

Retail & Distribution Sector Case Study – Web Retailer

The Client

Our client is the UK division of a well-known web retailer with global interests covering a vast range of consumer products from books to pet food.

The client's overall aim was to provide assurance to customers and stakeholders that it could continue to meet their expectations in the event of a disruption.



The Challenge

A global business continuity management programme was in the process of being rolled out to all geographical locations. However, the UK division wished to bring forward the activity and accelerate the programme. Part of the challenge was to utilise business continuity expertise from Corporate which was not necessarily replicated at a local level. Teed was selected as the business continuity partner to facilitate the UK activity whilst taking cognisance of Group's brief.

The geographical diversity of the business is such that although the main focus was on retail web services, other parts of the business including digital media and cloud services were also brought into scope. This is a very large organisation with thousands of personnel and any such project was going to take a long time to implement, therefore the focus was limited initially to priority areas of the business.

The organisation benefits from a level of inbuilt resilience and Facilities were keen to understand what the requirements would be should one of the UK locations suffer a disruption. This would mean that unaffected resources (e.g. workspace) could be utilised to support priority activities.

The ultimate challenge was to facilitate a number of parallel projects within a large, complex organisation that needed dedicated and experienced resource to pull together the different facets and create a workable business continuity management (BCM) framework for roll out across the UK. The client realised that there was a lot to achieve within a relatively short space of time.

The Solution

For a complicated project of this nature, our most experienced consultant, David Teed, was assigned to assist the client. Taking the Facilities element first, David visited 8 regional locations around the UK that were in scope with a view to understanding the business continuity risks and the activities undertaken at each location. A facilities-focused business impact analysis (BIA) was undertaken to ascertain the minimum resource requirements over time that would be required in the event of an incident at individual locations. A business continuity plan for UK Facilities was then documented clearly showing the response and recovery activity needed to support the needs of the business.

In conjunction, BIAs were undertaken for the most critical areas of the business to explore priorities, requirements and issues. From this, a key business area was selected as a pilot study and a business continuity plan developed containing the necessary response and recovery information to allow the business area to support its critical activities in the event of an adverse situation.

Improvement and risk mitigation actions were identified clearly showing what needs to happen to meet business continuity objectives and keep impacts within acceptable levels.

From this element of the project, it became apparent that there was a particular appetite for one of the key business areas to run a business continuity exercise as it had already developed a plan due to the complexity and criticality of the service provided. The business area recognised the benefits of an independent view and it was therefore decided to run a combined exercise for this area and Facilities to validate their plans and findings.

The final piece of the jigsaw was to create a BCM Framework bringing together the guidance and methods that had been tried and tested during the initial phases of the project.

(Continued on page 2)

Retail & Distribution Sector Case Study – Web Retailer

The Result

A significant proportion of the UK business was taken through different elements of the business continuity management process and an overall framework produced to allow all business areas to conform to Group requirements.

This was a demanding project that required considerable skill not only in facilitation, but in being able to develop and adapt methods to suit the diverse and complex nature of the organisation. The client recognised that bringing in Teed as an external resource to support the internal project team has helped them achieve a lot in a relatively short space of time and in doing so has helped to satisfy their objectives.

Teed has been retained as the client's UK business continuity consultants to provide assistance with ongoing planning projects.