

6 Practical Steps to Orchestrate Business Resiliency

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Business Continuity in Chaos

Chaos is “*complete confusion and disorder, a state in which behavior and events are not controlled by anything.*” In the IT realm, chaos is the reason we have business continuity plans. We have to be prepared to handle the inevitable intrusion of chaos and still achieve comprehensive business resiliency.

But chaos can sneak up on us — especially when we become complacent. The fact is, business continuity in the traditional sense is very dated. Business is progressing at a rapid pace, with a heavy reliance on data and technology. The models we have used successfully for decades don’t fit this new way business is being conducted. They don’t correspond to the risks we are facing today.

The risks that businesses faced in the past were statistically predictable, quantifiable, and insurable. Things like fires, hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, and power failures. But today, the risk landscape is highly ambiguous and amorphous. How do you even begin to quantify:

- **Cybercrime, terrorism, and denial of service attacks**
- **Wireless device security loopholes**
- **Global supply chain and business partner connectivity concerns**
- **Public cloud infrastructure risks**
- **Human capital dependencies**

If our risk landscape has changed, then our business continuity management (BCM) approach had better change right along with it. Otherwise, resiliency is going to descend into chaos.



The Demand for Business Continuity Transformation

CIOs and business continuity leaders are feeling the pressure — and the fear — caused by today's rate of change. The thought of chaos is frightening because they know that “doing the best they can” with traditional business continuity models is not enough to ensure resiliency in their organizations today.

Recovery Statistics

Of medium-sized companies that experience major business-data losses¹:



This is because, historically, business continuity management has focused on protection: protect your people, protect your assets, protect your information, protect your revenue. Essentially, dig in and prepare for a siege.

But in today's world, protecting what you have isn't going to get you where you need to be. In every area of business, companies are being forced to proactively meet customer and business demands in new and innovative ways. In marketing, that has involved a shift from huge mass-market campaigns to micro-personalized outreach. In software development, it often requires leaving behind sequential waterfall design methodologies and embracing incremental agile approaches. What about for business continuity management?



For IT and business continuity management, transformation in the 21st century means stepping outside of the traditional risk-averse mindset to take on a deeply proactive approach that extends across the entire business. Such an approach recognizes that business resiliency – the ultimate goal – means much more than keeping the lights on or even keeping the data flowing.

Resiliency: Then and Now

THEN	NOW
Protect your employees	EMPOWER your employees
Safeguard your brand reputation	PROMOTE your brand reputation
Preserve your customer confidence	INSPIRE your customer confidence
Defend your competitive edge	DRIVE your competitive edge

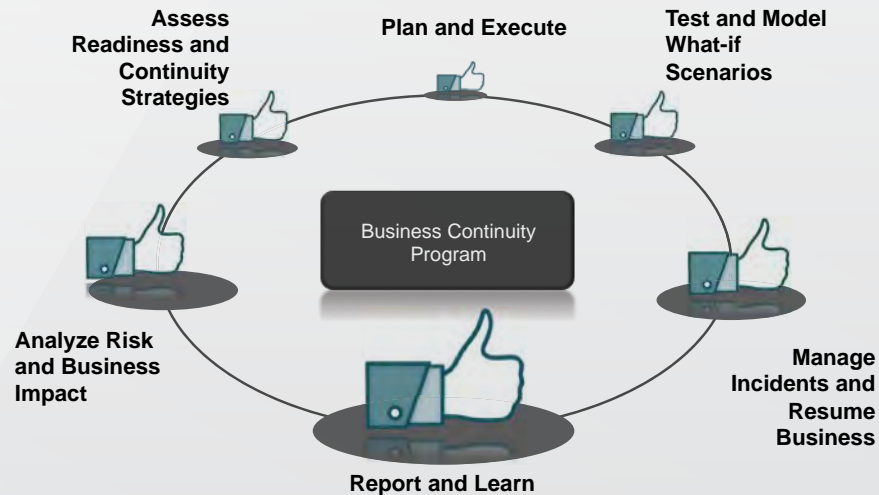
In this changing and threatening world, resiliency can be viewed as the enhancement and protection of human resources, current revenue streams, and future revenue growth potential, enabled by business and operational decisions that are informed by advanced risk intelligence and proactive business continuity awareness.



