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A Guide to Protecting Your Business

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A Blueprint for Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery

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If you're like most business owners you're in the "A disaster will never happen to

me" camp. Yet, every year businesses shut their doors due to various disasters and disruptions that occur.

"To show how unforeseeable a disaster can be, for Tescro Technologies, located outside Baltimore, Maryland thought it had little to fear. It was not in a flood zone, not in an earthquake zone and devastating hurricanes were more than hundred-year events. But in the case of Tescro, the culprit was a faulty fire hydrant.

One outside its Hunt Valley data center failed spectacularly on October 12, 2002 and several hundred thousand gallons of water blasted through a concrete wall leaving the company's primary data center under several feet of water and left some 1400 hard drives and 400 SAN disks soaking wet and caked with mud and debris." - Baltimore Business Journal (June 23, 2003).

Business disruptions range from floods, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes, severe weather, power outages, human error and other unforeseen events.

Basically, anything that has a negative impact on your business can be considered a disaster.

In January of 2001, the Federal Government listed these as the three most likely and most catastrophic events facing America:

- ✓ Terrorist Attack on New York City
- ❖ Earthquake in the San Francisco Bay Area
- ✓ Levee Failure in New Orleans

Recovering from a disaster requires proper planning, mitigation, training, practice and when possible prevention. Sometimes it can seem overwhelming as to where to begin. Now you can use this guide as a **blueprint** to help you get started.

NOTE: This is not a comprehensive guide but will provide you with a checklist to help you get started quickly.

This list will be particularly useful for small businesses and those who have never created or thought of business continuity or disaster recovery before.

Human Resources:

- Start and maintain a list of Key Employees, Vendors, and Clients. Provide copies to Key personnel in your organization.
- Develop an emergency contact list and a call order.
- Give keys and an alarm code to trusted employees, or friend.
- Set up a virtual number or other call forwarding business number.
- Create a list of emergencies, disruptions and disasters that have occurred or can occur within your community. Adjust your plan accordingly and note things that affect other businesses in your community.

Facilities:

- Inspect your building(s) to determine the impact specific types of disasters would have on the facility. The condition of your building can have a large impact on whether you can continue business operations from this location.
- Locate a suitable secondary and if possible tertiary location from which you can move your critical business functions to in the event your main location is unusable. It is important to do this before a disruption occurs.
- Locate a suitable place inside the building to shelter in place.

Facilities Cont'd:

- Set up an evacuation plan and a meeting /gathering place outside the building. Practice, Practice, Practice.
- Keep disaster supplies onsite for your employees, visitors and others who may be at your location.

Be sure to include:

- Battery Operated Radio
- Extra Batteries
- Flashlights and Batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Fire Extinguisher(s)
- Plastic Bags
- Camera and Film
- Pens, pencils, and paper
- Mops, brooms, dust pans, pails, shovel
- Basic Tool Kit
- Generator
- Food and Water Supply
- Uninterruptable Power Supplies
- Surge Protectors
- Land-Line Phone
- Cell Phone
- Duct tape

Information Technology:

- Back-up of critical computer files.
- Digital back-up copies of critical business documents such as business licenses, incorporation or DBA papers, copies of

lease, insurance policies, credit report, etc.

Information Technology Cont'd:

- List of computer hardware, software, along with licensing information and passkeys and proof of purchase.
- Additional inventory list of business equipment.
- Perform monthly restorations from back-ups to ensure you can recover from your back-up.

Business Continuity:

- Copies of important documents should either be kept at a secondary location and or digitized and accessible over a secure internet connection.
- Review current insurance coverage with agent and insurance carrier.
- Review and check status of business interruption insurance. Is it enough?
- Creditor and banking contact information.
- Check Contingency plans of Vendors and suppliers.
- Locate a back-up vendor or supplier for all critical products you depend on.
- Try to develop a relationship with other local businesses and make plans to work together or help one another after a disruption.
- Work with local emergency management.
- Include replacement cost of equipment.

Additional Resources to Include in Your Plan:

- Maintain a contact list of important local resources and try to meet with them and other organizations regularly.

Additional Resources to Include in Your Plan Cont'd:

- Local OEM (Office Emergency Management)
- City, County, and other Government
- Fire Department
- Police Department
- Health Department
- Utility Companies
- Hospitals
- American Red Cross
- Association of Contingency Planners

Getting Back to Business – What to Do After A Disaster

Recovery Steps:

- Ensure everyone is safe, if evacuating your building did everyone make it out? If sheltering in place is everyone inside? Allow guests to make outside calls.
- Assess the Damage
- Make note of damage to structure, equipment and other property including inventory.
- If safe to do so, take pictures
- Contact your insurance agent or company
- Only make repairs to keep additional damage from occurring.

- Avoid other repairs and moving/removing items unless told it is alright to do so by the insurance company or adjuster.
- Secure the building.

Recovery Steps Cont'd:

- Relocate business operations if needed
- Re-establish communications with employees, customers, and vendors.
- Restore electric, gas, water, telephone, garbage and other services
- Have the building cleaned
- Ensure that building is cleaned safely with proper products and techniques.
- Have the building inspected prior to re-occupation.

Financial Considerations:

- File business interruption insurance claim as soon as possible.
- Determine lost income/revenue.
- Determine value of lost equipment and other items.
- Maintain records of extra expenses incurred due to the event. Such as equipment rentals or replacement, temporary relocation costs, temporary workers, and other fees, costs, and payments.
- What other financial obligations does the business have? Any penalties for missed SLA's, or other agreements? Regulatory requirements that may be missed? Also include payroll, and other outstanding debt payments.

- Your adjuster may require sales records and sales history, Profit and Loss Statements, income tax forms and other records.

Additional Assistance:

- If a Federal Emergency Declaration is made, you will be eligible for assistance through FEMA and the SBA. Look and listen for local centers to go to for aid.
- If only a State declares an emergency you may be eligible for some aid through the State, but not through the Federal Government.

Additional Help & Resources:

This is intended to get you started with your planning and preparedness for your business. If you need additional help contact [Erwood Group](#) at 877-565-8324 and someone will help you in your planning process.

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