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Tips To Bulletproof Your Business

Three Primary Goals
Of Your Backup/Disaster Recovery Plan
And How To Achieve Them

This White Paper is brought to you by your friends at The Fulcrum Group, Inc.

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One Technology Solution: Yours

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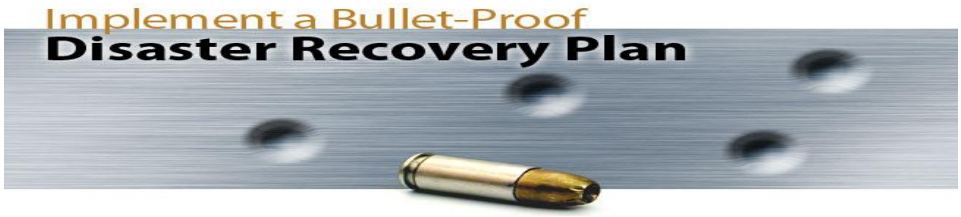
Three Primary Goals Of Your Backup/Disaster Recovery Plan And How To Achieve Them



A fire in our business complex six years ago was all the impetus we needed to reconsider and refine our existing backup/disaster recovery plan.

Thorough evaluation of the backup/disaster recovery plan we had in place revealed inconsistent backup procedures and substantial data growth – enough that we could no longer meet our Recovery Time Objective (RTO) and consequently, put us at risk for being unable to serve our clients in the event of a disaster.

Additionally, we recognized that the backup and disaster recovery solutions and plans that we implemented for our clients were likely no longer sufficient for the same reasons.

So we set out to develop a new comprehensive backup/disaster recovery solution that would not only meet our requirements but also the requirements of the majority our clients. We revised our backup/disaster recovery plan with 3 goals in mind:

1) **The ideal solution must fit the needs and requirements of The Fulcrum Group as well as our clients.**
There are lots of good reasons to have a disaster recovery/business continuity plan in place for your business, but depending on your industry, having a documented disaster recovery/business continuity plan might actually be the law. Many different industries are subject to laws and rules about how they should be protecting their data. For instance, financial institutions are subject to Recovery Time Objective constraints and other guidelines from the FDIC. And health care organizations must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which has strong implications for backing up data and making sure it is consistently available, even in a disaster. No matter your industry, every business owner should take the time to understand any regulatory requirements.

2) **The solution must be fully automated, with no human intervention required once the system is setup**.
Requiring human intervention to change tapes or disks, or requiring staff to take backups off-site introduces the possibility of human error, and can result in incomplete backups and possible data loss (imagine someone in your firm taking a backup home and having their car or purse stolen, resulting in significant data loss).

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So we made having a fully automated backup system a standard requirement for our solution. This means that the backups occur automatically, and that the data is backed up off-site to the Cloud automatically as well.

3) **The solution must meet our most common AND most critical recovery scenarios.**

Whether your business is likely to need an occasional file restore, or be unfortunate enough to be affected by a local geographic or neighboring disaster (as in our case), it is wise to anticipate and plan for all likely scenarios.

- Simple recovery scenarios, such as restoring an individual file or email mail box.
- Server recovery scenarios, such as a server hardware failure, with the ability to recover from a server failure in 1 hour or less.
- Major disaster recovery scenarios, especially those most common in our area, such as fire or tornado.

There are other factors to consider, and you should make sure you understand the basics of backup and disaster recovery. Some terms and processes to be familiar with include:

Key Terms

Disaster – *Any event* that disrupts your ability to run your business. Not just fires, floods, and tornadoes, but also server failures, major virus outbreaks, or a disgruntled employee deleting files.

Recovery Time Objective (RTO) - The duration of time in which an IT system must be restored after a disaster (or disruption) in order to avoid unacceptable consequences associated with the disaster. In other words, how quickly do you want to be operational again after a disaster?

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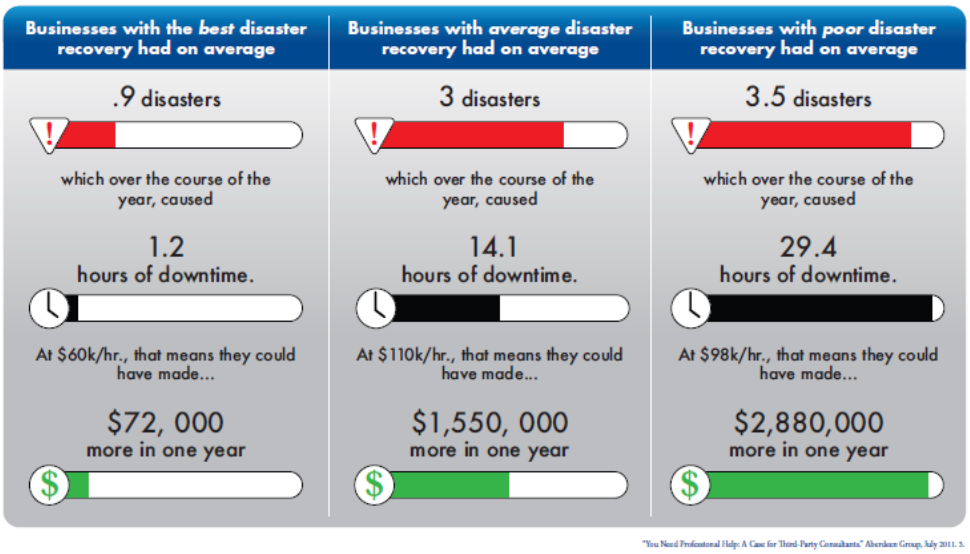
Recovery Point Objective (RPO) - The age of files that must be recovered from backup storage for normal operations to resume, if an IT system goes down as a result of a disaster. In other words, how much data could you afford to lose in a disaster? If you can only afford to lose 4 hours of data, then you will need to backup your data more often than once a day.

Business Impact Analysis (BIA) – A process for inventorying and analyzing the various IT systems of an organization, and then determining the business impact of various lengths of disasters on each IT system. This will help determine the RTO and RPO required for developing the appropriate backup and disaster recovery plan.



"You Need Professional Help: A Case for Third-Party Consultants," Aberdeen Group, July 2011. 3.

Other Considerations

Backing up servers is a no-brainer. But backing up critical workstations can be overlooked. We have found that for a few dollars per computer per month, we can backup critical workstations and recover from hard drive or other failure in a very timely manner.

For over a decade, experts at The Fulcrum Group have been serving DFW businesses as their trusted IT partner. Visit the videos page on our website at http://www.fulcrum.pro/resources/videos/ for some recent client testimonials.

Contact us with any questions you might have about your existing backup and disaster recovery plan and be sure to request your free Disaster Recovery Assessment.

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