

Disaster Recovery And Business Continuity

“EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED”

By Len Neuzil

Don't fall into the "9/11" complacency trap! Shoot for preparedness! Equipment lease financing allows you to do so at reasonable cost. Consider new vs. pre-owned IT alternatives. Seek professional advice for price validation, equipment trends and acquisitions strategies. Streamline asset management procedures for additional savings. Retain remarketing services for equipment disposal for the best financial return.

Compliance

Corporations face increasing challenges from today's regulators. They must demonstrate the ability to recover from systems outages rapidly while keeping pace with emerging technologies. Establish a "team-oriented" dialog with your regulators well in advance of scheduled tests and *be prepared* for audits. Don't wait to be scheduled. *Invite them*. Provide *more* than required and be honest about what's *really* needed to ensure your company's seamless recovery.

Security/Business Continuity/Disaster Recovery

Duplicate processing sites is the best solution, and possibly the most cost effective. Select a discreet location and *don't publicize it!* Dedicated hardware, software and infrastructure beat "shared, first come-first served" arrangements.

Pre-owned equipment for back up substantially reduces cost. Today, pre-owned equipment can be more current than hardware sitting on most data center floors. Perform "intrusion detection" testing upon your cyber network, LAN, WAN and physical environment.

Software vendors frequently forgive "disaster recovery" (duplicate) software license fees used for D/R testing. Commit vendors to Service Level Agreements covering rapid on-site support, "five 9s" reliability, 24-hour critical contact information, capacity on demand, etc.

Pre-arrange a secure conference call capability. Keep critical vendor spare parts on-site. Execute your systems daily, in parallel. By default, you've scheduled

a daily D/R test. When a disaster occurs, it's less complicated than trying to identify the "top 5 most critical systems," to recover first. Unbundling these applications and "re-assembling" them introduces costly and time-consuming complexity. It can even make it impossible to quickly recover.

Technology allows for high-speed data replication across long distances. Test *reversing the process*. Practice backing up data *to the primary site*. This ensures the ultimate recoverability of the original facility. Maintain a separate (remote) business continuity site. Staff this facility with selected permanent resources capable of running the business (Customer Support, Accounting, etc.) Avoid escalating "people costs" by rotating staff between sites. This fosters familiarity with the recovery process.

Keep current, 24-hour contact information for all critical staff. Provide for transportation to all sites. People could wind up onsite for several days. Stockpile special dietary needs, medical prescriptions, food, water, batteries, cell phones, pagers, portable laptops, clothes, cots, blankets, and flashlights.

Ensure alternate routing of telecommunications. A vast fiber optic network is already in the ground and is roughly 80% under-utilized. Some communications providers offer local connectivity to the network, avoiding long-haul leased line costs. The fiber network provides alternate routing. Many businesses, customers and partners are duplicating the same (costly) communications network due to entities with the same sources and destinations. The fiber optic network can dramatically reduce industry-wide communications costs while providing alternate communications capabilities.

Insist that customers, partners and vendors test their D/R regularly and test with you *from their D/R sites*.

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