

How to Choose the Best Document Shredding Service

A Complete Buyer's Guide



Why choosing the right document shredding service is so important

You have confidential information that must be kept confidential. And now you're in the market for a document shredding service. While it may seem straightforward from the outside, there are numerous factors to take into consideration as you search for the perfect provider. Finding a good document shredding service is vital to the success of your business. And more importantly, if there are ever any security measures broken by your document shredding service, then the due diligence of your selection process must be clear and easy to defend in court.

The protection of your company and its invaluable information starts with your decision to hire the right document shredding service – and no two providers are the same.

Be aware of the laws

Canada's federal law, Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), protects all personal information (health and otherwise) for every entity. There are also secondary laws in place that govern specific provinces, industry sectors and employment matters. Did you know that every organization that collects personal information about clients, employees and/or patients is required to comply with the law that states you must protect all information when it's discarded or else you may be subject to hefty fines? And not only that, these organizations must also have written protocols that outline how their information is disposed securely at the end of its useful lifecycle.

Now change your thinking

Forget about the laws for a second. What about your customers? Your employees? If you value your clients' business and your employees' work, and you respect the privacy of each, then you understand the fact that they've entrusted you with confidential information. And it's up to you to protect that information. In other words, destroy it before you discard it. And now, what about your company? Your reputation? Your code of ethics? You owe it to your business to protect all the information that makes it what it is today.

There's a common problem...do you fall into this category?

Over 70% of companies find that their employees dispose of confidential information inappropriately – even with a document shredding program in place!

Why? No formal information destruction policy and poor to no employee training. And let's be clear. Placing a few shredding bins around the office or telling staff members to run documents through the shredder in the back corner will not result in complete and secure document destruction. That's like buying a disability insurance policy laced with loopholes for the insurance company to avoid paying at the time of a claim. You see, a document shredding service is insurance – insurance that no one ever knows your confidential business.

Not sure how effective your shredding process is?

Assess it now!

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Are you a DIY shredder?

So you understand the necessity to shred your confidential business documents and your first inclination is to purchase a decent office shredding machine. You're not alone. But that doesn't mean it's the right way to go. A third party document shredding service can actually be more efficient and effective. Here's how:

- Small office shredders only take a few sheets of paper at once, making the process extremely time consuming
- These machines often break down, leading to repair and replacement costs
- Employees are using their valuable time shredding paper when they should be focusing on what they've been hired to do
- Because of the burden on employee time, lack of compliance is often the case, putting your organization and customers at risk
- Compliance is easy with a secure collection container provided by a professional shredding service
- These containers protect confidential information from employees who do not need to and who should not see it
- Professional shredding services prevent shredded material from simply being discarded – it is recycled to add an extra layer of protection

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO MAKE AN INFORMED DECISION

There are numerous factors to consider as you vet different document destruction services. Ask the appropriate questions, make sure you understand the process and don't leave any pages unturned.

On-site versus off-site

On-site means the document destruction company destroys all confidential documents right in the truck on the premises of your business. Off-site refers to those services that pick up your documents and transport them to a third party location where they're destroyed.

On-site, mobile information destruction services eliminate risks associated with transportation. Since all documents are handled right on your property, you can confirm there is never a document left unattended, you can keep track of who has access, and you can see how and when documents are destroyed.

Off-site information destruction services shred your documents at a dedicated facility. Because your documents are transported, you need to know how secure the truck is, factor in the added risk of the driver forgetting to secure the door of confidential information onboard multiple times a day (20-40 on average), assess the possibility of truck breakdowns or accidents on the road, inquire about the level of security you're really getting if your information sits in a warehouse waiting to be destroyed, and know that you have no visual proof that your documents are properly shredded since you're not there to witness it.

Know your cost of DIY shredding
Calculate it now!

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AAA NAID certification

NAID is the only organization that exists for the purpose of raising the security and ethics of the information destruction industry. Members of NAID are bound to a strict code of conduct and commit themselves and their businesses to a higher standard. NAID certified service providers are subject to regular and random onsite audits. The program requires written policies and procedures to confirm incident response preparedness, employee training and regulatory compliance. Employees of member companies are reviewed and screened by accredited auditors from NAID and at any time, customers such as yourself can request audit reports or even monitor NAID member companies for compliance.

Evaluating security measures

There are currently no regulations governing document shredding services in Canada. And that means you need to take security matters into your own hands. Confirm whether or not the document shredding companies you're considering have:

- Employee screening
- Insurance
- Written procedures in place
- Access prevention
- Monitoring and alarm systems
- Specific particle size
- Custodial audit trail

Are they insured?

Think about the protection of your business and all the contents inside of it. When you hire a company appropriately insured, you protect your business against bad service and property damage. Errors & Omissions insurance is so important because it covers you if there is inadequate work performed or negligent actions from one or more employees. General Liability insurance covers you in the event that your document shredding provider causes damage to your property or bodily injury to anyone on your staff. And when it comes to reliability and a measure of dependableness, document shredding companies that are properly insured do not bankrupt under legal cot pressure.

Get proof

Professional document shredding services provide you with a certificate of destruction. Inquire about this and make sure it isn't just any old vague certificate. It should establish individual records, and where and how they were destroyed through a valid audit trail.

Compare shredding vendors' value proposition

Download Comparison Table

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Implementing your information destruction program

According to Canada and Ontario privacy acts, your business must have a procedure manual and employee training to support your information destruction program, and you have a responsibility to inform and enforce the procedures to ensure 100% compliance. If you don't, you may just find yourself stuck in the most common problem noted above like so many other companies.

But all of this takes time, money and resources. So find a document shredding service that helps you implement all the key elements you need in order to ensure the success of your program.

Try it before you buy it

Be cautious about companies that lock you in to long-term contracts right away. A reputable document shredding provider will have a trial period in place so you can make sure this is the right service for your business.

Information security has never been more important.

*Equip your business with the protection it needs by
hiring the right information destruction service.*