

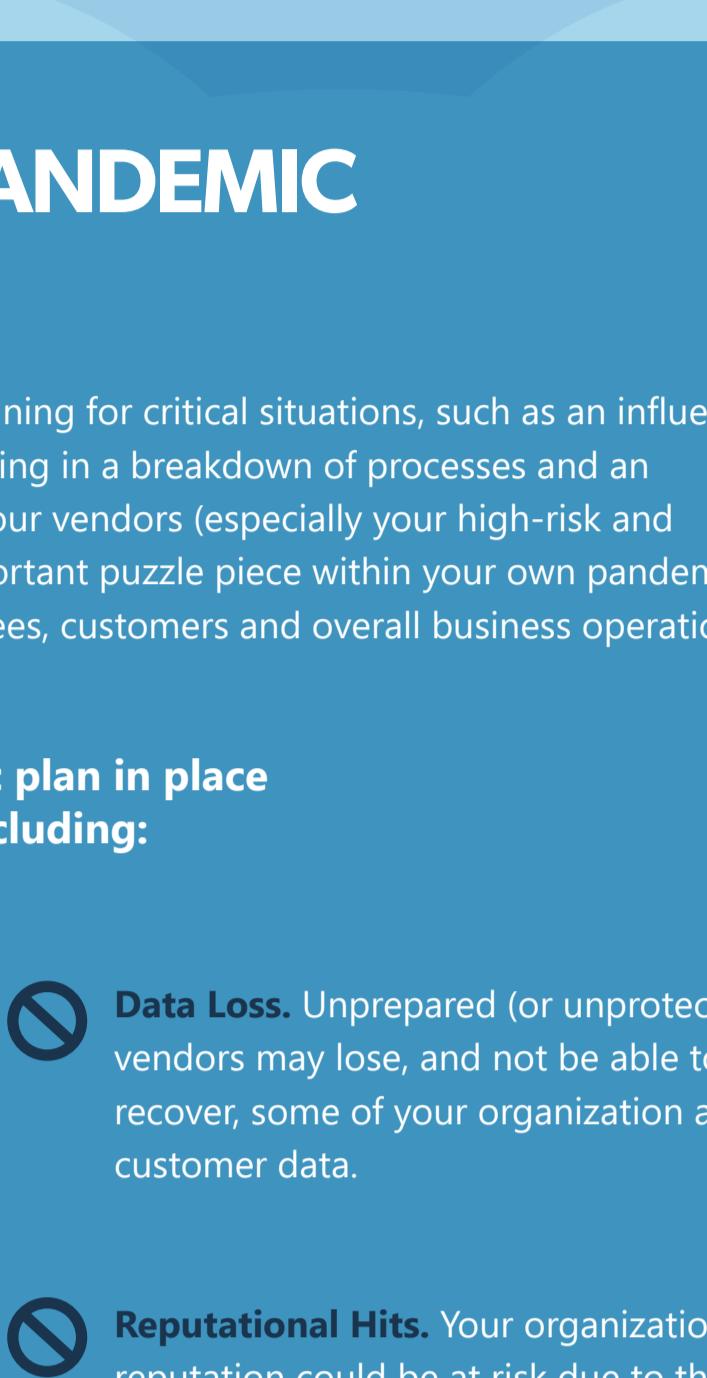
HOW TO REVIEW A VENDOR'S

PANDEMIC PLAN

What Is a Pandemic Plan?

A pandemic plan is an active document which lists the strategies, procedures, preventative measures as well as any corresponding implementation guidelines an organization will take should a global health crisis occur.

When it comes to your vendors, this serves as a roadmap which communicates how they plan to continue business services under the constrict of a pandemic scenario.



WHY A VENDOR'S PANDEMIC PLAN IS IMPORTANT

The absence of necessary infrastructure and planning for critical situations, such as an influenza outbreak, can lead to a cascade of failures, resulting in a breakdown of processes and an interruption of supplies and services. Knowing your vendors (especially your high-risk and critical vendors) have a pandemic plan is an important puzzle piece within your own pandemic planning and crucial for protecting your employees, customers and overall business operations.

Knowing your vendors have a pandemic plan in place protects you against several hazards, including:

Unprepared Vendors. This could lead to the vendor flying by the seat of their pants in order to resume uptime, which can put you in a compromised position if you're relying on them for your own operations to resume.

Data Loss. Unprepared (or unprotected) vendors may lose, and not be able to recover, some of your organization and customer data.

Operational Delays. This could mean your organization's operations are interfered with for longer than anticipated or longer than the downtime allotted for in your own business continuity, disaster recovery and pandemic plans.

Reputational Hits. Your organization's reputation could be at risk due to the vendor's failure to implement comprehensive, well-developed plans. Your customers, and even the media, will think it's your organization who isn't prepared! Remember, they can't see behind the scenes.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A PANDEMIC PLAN

What should you look for? A strong pandemic plan will include 5 major components:

Preventative Program(s)

Why is this needed?

Reduces the likelihood that the vendor's operations will be significantly affected by a pandemic event, including the following:

- Communicating and coordinating with critical service providers and suppliers
- Providing appropriate hygiene training and tools to employees
- Monitoring of potential outbreaks
- Educating employees

Documented Strategies

How does this function?

Provides for scaling the vendor's pandemic efforts so they are consistent with the effects of a particular stage of a pandemic outbreak, such as the 6 intervals described by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Investigation
- Recognition
- Initiation
- Acceleration
- Deceleration
- Preparation

Comprehensive Framework of Facilities, Systems and Procedures

What does this look like?

Provides the vendor the capability to continue its critical operations in the event large numbers of the staff are unavailable for prolonged periods.

Testing Programs

What does this do?

Ensures that the vendor's pandemic planning practices and capabilities are effective and will allow critical operations to continue.

Oversight Programs

What does this add?

Ensures the vendor is performing ongoing review and updates to the pandemic plan so that policies, standards and procedures include up-to-date, relevant information at all times.

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