



DISASTER RECOVERY PLANNING

THE COMPLETE GUIDE FOR WHAT TO CONSIDER
WHEN PLANNING FOR THE WORST



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INTRODUCTION

‘Disaster’ is a sound-the-alarm term. It sounds so extreme, so unlikely, that putting too much time into preparing for it would be a waste.

That’s the line of thinking that leaves businesses devastated and unable to recover when the unthinkable happens.

Having a comprehensive disaster recovery plan is an absolute need for businesses big and small. With more vital business data and information being stored digitally than ever before, it’s time to get up to speed on what your business should be doing to protect itself against disaster.

What is a ‘disaster?’ It covers everything from cyber crime to equipment failure to natural disasters (like floods, storms, and fires) – anything that threatens to destroy or erase data that would cripple your ability to operate your business.

Now is the moment to take inventory of how you’re storing vital data and what threats it may face. Then, it’s time to develop a disaster recovery plan that will keep your business afloat in the choppiest waters.

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BUSINESS PRIORITIES

When building a disaster recovery plan, you first have to identify your business priorities. Determining an order of importance will dictate your actions if disaster strikes. Having this list prepared will save you from making those decisions under duress. Should disaster find you, simply follow the order that you've carefully constructed for such an event.

An example business priorities list might look like this:

- Billing and Accounting
- Priority Client 1A Data
- Priority Client 1B Data
- Priority Client 1C Data
- Payroll
- E-mail
- Phone System
- Support Desk

It's critical to establish and communicate that order so that you can take action immediately in the event of a disaster. By staying organized, you're prepared to get your most vital systems back up sooner rather than later. Start considering which operations are the most important to your business continuity and place things in order.



CRITICAL IT RESOURCES

What IT resources do you need to support your priorities list? That's the next question that has to be answered as you build your disaster recovery plan. Restoring your critical IT resources is a central part of recovering from a disaster. These are the tools that will help your prioritized business functions return to normal.

Here are some examples of critical IT resources that might appear on your list:

- Internet access
- Security software
- Accounting software
- Collaboration software – like Box/Dropbox
- Servers

Having that list prepared gives your team a plan of action to restore your resources in the most efficient order. Instead of scrambling to decide what needs attention first, the list gives you direction.



BUSINESS IMPACT

The next step in developing a disaster recovery plan is putting together a business impact matrix.

A business impact matrix details how critical each data-based business component is, how its loss (or disruption) will impact the business, system applications, RTO (recovery time objective), RPO (recovery point objective), and methods of protection.

Criticality	Business Impact	System Applications	RTO	RPO	Protection Methods
Mission Critical	Direct Revenue Producer				
Business Critical	Cross-Organization Operations				
Operationally Important	Department Operations				
Expendable	Tools with Limited Value				

Organize the systems and data that are most important to bring back online immediately. This helps visualize which items can take lower priority and which items need to take precedence in a recovery process.

RECOVERY PROCESSES

At this point, you've organized your priorities, identified your most critical IT resources, and assessed the impact of system disruption on your business. Now, it's time to establish the actual steps you'll need to take to restore your data and system after a disaster.

Use a flowchart to show how a disaster will be identified and addressed. Break phases into:

- **Monitors and Alerts** – How will you find out about an outage?
- **Resource** – Who is the contact person for this kind of issue?
- **Remediation Steps** – What will you try first, second, third, etc. to recover?
- **Result** – What will the recovery attempt produce?

Flowcharts give you a clear picture of how disaster recovery should look in practice. You can begin to visualize the recovery process and you can feel secure knowing you have a plan.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

There's precious little time in the aftermath of an IT disaster. To be fully prepared for quick and effective disaster recovery, you should have an emergency contacts list ready. This can be split into two lists:

1. **Vendors** – Those outside your business who provide IT resources
2. **Internal Staff** – Those in management who are responsible for big picture business operations

During a disaster, it helps to have phone numbers readily available.

