

The Bottom Line

Technology Solutions for Small and Mid-sized Companies

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Moving Forward: Why Business Continuity is Important



A Business Continuity Plan is considered a "living" document-changing in concert with changes in the business activities it supports.

Every company should have a Business Continuity Plan in place in case of disaster or disruption. Investing in Business Continuity is not just necessary but wise. Even though, in the past, industries have never actually been required to develop and/or document business continuity plans today many of these same industries are required to do so. The U.S. Federal Government has now endorsed a standard for business continuity planning and made the statement, "Every business should have a plan" (Guide to Business Continuity Management).

The BCP is one step beyond disaster recovery in the sense that disaster recovery is the process by which you resume business after a

disruptive event and Business Continuity is a plan developed to help in the event that an interruption would occur.

A BCP consists of three elements that are seen as the driving force behind a plan's success. These elements are Crisis Management, Business Recovery Planning and IT Recovery Planning.

- **Crisis Management** focuses on stabilizing the event and preparing for business and IT recovery.
- **Business Recovery Planning** focuses on recovering vital functions and process that relate directly with the customer.
- **IT Recovery Planning** focuses on recovering critical IT components.

A proper BCP should include objectives to minimize financial loss to the business, continue to serve customers and mitigate the negative effects disruptions can have on a business's strategic plan, reputation, and operations. In addition to proactively monitoring the risk of other possible service disruptions. Such a plan

should be implemented within the company's office, with their IT staff, and anyone else that is pertinent to business operations.

Also a business's technology components should not be forgotten when making the BCP. Many businesses think they know what they have on their networks, but many people don't know how their servers are configured, or what applications reside on them, what services are running, what version of software or operating systems that they are using. The technology components that should be addressed when creating an effective BCP are: the hardware, software, data files, communications (network and telecommunications), vital records, operations processing equipment and office equipment.

Without a plan that considers every critical business unit such as, personnel, physical workspace and IT issues; a business may not be able to resume serving its customers at acceptable levels. These lags in business will ultimately create unhappy clients and eventually a loss in revenue to the business.

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Business Partner Spotlight

American Capital and BLC Aim to Make Purchasing Easier

Black | Line Consulting and American Capital have joined together to offer BLC's clients a financial resource for some of the bigger purchases they will be making over the course of their business's life. BLC's clients will be able to lease or finance their purchases over a period of time rather than making one large payment up front, thus freeing up more money for other things such as marketing, inventory and personnel.

American Capital was formed in the early 1980s when the company began leasing mainframe equipment and today as the times have changed so has American Capital. American Capital now works with emerging companies, established companies and Fortune 500 companies and is dedicated to building long-term relationships with all of their clients and making sure their acquisitions are simple and

affordable. American Capital has leasing and financing expertise in many areas including, IT equipment, telecommunications, office equipment, machinery and security systems and they have a wide variety of vendor leasing programs to suit their client's needs.

For more information please contact Mel Sears, Director of Client Development for BLC at (630)388-1700.

Business Fact:

-Business leaders and IT leaders should work together to determine what kind of plan is necessary and which systems and business units are most crucial to the company.

The ABCs of Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery Planning

Reminder:

BLC Executive Seminars

- Business Continuity-The Step Beyond Disaster Recovery
Date: Sept. 26, 2005
- RISK Seminar (Raising Internet Security Knowledge)
Date: Oct. 24, 2005
- Customer Relationship Management Software (CRM)
Date: Nov. 29, 2005

If you would like more information or to register for any of the seminars please visit our website www.blacklineconsulting.com or call (630)388-1700.

All Seminars are from 10 am-Noon and will take place at the Naperville Chamber of Commerce.

Business Fact:

- A sure recipe for CRM disaster is to deploy a CRM strategy without a clear sense of process change, an undefined expectation or over zealous expectations of what should happen after the implementation is completed.

