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Business Preparedness & Continuity Consulting Services

Business Continuity Awareness Week, March 17-21, 2014

Day 1: What is Business Continuity and Why You Need to Do It?

Business Continuity Awareness Week is a global awareness campaign sponsored by the Business Continuity Institute (BCI) and continuity professionals worldwide to raise awareness of the need to prepare businesses for disasters and business disruptions. This year's theme is "**Counting the Cost**" with the intent to focus on the potential cost of NOT having a business continuity program or management system in your company. In other words – what could happen if you don't prepare your business?

Business Continuity (BC) is a proactive approach to address risks, develop plans, and prepare your employees and managers with the goal to effectively respond to and recover from disasters or disruptive incidents that could have a negative impact on your company. Think of it like the Boy Scout motto but for businesses – always be prepared. A business continuity program or management system is just a formal way of saying how you manage those BC activities. Although it may sound simple to say you're going to analyze your risks, define your strategy, identify the most critical processes in your business, write your plans, train your staff and employees, and then test it all to see if it works, I've learned after 20 years in this profession that some pieces sound simple but putting every piece of the puzzle together correctly can be difficult.

But why should you implement a business continuity program within your company? BCI has a great graphic (click

<http://visual.ly/business-disaster-preparation>

for the full version) that I'd like to point out two statistics from. First, around one-half of businesses have no continuity plans or processes in place. (From another study, if you

take out large companies from that mix, the percent for small and medium businesses with no planning is around 75%.) The second point is that when a disaster or disruption happens, around three-quarters of businesses without plans fail, close their doors, and in other words – GO OUT OF BUSINESS.



Why do so many businesses bet their company on such lousy odds? I've heard a lot of excuses (it's expensive, it's too much time, or it can't happen just because it hasn't happened already, etc.) but so far I've never heard one legitimate reason to justify the strategy of doing nothing in hopes nothing bad will ever happen. How much you have to do depends on different factors but doing nothing is not a good strategy. I will readily admit I am biased as this is my profession and I am extremely passionate about it. So in the next 4 articles during Business Continuity Awareness Week I will address more logical reasons why your business should implement some level of business continuity planning. The topics will include the impacts from a disaster on your business (i.e. COSTS), continuity requirements and standards, direct benefits to your company, and end the week with an outline of how to implement a business continuity program.

As always – Be Aware, Be Prepared, Be Safe. – *Brian*