

Business continuity: Achieving differentiation through continuous business operations



Proactively address business continuity needs

Maintaining business continuity has long been a concern for organizations across all industries. In the past, organizations typically relied on point products to support business continuity, protect and manage data, and address the effects of planned outages and unplanned service disruptions. These solutions most often addressed separate departments and functions of the enterprise on an ad hoc basis. However, concerns over recent natural disasters, deliberate cyber attacks, terrorist activities, regulatory issues, accidents and simple human error have underscored the need for a more comprehensive, integrated approach to business continuity.

Yet surprisingly, Gartner estimates that only about 60 percent of today's firms have comprehensive disaster recovery plans in place, and less than 25 percent have an overall business continuity management plan. Gartner further states that those without such plans are on a collision course with disaster. More specifically, research shows that the average revenue loss per hour of downtime is US\$1.01 million—ranging from US\$330,000 to US\$2.8 million depending on industry.²

Highlights

- *Maintain business operations according to service-level agreements*
- *Reduce overall business risks*
- *Anticipate and respond dynamically to planned or unplanned outages*
- *Ease compliance with regulations and audits*
- *Better align business with technology*

IBM provides comprehensive solutions that can help you plan for unforeseen eventualities by anticipating and preparing for business continuity and resilience.

In today's business environment, as knowledge transfer becomes an essential requirement across the enterprise value chain, proactive organizations must take a wider view of business continuity, with an end-to-end plan for ensuring availability, continuity, recovery, security and compliance.

By reducing the impact of disruptions to critical processes and planning proactively to ensure that business operations are continuously available, your organization can exhibit better business management to employees, customers, suppliers, business partners and regulatory bodies. This competitive differentiator can improve customer and partner satisfaction, cement customer loyalty and help protect your organization's brand image.

Obviously, maintaining information within a secure environment and protecting the IT infrastructure from security violations that threaten business continuity must be top boardroom priorities. Organizations of all types must also address compliance with government and industry requirements and ensure availability of critical business processes. Yet the typically heterogeneous IT environments of today's global businesses can make it difficult to maintain expected service levels for availability, since many components of the infrastructure may not support the same standards. This makes service-level management a costly and challenging effort. Furthermore, in many industries there are mounting regulations requiring that service-level management meet certain criteria. For example, Basel II and Sarbanes-Oxley require timely access to financial records by auditors, company directors and statutory bodies.

Anticipate and respond dynamically . . . with IBM

IBM provides comprehensive solutions that can help you plan for unforeseen eventualities by anticipating and preparing for business continuity and resilience. Comprised of an integrated set of IBM services, availability management software and high-availability hardware capabilities, these solutions can help ensure that critical business processes, IT infrastructure, systems and networks

can be continuously available. This is especially important when one considers that today's customers expect a high level of responsiveness and demand that products and services are available when and where required, at all hours.

You can better align business and technology initiatives, and better understand your organization's vulnerabilities and risks, by working with IBM consultants through an IBM Risk Readiness Assessment. Further, a Business Impact Analysis will identify the impact of each risk on your business processes and recommend strategies for risk mitigation. An effective third step, the Resilience Assessment, provides a clear view of your organization's risk tolerance and existing resilience capabilities, and helps confirm whether programs are in place to address management of business continuity, service levels, availability and recovery. This assessment includes comparisons against industry-leading practices, and recommends resilience, continuity and recovery strategies and incremental projects to address planning gaps, all in accordance with appropriate levels of investment within your industry and markets.

IBM offers a variety of other business continuity services that can assist with program and infrastructure design, implementation and management. Our recommendations may incorporate a number of appropriate projects and solutions. For example, GDPS® (Geographically Dispersed Parallel Sysplex™) technology and associated implementation services may be recommended when your business requirements demand high levels of availability and near continuous business operations. GDPS uses IBM Parallel Sysplex® clustering technology to enable IT resource sharing and automated workload balancing—allowing enterprises to dynamically manage workloads across multiple sites, to achieve the required high levels of availability. A wide variety of offerings, including industry-leading IBM Tivoli® software and IBM servers and storage with high-availability features and capabilities, can be combined to provide an IT infrastructure to support your most stringent business continuity requirements.

Prevent service disruptions

IBM solutions for business continuity are designed to enable a more flexible, more resilient IT infrastructure that supports an organization with the required service levels. The intent is to help prevent service disruptions whenever possible, and develop and implement a plan for availability and recovery management should the need arise. IBM can help you address the full spectrum of availability and recovery needs, whether you decide to fully manage your own IT environment, seek help with outsourcing some IT operations, or prefer to have IBM completely manage it for you—either at your site or at ours.

Business continuity solutions from IBM can result in your company gaining a better understanding of the impact of risks on business processes, more closely aligning business and technology initiatives, reducing overall risk, easing the burden of audit and compliance practices, and often reducing insurance costs. Our comprehensive continuity planning also recommends training for executives and employees, so that they may be well-prepared to manage business continuity issues and know how to respond in the event of any unforeseen incident, whether minor or major.

IBM: The industry leader in business continuity and recovery

IBM has over 40 years of experience in providing business continuity and disaster recovery services worldwide. With more than 140 recovery centers located in 76 countries, IBM Business Continuity and Recovery Services supports over 15,000 recovery contracts worldwide. Whether you manage your own IT environment or prefer any level of external management, IBM has the ability to help you wherever you are located.

You can better align business and technology initiatives, and better understand your organization's vulnerabilities and risks, by working with IBM consultants through an IBM Risk Readiness Assessment.

Our expertise has contributed to the development of a technology platform, reusable code and services that combine in a common IT architecture framework we call the On Demand Operating Environment. This framework, based on the concept of a service-oriented architecture (SOA), guides the development and integration of our solutions portfolio. In this way, IBM helps you protect and leverage your previous investment in legacy systems, and enables you to continually innovate and improve your business processes.

How IBM can help

IBM offers a consultative approach to your business continuity concerns based on practical modeling tools, proven methodologies and industry best practices that can take your organization from its current state to an ideal "where you want to be" state. Built on open-standards-based

IBM technology, our business continuity solutions are flexible, scalable and can support heterogeneous hardware and software platforms.

We will work with you to gain a better understanding of your current environment, help identify future needs, and help develop comprehensive business continuity and recovery strategies supported by appropriate plans and procedures. To implement those strategies and plans, we can help design and build a resilient IT infrastructure to support your business requirements. In addition, IBM offers flexible financing options to minimize upfront costs, help align expenditures to expected benefits, and improve return on investment.

For more information

For more information about how IBM can help you extend business continuity preparedness, contact your IBM representative, or go to:

ibm.com/solutions/itsolutions



© Copyright IBM Corporation 2006

IBM Corporation
New Orchard Road
Armonk, NY 10504
U.S.A.

Produced in the United States of America
3-06
All Rights Reserved

IBM, the IBM logo, ibm.com, the On Demand Business logo, GDPS, Parallel Sysplex, Geographically Dispersed Parallel Sysplex and Tivoli are trademarks or registered trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation in the United States, other countries, or both.

Other company, product, or service names may be trademarks or service marks of others.

References in this publication to IBM products or services do not imply that IBM intends to make them available in all countries in which IBM operates.

¹ Gartner. "Best Practices in Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery". March 2004.

² Gartner. "Disaster Recovery: Reaction, Not Reality". February 2004.