Simple CRM Success Principles

Technology Solutions for Small and Mid-sized Companies

Continued From Page 1: **A Good Business Continuity Planning is Necessary**

Tips & Techniques

Cleaning your computer

Routine maintenance of your computer will help it last longer and perform better. The following are tips on how to clean your computer

1. **Clean around your computer** - By removing stacks of books and paper you help to remove items that trap dust.
2. **Clean the computer case** - Spray a mild cleaner on a damp cloth and wipe off the exterior of the computer and the plastic casing of the monitor. Be sure NOT to drip any liquid onto the computer itself.
3. **Remove dust and debris from the computer** - Animal hair, dust, cigarette ashes, etc. can all effect your computer. Use a vacuum with a hose to clean around the open holes in the back of the computer.
4. **Keep your computer off the floor** - By keeping your machine off the floor you will minimize the amount of dusty and dirt your machine may potentially pull into the casing.

The better you maintain your computer the longer it will last.



Got an IT question you would like answered by an engineer at BLC? Send it in and if your question is answered you will receive a FREE Security Assessment valued at \$350.

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If you would like to learn more about Business Continuity and the advantages of having a great BCP in place Black | Line Consulting will be hosting a **Business Continuity - The Step Beyond Disaster Recovery Seminar**

in September. Some of the items to be discussed at the seminar include:

- Project Initiation and Management
- Risk Evaluation and Controls

- Business Impact Analysis
- Developing Continuity Strategies
- Emergency Response and Operations

The Whole Truth About CRM and your business

CRM or Customer Relationship Management is a strategy used to learn more about customers needs and to be able to develop stronger relationships in

order to enhance both new customer development and current customer penetration and retention. The CRM process requires the creation of an enterprise-wide database containing all information about a customer.

CRM systems need to include not only the rationale for implementation, but also a clear set of objectives along with the sales, marketing and software considerations needed for success. About 50-70 percent of CRM implementations fail when software technology considerations



All pieces need to be in place in place for CRM to be successful

are given priority over the business process.

Technology is only one aspect of the CRM process and it is also not

the only link that creates an unsuccessful CRM system. "The problem is not always technology, the technology's great," said Jody Jankovsky, CEO of Black | Line Consulting, "but if management doesn't enforce the CRM implementation there is a high chance it will fail." Other items that may cause CRM projects to fail are when there is no simple plan with clearly defined results, or when the "people" side of CRM is ignored, or not focusing on business results.

On the other hand, just be-

cause of a few failures there is really no reason to condemn an entire category of technology. "There is a lot of negative information about CRM out there...but success stories are not hard to find," said Jankovsky, "and CRM is something that always has a positive impact on a business."

If you would like to learn more about CRM Software and how to select the correct CRM System for your company's needs BLC will be hosting a **CRM Seminar** in October. Some of the items to be discussed at the seminar include:

- Why every business must have CRM
- Five Reasons why CRM systems fail
- Getting the most from your CRM system
- Measuring your Sales and Marketing efforts
- Selecting a CRM System

Ask the Engineers

Black | Line Consulting Engineers Answer Reader's Questions

Q: I run a small business and am looking to back up files and folders. I'm wondering, what is the best storage solution?

A: It's great that you're thinking about both backup and storage--the two are definitely not the same.

Storage - If you need increased storage capacity and want to be able to access the stored data easily, you should look into adding an external hard drive. If you have multiple users accessing the same data, check out a networked storage drive.

Backup - On the other hand, a hard drive can fail and take all of your important data with it. For backup, look into either DVD burners or Flash Drives (USB Drives). Depending on the amount of data you have to store a DVD can hold more than the Flash Drive. That way, if anything happens to your computers and drives, you'll have the data safely squared away. Good luck!

Q: I often receive returned e-mail that comes back to my computer. The problem is that I didn't send the e-mail, and I have no idea

who the intended recipient is. How can I stop this?

A: You are not sending these messages; rather, your address has potentially been stolen by a virus on someone else's PC. It's called *address spoofing*, and the intended recipient is bouncing that mail back to you (even though you didn't send it). It might be time to have your computer security evaluated.

Please send your questions to support@blacklineconsulting.com and maybe you will see it in an upcoming issue of *The Bottom Line*.