# Smart**Backup**
## Comparison Guide

A comparison between AcuWorkflow SmartBackup and the two standard backup
options available from Smartsheet.

*Version 021626A*

# SmartBackup Comparison Guide

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## Introduction

This document provides information about the features and capabilities of SmartBackup and how it compares with alternative backup solutions for Smartsheet.

One of the key attractions of Smartsheet is the ability to format sheets and elevate usability with the use of icons, symbols, conditional formatting, attachments, automations, forms, and sheet organization, including row indenting, and Grid, Gantt, Card, and Calendar views.

However, for the most part, all these features are lost when backing up sheets using the standard Smartsheet options, which effectively convert the sheets into ordinary Excel files.

Therefore, if you need to do a recovery, you may be able to restore your basic data, but the process may leave you with an "unusable application".

## SmartBackup Alternatives from Smartsheet

As most Smartsheet customers are aware, Smartsheet itself does include a built-in backup capability, and Smartsheet also provides a free Java-based tool that can be used by System Administrators. However, these tools have several severe limitations, which is why we created our SmartBackup solution.

SmartBackup is currently the most comprehensive, advanced backup solution available in the market today, and is endorsed by Smartsheet sales and support teams as the recommended backup solution for Smartsheet customers.

For comparison purposes, let's look at the two alternative options available from Smartsheet.

## Smartsheet backups

This functionality is built into Smartsheet for Enterprise and Business customers. It creates copies of Sheets and emails a link to the User which they can use to download a zip file containing the backup copies.

| Smartsheet backup | AcuWorkflow SmartBackup |
|---|---|
| Only creates "exported" backup copies in Excel format as .zip files. | Creates rich, full fidelity online backup copies that are stored in Smartsheet, as well as offline backup copies which are saved outside of Smartsheet. |
| Can only backup Sheets and Attachments. | The LiveCopy function can create online backup copies of Sheets and Attachments, Dashboards, and in a future release, Reports and Folders.<br><br>The ShadowCopy function creates offline backup copies of Sheets with Attachments and additional metadata and in a future release can also include copies of Reports. |
| Only accessible on a per User basis. | Installed, configured, and managed by a System Admin. Runs automatically for all Users. |
| No Admin features. | Deployed and managed by the System Admin for all users. |

| Smartsheet backup | AcuWorkflow SmartBackup |
|---|---|
| Must be turned on manually for each workspace. | Automatically includes all eligible workspaces. |
| Does not do incremental backups, only full backups. | Creates online backups of all active sheets and dashboards and includes offline backups of all active sheets. |
| Can only request a weekly recurring backup. | All SmartBackup functions can be scheduled to run on any sequence, or multiple sequences as needed, at any time, and as often as needed. |
| Backup details are sent in an email to the user. The user must open the email and click on a link to download the backup copy as a zip file and save that somewhere. | Online backup copies are included in each User's "Vault", and offline backup copies are saved in a secure location. No manual intervention required. No additional action required for Users or Admins. |
| Admins do not have access to these backup files. | Users have access to their own online backup copies; Admins have access to all offline backup copies and Users can also share their "Vaults" with Admins if needed. |
| If the user does not click in the email to download each backup copy, the link will expire after 7 days. | Online backup copies in the Vault are available as soon as LiveCopy completes and will be available for as long as the Admin decides.<br><br>Offline backup copies are available as soon as the ShadowCopy function completes and can be retained for as long as the Admin decides. |
| It is possible to request a one-time backup, but that also needs to be done manually. | LiveCopy and ShadowCopy functions can be initiated on demand at any time. They can also be scheduled to run automatically on any recurring schedule as needed. |
| It is only possible to request a recurring weekly backup at the Workspace level. Only one-time backups can be requested at the Folder level. | LiveCopy and ShadowCopy functions can be initiated on demand at any time. They can also be scheduled to run automatically.<br><br>In a future release, the Specific function can be used to schedule recurring LiveCopy or ShadowCopy runs for any Folder, Sheets, Dashboards, or Reports. |
| If a user leaves the company all their Smartsheet backup settings are lost. | All online and offline backup copies are retained if a User leaves the organization. All configurations, settings, and schedules are under the control of the System Admin. |
| All backups are in the form of file copies (exported copies) in Excel format and do not contain any metadata. | The ShadowCopy function creates backup copies in Excel format together with several "packing note" files containing all available metadata about the Sheet, Rules, and Attachments.<br><br>Additionally, the LiveCopy function creates rich, full fidelity copies of Sheets, Dashboards, and Reports |

