



Test business continuity plans effectively before it's too late

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Many organisations are paying lip service to business continuity planning and finding that when the plans are invoked they fail. Worse still, they're finding that it can cost more just to go through the motions of putting a plan together than it can to build and test a strategy that really will provide business continuity.

PR9.NET September 28, 2005 - The hurricanes that have hit the United States this month and July's terrorist attacks in London have served as a stark reminder to companies to examine their business continuity procedures before it's too late, and independent testing consultancy Acutest, www.acutest.co.uk, has set up a new team to help organisations review their business continuity and disaster recovery strategies.

Statistics show that 90% of businesses that lose data following a disaster are forced to shut within two years*. Acutest's experience is that there is an alarming level of complacency in the business continuity planning of UK companies, with many of the organisations who do allocate significant budgets to business continuity planning spending money on the wrong things or not testing plans sufficiently to be confident they will work.

The Acutest solution to these issues is an independent health check highlighting areas of omission and also looking at areas which require testing (Business Continuity Planning Assurance). Acutest involves the client in identifying the risks to be mitigated and works with them to test the effectiveness of the procedures in place. As well as highlighting the areas of risk where testing is required, this approach also shows the areas in which testing would not add value and therefore would be a waste of effort.

Acutest's CEO, Barry Varley, said: "We all hope that it will never happen to us, but the question is how would your staff, systems and the services you provide cope following a disaster? Could your business survive?"

Varley continued: "Some organisations produce plans simply to 'tick a box', for example to satisfy regulatory bodies, auditors, shareholders or prospective clients. These organisations often reuse a generic plan, and frequently the company revisits it so rarely that it ends up referring to equipment or business practices that are no longer in use. We have been into companies to discuss business continuity and found the only copy of the plan existed in a bookcase in the IT Director's office!"

"There is a large community that pays lip service to business continuity planning and business continuity testing. They pay the costs of planning but then find that those procedures don't deliver on the day it matters most. Worse still, it can cost more just to go through the motions of putting a plan together than it can to build and test a strategy that really will provide business continuity in an emergency."

For more information on effective business continuity planning or testing, contact Acutest on 020 7917 2838.

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About Acutest

Acutest is an, independent consultancy specialising in testing software, IT and technology-centred change. Acutest provides a full portfolio of outsourced software testing services, primarily to blue chip organisations. The principal aim of all these services is to substantially increase the value businesses can derive from testing by reducing the elapsed time spent testing, reducing the cost of testing and reducing the risks to launching new organisations, products and services.

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