



DISASTER PROOFING YOUR ENTERPRISE

In today's constantly changing and competitive business environment, access to an enterprises key data and information resources is more critical than ever before. This is especially true in highly regulated environments since banking, healthcare, etc regulations are now demanding it. Regardless of enterprise size and type, not having timely access to key enterprise wide data, information, and human resources can be devastating to existing revenue streams, maintaining current client accounts, or supporting governmental mandates. Developing an effective and efficient business contingency plan ensures informational resources are available prior, during and following an enterprise interruption event. There are four (4) key components to business contingency planning:

1. Business Impact Analysis & Assessment (BIA)
2. Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP)
3. Business Continuity Plan (BCP-Private, COOP-Public)
4. Exercise & Maintenance (Test)

From a contingency planning perspective, a DRP ensures the protection of data back-ups and safe storage of duplicate information (data and paper) so that enterprise-critical information cannot be lost or damaged from an interruption event. Equally important, a BCP and/or Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) ensure the continuous availability of critical systems, processes and networks. A BCP/COOP is the operational glue that keeps the doors to an enterprise functionally open during system outages, system upgrades, physical moves, or during batch window processing.

By definition, a "disaster" is any event that can cause a significant disruption in operational and/or computer processing capabilities for a period of time that affects the operations of an enterprise. Disasters come in three forms: natural, human and technical. Examples are:

- Natural-- floods, tornados, earth quakes, severe storms (rain/ice/snow)
- Human-- terrorist activity, electronic security breaches, civil disorder
- Technical-- power failure, hardware or software failure, software virus

Technology Affects BCP/COOP

From a contingency planning investment perspective, there are three major areas of technology that increase the need for an enterprise to invest in business contingency planning:

1. The Internet
2. Broadband and storage
3. Information integration

The Internet allows enterprises to be more geographically dispersed, virtual in nature – and increasingly mobile. A multi-located manufacturer, education, government institution, or healthcare entity that loses physical or virtual connectivity can encounter immediate losses in revenue, public scrutiny, disgruntled clientele and/or the inability to communicate with key personnel. Broadband and storage is simply the amount of information transferred and/or stored at any single point in time. In

less than ten years, broadband and storage requirements have increased by two orders of magnitude! The loss of data stores today has a greater impact on the ability to maintain revenue streams and/or support governmental mandates. Information integration is the ability for enterprises to purchase business related software that simultaneously touches multiple revenue and/or legal dependent points. For example, supporting multiple essential functions upon an enterprise wide software application solution increases the magnitude of vital data loss. Each of these technology forces demands a greater degree of information availability and enhanced awareness of disaster and BCP/COOP planning.

Continuity Planning Is Key

Traditionally, enterprise managers and owners collective with their IT staff have assumed that backing up electronic files and records guarantees ongoing information availability. Depending upon physical location, type of technology used, frequency, and level of data integrity this process falls short of ensuring the continuation of mission critical operations.

To make certain that mission- critical systems, networks and business processes are always available, every enterprise should have an active or “live” BCP/COOP plan in place. An effective BCP/COOP plan includes the following objectives:

- Continuation of enterprise operations
- Identifying and streamlining recovery processes
- Aligning vital enterprise technologies with recovery processes
- Minimizing immediate technological damage or loss
- Minimizing financial and/or legal loss
- Reducing downtime

The cornerstone of a BCP/COOP plan is what’s known as a Business Impact Analysis, or BIA. The BIA includes an enterprise and technology audit, enterprise risk analysis and assessment. The purpose of the BIA is to identify and assess the magnitude of risk against the enterprises financial and/or legal losses incurred due to an enterprise interruption event. Finalizing a BIA is critical when developing the enterprise’s risk mitigation strategy and roadmap while ensuring an effective and working continuity plan.

A vast number of enterprise managers, owners and executives today are either minimally prepared, have not reviewed their current plan for four to five years, are too busy to develop a plan, are short on human resources, or simply don’t know how or where to begin. The need for continuity planning and support will continue to intensify as private and public enterprise’s needs become more demanding. New and emerging technologies, government regulation, customer and employee demands will further drive this need.

Compared to the alternative, developing and maintaining a BCP/COOP plan is a financially sound and time efficient choice. It may even be a regulatory requirement! Uncertain where to begin? Contact Visage Solutions LLC at info@visagesolutions.com or 919-882-2056.

Our Value

- Utilizing our proprietary **SingleVue™** and **OpsAudit™** methodologies, we tailor comprehensive, cost-effective and flexible solutions to our clients.
- Our solutions enhance your current business processes, rather than adding unnecessary overhead, thus creating measurable long-term value.
- We involve your executive team, including your internal and external advisors, to guarantee solutions are absolutely consistent with your requirements.
- We allow you to concentrate on managing your business.

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