

Disaster Recovery

How and why it extends to your third parties

Disaster Recovery, a subset of **Business Continuity**, deals with the immediate response to a business impacting event. Disaster Recovery encompasses all disaster types, not just incidents involving computer related equipment.

What is Disaster Recovery?

Disaster Recovery outlines the process and procedures for a business to follow at the immediate onset of an incident up to and including the resumption of normal operations.

Disaster Recovery Includes: Gathering of Disaster Recovery personnel at command center, determining if the incident is a disaster, implementing disaster recovery plans or business continuity plans, coordinating with external public entities if necessary, salvaging operations, recovery operations, communications and then returning to normal operations.

Why should your organization care about your vendor's Disaster Recovery preparedness?

With the interconnected nature of products and services offered by organizations through third-party relationships, having part of the organization's services unavailable for an undetermined amount of time could significantly impact operations and reputation. Your organization benefits from knowing how quickly vendors plan to recover from certain business impacting events, and that your vendors are prepared and will be able to quickly and effectively respond to disaster situations.

- If a flood destroyed your check and paper products vendor's storage facility, do they have a secondary storage facility or emergency supply of stock to enable them to continue operations until new stock can be ordered and received?
- If an electrical fire destroys your vendor's server room, and they are using a cold site failover strategy (a site without any equipment in place ahead of time), do they have procurement agreements with hardware vendors to ensure that equipment is received as quickly as possible?
- If a hazardous materials spill happens and is preventing your vendor's employees from accessing the office, does your vendor have an appointed Communications Team to ensure timely cleanup status updates?



4 KEY ELEMENTS IN EVERY DISASTER RECOVERY PLAN

1 IDENTIFY KEY INDIVIDUALS

A Disaster Recovery Plan begins with identifying key individuals and forming teams for handling disasters and coordination, along with a communications plan to notify appropriate people.

2 DISASTER IDENTIFICATION AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT

The next component of building a Disaster Recovery Plan involves assessing potential disasters and building plans to suit them.

- Disaster Recovery Plans do not need to be specifically built for every single disaster. Often one type of plan, such as a building inaccessible plan, will cover many different types of disasters.

3 PRACTICE

Once Disaster Recovery Plans are created they need to be exercised on a regular basis. These exercises ensure that everyone involved in the plan has knowledge and experience in the activities that they will be required to perform and that any external entities that will need to be contacted have the correct contact information and are familiar with the people contacting them. The results of these exercises allow a business to adjust and improve their plans.

4 UPDATE

Disaster Recovery Plans need to be reviewed and updated regularly or when significant change occurs within an organization. Changes to the environment, internally or externally, such as new equipment being purchased or a hazardous shipping route changing to now pass nearby your vendor's facilities, must be accounted for and have plans either created or adjusted accordingly.

Regular reviews along with plan exercises assure that the vendor is prepared and able to respond to whatever situations arise and allow the corresponding plans to be improved to minimize the impact of the event.

Additionally, when actual disasters occur, it's always a good idea, post-recovery, to look back at your Disaster Recovery Plans and see how effective they were and fine tune as needed.

Ensuring that your critical vendors can survive in the face of disaster helps you to rest assured that your business can also survive.

Venminder has a team available to do a qualified BCP/DR review and analysis. Download a free sample of our BCP/DR Analysis now.

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