



The assurance of a good business continuity program: Ensuring business well-being

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Security directors are well aware of the need for regular review of security practices to ensure visitors, guests and employees remain safe. Day to day operations for safety directors should also include an eye towards planning for a business disruption or emergency. Thorough property/asset review and regular training are successful components of any plan to reduce vulnerabilities. It is advised security and risk assessments be conducted by someone with experience in the organization to determine what assets need to be secured and how to execute a plan. Many companies understand this and often take this on themselves, while this is one approach, having an outside company assist with this or take the entire task over altogether can uncover details that might have been overlooked.

Company executives along with the person(s) designated to carry out the emergency plan, need to review what is at risk in an event which can disrupt or threaten a business. Employee safety is at the top of the list, followed by tasks necessary to keep operations going under many circumstances, and how to maintain business if the business is shut down altogether. Business continuity planning experts will help companies with regulations affecting their businesses, survival and security strategies and post emergency operations by utilizing personnel possessing law enforcement and first response experience as well as emergency training as part of its strategy. City-based businesses are often located in high-rise buildings and densely populated areas, presenting additional challenges. Business continuity programs to specifically address the challenges buildings face are always changing as the threat climate is always in flux. Cities face threats that range from man-made to weather related, the items to cover on a check list can be quite extensive.

Throughout the years there are obvious landmarks which are targets and locations which can become targets for unknown reasons. It is this hit or miss possibility that safety directors need to address. Day-to-day activities cannot be overlooked either, a possible threat condition can take place, at anytime. There are tailor-made programs that provide training and support, as well as law enforcement expertise to stand ready to assist or complement an overall plan during a weather emergency like a hurricane or tornado, or man-made disruption. During Occupy Wall Street, businesses in lower Manhattan found themselves plunged into a political controversy and a physical challenge just trying to get to work. This sudden and overwhelming obstacle of up to 5,000 protesters a day from September to November was a threatening situation for any business in the area, especially as those inhabiting the area at that time were relying on local businesses for food and other daily needs. Corporations had to plan safe routes for their employees to enter and exit their office each day, a job local law enforcement couldn't be entirely responsible for, they had a daily mob to contend with.

Global Elite Group (GEG) was for working with property owners during Occupy Wall Street and

deployed the customized plan along with other strategies, as an event of this kind had never happened before. The additional security component included protection services, bomb sweeps and escorts of employees and executives. A plan to keep everyone safe and the business open in the face of a large crowd, which could become unruly at any moment, worked. Businesses are faced with a host of sudden disruptions, being able to address them at a moment's notice is what a good plan will do for a company.

Not all complexes however will be exposed to high profile visitors or large scale events. Often complexes have subtle safety concerns such as how to address unruly guests, employee thefts, or it is located in the vicinity of a complex which does host high profile visitors, events and overflow is a concern. GEG found during Occupy Wall Street many under the radar businesses in the area had great concerns for their employees. Being able to summon up a plan to protect employees and property while going through a stressful event is not always possible, but a good sound program help alleviate that burden.

Understanding the "inner workings" of complexes and engaging the services to meet the emergency demands on short notice ensures continuity. Not all emergencies can be planned or staffed by the company; an outside company should be a phone call away.

The future of business continuity includes the constant review of its approach to safety and the update of available technology which assists in the overall security of the complex. An effective approach includes review of all aspects of building and occupant activities, the risk assessment process can include an annual review with written recommendations for supplemental activities to meet existing industry best practices. The industry's approach to building safety is constantly changing, expert security consultants with law enforcement backgrounds will successfully provided a plan to ensure business well-being.

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