files using DriveHQ Online Backup, you can also use DriveHQ.com website, or DriveHQ FileManager. You can easily restore files to a new / different computer without affecting your current backup task(s).

### 3.9 User (sub-user) Account Creation is difficult

Instead of creating users directly, Carbonite will send invitation emails to users. The user will need to read the email, sign up an account and create a password, then download the Carbonite Online Backup client software. (see the screenshot below)



With DriveHQ, the process is much easier. The admin user will create an account for the user directly. The user can then install DriveHQ Online Backup and logon with username and password created by the admin user.

### 3.10 Carbonite's user administration feature is weak and does not scale to large enterprises

Carbonite only supports two user types: Administrator and Users. An administrator user has full control over all users and backup tasks. This design is not scalable to large enterprises. If an enterprise has over 1000 employees, one administrator cannot manage all user accounts; but creating too many administrator accounts will significantly increase the security risks as each admin user has full control over users and backup tasks.

DriveHQ supports 5 user types:

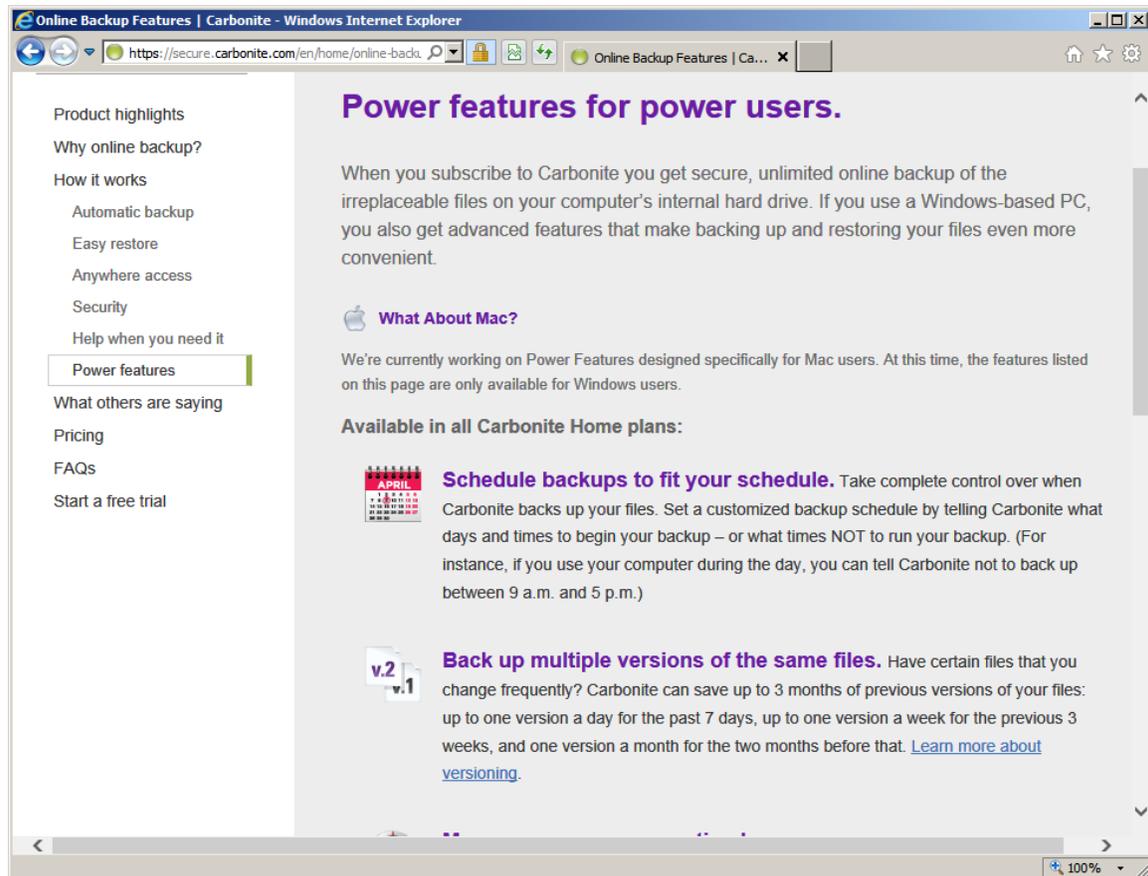
- Group Account Owner ; (usually business owners or IT managers)
- Group Administrator; (usually IT managers)
- Subgroup Administrator; (usually branch / department managers)
- Regular Group Member; (usually regular employees)
- Guest Users. (usually external clients)

with DriveHQ, an enterprise can easily create sub-groups and delegate system admin tasks to sub-group administrators. This can easily scale to thousands of users and computers.