NON-IT DISASTER PLANNING

While this guide deals primarily with IT disasters, non-IT disasters can be equally (if not more) damaging and often have heavy IT implications. Here are some common data loss event scenarios:

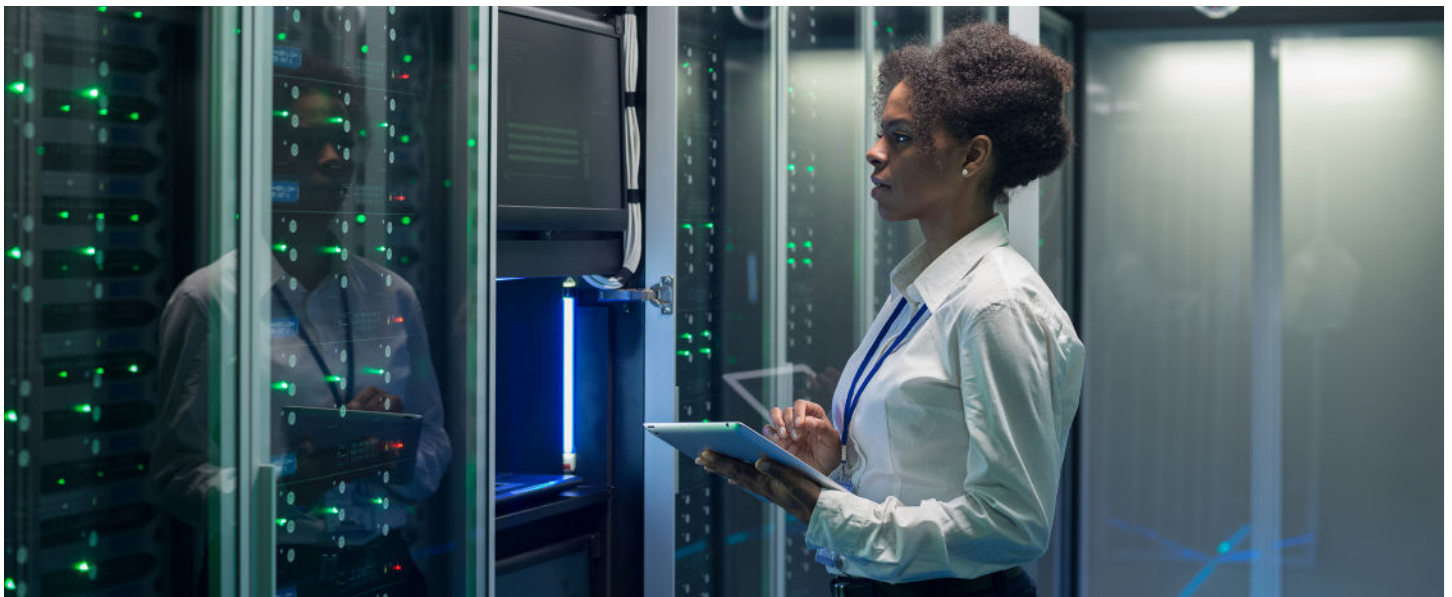
- **Fire** – Partial building damage
- **Tornado** – Building destroyed
- **Snowstorm** – Building inaccessible
- **Power surge**
- **Bomb threat**
- **Plane crash**
- **Flood**
- **Crime**

All of these events require a different set of recovery steps that should be carefully thought out for your business. Take stock of your resources and options for reacting to these events.

DISASTER RECOVERY CHECKLIST TEMPLATE

Before you build a Disaster Recovery plan, you have to take stock of the critical systems, servers, networks, etc., that are essential for operating your business. Below, you'll order your "Business Priorities." This dictates what you'll address first if disaster strikes. Identifying your business priorities takes the guesswork out of disaster recovery.

Business Priority	Priority Number



Please reproduce this page for as many business priorities as you identified in the previous step.

Discovery Process

Business Priority		Priority Number	
Maximum Allowable Outage Time How long can your business function without this?		Priority	Low / Medium / High / Very High
What Does This Do For Your Business?	What Resources Are Needed To Make This Work For Your Business?		

Recovery Process

What Business Operations Are Impacted When This Goes Down?	
How Are You Alerted?	Who Is Responsible For Fixing This?



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International Foodservice Distributors Association (IFDA)

The International Foodservice Distributors Association (IFDA) is the premier trade organization representing the \$382 billion foodservice distribution industry. This industry ensures a safe and efficient supply of food and products to more than one million restaurants and foodservice outlets in the U.S. daily. For more information, visit www.ifdaonline.org.

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