

## Three top tips on maintaining business continuity

Now that your business has gone online, how can you make sure it stays connected at all times?

The answer is business continuity, which ensures that organisations can stay online, or quickly recover from any down time in the face of seriously disruptive incidents. With enterprises now embracing omni-channel retailing and consumers craving constant connectivity, business continuity is more important now than ever.

Just as becoming connected is vital for any modern company, staying connected is equally crucial especially with an increasing amount of business being handled online. For any organisation to be able to deliver a consistent and reliable experience to its customers, it must first gain a consistent and reliable infrastructure for its most essential operations.

With that in mind, here are the top three things any organisation should look at when seeking continuity:

1. Businesses first need to decide which applications and data are most vital to their operations. Anything that must absolutely be connected at all times should be backed up with a secondary connection. For a retail operation, the most vital applications will likely be those supporting payment cards and stock control, for which a 3G or 4G backup connection would suffice. For hotels, the secondary connection will only need to support the applications for which connectivity is required, as property management systems can often run locally during down time.
2. Once applications have been reviewed, it's time to consider the Cloud. Backing up data in the Cloud enables remote access, which is especially useful should a business be required to operate from a temporary location, for example, after a flood. The downside, however, is that data and applications will need to be loaded back up into the main site when primary connectivity is restored. Most organisations will find that a Cloud/local storage hybrid is the most flexible solution as it offers high levels of data availability at relatively low cost, allowing everyone access if a site on the system goes down.
3. Though it is sometimes overlooked, the type of connection organisations use will have a huge impact on how effective their continuity is. For most businesses, a fibre connection will be ideal, as it allows the majority of interruptions to be resolved within a day or even just a few hours. In some cases—if a business is located in a flood-prone area, for example—a satellite or wireless solution could be a better option than a fibre connection.

With every organisation presenting its own needs and vulnerabilities, it's clear that there is no one-size fits all solution for achieving continuity. It is crucial that organisations keep in mind all of their unique needs, both current and future to find the right fit. Whether it's a dual fibre connection for a retail operation or a satellite solution for a countryside hotel, enlisting the help of an experienced and knowledgeable managed services provider can help any organisations fight against downtime and reap the benefits of business continuity.

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