Traditional Business Continuity Management: Tried and True

The demand for transformation does not mean that we throw out everything we have learned about business continuity management in previous decades. Not at all. The principles we know and practice are tested, tried, and proven – for the risks they were designed to meet.

The classic BCM model...



The problem with the classic BCM cycle is that it is a cycle, and cycles take time ... time that businesses don't have today. For example, say that Company XYZ adds a new product, introduces a new service, establishes a new business process, or partners with a new vendor. Can they afford to wait months until the next annual business impact analysis (BIA) to analyze these items and incorporate them into their business continuity plan?

No. The downstream dependencies, the financial impact, the operational ramifications, the business continuity ramifications ... everything has to be assessed and responded to immediately. Otherwise, the company could be risking chaos.



Creating Order Out of Chaos

Fortunately, there is another definition of chaos: *“the state of the universe before there was any order and before stars and planets were formed.”* In other words, chaos is actually opportunity in disguise.

CIOs and business continuity professionals today have a fabulous opportunity to transform business continuity management: to create order out of chaos. And they are exactly the right people to make this happen, because they:

- Are experienced risk experts
- Perform effectively under pressure
- Focus the right people and resources on strategic initiatives
- Possess in-depth knowledge of the business and IT
- Can align the business and IT

In fact, [Gartner anticipates](#) that “By 2018, digital business will require 50 percent less business process workers and 500 percent more key digital business jobs, compared with traditional models.”

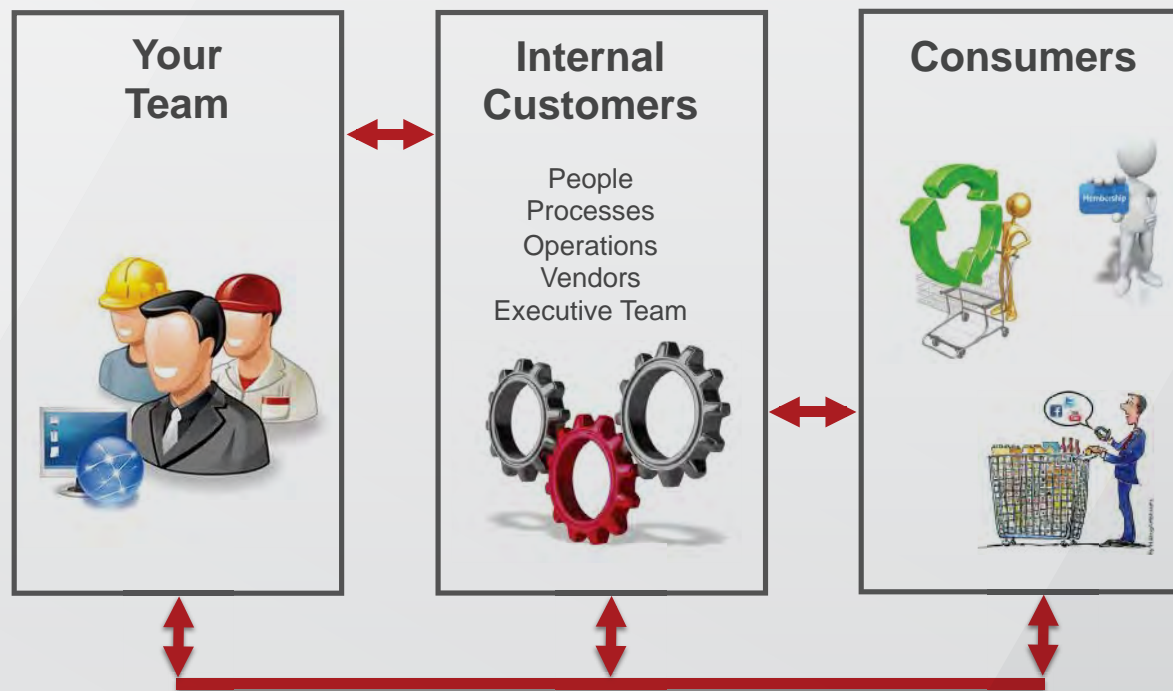
But what – exactly – needs to happen to transform business continuity management to prevent chaos and orchestrate resiliency?