### 3.11 Carbonite Online Backup for Mac does not support scheduled tasks and file versioning

On Mac, Carbonite Online Backup does not support task scheduling and file versioning. More detailed information is available in the screenshot below.

<https://secure.carbonite.com/en/home/online-backup-software/power-features>



### 3.12 Unlimited Backup is not really "unlimited"

Carbonite's "unlimited" backup is for consumers only. For business backup, it is not unlimited. It starts with only 250GB or 500GB dependent on your plan.

Since storage, bandwidth, server and electricity are not free, we can guess that "unlimited online backup" is not really possible, it must have some limits. In Carbonite's case:

- It is limited to the consumer plans.

- It is limited to each computer. Most families have multiple computers, to backup multiple computers, you need to pay for each computer.
- It does not support backing-up mobile devices;
- It cannot backup servers, external drives and network drives (unless you pay a higher price)
- It does not backup large files (over 5GB) by default.
- Most consumers only have 2 to 20GB of personal data to backup, "unlimited backup" really means 2-20GB in many cases.

As reported in:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/tonybradley/2013/07/23/the-myth-of-online-backup/>

<http://www.dslreports.com/forum/r22910253-Rant-Carbonite-Backup-is-not-unlimited-as-they-claim>

Carbonite has ways to limit online backup.

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying a Forbes blog post. The browser's address bar shows the URL: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/tonybradley/2013/07/23/the-myth-of-online-backup/>. The Forbes logo is visible in the top left, and navigation links for 'New Posts', 'Most Popular' (with sub-link 'Hip-Hop's Top Earners'), and 'Lists' (with sub-link 'The Forbes 400') are in the top right. On the left side of the page, there are social sharing buttons for Facebook (259 shares), Twitter (89 tweets), LinkedIn (24 shares), Reddit (10 shares), and a Submit button (66 votes). The main content area features a red-bordered box containing the following text:

The problem this photographer was having is that she had signed up for Carbonite Home in November of 2012. As of May 2013—six months later—Carbonite had not yet completed the initial backup of her data. She has roughly 2.5TB (terabytes) of data connected to her computer, but had only designated about 500GB worth of files to be backed up by Carbonite, and she was concerned that her important files were still unprotected in the event of a disaster.

When she contacted Carbonite support, she was told that the upload speed of her broadband Internet service was irrelevant. Carbonite transfers data at a maximum rate of 2Mbps—or about 22GB per day—for the first 200GB. After that point, Carbonite throttles the data upload to 1GB per day.

I thought this sounded incredible, so I reached out to Carbonite myself. A Carbonite spokesperson confirmed the bandwidth throttling, and sent me a link to where it is [clearly spelled out](#) in the Carbonite customer knowledge base. Carbonite claims that average users actually only achieve upload speeds of 3GB to 4GB per day for the first 200GB.

At that rate, it takes nearly two months just to upload the first 200GB of data, and then another 300 days to finish uploading the remaining 300GB. Assuming she doesn't add any new data ever, it would take almost the entire first year of Carbonite Home service just to finish the initial backup of the data that existed when she signed up. In the course of that year, she might

At the bottom left of the screenshot, a partial URL is visible: <http://blogs.forbes.com/account/>

### 3.13 Carbonite's pricing is not low

In a quick glance, it seems Carbonite's price is low. However, Carbonite only offers online backup service, you might have to order another service from a different service provider for other cloud services.

Also note that Carbonite charges per computer for consumer service plans; for business plans, the cost is much higher and it only offers 250GB or 500GB storage space. Additional storage space is price at about \$1155/TB/year, which is higher than DriveHQ's storage price.

Remote Data and Online Server Backup | Carbonite BusinessPremier - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.carbonite.com/online-backup/pricing-plans/businesspremier

DURATION	ADDITIONAL STORAGE & DATABASES	COST
<input checked="" type="radio"/> 1 year	500 GB included	1050 GB for 1 year
<input type="radio"/> 2 years <b>Save 10%</b>	+ 550 GB additional *	<b>\$1155.93</b>
<input type="radio"/> 3 years <b>Save 15%</b>	1050 GB total	<b>SELECT</b>

Enhanced Server Backup (\$399.99/year)\*\* ⓘ

\* additional storage cost: 50 GB for \$55.99 per year or 100 GB for \$99.99 per year

\*\* additional fees may apply for subsequent configuration changes for Enhanced Server Backup

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