



The
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BULLETIN



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CONDUCTING A TABLETOP D. R. EXERCISE

For records and information managers (RIM), the term disaster recovery plan is not new. The RIM people, along with IT (Information Technology), carry a major responsibility for saving data that is crucial for the operation of an organization. Indeed, business continuity and disaster recovery planning are used interchangeably by some groups. Dozens of books, thousands of articles, and hundreds of training sessions have been created on the topic of disaster recovery plans. In some industries, regulatory compliance for specific areas of data has brought compliance into DR planning with a heavy hand. Presuming that most people reading this already have a DR plan in place, we know that conducting an all-out test drill of the plan can be disruptive to a day's work even though much is learned from it. For that reason, the following is an exploration of some ideas concerning tabletop DR exercises and how they can identify areas that need improvement.

If you as a RIM manager have painstakingly put your own DR plan together, with the huge amount of time and effort these things take, you will be amazed or dazed to find there are many software packages which are marketed to make your DR tabletop exercise easier and faster to do. (Google "disaster recovery tabletop exercises" and find over 16,000 listings including dozens of companies with sites such as: www.attanium.net, www.eaglerockalliance.com, and www.drservices.com.)

For example, Attanium's package delivers a role-playing scenario in which participants deal with a real-life disaster as it unfolds, during which they make critical decisions and then deal with the consequences. An overview, how-tos, script and a Power Point slide show extend this exercise over 3 to 4 hours. You choose a storyline from a list of 11 industries.



Disaster Recovery Services offers a free template to get started. The template fields that require specific information about your organization are described as easy to locate and use. The aim is to compile content that will meet your governance, operational and audit requirements. There's a five-part overview checklist on their website (see above).

Eagle Rock Alliance states that a tabletop exercise with disaster scenarios can be organized without trying them out on critical systems and data. Their approach includes developing a presentation for use during the exercise as well as a handbook for participants.

Writing for www.recoverychronicles.com, Joe Oliva of Strohl Consulting Services authored a four-part series on tabletop exercises in 2005. In his second article, he states that "Having a completed business continuity plan does not mean it will lead to an effective recovery...Only through repeated and continuous testing can planners have a measure of assurance that the plan will work as designed and personnel will know what to do. The tabletop exercise... provides valuable training to recovery personnel and enables planners to enhance continuity plans without causing major interference of normal operations. In any actual recovery effort, the best team members are usually those who have participated in exercises."

So, once you've conducted your tabletop DR exercise, what are some of consequences or recommendations or questions that may follow? Many of these will show up on Disaster Recovery Journal's web site, www.drj.com, as running commentary. For example, once a plan is in place, how often should a formal review be conducted? A reader cautioned that some items may have changed externally, such as a change in a database. If such a change is not registered within the plan, it may become a hazard. Therefore, processes for change management and asset management must connect with the plan. Recovery planning software can enable changes to the plan at lower levels. But if this is not available, the task of updating certain parts of the plan should be delegated and monitored. A need for consistent and thorough updating may become obvious after a tabletop exercise has concluded. Another reader said he has his staff reviewing their plan monthly to incorporate needed changes.

You've held your tabletop exercise. Some persons participated actively, and others did less so or were minimal at best. Could this last attitude creep into your workforce? Meaning, if your organization did actually suffer a disaster or an outage, would everyone who has been assigned duties within the plan actually show up for work? (This was another question from DRJ's web site.) Thus, it is important that the Human Resources Department and department managers who do the actual hiring make it clear to key employees what their responsibilities will be as part of the DR plan, and that they will be held accountable to be on the job.

Other changes may come to light as part of the exercise. "In actual practice, disaster recovery plans often necessitate change in the storage infrastructure and impose other overhead tasks that must be addressed," according to Stephen J. Bigelow, www.searchstorage.com, 15 April 2008. So the storage administrator must budget for and schedule the possible hardware, software, implementation, training and



facilities costs needed to accommodate the DR plan. But, as we know, other changes can act upon the plan and the parts within it. For example, there may be new privacy laws that require encryption of files that did not need such protection in the past.

