

Recovery Takes More Than A Plan



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While most organizations have a disaster recovery plan, few have a full-fledged business continuity plan so operations continue. Here are ten key elements.

1 Project Initiation and Management.

It is important to establish the need for a business continuity plan, including obtaining management support and organizing and managing the project to completion within agreed upon time and budget limits.

2 Risk Evaluation and Control.

Determine the events and environmental surroundings that can adversely affect the organization and its facilities with disruption as well as disaster, the damage such events can cause and the controls needed to prevent or minimize the effects of potential loss. Provide cost-benefit analysis to justify investment in controls to mitigate risks.

3 Business Impact Analysis.

Identify the impacts resulting from disruptions and disaster scenarios that can affect the organization and techniques to quantify and qualify such impacts. Establish critical functions, their recovery priorities and inter-dependencies so recovery time objectives can be set.

4 Developing Business Continuity Strategies.

Identify strategies for each business operation, conduct cost/benefit analysis of business continuity solutions and consolidate recovery strategies across the organization. Obtain business unit consensus on consolidated strategies and the commitment of top management.

5 Emergency Response and Operations.

Develop and implement procedures for responding to and stabilizing the situation following an incident or event, including establishing and managing an emergency operations center as a command center during the emergency.

6 Developing and Implementing Business Continuity Plans.

Conduct planning and arrangements needed to ensure continuity of critical business functions. Proper preparation and implementation of procedures covering equipment and personnel are essential. Account for unique organizational characteristics and build teams.

7 Awareness and Training Programs.

Prepare a program to create corporate awareness and enhance the skills required to develop, implement, maintain and execute the business continuity plan.

8 Maintaining and Exercising Business Continuity Plans.

Pre-plan and coordinate plan exercises; evaluate and document plan exercise results. Develop processes to maintain the currency of continuity capabilities and the plan document in accordance with the organization's strategic direction. Verify that the plan will prove effective by comparison with a suitable standard; report results in a clear and concise manner.

9 Public Relations and Crisis Coordination.

Develop, coordinate, evaluate and exercise plans to handle media during crisis situations. Develop, coordinate, evaluate and exercise plans to communicate with and, as appropriate, provide trauma counseling.

10 Coordination with Public Authorities.

Establish applicable procedures and policies for coordinating response, continuity and restoration activities with local authorities while ensuring compliance with applicable statutes or regulations. ♦

About the Author

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