

Protect your business, data from disaster

Plan ahead to keep your company in operation when unexpected occurs

Natural disasters, terrorist activities and rapidly spreading illnesses such as influenza have pushed disaster recovery to the forefront for most organizations. However, disaster recovery shouldn't be limited to catastrophic events.



STAYING PREPARED

Jeff Pyden

Businesses need to prepare for more common, everyday "disasters" such as a broken water pipe that floods the building, an ice storm that keeps employees from driving to the office or loss of power caused by a nearby construction project.

As organizations become increasingly dependent on technology to deliver the critical data powering their businesses, there is a growing awareness that if those systems go down, business can grind to a halt.

Also, missed opportunities, lost revenue and increasingly strict regulations mandating the protection and long-term retention of data add to the critical need for disaster-recovery and business-continuity plans.

The goal in disaster recovery is business continuity. You want to keep your core business functions operating smoothly under all circumstances. That requires you and your employees to have uninterrupted access to information, regardless of the situation.

One of the most critical aspects of a disaster-recovery plan is to enable employees to work from home or other remote locations, giving them access to critical resources and data as if they were in the office.

There are many ways to accomplish that, one of which is through application hosting.

Application hosting offers many advantages beyond disaster recovery, including the ability for workers to access new business processes quickly and cost-effectively. It also provides automatic updates, back-up management and support by information-technology professionals, lifting the burden of those activities from your staff.

That makes application hosting particularly attractive to startups as well as small and midsized businesses.

Application hosting may be delivered as a subscription model that allows the client to pay for use of the application on a monthly or yearly basis.

QUICKINFO

ASK YOURSELF:

What impact would your company feel from the loss of data?

What steps have you taken to protect hardware, software and data files?

How reliable are the backup systems you have in place?

How quickly could your business recover from a disaster?

Alternatively, the client may own the software outright but have it deployed in the security and managed care of a data center, rather than managing the software internally.

Either way, application hosting takes one of your most valuable business assets - your data -

and houses it safely and securely while allowing remote access from anywhere, at any time you need it.

What could be more advantageous to your business than reliable, disruption-free operations? Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What would be the business impact and financial consequences resulting from lost data or losing access to data?

2. What steps have you taken to protect hardware, software, data files, communications and other processing operations?

3. How reliable are the backup systems you have in place?

4. How quickly could your business recover from disaster?

Disaster-recovery and business-continuity planning involve more than off-site storage or backup processing.

Organizations should address all the critical operations and functions of the business and how employees can continue to perform those functions, regardless of their location.

Then you'll have a plan that will ensure the ongoing availability of critical resources and continuity of operations.

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