

Keep Your Business Up and Running with Good Business Continuity Planning

In a recent survey conducted by the Ad Council, 91 percent of business administrators indicated it was important to have a business continuity plan, yet only 38 percent reported their organization actually had one. Most administrators would agree their organizations are at risk to potential threats such as violent storms, fires, floods, etc. So why haven't more prepared to respond to these events?

Some organizations may be relying on a false sense of security when it comes to their ability to continue business operations after sustaining a loss to their facilities. The following are a few of the responses received from an informal phone survey conducted in 2012 with Catholic nonprofits on business continuity planning.

The question was, "Does your organization have a business continuity plan?"

"Yes. We back up our data." That's great! Hopefully it is backed up frequently, stored off-site and periodically tested to ensure the data is not corrupt. However, what will you restore those backups to? In addition to your data, you need computers, software programs, Internet connectivity, power and a place from which to work.

"Yes. We can work from home." Have your employees worked from home to ensure they have access to all the information and resources required to perform their jobs? Were those employees able to meet the needs of your clients/customers? Are you comfortable with employees using their personal or family computers for business purposes?

"We don't need a plan. We have insurance." There is no question insurance is a critical element in recovering from the loss of your physical property. Insurance; however, does not cover everything.



Insurance may cover the costs associated with repairing or rebuilding your property. It may also cover the extra expense associated with relocating to a temporary facility; however, it will not find a temporary facility for you, nor will it assist you in setting up that temporary facility with desks, computers, phones, copiers, fax machines or any other equipment essential to your operations. Your insurance coverage may include purchasing new computers and software programs, but it cannot restore your systems and data.

Finally, while insurance coverage may reimburse you for the temporary loss of revenue, it will not reimburse you for the permanent loss of customers/clients who have found other organizations to provide the goods or services that you once provided them. Don't hold on to false assumptions when it comes to the continuity of your business operations. You can avoid planning, but you may not be able to avoid the consequences of not planning. ☀

Diane Engstrom is the Director of Business Continuity Planning at Christian Brothers Services. She regularly speaks on business continuity and preparedness topics.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PREPAREDNESS EVALUATION

Organization Name: _____
Evaluation Completed By: _____

Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Complete the Preparedness Evaluation to understand your organization's current level of preparedness. If you answer "Yes", rate your plan by placing an "X" in the corresponding box. 1 for poor and 5 for excellent.

		1	2	3	4	5	Write Number Here
Team Does your organization have a business continuity team in place?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Responsibility Does your business continuity team clearly understand their responsibilities at time of disaster?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Communication Has your organization's business continuity plan been clearly communicated throughout the organization?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Identification Have you performed a risk assessment that identifies potential threats to your business operations?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Preparedness Is your building wired for generator power?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Generator Access Does your organization have access to generators and fuel at time of an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Remote Access Are your employees set up to work from home through a secure VPN connection?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Testing Do you test a recovery plan on a regular basis?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Data Does your organization have off-site data backup?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Communication Plan At the time of a business interruption, do you know who will be contacting you with instructions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No						
Grading Scale 0 – 24 Don't get discouraged if you are feeling a little overwhelmed with the planning process. Remember, any progress you make today prepares your organization for tomorrow! 25 – 34 Congratulations. You've made some good first steps towards organizational preparedness, but don't stop now! 35 – 44 Good Job! You're almost there! 45 – 50 Excellent!							Your Total Score

Content for this Preparedness Evaluation was provided by Agility Recovery. agilityrecovery.com.