| Smartsheet backup | AcuWorkflow SmartBackup |
|---|---|
| | and saves those in each User's Smartsheet account. |
| The backup copies are not saved inside Smartsheet and are therefore not accessible from within Smartsheet. | The LiveCopy function creates rich, full fidelity copies of a User's Sheets and Dashboards and saves them in the User's Vault for easy retrieval.<br><br>The ShadowCopy function creates offline copies of Sheets and saves them outside of Smartsheet under full control of the System Admin. |
| To restore data, rows, columns or sheets, the User will need to find the backup email, download, and extract the exported files, and find the data then copy and paste into the original sheet, or they may need to import the exported file back into Smartsheet and copy the data from that import. | To restore, all the User needs to do is locate the most recent online backup copy in their Vault and simply copy the good data back to the original Sheet.<br><br>In addition, if needed, the Admin can restore the Excel files created by the ShadowCopy function back to Smartsheet and share with the User for restoring. |
| Formulas and Forms are not included in the backup copies. It is not possible to restore formulas, nor is it possible to restore form data. This applies to drop down lists and other metadata as well. | Formulas and Form data can be restored from the online backup copies in the Vault (as well as drop down lists, etc.)<br><br>Formulas, drop down lists, and other metadata can also be restored from the ShadowCopy offline backup copies. |
| It is possible to include attachments in the backups but there is no information about how those attachments are used in the sheets. Note that to include attachments in the backups, the Users must remember to enable that feature for every Workspace backup request. | Attachments are included in the online backup copies in the Vault and are arranged exactly like the original Sheet.<br><br>Exported attachments are available in the ShadowCopy offline backups location and can be restored to their original locations using the Attachments packing note metadata if needed. |
| No ability to choose when the weekly backups will run. By default, all backups will run "over the weekend" at some random time. | Full control of when and how often online and offline backups are run. Can specify Date and Time for each function and can schedule to run multiple times in a day if required. |
| There is no overall view or list of all Smartsheet backup workspace settings in the organization. There is also no way for each individual user to see which Workspaces have been enabled for weekly backups. | All online and offline backup settings and configuration for all Users in the organization are defined by the System Admin and are easily accessible. User and Admin notifications include details of which Users and sheets are included in each LiveCopy and ShadowCopy run. |
| At an organizational level, the System Admin has no view of organization of the Smartsheet | DRP Reports provide a summary of all the users and groups in the organization, and the job summary report can provide additional |

| Smartsheet backup | AcuWorkflow SmartBackup |
|---|---|
| environment and how much data needs to be backed up. | information about the sheets that were backed up for each run. |

## Backup Tool from Smartsheet

The Smartsheet Backup Tool is a Java command-line tool that can be used to back up all Sheets in a Smartsheet account. It makes copies of Sheets and saves those as Excel files outside of Smartsheet.