Commenting that many of today's businesses must increase their BC/DR efforts while facing higher prices and devaluation of the U. S. dollar, Michael Croy of Forsythe Solutions Group (www.forsythe.com) made these observations in July 2008. Newer technology will improve BC/DR as well as overall functionality. Buying newer technology will be an expensive necessity for many organizations because most of today's data centers were created in the late 1980s and are at least 20 years old.

Knowing that they need to spend money on new infrastructure to improve BC/DR, an executive may think "What will I gain by spending this amount of money? Michael Croy says they should ask themselves what they might lose if they DON'T spend the money to improve their BC/DR programs. For a financial institution, what happens if a natural disaster wipes out all its financial records and its database of customers? On the positive side, the BC/DR industry has been around for more than 25 years, so there is a wide and solid base of best practices that can be useful in making new decisions. It is sad but true that in this field you can gain a lot of BC/DR wisdom by observing other people's mistakes in not having plans.

As a final emphasis to the worth of disaster preparedness training gained by going through tabletop and other DR exercises, here is further sad news. Researchers at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health have released findings of factors that affected the evacuation of thousands of people from the World Trade Center Towers on September 11, 2001. There was lack of awareness and experience in evacuation procedures. People were making phone calls. People were seeking out co-workers. People had concerns about their own health and stamina to descend multiple flights of stairs. People wore inappropriate footwear (likely women's high heels). There was confusion about where the staircases were located and where they terminated, and there was periodic congestion on the stairways. Waiting for their supervisor's permission to leave was probably the most tragic mistake of all.

Your storage contractor may have information about disaster recovery training sessions that are being offered in your city and which may be appropriate for your needs.

COHASSET ARMA MANAGING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

Cohasset Associates is pleased to invite you to participate in the 2009 Electronic Records Management Survey co-sponsored by ARMA International. This is the sixth time that Cohasset and ARMA have teamed together to measure the key issues associated with the "current" state of electronic records management. In the past, the results of this survey have been very influential - senior management at many organizations have used the data to assist in accelerating the implementation of electronic records management programs and Federal judges have used the findings in their speeches.

One of the survey's strengths has been its measurement of progress over time. Much improvement has been achieved, but the last survey clearly showed there still was much to be done.

Your participation in this survey is therefore very important to continue the survey's commitment to quality and service to the RIM community. Simply click on the URL below to go to the Cohasset web site where, in just a few minutes, you can complete the survey. <http://www.cohasset.com/mer2009survey/>

Your participation benefits all RIM professionals because the survey results provide senior management with authoritative up-to-date survey research that:

- Defines key issues that records management professionals are seeking to address - particularly relating to the life cycle management of electronic records,
- Details the ways in which current records management programs need improvement "to get the job done", and
- Identifies the significant risks that exist when organizations do not have senior level commitment to achieve "best practices" in the management of critical information assets.

As a follow-up to this survey, ARMA will co-sponsor a White Paper prepared by Cohasset that provides a comprehensive examination of the survey's results - including trends over time based on Cohasset's five earlier ERM surveys.

The White Paper will present a "call to action" to senior management and thereby encourage greater focus to protection of the organization's records and information assets. When published in July, the White Paper will be available to everyone without cost.

Cohasset and ARMA believe that, with a heightened awareness of the issues and the risks, senior management will provide stronger leadership and greater support to improve management of electronic records.

Take the few minutes required to participate - and do it today. This is a unique opportunity. The 2009 ERM survey is now live and will be available until 9 p.m. Eastern, April 29, 2009.

<http://www.cohasset.com/mer2009survey>

ARMA INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGES ORGANIZATIONS TO IMPLEMENT BETTER RECORDKEEPING

Announcing the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping PrinciplesSM

Records are the foundation of compliance and the key to success for organizations - big or small, public or private - in any industry. Litigation professionals, too, are becoming painfully aware of the need to manage e-mail at an organizational level in order to mitigate risk during the legal discovery process. Businesses are also coming to realize greater efficiency and cost savings due to better information management. As a result, recordkeeping best practices have become a process and skill needed by not only records professionals, but by every employee.

