**Top 8 Components of a Disaster Recovery Plan for Business**

Whether it’s a storm knocking out your power lines, a computer virus disabling your software, or a fire, your business can be disrupted by any number of threats. When that happens, a strong disaster recovery plan can make the difference between a brief hiccup in your operations and a costly blow to your company.

Because your business involves several connected parts, a number of elements will go into a good disaster recovery strategy. Here are some key pieces you should make sure to include:

**1.  Secure data storage.** If your network fails, the information it contains can be corrupted or lost.[**Preserving your data**](http://www.gwi.net/the-pros-and-cons-of-cloud-storage/) is essential to any plan to restore normal operations in good time.

**2.  Regular backups.** A [**backup**](http://www.gwi.net/eight-reasons-to-consider-a-cloud-backup-for-your-business/) that was made weeks or months ago can force you to rebuild your most recent projects from scratch. Depending on how much data your business handles, even backing up your data on a daily basis might not be often enough.

**3.  Quick detection.** Service interruptions can take many forms, and it’s important to know how exactly what the problem is in order to coordinate a response. Building in diagnostic tools to help you evaluate your system can be essential when coordinating your disaster recovery effort.

**4.  Offsite locations.** Having a [**secondary site**](http://www.gwi.net/nonprofit-achieves-scalable-reliability-with-redundant-internet-cloud/) can help to keep your business running if your main office is damaged too badly to return to right away. Keeping offsite backups for your data will allow you to keep your company’s virtual presence running smoothly while you relocate to a new physical space.

**5.  Service redundancy.** Even more than a physical location, it’s important to having a set of secondary resources, such as [**alternate communication lines**](http://www.gwi.net/nonprofit-achieves-scalable-reliability-with-redundant-internet-cloud/) to use if the phone network goes down, or backups for the[**company email server**](http://www.gwi.net/five-ways-a-hosted-exchange-platform-makes-office-collaboration-more-efficient/).

**6.  Employee preparation.** Each of your employees must be familiar with the recovery plan, and what they need to do in the event of a disaster.

**7.  Succession planning.** A great disaster recovery plan can fall apart if the particular employee it depends on is suddenly unavailable, and no one else knows how to step in. Your employees need backups, too.

**8.  Awareness.** For many businesses, the weakest part of their disaster recovery plan is a lack of serious attention. Overcoming the human tendency to view a disaster as unlikely is critical to minimizing the damage if and when one occurs.