

A **TAMP Systems** White Paper

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How to Plan for Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity

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Introduction

Having an understanding of what it means to plan for disaster recovery and business continuity will provide you a solid framework from which to create specific plans for your business.

Definitions

- **Disaster** = Any event that causes inaccessibility or inoperability to your technology, business functions or facility.
- **Disaster Recovery Plan (DRP)** = A plan to recover from inaccessibility or inoperability to your technology.
- **Business Continuity Plan (BCP)** = A plan to recover from inaccessibility or inoperability to your facility, including your business functions and technology.

Definition Dialog

If you ask ten people to define a disaster, you would get ten different answers. The first thing that comes to mind when you think of a disaster is an event, such as a fire, flood, tornado, terrorist attack, etc. Our industry research has shown that there are well over 200 events that can cause a disaster. Rather than planning for disaster events, we plan for the result of an event as it relates time. For example, if a disaster event causes inaccessibility to your facility or inoperability of your technology for a specific or an approximate timeframe, it would be considered a disaster. Therefore, we define a disaster as “any event that causes inaccessibility or inoperability to your technology, business functions or facility, and

possibly permanently...” It is logical to believe if you can recover from a worst-case scenario, you will be able to recover from anything less. It should be noted that most contingency planning practitioners differentiate disaster recovery as recovery of technology after disaster and business continuity as recovery of business functions after a disaster. We strongly believe that these must be integrated.



How to Accomplish Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Planning

In order to accomplish disaster recovery and business continuity planning, you must:

1. Define the scope of what you are trying to recover from a disaster. This may be one server, a complete data center or an entire facility.
2. Define your Recovery Timeframe Objective (RTO). This is the target timeframe within which you want to recover from a disaster.
3. Choose and implement the recovery strategy that will allow you to achieve your RTO. For example, if you want to recover the mission critical servers in a data center and your RTO is 24 hours, you could choose a commercial hot site as your recovery strategy.
4. Identify and document your recovery resources. These are the information resources that will assist you in your recovery activities and will allow you to achieve your RTO. Alphabetically, the categories of recovery resource information are:

- a. **Equipment** - an inventory of the equipment you had before the disaster as well as what equipment you will need for recovery
 - b. **Facilities** – a description of the facilities, including contact information and directions, which would assist you in your recovery activities. These may include your offsite storage facility, hot site, command centers, alternate offices, etc.
 - c. **Forms & Stationery** – a description of any special forms or stationery items that would be necessary to achieve your RTO. For example, blank company checks, etc.
 - d. **Personnel** – detailed contact information on all your personnel will be essential for recovery
 - e. **Recovery Tasks** – a description of the tasks that need to be accomplished for recovery
 - f. **Software** – an inventory of the software you had before the disaster as well as the software you will need for recovery, including any temporary software license keys
 - g. **Supplies** - a description of any special supply items that would be necessary to achieve your RTO. For example, signature plates, etc.
 - h. **Vendors** – a description of your vendors, including their purpose, contact information and service level agreements
 - i. **Vital Records** – an inventory and description of the vital records you will need for recovery. The best recovery plan will not work without your vital records.
5. Document your recovery plan. This plan must be logically organized and easily reference-able. Your plan must cover the following topics:
 - a. *Introductory Information* - This section should contain the foundation information for your Plan, e.g., scope, recovery objective, recovery strategy, assumptions, etc.
 - b. *Incident Response* - When an incident (potential disaster) occurs, someone must respond with a pre-defined sequence of events and follow the Disaster Declaration Procedures
 - c. *Notification Procedures* - Once a disaster is declared by management, notification of Plan-

participants must immediately begin

- d. *Recovery Teams Responsibilities, Staffing and Procedures* - As soon as the Plan participants have been notified, they will become part of one or more recovery teams – Therefore, recovery roles and responsibilities will be documented in this section
- e. *Emergency Procedures and Information* - This section is a requirement by external regulators for plans
- f. *Mission Critical Operating Specifications* - Everything you will need to quickly establish your mission critical operations should be documented in this section, e.g., command center locations, service level agreements from your vendors, etc.
- g. *Rebuilding/Restoring Specifications and Inventories* - At the same time that you are establishing your mission critical operations, restoring and rebuilding should begin immediately
- h. *Appendices* - A glossary of terms as well as testing and maintenance

procedures are the main topics that should be in this section

Summary

Disaster recovery / business continuity planning is not a trivial task, nor is it beyond the capabilities of an intelligent person who knows your company and its needs, and has support of top management. There are two intelligent alternatives to accomplish planning. One alternative is to purchase a do-it-yourself recovery planning software product that contains the information and tools to assist you. The second alternative is to secure the services of a consulting firm that specializes in business continuity planning and can also provide you with a software tools so that you can become self-sufficient in your recovery planning maintenance efforts.

About TAMP Systems

TAMP provides a comprehensive resource and document management system specifically designed for disaster recovery and business continuity planning. The Disaster Recovery System (DRS™) is a web-based software solution that is easy to learn and features automatic updating of plan content. For over 20 years, TAMP has focused solely on developing solutions for contingency and recovery planning. Our DRS-certified consultants provide customized planning services to ensure that plans meet regulatory requirements. For more details, please visit <http://www.drscopytamp.com> or call 1-516-623-2038.