

Business Continuity Management Key Initiative Overview

Roberta J. Witty

This overview provides a high-level description of the Business Continuity Management Key Initiative. Business continuity managers, IT disaster recovery managers and other IT leaders can use this guide to understand what they need to do to prepare for this initiative.

ANALYSIS

Business continuity management (BCM) ensures business resiliency before, during and after a disruption. This has become a crucial discipline in an increasingly complex, interconnected global economy.

BCM has moved beyond the traditional focus on recovering IT systems following a disaster to ensuring the ongoing resiliency of critical business processes. Enterprises that fail to practice effective BCM planning and exercising could risk catastrophic business failures caused by events ranging from natural disasters to disease outbreaks to supply chain failures. BCM now requires not only technical expertise, but also a detailed understanding of business requirements; legal and regulatory requirements; the demands of the enterprise's industry vertical and key business partners; and worldwide political, cultural and environmental issues.

Consider These Factors to Determine Your Readiness

BCM and IT disaster recovery management professionals and other IT leaders should consider the following factors when developing and maturing a BCM program. These factors may vary widely, depending on the enterprise:

- The regulatory, political, cultural, environmental and contractual demands facing the enterprise
- The business availability needs of the mission-critical business processes and system resources (both internal and belonging to external partners)
- The maturity of the enterprise's existing BCM program, based on benchmarking against an existing BCM framework

Develop and Manage a BCM Program in Four Phases

- **Strategize and Plan:** Define the scope of the BCM program, obtain necessary resources and define governance systems. Integrate the discipline with strategic IT and business plans.
- **Assess Current State:** Determine who the key stakeholders are, and seek feedback from them about the current state of the BCM program. Identify and prioritize key risks and requirements, and identify needed skills and capabilities.
- **Implement:** Staff and manage the program's implementation. Seek feedback from users. Select technologies. Monitor risks.
- **Operate and Evolve:** Use governance systems to track the success of the program. Adjust the approach, based on operational results and changing business needs.

RECOMMENDED READING

The following documents are foundational research to get started with this initiative:

"Activity Cycle Overview: Business Continuity Manager Role"

"Business Continuity Management Defined, 2008"

"Toolkit: IT-DRM Self-Assessment"

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS

Corporate Headquarters

56 Top Gallant Road
Stamford, CT 06902-7700
U.S.A.
+1 203 964 0096

European Headquarters

Tamesis
The Glanty
Egham
Surrey, TW20 9AW
UNITED KINGDOM
+44 1784 431611

Asia/Pacific Headquarters

Gartner Australasia Pty. Ltd.
Level 9, 141 Walker Street
North Sydney
New South Wales 2060
AUSTRALIA
+61 2 9459 4600

Japan Headquarters

Gartner Japan Ltd.
Aobadai Hills, 6F
7-7, Aobadai, 4-chome
Meguro-ku, Tokyo 153-0042
JAPAN
+81 3 3481 3670

Latin America Headquarters

Gartner do Brazil
Av. das Nações Unidas, 12551
9º andar—World Trade Center
04578-903—São Paulo SP
BRAZIL
+55 11 3443 1509