

# Business continuity planning



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLANNING by Aaaa Bbbb July 2008 The modern world has evolved in such a way that it has become a global village where all countries have become dependant on each other. The information technology has broadened the scope of business operations across borders. Many vital industries and businesses are focused on developing global presence in order to survive. Non profit, charity and government organizations may survive on their own resources during any crisis due to their inherent support or backup, but the private and corporate players have to indulge in pre planned strategies in order to keep their business in a continuous state of activity and delivery in order to survive in the fiercely competitive world. Thus there has emerged a need for ‘ Business Continuity Planning’ (BCP).

Any natural or unnatural disaster can always disrupt a business activity either for a short or a longer duration. It has now become essential to foresee such eventualities and have concrete plans to handle such situations. One of the prime examples of such a scenario was the terrorist activity in which the World Trade Centre was destroyed in New York which posed an immediate threat to the business concerns in that location.

However many of the organizations in the area had adequate backup and continuity plans in place which helped them to recover (Safeguard).

An ideal BCP begins by identifying the ‘ applications, customers and the locations which an organizations needs to keep functioning in face of any disruption and the time frame involved in the execution of the backup plan’ (Mphasis). The identified applications and services need to be delivered continuously even during the disruptive phase and any good BCP endeavors to pre plan and enforce such infrastructure, regulations and methods without

fail under continuous supervision and testing. Resources in order to achieve continuity need to be identified and categorized according to priority beforehand. Such resources must include ‘ personnel, finance, information, equipment, legal counsel, accommodations and infrastructure protection (Safeguard). A good BCP plan in force enhances the reputation and the confidence within as well outside a business organization.

BCP is initiated by a special governance sector or an exclusive department in the organization which takes overall control for planning, finance, execution, auditing and testing of the program. It conducts a ‘ business impact analysis to identify the organization’s mandate and critical services or products’ (Safeguard). It then prioritizes different activities according to merit and then makes plans to ensure their continuity. Disasters and disruptive forces are identified and the current recovery capabilities are analyzed and reinforced or incorporated into the BCP if they are found adequate. Exclusive teams are made and trained to be in ready preparedness for any eventuality. Such teams are prepared to cover all pre visualized aspects such as ‘ mechanical, financial, insurance, salvage, transport, communication and computer data related, etc’ (Safeguard). The readiness and capability of such teams is continuously monitored both internally as well externally by auditors. Research and analysis are a continuous process in any good BCP. The constituent groups or teams in a BCP are regularly trained in the latest developments and techniques of their respective departments which are followed by exercises in order to achieve a high level of competence.

Adequate backup of critical data and duplication in alternative safe locales is a vital aspect of any BCP. Data security and maintenance should be ensured and there should be a high degree of connectivity and rapid shifting of

activity to alternative locales in face of any eventuality. Most BCP programs are based on team responsibility where designated teams are responsible for the recovery and maintenance of vital aspects of the organization. The process of recovery is very systematic with a known and well defined sequence of actions to be followed. It is defined exactly and in accordance with the organizations' mandates (Mphasis). Mock exercises are an ongoing activity to test the scope of any lacunae in the applied plans and necessary changes are incorporated if any flaws are noticed. Disasters are classified precisely based on the seriousness of the threat they pose to the organization and recovery plans prepared accordingly.

BCP is now a very well recognized aspect in most organizations in the developed as well as the developing countries and great emphasis is laid on its implementation.

#### Works Cited

Mphasis Disaster Recovery/Business Continuity Plan, Available online at:

[www.mphasis.com/pdfs/Mphasis\\_Business\\_Continuity\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.mphasis.com/pdfs/Mphasis_Business_Continuity_Plan.pdf)

Safeguard, A Guide to Business Continuity Planning, Office of Critical Infrastructure Protection and emergency Preparedness, Government of Canada, Available online at: [getprepared.gc.ca/\\_fl/bcont\\_e.pdf](http://getprepared.gc.ca/_fl/bcont_e.pdf)