



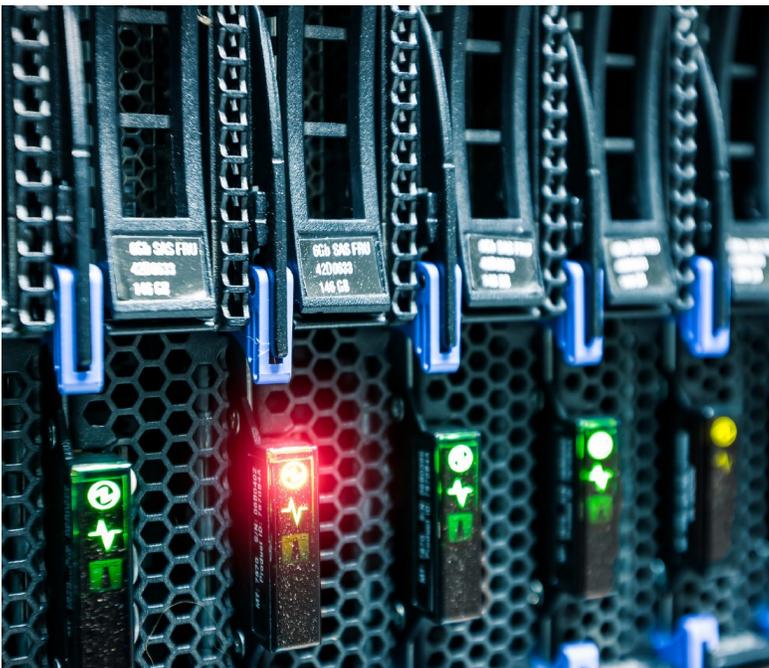
Business Continuity & Disaster Recovery Planning

“43% of small businesses affected by a disaster never reopen and another 29% go out of business within 2 years.”

-Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Your small to mid-size business is operating at full capacity. You're getting new customers every day, your suppliers are meeting their orders, and you're experiencing rapid growth. Everything is running smoothly. Then, disaster strikes.

“Disaster” can take many forms for a business: from natural disasters like floods, fires or severe storms to more human threats like cyberattacks, data breaches or internal mistakes – and sometimes even hardware failure.



Many of these disasters are simply beyond your control. Between digital and physical threats, it's important to understand there is no such thing as perfect and complete protection for your company's network.

So, what are some of the actionable steps that businesses like yours can take to better prepare for surviving the unexpected? We are here to explain business continuity and disaster recovery and share tips to prepare your operation to power through the unexpected.

What is business continuity and disaster recovery?

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BCDR) are two critical components of an organization's risk management strategy, ensuring that essential functions can continue during and after a disaster. Emergencies like hurricanes, fires, cyberattacks, and more are considered disasters.

Business Continuity (BC)

- **Definition:** Business continuity refers to the processes and plans an organization puts in place to ensure that essential business functions can continue during and after a disruptive event, such as natural disasters, cyberattacks, or other emergencies.
- **Focus:** The focus is on maintaining operations, minimizing downtime, and ensuring that critical services are still available to customers and stakeholders.
- **Components:** Business continuity planning typically includes risk assessment, business impact analysis, recovery strategies, and regular testing and updates of the plan.

Disaster Recovery (DR)

- **Definition:** Disaster recovery specifically deals with the recovery of IT systems and data after a disaster. It's a subset of business continuity, focusing on restoring technology and data access.
- **Focus:** The focus is on the restoration of IT infrastructure and operations to minimize the impact of disruptions on business processes.
- **Components:** Disaster recovery plans often include backup solutions, data recovery strategies, and procedures for restoring hardware and software.

Key Differences:

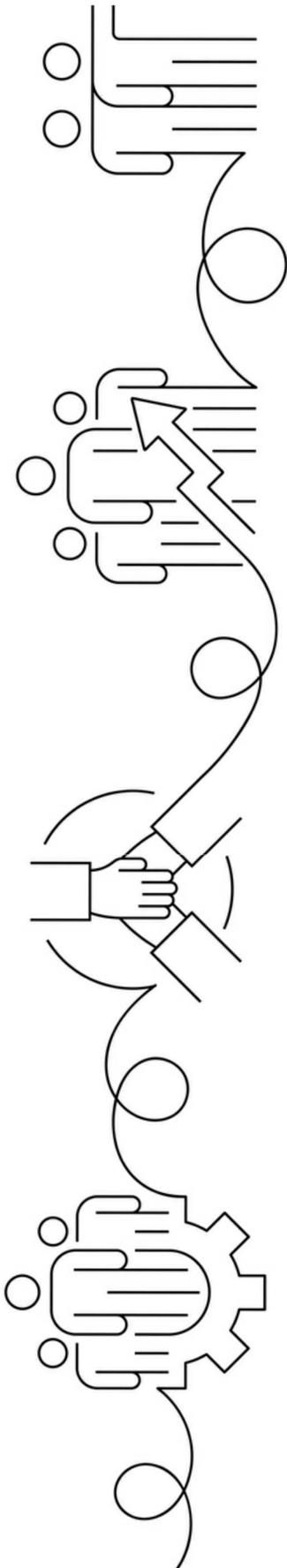
- **Scope:** Business continuity covers the entire organization and its operations, while disaster recovery focuses specifically on IT and data recovery.
- **Planning:** BC planning involves strategies for maintaining operations across all functions, whereas DR planning involves specific procedures for recovering IT systems.

