

Creative Case Study – Technology Marketing Agency

The Client

Our client is a creative agency with a specialist focus on technology marketing. A small to medium sized business with 60 staff delivering marketing and communications for internationally recognised brand names.

The business is owned by a venture capital company seeking to invest in the growth of the organisation and in doing so wished to protect their investment by ensuring effective business continuity was in place to deal with unexpected incidents.



The Challenge

It is not unusual for smaller organisations to be located in single premises with a dependence on a few niche third party providers and unless addressed, this is where much of the risk exposure lies. Our client is based in a rural detached building which had already been subjected to flooding affecting IT capability. This incident helped to focus minds on the need to establish recovery strategies and contingencies to ensure customer service levels were not adversely disrupted by similar events.

There was also a dependence on a web development company based in an unstable region of Eastern Europe and a reliance on a third party provider of cloud hosted services.

The client had not considered business continuity planning previously as their principal focus was on growing the business. However, it was recognised following the flooding, that it was necessary to take stock and understand that a significant disruption, if not planned for, could have a real and possibly detrimental impact on the business.

Teed was engaged to help take the client through the relevant stages of business impact analysis, recovery strategy development through to documenting and exercising a Business Continuity Plan.

The Solution

Teed's consultant met with business representatives to determine the business priorities, critical activities and resources needed to manage the recover from an incident causing a loss of resource, for example, premises, people, IT and suppliers. Using Teed's effective analysis methods, it was possible to obtain the necessary level of information from only half a dozen key people in the organisation, therefore keeping everyone's time to a minimum.

Where there were gaps between what was required by the business and what was actually achievable, strategies and contingencies were discussed that would close the gaps. Given that the client had no alternative business premises, the consultant worked with a local recovery site provider and the client to agree a competitive rate for up to 10 seats, with PCs or Macs and phones, in the event of staff being displaced. Although not a big investment, it was an easier option than trying to establish a complete remote working solution which would have increased the investment significantly.

A further recommendation by Teed's consultant was to create a replicated IT environment taking into account the primary IT was in a location also prone to flooding. The vulnerability of the web development company was recognised and measures identified to reduce exposure by ensuring contingencies were in place to protect the coding and capability. The cloud hosted services were given due consideration and a couple of improvements identified to improve resilience and recovery.

Once the Business Continuity Plan was drafted, this was validated through a table top business continuity exercise for the newly formed incident management team. This also helped individuals to understand what business continuity management means to them as a business and their pre- and post-incident responsibilities.

The Result

Our client's investors were satisfied that the 'what-ifs' had been given appropriate consideration to ensure their investment in the business was protected. Management now has the confidence of knowing how they would continue services in a range of adverse situations and having gone through the thought process, this will help focus their investment on building a more resilient IT capability.

Although not a large organisation, there were still vulnerabilities that needed to be addressed and the client recognised that their decision to invest in business continuity planning was wholly justified.