Due to the exponentially expanding volume of information available and the pressing need to manage information correctly, ARMA International is pleased to announce a set of Generally Accepted Recordkeeping Principles (GARP <<http://www.arma.org/garp>>) SM.

Through these principles, ARMA International provides a framework for guidance in implementing information management programs to help business leaders, legislators, the judiciary, and other stakeholders understand and address the key components of records and information management as a discipline and as a best business practice. The principles were developed from related information management legislation, the combined experiences of the task force members, applicable ARMA International, ANSI, and ISO standards, the recommendations of ARMA International's more than 11,000 professional practitioners, and case law.

Each of the eight principles has an expanded description containing detailed information on how to ensure organizations are meeting the criteria for a sound

information management program. These descriptions, as well as other information on the principles, can be found at www.arma.org/garp.

The eight Generally Accepted Recordkeeping PrinciplesSM are:

- Accountability
- Integrity
- Protection
- Compliance
- Availability
- Retention
- Disposition
- Transparency

Using these generally accepted principles as a guide helps to ensure that the company's most important assets, their records, are used correctly to support the organization's essential activities such as budgeting, planning, demonstrating compliance with laws and regulations, and other day-to-day operations.

A task force was initially formed to help encapsulate these principles. It was comprised of a multi-disciplined group of widely respected professional practitioners at the highest levels of their professions. ARMA International members and non-member stakeholders then reviewed the proposed principles and submitted comments that were taken back to a task force for review and consideration. This same task force will continue to monitor legislation and case law and will recommend changes to the principles when appropriate. The principles have been approved by the ARMA International Board of Directors.

For more information about the Generally Accepted Recordkeeping PrinciplesSM or ARMA International, please visit www.arma.org

STATE OF THE ECM INDUSTRY

The US AIIM (www.aiim.org) has released an 18 page vendor sponsored industry research paper on the current state of the ECM industry. I think this report is worth reading by all records managers (and no, I receive no benefit from saying that).

The following are very familiar sounding extracts from the report provided by CMSWire (www.cmswire.com):

BEGINS

Not surprisingly, the bottom line is that electronic content in many of its shapes and forms in the organizational landscape is still (mainly) a mess.

Enterprise Content Management Circa 2009

AIIM has found that managing electronic documents is still a challenge for a whopping 47% of organizations. On top of that, business communication channels like IMs, text messages, blogs and wikis are uncontrolled and off the corporate radar for 75% of businesses.

Other key findings include:

- 55% of organizations having little or no confidence that important e-mails are recorded and retrievable.
- 28% of organizations would take more than a month to produce documents for a legal eDiscovery.
- In 29% of organizations, SharePoint is competing with existing Enterprise CMS, Document Management (DM) or Records Management (RM) suites, while 6% integrated it with existing systems.
- The single ECM system concept is still alive in 35% of organizations, whereas 33% plan to use a single sign-on portal to access multiple repositories.
- License sales in the main areas of DM and RM are set to hold steady in 2009.
- Only 52% of respondents have measured the ROI and done cost analysis before and after their DM/RM projects.

ENDS

http://www.cmswire.com/cms/enterprise-cms/state-of-the-ecm-industry-2009-content-still-a-challenge-004237.php?awt_l=FzzYt&awt_m=1aM3VW.2wan0sm

The full report can be downloaded free of charge (after registration with AIIM) at www.aiim.org/stateofecm2009

BRM partners with NAPO (National Association of Professional Organizers) for Shred Day Event



On Saturday April 18th, BRM held a shred day in conjunction with the National Association of Professional Organizers (NAPO) at the Staples on Banksville Road in the South Hills and the Staples at the Waterworks Mall. From 10am-2pm, BRM and NAPO collected paper items from the public to be shredded. The event was very successful, collecting approximately 12,000lbs of paper from both locations combined. BRM hopes to partner with NAPO in the future for another shred event.



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