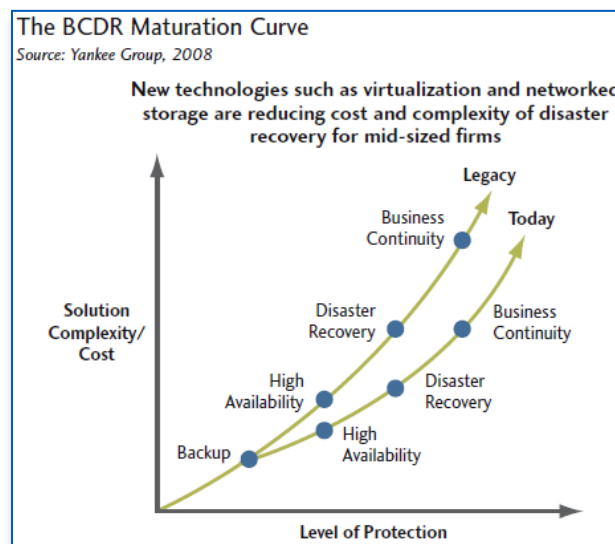


EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SMB Focus: Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity

Ensuring that key systems and applications driving your business are protected against outages is just as critical in the SMB space, if not more so, than for large enterprises. The Underwriting Guide for Insurers by A.M. Best found that only 6 percent of mid-sized companies that suffer catastrophic data loss survive – 43 percent never reopen, and 51 percent close within two years of the disaster. Developing, maintaining, and testing technology and business strategies designed to avoid or minimize the impact of business process interruptions are a key component of SMB IT and Business strategy.

In the past, Disaster Recovery (DR) solutions have been highly complex and expensive, forcing many SMB's to accept risk based on balancing the resources and capital necessary to maintain operations against the cost of a mature Business Continuity plan and infrastructure. Reliance was placed exclusively on data backup rather than a comprehensive recovery plan, a high-risk approach with significant coverage gaps and risk. The introduction and recent cost reduction of several new technologies including virtualization, centralized storage, and data replication is enabling the SMB market to deploy comprehensive DR solutions previously thought unavailable.

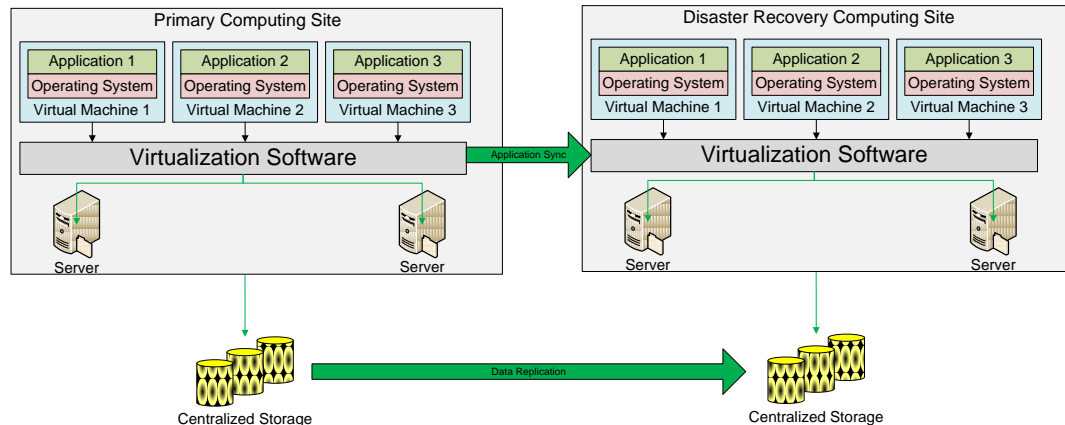


DISASTER SCENARIOS

While mega events, such as Katrina and 9/11 frequently become the focal point for DR planning discussions, they are far less likely to impact your business than the more mundane and more probable events that frequently shut down an unprotected IT infrastructure. Power outages, loss of data communications, and flooding are much more likely to impact a business than a high profile event. Hardware and software failure or human error is also far more prone to interrupt business than terrorism or hurricanes. A quality DR solution can address all likely scenarios but it is important to view the utility truck about to begin digging down the street as a risk rather than exclusively focusing on large scale, high profile events.

Components of an SMB appropriate DR Plan

- Build resilient infrastructure incorporating Disaster Recovery elements
 - *Data Replication and Data Backup* which can be easily restored and are located some distance from the primary data processing location
 - *High Availability computing platforms* – Systems and software solutions which incorporate redundancy to reduce the likelihood of failure. Virtualization is one example that reduces cost and risk during normal business operation and DR events.
 - *Remote computing facilities with available and configured hardware.* Backed up data is of little value without the recovery infrastructure and data communications to the DR facility.



- Business Stakeholder approved Business Continuity plan
 - Establish the Recovery Time and Recovery Point Objectives (RTO & RPO) for key systems aligned with business priority
 - Define the underlying architecture (security systems, storage...) necessary to enable RTO and RPO objectives to be met
 - Establish a DR budget based on stakeholder approved RTO and RPO requirements
- Disaster Recovery Playbook
 - Define and document detailed steps necessary to recover individual applications
 - Define and document detailed steps necessary to fail over to a secondary computing facility
 - Compile and maintain contact information for all staff members with DR responsibility and succession planning should they be unavailable

Strategy and Implementation

- Establish a secondary data processing location. This can be an alternate site within an internally owned facility or space within a colocation provider's data center
- Determine whether your IT team has the time and capability to maintain the DR environment and plan or consider outsourcing this function.
- Implement technologies that reduce DR complexity and cost such as virtualization, data replication, and centralized storage
- Maintain the DR documentation and playbook as part of the change management process. DR documentation updates must be part of any change activity
- Test early, test often. Testing will not only ensure that your DR plan works fully and delivers operational systems within their assigned recovery time/point objectives, but will build confidence in the DR team so that they are ready to execute should the need arise.

OUR EXPERIENCE

For more than 15 years, IT Evolution, Inc. has been the go-to partner for mid-sized companies looking to define and implement Disaster Recovery solutions. Our experience ranges from handling midsize business solutions as well as developing strategies for larger enterprises.

ABOUT IT EVOLUTION:

Serving Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware companies for more than 15 years, IT Evolution provides information technology services. The firm provides a full spectrum of IT services including IT consulting, data management, program/project management and infrastructure services and support. IT Evolution has senior, experienced, local resources delivering solutions that are right-sized for its clients' needs. The company's motto is, "We can help", and is recognized as one of the fastest growing companies by the Philadelphia 100, South Jersey 25 and INC 500/5000. For more information, please visit www.itevcorp.com or call toll-free at 888-464-1845.