

Think About Never Failing, Not How to Recover



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Operational resilience is the economical balance between an organization's requirements for service availability and the consequence of an interruption to that service. The likelihood that your organization will experience a catastrophic loss from a material service interruption caused by an IT operational-problem is far greater than any service interruption being caused by some disaster or "black swan" event. So, if the overarching objective is to protect our organizations from bad events that generate losses then it is time to focus our attention to creating resilient IT operations.

We live in a technology driven world. Every possible business process has been automated — automated to the point where IT is deeply embedded in the operating fabric of our business and the organization is now highly dependent on it. IT has become a microcosm of the organization and it is used to process more transactions, of greater value, faster than ever before — retaining an ever-increasing amount of information for longer periods, as well.

IT is used to increase operating efficiencies, extend our reach globally, accelerate the overall pace of business and increase our competitive advantage. It has changed the way we sell; it has changed the way we buy; and it has even changed the way we meet, read books and chat with colleagues. Simultaneously, and quite unintentionally, technology has introduced new exposures into our organizations and these exposures have deceptively seeped into every layer of the organization.

Exposures have been created through a combination of the technologies' complexity, its enmeshed interdependence and its brittle infrastructure. While information technology allows our organizations to process more data at a faster rate, it has also increased the likelihood that we could lose data faster than ever before. IT is not only needed to sustain continuity in a modern organization, it is a

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principal source for a potential business disruption.

The greater the reliance on technology, the larger the potential for loss becomes. The economic loss from a service-interruption is derived from the relative value of the data. Data is the new world currency and protecting that data is vital to the survival the organization. Data loss, data unavailability, and data corruption all have an adverse economic impact. Lose the wrong data, lose too much data or even have access to the data unavailable for too long and it could prove economically fatal.

Traditionally, backup has been used to protect data; however, backup technologies, even with their compression and de-duplication capabilities can't keep pace with the massive volume of data or its rate of change. Our organizations are beginning to expect "instant IT" and today's business simply cannot tolerate the excessive restoration times required by outdated backup processes. There is simply too much data and the data changes too quickly for traditional backup processes to be effective.

The issue, however, is not about backup — it is about recovery. The cost of recovery outstrips the cost of prevention by two to three times — recovery is becoming obsolete. In the new world of big data, private clouds, and mobile computing we need to think about never failing, not how to recover. Our views on recovery must be replaced with the notion of continuous service and resilient operations. We need to apply methods that reduce operational risk and promote better decision-making regarding how to increase the operational resilience of IT.

For more information, please visit www.symantec.com [1].

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