



Disaster plan for your data can mean the difference between life and death for a small sized company

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A natural disaster such as hurricane or tropical storm can jeopardize your company's existence. According to Gartner, 40% of all companies that experience a major disaster will go out of business if they cannot regain access to their data within 24 hours. A business disaster plan, using cloud computing resources, can mean the difference between life and death for a small-to-medium sized business.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicted a 70% chance of 8-13 named storms for 2014. Three to six of these storms could develop into hurricanes. We learned from Superstorm Sandy in 2012 that it takes just one episode to cripple global business for weeks.

A disaster recovery plan can be simple and inexpensive compared to the problems that can result from unpreparedness. Here are a few simple, cost-effective tips to help your business bounce back in the event of a major disruption of transportation and infrastructure services:

Use a hosted email solution: You can have all of the functionality that your current on-premise Exchange Server offers with a cloud-hosted email subscription. For a small monthly fee per mailbox, end users can log into their email accounts from anywhere, at anytime, using a secure internet connection.

Make sure you have email continuity: In addition to spam and virus protection, companies like Symantec offer affordable archiving solutions. Even if power and data connections are completely cut off, received emails are stored safely until you have an opportunity to retrieve your messages.

Backup your data in the cloud: Your important business data is automatically saved in secure, remote data centers. High speed fiber optic connections and inexpensive data storage make cloud backup a feature that no business can afford not to invest in.

Use a remote desktop solution: Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) allows you to log into your own desktop from any location, over the internet. That's because all of your files and settings are safely stored on remote servers.

Subscribe to Voice-over-IP (VoIP) in the cloud: Users can take advantage of all of the functions of IP communications such as Cisco's Unified Communications Manager over the internet. With a computer and a softphone application, you can dial from your extension from any location. Soft clients like Cisco's "Jabber" include instant messaging, presence, and video calling.

Business in the New York Metro area was brought to a standstill after Superstorm Sandy in 2012. Thousands of organizations below 30th St. in Manhattan were without electrical service for almost a full week after the storm. Some sustained irreparable damage to computer and network hardware, resulting in permanent data loss. Many companies that invested in cloud computing and secure data backup solutions were able to continue business with employees connecting to their voice and data applications from their homes.

The key to sustaining business operations in the wake of disaster is to plan for a scenario of interruption of transportation and utility services for extended time periods. Companies that have in-place disaster plans can maximize their chances to remain in business once all services are restored.

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