

The Business Case for **Outsourcing Business Continuity Planning**



Business continuity planning services (BCPS) must facilitate organizational preparedness through the establishment of policies, plans and procedures that enable an organization to respond to an event in a manner that ensures critical business functions continue with minimum levels of interruption. The primary objective of the BCPS program is to allow business operations to continue under adverse conditions. Developing a comprehensive BCPS program will assure that an organization is able to continue its operations in the event of a minor interruption or major disaster.



Business Continuity Planning Services includes the holistic management processes that identify potential impacts that threaten an organization. ICS provides a framework for building a resilient capability which includes an effective response to safeguard the interests of key stakeholders and protect your reputation. An effective business continuity program includes developing advance arrangements by establishing policies, plans, and procedures. These enable the organization to continue critical business functions at planned levels of service, despite events or interruptions.

Please visit ICSInc.com to learn more.



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Overview

While a combination of online backup, disaster recovery, and high-availability tools can help maximize uptime – technology is only part of the equation. An effective BCPS program begins with a thorough impact assessment and strategic plan. Well developed business continuity plans (BCP), built upon a BCP policy developed from organizational business goals and objectives, will keep your agency up and running through interruptions of any kind: power failures, IT system crashes, natural disasters, supply chain problems and more. Natural disasters such as hurricanes, tornados and earthquakes are only part of the risk, alongside information security risks. The chances of a data center experiencing a security breach are higher than its chances of catching on fire. Threats can come from anywhere on the Internet, which dictates the need for constant monitoring and reevaluation of plans once they are in place. Ensuring plans are developed, in place, tested and advertised as such will provide leverage in selling the benefits and value of the services your organization provides.

Should you outsource or develop plans in-house?

Senior management may choose to outsource BCPS for many reasons. They may not have the expertise in house to do the job. It may save them money in certain areas by eliminating the need to expand current staff. Personnel trained and skilled at developing business continuity programs are hard to find and expensive.

How do you decide?

The first step when deciding whether to use a consultant to facilitate the development of a business continuity plan is to assess the resources that your company has in-house by answering the following questions:

- Is there a member of our staff who has the necessary skills? If so, are you confident that his/her knowledge is current and broad enough to develop a fully rounded business continuity plan?
- Will that person have enough time available to devote him/herself to developing the plan? Will he/she be able to gain the necessary cooperation of senior managers and division chiefs when researching the information needed?



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- Is there a member of your staff who could be trained in the necessary skills? How much training will they need? What areas of expertise does he/she lack? How much budget can you make available and how will the cost of training compare with that of using a consultant? How long will it take before he/she is in a position to start the planning process? How will you verify that the training that is provided is adequate for the he/she versed in the software tools and resources available to assist in your planning efforts?
- Is there a member of your staff who, although not capable of fully developing a business continuity plan, could work with an external consultant to minimize the amount of consultancy time needed? Could a consultant be used for the more complex areas of the planning process and for quality control to supplement your in-house resources?
- How confident are you in the quality of plan that could be produced in-house? Consultants usually bring with them a wider experience of business continuity planning. They have seen what is necessary in business; they have created plans, tested plans, seen plans invoked. Consultants are well-versed in best practice, and their own business will stand or fall on the quality of the plans that they produce for their clients.
- Does the staff feel able to challenge accepted internal views, opinions and the status quo within the organization? A third party is able to navigate through various agencies and entities with minimal political or organizational threats which will help speed the process and reduce unnecessary distractions.

Why Choose ICS?

ICS, Inc. has the industry experience and knowledge to develop, implement, and validate BC programs. ICS has assisted in developing and implementing business continuity programs in a variety of organizations in the private and public sectors, including projects with Federal agencies, and state and local governments.

ICS is able to work with clients using internal client methodology or the ICS methodology which is based on the standards and best practices from the Disaster Recovery Institute's Professional Practices for Business Continuity Planners to develop a comprehensive Business Continuity Planning program.



About ICS, Inc.

Integrated Computer Solutions, Inc. (ICS) is a full-service information technology and IT security consulting and professional services firm headquartered in Montgomery, AL with operating locations throughout the United States.

Established in 1997, ICS provides a robust portfolio of technology and information security services that combine comprehensive strategy with cutting edge security. Our services provide a balance of cost and quality that enables our clients to maximize their return on IT investments.

ICS has an established track record of providing enterprise technology and security services to a wide range of Federal, State, and Fortune 1000 clients.

