

Development and Testing of Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Plans

CHALLENGE

Following a fire, which destroyed an entire data center facility, but fortunately did not result in any injury or loss of life, a financial firm decided that it needed to update its business continuity and disaster recovery plans, as the current plan was considerably out of date.

APPROACH

The initial challenge was to determine the scope of the required contingency plans and what it would take to develop and implement them in terms of effort, budget and timeframe. Two major facilities were used to back each other up from both business-continuity and disaster-recovery perspectives, as well as to back up a third data-center facility.

Because of the size of the project and the need to keep the data and procedures current, an automated system was acquired to maintain contingency planning data and facilitate periodic tests. An automated notification system was also installed. Further, two command centers were established.



BENEFITS

By developing a formal set of business-continuity and disaster-recovery plans and implementing procedures to ensure that they were kept up-to-date and tested periodically, the company could assure its auditors, regulators, business partners and customers that it could successfully recover from major adverse events. This served to maintain and grow the customer base and avoid reprimands and/or fines from regulators.



RESULTS

While the initial intention was to create the capability to recover from adverse events, such as fires, floods, breakdowns in telecommunications and other services, the capabilities were invoked in a number of other situations. For example, the command centers have been used proactively on a number of occasions where significant business disruptions might be expected to occur, rather than actually happen. This facilitates communications and decision making under potentially adverse conditions.