

DISASTER RECOVERY CONCERNS FUEL CERTIFICATION PROCESS

Training Key to Business Continuity

Today, businesses and government are more aware than ever about their respective network and infrastructure vulnerabilities, understanding that failing to plan may translate into planning to fail. What are the signs? Organizations are investing in more robust back-up and recovery implementations and are ramping up training in record numbers.



Thomas C. Mawson
Executive Director
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Experience is Critical; Certification is Everything.

"The first step in planning and preparation for homeland security, specifically for business continuity, is to get people certified so that they can be more knowledgeable on what type of hardware, backup systems and requirements they going to have to continue operations," said Thomas C. Mawson, executive director of Falls Church, Va.-based Disaster Recovery Institute International (DRII), an organization dedicated to certifying disaster recovery planners worldwide.

The certification process provides key personnel with the knowledge about what tools and processes are necessary to handle business continuity issues. Through the certification process, business continuity planners are trained in a commonly accepted body of knowledge. Certification provides leaders with the authority to implement business continuity solutions and a network of expert colleagues to share experiences.

Institute Experiences Upsurge in Course Demand

According to Mawson, enrollment in DRII dou-

bled this year alone, attesting to the fact that both government and industry are placing greater emphasis on training. To date, DRII has certified 1,600 people worldwide as Business Continuity Professionals or Master Business Continuity Professionals. Last year, it certified 310 professionals. This year DRII will conduct 90 courses around the United States.

"We're seeing much more emphasis on accepted standards," said Mawson, adding that that's where DRII plays a big role. Incoming students state that their primary objective in taking the certification course is to learn about standards in planning methodology and terminology in business continuity and disaster recovery. To this end, DRII is working on a new project with *Disaster Recovery Magazine*, *Contingency Planning and Management* and other organizations to rewrite and expand the glossary for disaster recovery/business continuity terminology.

The person who shoulders responsibility for disaster recovery/business continuity in an organization is moving away from the information technology function. Today, the business continuity specialist often comes out of the finance, security, or operations area, noted Mawson.

Organizations are training people in-house for some of their mission-critical functions and enlisting hot sites and other backup facilities for others. Many companies, especially in the financial sector, are going from one backup site to two or three facilities. This flexibility means that more training will be necessary.