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Continuity Cover

***Fast, effective business continuity planning
for small and medium businesses***

**Teed Business Continuity Ltd
Springfield House
Laurelhill Business Park
Stirling
FK7 9JQ**

**Tel: 01786 406370
Email: info@teed.co.uk**

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Introduction

Small and medium businesses make up the vast majority of business in the UK and play a critical role in underpinning the nation's economy. For big business, they are the vital link in the supply chain, supplying each tier either directly or indirectly.

Assuming all goes according to plan, suppliers will continue to supply and in turn businesses will continue to provide, *ad infinitum*. But what happens when there is a disruption to the natural equilibrium?



Statistics from the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) suggest that 80% of businesses affected by a major incident close within 18 months and 90% of businesses that lose data from a disaster are forced to shut within 2 years. The FSB goes on to say, "Small businesses, by their nature, are more vulnerable to the impact of major incidents and disasters and the impact all too often is terminal. This has a knock on effect on the whole supply chain in which they were involved and the community in which they were based."

As more organisations look to the continuity of their supply chain, increasingly it is smaller businesses who are being asked to provide assurances that they have taken steps to ensure they can continue to provide services in the event of a disruption, and to provide evidence of this.

How could this affect you?

A key supplier goes out of business; severe weather conditions cause gridlock on the major arterial routes; an earthquake and tsunami occur in a distant country. At first glance, these examples may seem too remote to have any direct impact upon your business, but when a link in the chain is broken, it is invariably not the short term impacts of a disruption, but the longer term effects which strike smaller businesses particularly hard.



The implications of the loss of a critical supplier or a delay in receiving supplies plus increased costs, a destructive fire or flood causing loss of premises and stock or IT security breach; these types of events can mostly be absorbed by a large organisation, but could prove unsustainable for smaller businesses. Equally, unplanned staff absenteeism caused by disrupted transport networks, illness, school closures, etc., can have a direct impact on smaller businesses.

It is at this point that you would reach for your Business Continuity Plan which sets out the most effective way to recover your business critical activities and restore services quickly.

What is Business Continuity Planning?

Every day, organisations seek to provide their services or products in the optimum way to benefit them, their staff and stakeholders. By establishing effective methods to maintain continuity of business, the sustainability of their business can be assured.

However, even relatively minor disruptions such as losing power for a day causing IT downtime or delayed deliveries due to adverse weather which start as a frustrating inconvenience, can quickly escalate to unacceptable levels and unhappy customers.

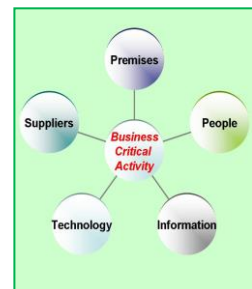


Fig 1: Resource Dependencies

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Business continuity planning seeks to meet these issues head on by assessing the organisation's business critical activities (i.e. services and products) and understanding how the loss of resources upon which they depend can impact the ability to maintain these activities (*Fig 1: Resource Dependencies*).

Identifying the factors that could potentially reduce or cease operational capability and assigning appropriate risk controls enables strategies to be implemented pre-incident, which will aid the recovery of the business post-incident.



Fig 2: Implications of a Disruption

This process determines the consequences of the impacts to the business in terms of loss of revenue and reputation, confidence in the brand and market share (*Fig 2: Implications of a Disruption*).

The end result is a tried and tested business continuity plan that clearly shows what actions should be taken to respond to and manage a business continuity threatening disruption.

Business continuity planning is essentially about taking a common sense approach to the potential impacts of disruptive scenarios and understanding how to manage them, before they happen not afterwards.

What are the benefits to us?

The benefits of business continuity are not only in having a plan to help respond quickly and effectively to a disruption, but it is increasingly being seen as advantageous in helping win new business over competitors, fulfilling tender requirements, providing assurance to stakeholders and can help reduce some insurance premiums.

