

An Important Complement to the Disaster Recovery Plan

"Disaster Prevention? Oh, yeah. We already have a Disaster Recovery Plan."

Such significant attention to issues of Disaster Recovery has been given in the media that Site Managers are generally aware that a plan should exist to enable an organization to cope in the aftermath of a Computer Room crisis. Rehearsed procedures for retrieving archived data media from off-site facilities are commonplace, and Maintenance Contracts, 'Hot' Stand-by Sites and Distributed Architectures all play a part in helping to continue 'business as usual' in the hours during and immediately following a Computer Room Disaster. These techniques, though indispensable, are much like Insurance Policies; mobilized *AFTER* a disaster, and then offering only limited and temporary relief.

Though it has been said that most disaster recovery plans, when put to the test of a true disaster, fail to serve the organization, no one who has contemplated the consequences of failing to plan for a Computer Room Disaster would advocate the abandonment of contingency planning. It can be shown, however, that relatively few have considered or implemented a System for Disaster Prevention.

In most cases, the keys to effective Disaster Prevention are the **early detection** of abnormal conditions and **notification** of persons capable of dealing with the pending crisis: Catch an air-conditioning failure as soon as the temperature starts to rise; gracefully power-down computing equipment before fire systems discharge; arrest an intruder before the commission of a vandalous act. By detecting and treating minor problems early, major problems can be avoided.

A third key to the disaster prevention plan, incorporating *Automated procedures, products and services* has been made possible and affordable by recent technological advances.

The 3 Principles to Employ for Preventing an Environmental Incident From Becoming a Corporate Disaster

1. **Early Detection**
2. **Swift, Appropriate Action** Taken by Responsible Personnel
3. **Automated Procedures** (Products, Services and Activities) to Ensure Thoroughness and Execution in the Absence of Appropriate Personnel

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