| Backup Tool | AcuWorkflow SmartBackup |
|---|---|
| Requires technical expertise and configuration. | Requires some technical expertise to install and configure, but this process can be completed in about 15 minutes. |
| Not supported by Smartsheet (no support available). Code was last updated in 2018. | All updates and fixes are included. Enhancements and updates are provided at least on a 6-month cycle. Support is included. |
| Only takes full backups of all Sheets in the entire Smartsheet deployment. No support for incremental backups. No ability to select certain users or groups. | SmartBackup includes Incremental, Specific, and Active options for online and offline backups.<br><br>SmartBackup is the only solution available that can provide Incremental backups of active sheets. It can also be configured to run for only certain Users or groups. |
| Only creates Excel file copies of Sheets. Does not include attachments, comments, discussions, forms, formulas, etc. No metadata included. | LiveCopy creates rich, full fidelity online copies of Sheets, Dashboards, and Reports and saves those inside each User's Smartsheet account.<br><br>ShadowCopy also creates Excel file copies of all active Sheets, together with all available metadata and saves those outside of Smartsheet. |
| All backed up copies are saved into a single folder on the destination drive. | The LiveCopy function saves backup copies in each User's Vault, together with a Date and Time stamp and only includes Sheets, Dashboards and Reports that have recently changed.<br><br>The ShadowCopy function saves copies of Sheets and associated Attachments into separate folders for each User, in separate sub-folders for each day and each run and retains a record of the Workspace and folder hierarchy.<br><br>Location of offline backup files can be defined and managed by the System Admin. |
| Can be scheduled to run using a standard scheduling tool. | Can be invoked via the SmartBackup Console, or via the Command Line, or using a standard scheduling tool such as Windows Task Scheduler. |

| Backup Tool | AcuWorkflow SmartBackup |
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| | Incident Management Systems (IMS) integration available via notifications. |
| Does not have any notification capabilities. | Includes a new sophisticated job and notifications solution called JobCentral. JobCentral is built in Smartsheet and can be fully configured and customized by the SmartBackup Admins. |
| Only has a command line interface. | Can be invoked via the SmartBackup Console, or via the Command Line, or using a standard scheduling tool such as Windows Task Scheduler. Also includes a "Console Server" window providing additional task and logging details. |
| Has limited error handling. | Comprehensive error logging and management, with sophisticated wait/retry/skip logic. Debugging mode option together with Log files included. Sophisticated reporting, notifications, automations, and dashboards are provided by JobCentral and all managed in Smartsheet. |
| Has very limited documentation. | Full documentation available as well as User guides and training and System Admin guides and training. |
| Is very unstable and requires a lot of System Admin or IT Support and manual intervention. | Stable solution, having secured over 8 million sheets to date. Once installed and configured, can run continuously and autonomously with minimal supervision. |
| Does not support incremental backups. | SmartBackup includes Incremental online and offline backup copies, and focuses on creating backup copies of the most active sheets.<br><br>SmartBackup is the only solution available that provides Incremental backups. |
| If it encounters an error, it will abort. | Comprehensive error logging and management, with sophisticated wait/retry/skip logic. |
| Only accessible to Admins. No User access of functionality or the backup copies. | Online backups are accessible to Users and offline backups are managed by Admins. Online backups can also be shared with Admins if needed.<br><br>Each User has direct and easy access to their own rich, full fidelity backup copies in their own Vault.<br><br>Admins have secure, easy, and full access to all offline backup copies for the entire organization in one place. |

## Summary

As you can see from these tables, we have built a tremendous amount of capability into our SmartBackup solution, and we also provide detailed documentation on the product and on how to install, configure, and run the solution in your environment.

With SmartBackup you also have several deployment and configuration options, allowing you to tailor the solution to your needs and to help create a comprehensive backup and business continuity framework to secure your Smartsheet and business data.

## Questions

You can find comprehensive information about SmartBackup on our website at https://www.acuworkflow.com, and in our SmartBackup Documentation site and User Guides site.

If you have any questions or require any additional information, contact us at info@acuworkflow.com.

## References:

### AcuWorkflow SmartBackup

- Website: https://www.acuworkflow.com
- Documentation: https://docs.acuworkflow.com/
- User and Admin Guides: https://guides.acuworkflow.com/

### Smartsheet backup

- Website: https://help.smartsheet.com/articles/506499-back-up-your-data

### Smartsheet Java Backup Tool

- Website: https://www.smartsheet.com/marketplace/apps/backup-tool-by-smartsheet
- GitHub: https://github.com/smartsheet-platform/backup-java