



Continuity Planners Australia

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Continuity or Collapse

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If you are out of business for a week, you are probably out of business

A key problem facing business today is this. How will you serve your customers if something goes horribly wrong? If suddenly you couldn't deliver your product, how long would your customers wait? Years ago, customers would give you a month or two to get back on your feet after a fire or similar crisis. But in these days of 24x7 service, customers expect you to be there even in the worst of circumstances.

You take daily and weekly backups of your computer data and store them off site. But how often do you test your capacity to restore that data and systems software on to a replacement box? Do you know where you will work from if your building is destroyed? Do you know what the most important things are to do first following a disaster?

What could go wrong?

While terrorism is much talked about, it's probably more likely that a fire or power failure will affect your business. And there are a host of other things like:

- A storm or flood can damage or destroy your premises
- Computers can fail, leaving you without the ability to access your data
- Data can be corrupted by virus or other hacker attacks
- Data lines can be cut
- Protests or union action can stop you using your premises
- Products could be contaminated, or your business can be affected by other reputational damage
- Accidental or deliberate explosions or terrorist acts could kill or injure staff

The random fool in the shop next door who decides to burn his premises down, or the apprentice in the workshop up the road who accidentally starts a fire are equally out of your control but still capable of collapsing your business.

Won't my insurance be enough?



Hopefully your insurances will pay for the physical damage and may even cover loss of profits.

Alas, the data shows that a huge percentage of businesses even with good insurance cover will fail, because the customers go somewhere else and they don't come back.

"I never saw a wreck and never have been wrecked, nor was I ever in any predicament that threatened to end in disaster of any sort"

Captain Edward John Smith of the Titanic

What is Continuity Planning?

It is that collection of activities that goes into making sure your business can continue to operate, should something horrible happen to it. There are three simple steps:

1. Consider the risks that your business might reasonably face. Identify the critical parts of the business that you would have to recover in order to continue delivering your products/services to your customers. Work out what systems, equipment and people you will need to do those critical things.
2. Write a plan which lists all the information you will need to get back up and running including, who will go where to do what, in order to continue the critical parts of your business and collect lists of contacts, software, suppliers, customers, processes and so much more. Store the plan somewhere where you can access it off site. (For our clients we use the web based Continuity Coach www.continuitycoach.com)
3. Test that the continuity plans and the backups all work. The effectiveness of your business continuity plan is limited to how well the people involved can implement the plan. Writing the plan is important, but a waste of time unless it is rehearsed. Waiting for a real crisis to happen and then discovering that the plan had overlooked a critical area is a bad idea.

Where do I get good help to develop and test my continuity plan?

Continuity Planners Australia has a range of options to meet all sizes of business http://www.continuityplanners.com.au/brochures/Small_Medium_Business.pdf

We are Australian owned and operated, based in Sydney and servicing business around Australia.