10 STEPS TO BUSINESS CONTINUITY
Agility Recovery's quick guide to building a resilient business.

Agility Recovery

1 | Know Your Risks
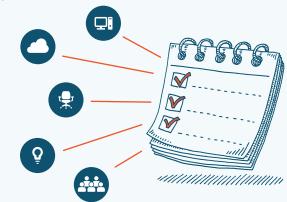Which disasters will most likely impact your business?

Though major disasters dominate the headlines, most business interruptions are caused by everyday events, such as power outages, human error, and technology failure. It is important to assess your risk for catastrophic weather occurrences, but equally important to evaluate exposure to more commonplace risks.

2 | Know Your Critical Functions
Evaluate and document your company's vital operations.

Determine which processes, employees, equipment and materials are critical for your daily operations. Critical business functions include such things as billing, payroll, and service fulfillment. List these functions and determine a process for restoring them in the event of an interruption.

3 | Find a Backup Location
What would you do if your facilities were inaccessible tomorrow?
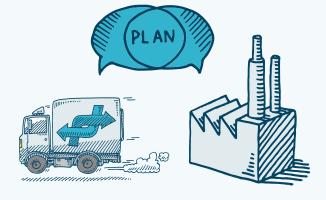
Where would you go to continue basic business operations? Review your site requirements and determine a plan for recovery. Alternative site options include working from home, relocating to a secondary site, using the site of a similar business partner, or turning to a vendor that provides recovery office space.
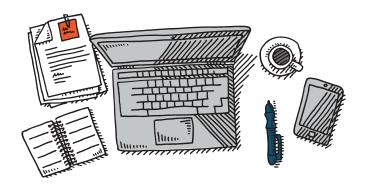
4 | Prepare Your Supply Chain
Talk to your key vendors and suppliers about their recovery plans.

According to recent surveys, less than half of American businesses have disaster recovery or business continuity plans in place to maintain supply chain logistics in the event of a disaster. Talk to your key vendors and suppliers about their BC plans. Develop relationships with alternate vendors in case your primary vendors experience an interruption.

5 | Help Employees Prepare
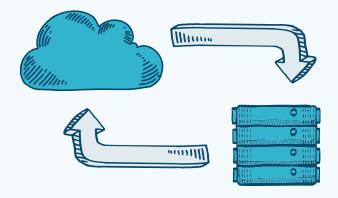Ensure employees and their families are prepared for disasters both at work, and at home.

While data recovery and business continuity may form the backbone of a disaster recovery strategy, if employees are unable or unwilling to report to work, having your systems back online may prove worthless. Without question, most businesses will admit their most valuable assets are their employees. Help your employees prepare for disasters at home, ensure they know their role in your continuity plan, and develop and practice crisis communications and incident management plans that incorporate both employees and their families.

6 | Practice Backups
Back up your data and practice restoring your technology.

In today's highly technical, connected economy, information is more valuable than ever. Having data and critical applications backed up is an essential and relatively common practice. However, make sure to store your data in an off-site, safe and secure location, preferably 50 miles or more from your site(s). Also, regularly verify that you can retrieve your data and test restoring it back to on-site hardware. Outline a plan to replace PCs, software, servers, printers, and fax machines should your office be destroyed.

7 | Create a Communication Plan
Create an employee, vendor and key client communication plans.

Update your emergency notification database for all employees, including emergency contacts like spouses or closest relatives. Make sure your employees, vendors, suppliers, partners, and even clients know ahead of time how to exchange or obtain information should your standard methods of communication fail. Also, update a list of your critical clients and vendors and store it in an off-site location. Determine a process for contacting them should your systems go down.

8 | Emergency Kits
Assemble an emergency kit, with everything your team will need.

An emergency or disaster recovery kit should contain items such as fresh water, non-perishable food, flashlights, extra batteries, battery-powered AM/FM radio, first aid kit and copies of important documents and records. Additionally, your business disaster kit should contain elements such as petty cash, critical contracts and documents, corporate letterhead, software licensing keys, passwords, and other sensitive documents.

9 | Insurance Review
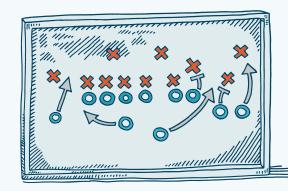Is your insurance coverage adequate?

Sit down with your agent to assure that you are insured for potential risks. Consider business interruption insurance, which may compensate you for lost income should you experience a disaster. Make sure you keep photos of your building, equipment lists, and policy information stored in a safe and secure offsite location.

10 | Test Your Plan
A plan that nobody has seen is no better than no plan at all.

Make sure your plan is actionable and able to be executed during times of crisis – test your plan annually and update it as necessary. Make sure to re-educate employees when any changes to the plan are made and include training on the plan for all new hires.