Creating a Business Continuity Plan

By outlining recovery procedures and communication strategies, a BCP enables quick response to crises, safeguarding employee safety and fostering resilience.

BCP Checklist:

- **Risk Assessment**
 - Identify potential risks and threats.
 - Evaluate the likelihood and impact of each risk.
 - Prioritize risks based on their potential effect on operations.
- **Business Impact Analysis (BIA)**
 - Identify critical business functions and processes.
 - Determine the maximum acceptable downtime for each function.
 - Assess the impact of disruptions on resources, revenue, and reputation.
- **Determine Continuity Strategies**
 - Outline recovery strategies for critical functions.
 - Identify resources needed for recovery (people, equipment, facilities).
 - Consider alternative locations for operations (remote work, temporary sites).
- **Business Continuity Plan Development**
 - Document continuity strategies and procedures.
 - Include contact information for key personnel and stakeholders.
 - Develop communication plans for internal and external stakeholders.
- **Training and Awareness**
 - Train employees on business continuity procedures and their roles.
 - Conduct awareness programs to emphasize the importance of preparedness.
 - Distribute the business continuity plan to all employees.
- **Testing and Drills**
 - Schedule regular testing of the business continuity plan.
 - Conduct drills to practice response procedures.
 - Evaluate performance and identify areas for improvement.
- **Plan Maintenance**
 - Review and update the business continuity plan regularly (at least annually).
 - Incorporate lessons learned from tests, drills, and real incidents.
 - Update contact information and resources as needed.

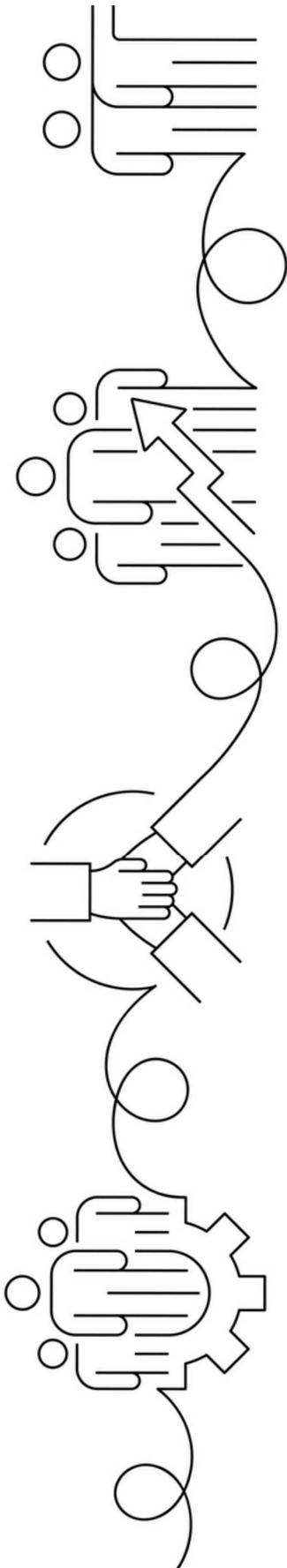


Creating a Disaster Recovery Plan

By identifying critical systems and establishing backup solutions, a DRP enhances your organization's resilience against cyberattacks, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

DRP Checklist:

- **Identify Critical IT Systems**
 - List all essential IT systems and applications.
 - Prioritize systems based on their criticality to business operations.
- **Backup Solutions**
 - Implement regular data backup procedures.
 - Ensure backups are stored securely (offsite/cloud).
 - Test backup restoration processes periodically.
- **Disaster Recovery Plan Development**
 - Document recovery procedures for each critical IT system.
 - Specify recovery time objectives (RTO) and recovery point objectives (RPO).
 - Include contact information for IT personnel and vendors.
- **Emergency Response Procedures**
 - Outline immediate actions to take following a disaster.
 - Define roles and responsibilities for IT staff during recovery.
- **Alternative Resources**
 - Identify alternative resources for IT functions (e.g., temporary hardware).
 - Plan for remote access to critical systems if needed.
- **Testing and Validation**
 - Conduct regular disaster recovery tests (simulation, tabletop exercises).
 - Validate the effectiveness of recovery procedures and update as needed.
- **Incident Response Coordination**
 - Establish communication protocols for IT teams during a disaster.
 - Designate an incident response team and clarify roles.
- **Plan Maintenance**
 - Review and update the disaster recovery plan regularly.
 - Ensure alignment with changes in IT infrastructure and business operations.
 - Incorporate feedback from tests and real incidents.



Disaster Recovery in the Cloud

In the event of a hurricane or other natural disaster, having a [cloud-based business continuity and disaster recovery plan](#) dramatically simplifies operations for your company, employees, and clients.

Traditional on-site solutions store integral data, software, and more at your physical office. Using the cloud decentralizes your infrastructure, so documents are no longer stored at a physical location.

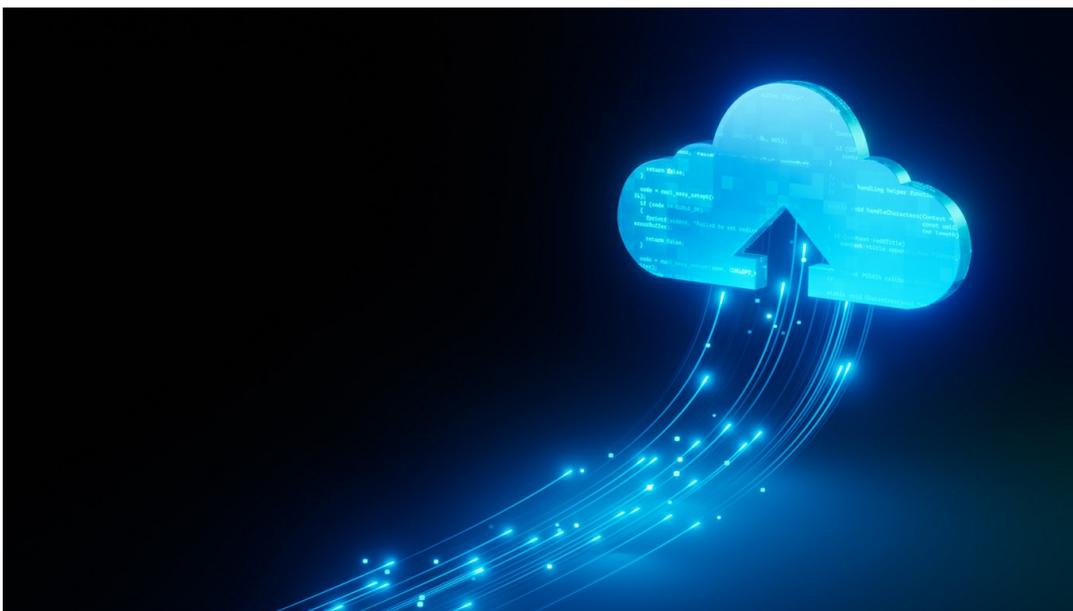
A cloud-based business continuity and disaster recovery plan allows you and your employees to operate anywhere they have internet. Instead of focusing your preparedness and recovery efforts on your equipment, you can prioritize employee safety without compromising business operations.

With the cloud, you can continue communicating and coordinating as usual, and you can access the documents and programs you need to operate.



“90% of disaster recovery options will run in the cloud.”

-Gartner



Working with a Managed Service Provider

Often, small to mid-size businesses lack the technical personnel, budget, or time to internally design and implement complex disaster recovery plans. Partnering with a Managed IT Services provider like Bit-Wizards allows business owners to focus on running their business without leaving this critical safeguard incomplete. We'll be in charge of putting the right server, network, and storage infrastructure in place for a robust and comprehensive disaster recovery plan. And the entire process will be kept up to date and tested regularly to ensure it is reliable.

Our Partnership

We're dedicated to helping businesses of all sizes and industries protect against rising threats and potential disasters. Giving you the best chances for success matters to us, and we'll do everything in our power to ensure complete protection. When you are equipped with a foolproof and powerful business continuity plan, you'll never have to worry about losing face with customers should a disaster occur. Contact us today to learn more!



Contact Us

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Related Resources:

[Developing an IT Disaster Recovery Plan](#)

[Why the Cloud is Crucial to Hurricane Prep & Recovery](#)

[IT Hurricane Preparedness](#)

[How a Hurricane Can Cost Your Business](#)