

Business Continuity Can Be A Matter of Survival For Small Businesses

Tuesday 16 May, 2017

"Maybe you are busy looking for a way to recover your files, but do not waste your time. Nobody can recover your files without our decryption service". This is what users infected by the WannaCry virus read on their screens after having accidentally let the malware in. Yet despite the ransomware attack affecting a reported 200,000 systems across over 150 countries, and despite the tales of disaster we are reading about in the media, the encouraging news from many organizations is that their business continuity process is preventing a disruption from turning into a crisis.

This is because organizations across the world have been invoking their business continuity procedures, ensuring that their priority activities are carried out, an appropriate level of service is provided to customers and any damage to reputation is limited.

"With a major incident now declared by NHS England, it is evident just how disruptive cyber attacks such as ransomware can be," said David Thorp, Executive Director of the Business Continuity Institute. "Organizations must have mechanism in place so they are prepared to deal with the consequences of a cyber security incident, or in fact any other type of incident, and can continue as near 'normal' operation as possible, while maintaining the confidence of their stakeholders. And Very often the most vulnerable organisations of all are the thousands of SMEs that form the backbone of our economy"

The modern business environment is heavily reliant on IT systems, and although these systems provide many benefits, they also have their pitfalls, which stem from this reliance. Research conducted by the Business Continuity Institute presents the inevitability of an attack with its recent Cyber Resilience Report showing that two-thirds of organizations had experienced an incident during the previous year, and 10% had experienced at least ten.

The dramatic effects of an attack such as last Friday's should not be underestimated, yet organizations, such as the NHS, have managed to keep operating under attack. This is in large part because NHS trusts are required to have in place an effective business continuity plan and it is testament to the effectiveness of this planning that disruption has not been more severe.

All businesses can develop similar levels of resilience. It is business continuity is that makes an immediate difference during any kind of emergency, crisis or disruption. It is what makes an organization resilient, ready to respond and carry on, even amid difficult circumstances. Yet business continuity cannot be improvised. It requires a knowledge of what to do as well as the support of everyone within the business.

David Thorp added: "The Business Continuity Institute has a range of free resources, via our [website](#), that can be accessed by SMEs who can't afford to employ BC specialists but who still need to avoid potentially fatal disruptions to their activities. Visit our website to find out more. via our website. If prevention fails it is essential that smooth operations are maintained at all costs... it might be the difference between survival and going out of business."

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