Business Continuity on a Budget

For larger organisations with a complex infrastructure of multiple sites, products and services, business continuity planning is often the responsibility of a dedicated resource, whether internal or external, armed with an appropriate budget.

This is invariably not the case for small and medium businesses where time, budget and resource are the obvious constraints; unsurprisingly, business continuity planning becomes a case of “when we have the time/money/staff” and is left for another day.



Business continuity need not be time consuming or complex and can be achieved in a few steps:

- Understand what you need to keep going in order to maintain acceptable service levels
- Identify where, how and with what you can best continue to meet customer needs in the short to medium term
- Know who will take responsibility for delivering the response and recovery
- Establish a foolproof communications structure
- Write it all down as a plan of action, test it out and keep it up to date

If that still seems too daunting a task, Teed Business Continuity will be happy to help you negotiate the road to successful business continuity planning.

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About Teed Business Continuity

Teed is a specialist provider of business continuity and disaster recovery solutions based in Scotland. We work with organisations of all shapes and sizes and recognise the difficulties faced by small and medium businesses in developing plans and strategies.

We have developed **Continuity Cover** to help fill the gap by providing affordable business continuity planning. A fast track approach minimises the time and input required by the client resulting in a workable business continuity plan. As a small business ourselves, we recognise the importance in keeping costs and time to a minimum.

All **Continuity Cover** services are provided by our experienced consultants who will work with your organisation on exactly the same basis as for larger clients, using the same proven analysis and planning methods. Your business will benefit from the knowledge and facilitation skills gained through the many hundreds of projects Teed has undertaken since opening its doors in 1999. All work is aligned to current business continuity management standards and the Business Continuity Institute's Good Practice Guidelines.

Teed has gained an enviable reputation for providing business continuity and disaster recovery services at the very highest level and we aim to deliver the very best we can for all our clients, whether large or small. A Business Continuity Plan from Teed provides reassurance to clients and stakeholders alike of the quality and credibility of the planning.

Continuity Cover Services

You can choose from three different planning packages to meet your size and budget. The whole process can be sandwiched into one day on site or spread over 3 or 4 days on site.

The **Starter** pack is ideal for very small businesses where key individuals gather for facilitated mini workshops to discuss critical activities and recovery strategies in a round table type forum. A great way of achieving results quickly and effectively.

Our **Mid** range pack is suited to the slightly larger business with a defined structure and where one-to-one analysis and planning discussions are more beneficial. The **Mid** pack also includes a gap analysis which helps identify where the current recovery capability does not meet the required recovery timescales.

The **Full** package builds upon elements offered in both the **Starter** and **Mid** packs, but also includes testing and validating the plan with a desktop exercise upon completion of the project. This often acts a conduit for gaining that all important buy-in from management, together with an understanding of roles and responsibilities for managing business continuity disruptions.

Whichever package you go for, each provides you with a business continuity plan and a **Continuity Cover** certificate stating that the current state of business continuity preparedness within the organisation has been independently verified. This is a useful document to show to anyone requesting evidence of your business continuity planning.

A quick summary of **Continuity Cover** services is shown in the table overleaf and each element is explained in more detail on the following pages.

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Continuity Cover : Summary of Packages & Services

No.	Continuity Cover Services	Packages		
		Starter	Mid	Full
1	Fast Track BC Planning Workshop	✓	-	-
2	High Level Business Continuity Plan including incident management actions	✓	-	-
3	Incident Management Structure Defined	✓	✓	✓
4	Business Continuity Recommendations Report	✓	✓	✓
5	<i>Continuity Cover</i> Certificate	✓	✓	✓
6	One to One Interviews (instead of Workshop)	-	✓	✓
7	Detailed Business Continuity Plan including incident management, business recovery and resource recovery actions	-	✓	✓
8	Gap Analysis	-	✓	✓
9	Desktop Scenario Exercise	-	-	✓
10	Business Continuity Preparedness Rating	-	-	✓
	<i>Deliverables prepared by consultant off site</i>	✓	✓	✓
	<i>Number of consultant days spent on site</i>	1	3	4

If you are unsure which of the packages would best suit your needs, please ask one of our consultants who will be happy to have a discussion to assess your requirements and advise on the most appropriate level of service.

