

Disaster recovery planning: Minimize unexpected downtime

Help protect your organization from costly outages.

Sales software, credit card processing, payroll, inventory management, cloud storage, communications with customers and employees: Modern business operations rely on uninterrupted internet connectivity.



64% of businesses said internet disruptions have damaged their brands' reputation and reduced consumer confidence.¹

Every organization should ensure that continuity of internet connectivity and protection for data is included as part of its disaster planning. This foresight can protect your business from the consequences of internet downtime and reduce the length of costly outages when the unexpected happens.

The high cost of downtime

For most organizations, IT disruption is a matter of “when” not “if.” A flooded office building, mishandled server workloads or a natural disaster is all it takes to separate most organizations from the network resources they need to function effectively.

The ramifications of a disruption can be substantial as internet downtime triggers a chain reaction of negative effects that create challenges for your business. In ecommerce, for example, nearly two-thirds of businesses in one survey said even small disruptions can cause their customers to stop the purchasing process.²

That's just the start. In addition to lost revenue, 64% said internet disruptions have damaged their brands' reputation and reduced consumer confidence.³

Beyond its effect on revenue, the consequences of losing internet connectivity can be wide-reaching:

Productivity: Disruption of systems that support email, videoconferencing, internet access and phone networks can put important work on hold until service is restored.

Reputation: Network disruption creates a negative experience for customers when they encounter interruptions to order processing, support or online services.

Compliance: Determined employees will often work around outages by using third-party services for tasks like file sharing and messaging that don't meet their organization's security standards, potentially putting your data at risk.

Mitigation: IT staff will drop other business initiatives to handle a system outage, spending time to discover a fix or set up a workaround to restore connectivity.

A disaster recovery plan is critical to minimize these risks to your business. Having the procedures and technologies in place to address an IT disruption in advance can reduce the severity of outages.



39% of businesses said internet disruptions cost their company between \$500,000 to \$999,000 due to lost revenue, compensation to customers and extra time spent fixing the issues. 12% stated that it costs their company more than \$1M.⁵

Disaster recovery plan essentials

Organizations routinely prepare for natural disasters, fires or other disruptions. The Department of Homeland Security recommends that businesses also create a strategy for IT alongside their business continuity planning.⁴

An IT disaster recovery plan should be comprehensive, actionable and easy to follow in an emergency. Here are some best practices to consider when developing one for your organization:

Inventory critical systems

Creating your plan begins by documenting what's at risk. Which applications, remote data and lines of communication will become unavailable if internet connectivity or networking equipment goes down? Determine the locations where downtime will have the greatest impact on your business. Make an inventory of all business-critical applications and databases. Additionally, include the documentation for the essential hardware behind your network for all locations.

Plan for recovery

Emergency planning provides an ideal opportunity to consider additional network protections. Begin by detailing network strategies that include redundant access to reduce the risk of downtime. These strategies should leverage failover solutions that can instantly re-route traffic over an added fiber or wireless connection if the primary connection is disrupted.

Your recovery plan should also outline clear priorities and detailed steps to bring essential systems back online when connectivity is resolved. The order in which your team addresses affected services and applications should be determined by their relative business impact.

Work with your service provider to identify a team

Complex IT systems can involve staff at multiple locations, third-party contractors and vendors providing critical services. Identify the role that each will play in the event of an outage and document the responsibilities they will assume to bring systems back online.

Develop a manual

Compile your disaster recovery plan into a single document that gives each member of the response team a clear picture of the organization's IT recovery processes and priorities. Make sure the team reviews and validates this information.

Secure your data

Backup strategies must be an ongoing IT priority for a disaster recovery plan to be effective. Backups stored offsite should conform to the same security standards as production systems. You should also assess your backup policies regularly to ensure compliance, as well as the effectiveness of backup schedules to prevent the loss of any information generated by essential applications if they lose connectivity.

Test and retest

Build for redundancy and confirm that your backup solution for internet connectivity delivers the continuity you expect during an outage. Retest your IT emergency plans periodically at all locations to ensure they account for new software and hardware configurations that might require updated procedures.

Every minute of an outage raises the risk of lost revenue, compliance issues and reputational damage. The time you invest in an effective IT disaster recovery plan can pay off when you need to bring your most important resources back online as quickly as possible.



Explore options with your service provider

IT problems can disrupt much more than the network, such as customer satisfaction, data loss, brand reputation and missed business opportunities.

Be proactive. Prepare a disaster recovery plan that empowers your team to restore systems quickly at all locations and with as little business disruption as possible. You can begin to mitigate your risk by designing your disaster recovery plan with the help of a trusted network service provider.

Spectrum Enterprise has the specialized expertise, nationwide connectivity and comprehensive solutions to build redundancy into your internet service and help ensure continuous availability in the event of an outage. With the right plan in place, you can rest assured that if a service interruption does occur, your business will continue.

Learn more

enterprise.spectrum.com/fiber

1. ["Internet Disruptions Cost E-Commerce Retailers Millions Annually,"](#) Catchpoint, March 28, 2023.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. ["IT Disaster Recovery Plan,"](#) Department of Homeland Security, September 7, 2023.
5. Catchpoint, ["Internet Disruptions,"](#) March 28, 2023.

About Spectrum Enterprise

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