6 Practical Steps to Orchestrate Resiliency

1. Adopt a business-wide perspective.

Business continuity personnel tend to live in a bubble. They talk to their team and they talk to their internal customers: the different lines of business, operations, vendors, etc. They *don't* tend to talk to the consumer. But to truly leverage technology and business continuity to build a resilient business, you need to think about the business as a whole. That means engaging with the consumer (thinking like the consumer, enhancing the consumer's experience, anticipating the consumer's next demand), and aligning the business continuity program with the goals and objectives of the business.



2. Challenge your business continuity management methodology.

As you think about your business as a whole and engage with your internal customers and your consumers, ask yourself:

- What do we need to do to align our business continuity management methodology with our desired business outcomes?
- How do we become more agile and responsive?
- How do we leverage technology to boost the business?

3. Reconsider your business impact analysis (BIA) process.

Chances are, you are bringing new business processes, applications, products, services, and vendors into the fold all the time. Can you really afford to wait until your next annual BIA to study the risks associated with these new items and carefully work them into your business continuity plan? Do you really want to get involved only when the switch gets flipped for the go-live?

No. You need a new way to safely onboard new processes, new products and services, and new applications and vendors — before these things ever make their way into the production environment.



4. Reinvent intelligent plans

There is only so much that a static or traditionally built business continuity plan can do for you, considering the ambiguous nature of today's threats. What you really need is a foundation you can then build on during an actual event, because you can't possibly predict all the details of a business interruption ahead of time. This is intelligent planning: a plan that takes into account changing situations that unfold very rapidly; a plan that combines a base outline with accurate data and incident management to become a targeted weapon to combat any interruption, attack, or disaster.

5. Promote collaboration and communication.

For intelligent planning to become a reality, collaboration and communication need to be vastly increased to provide situational awareness during an incident. For example, some of the questions that need to be asked are:

- What's happening?
- How extensive or localized is the disaster situation?
- Is transportation or safety an issue for employees?
- What is the impact to:
 - Our business?
 - Our vendors?
 - Our facilities?
 - Our customers?
 - Our employees?
- What are the critical recovery tasks?
- Which processes and applications have been affected?

Such communication is essential to support the decision making that needs to take place rapidly and accurately to address an incident.



6. Drive resiliency, roadmap innovation.

In many ways, we end where we began: with a focus on the business. As you challenge your business continuity management program and shake things up, you also need to drive the creation of a new resiliency roadmap: a roadmap that is aligned with your organization's goals and objectives, and that has resiliency processes embedded into the culture and daily operations of the company.

For example, if Procurement is looking at a new vendor, you need to be a part of that process for business continuity reasons, asking questions about the vendor's resiliency strategy and disaster recovery tests. With Human Resources, you need to be part of the onboarding of new employees, training them in company security policies and procedures.



“The best way to predict your future is to create it.” -Abraham Lincoln



The past decade has seen more changes to business and technology than could ever have been anticipated. It is no surprise that chaos is encroaching on businesses everywhere.

But chaos is preventable. CIOs and their business continuity management teams are positioned to orchestrate true resiliency for their organizations: a resiliency that doesn't just protect assets, but that proactively drives the continued success of the business. Taking the six practical steps outlined here will usher in that resiliency, and position businesses to achieve the future they want to create.





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Joining in 1998, Tracey has been highly involved in the continued evolution of Business Continuity products and services. She advises on software strategy and product direction and partners with customers worldwide to support, evolve, and enhance their programs.

About Sungard Availability Services

Sungard Availability Services provides managed IT services, information availability consulting services, business continuity management software, and disaster recovery services.

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