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Continuity Cover : Detailed Explanation of Packages & Services

1. **Fast Track BC Planning Workshop (Starter)**

- The fast track method is designed around getting the key people in a room for one day, during which they are taken through the business continuity project stages and thought process
- Often best for smaller organisations, the participants must have sufficient knowledge and authority to make decisions on the order of priority of each business or service area and the level of acceptable risk exposure to the organisation.

2. **High Level Business Continuity Plan (Starter)**

- A Business Continuity Plan is created stating the incident management actions required to contain the adverse situation and keep negative impacts within acceptable levels, including dealing with employees and communication with stakeholders
- The Plan also notes the resource recovery requirements, priorities and timescales of the organisation and the critical activities which need to continue in order to minimise negative business impacts.

3. **Incident Management Structure (All Packages)**

- A clear structure, together with roles and responsibilities, is defined for escalating and responding to adverse situations thus ensuring that an efficient, timely and effective response can be invoked to deal with potentially disruptive events.

4. **Business Continuity Recommendations Report (All Packages)**

- A recommendations report is produced detailing the actions required to take the organisation's business continuity preparedness to the next level of competence
- The report provides a road map for the organisation to use when driving forward any necessary improvements to its business continuity capability.

5. **Continuity Cover Certificate (All Packages)**

- A **Continuity Cover** Certificate, valid for 1 year, is issued stating clearly the independently verified current state of business continuity preparedness within the organisation
- This Certificate can be used to verify the state of preparedness for stakeholders.

6. **Business Impact Analysis One to One Interviews (Mid & Full)**

- For larger or more complex businesses, one to one business impact analysis (BIA) interviews with business area leaders are often the most appropriate approach
- These interviews identify the impacts of disruption on the ability to continue with critical activities
- The focus on defined business continuity aims, set in the context of a worst case scenario, and supported by experienced facilitators, ensures that requirements remain commercially focused on key business objectives.

7. **Detailed Business Continuity Plan (Mid & Full)**

- As per the Starter package, but the Plan also details the specific actions required to recover resources, continue critical activities following an incident and manage the recovery of each area of the business in an effective and prioritised manner.

8. **Gap Analysis (Mid & Full)**

- The Gap Analysis identifies where the post incident activity levels or recovery timescales following a serious incident cannot be met by the current recovery capability
- For each gap identified, at least one option is recommended to address the gap. Alternatively senior management may choose to accept the current risk exposure.

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9. **Desktop Scenario Exercise (Full)**

- A half day focused scenario exercise is a useful addition to any business continuity programme of activity
- Key members of a defined response team are provided with a scenario depicting a disruptive event, tailored for their business. They are asked to talk through their actions, utilising their response plans to provide guidance on actions and communications
- Facilitators with experience in incident response and management provide challenging interjects, ensuring that participants are continuously challenged
- A post-exercise debrief ensures that everyone has the opportunity to convey their views on the response and, inevitably, many lessons are learned
- The exercise is an excellent opportunity to gain buy-in from people throughout the business – in our experience there is always enthusiasm for business continuity once people have been involved in an exercise
- An exercise outcome report is produced to provide a record of the exercise together with a note of the lessons learned and actions arising.

10. **Business Continuity Preparedness Rating (Full)**

- Teed has developed an effective business continuity scoring methodology that allows organisations to benchmark their current exposure and motivates them to improve their preparedness on an ongoing basis.
- A rating out of 10 is provided for the effectiveness of the planning awareness and capability shown in the 5 key areas of People, Documentation, Solutions, Communication and Exposure
- The rating out of a maximum potential score of 50 provides a clear indication of the areas that require focus in the future
- Very useful for showing customers and stakeholders that plans are tried and tested