



Pentire Solutions Ltd

General Information

1 Introduction

1.1 The Company

Pentire Solutions Ltd was founded in 1995 to provide commercial organisations, of all sizes and in all sectors, with support in the critical areas of business continuity and disaster recovery. The enclosed Services Summary provides information about our support activities.

Our global customer listing includes multi-national organisations, for whom we have provided various levels of support in the assessment of potential risk and the development of business continuity planning. The nature of the services we provide and confidentiality precludes their being named here.

1.2 Location

The Company's office is in Burgess Hill, West Sussex, UK. This is within one hour's train journey from central London, thirty minutes from Gatwick Airport and one hour from Heathrow. Other regional airports (Stanstead, Southampton and London City) are also within easy reach. Its location means that customers in the British Isles and mainland Europe can be accessed with relatively short journey times.

1.3 Independence

Pentire Solutions Ltd is completely independent, and receives no commissions, etc., from any continuity / disaster recovery service providers, nor software suppliers. It is a point of pride to maintain this independence and to be able to operate in our customers' best interests at all times.

1.4 Insurance

The Company has Professional Indemnity insurance cover for £500,000 per claim from the Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance plc. Third party liability insurance cover is arranged per project, dependent upon customer requirements.

1.5 Personnel

Apart from Bob Draper, there are no full-time personnel employed by the Company. Where additional resource is needed, associate consultants are selected from a small group of specialists, dependent upon the customer's project requirements. The associate consultants are not limited to the business continuity field, but encompass

all aspects of commercial specialisations. Curricula vitae of all associates selected to participate in a project are included in the tender documentation submitted for the customer's approval.

1.6 Standard Terms and Conditions

A copy of our standard terms and conditions can be supplied upon request. We are flexible and will not unduly withhold agreement to amend clauses to meet customers' specific requirements.

1.7 Fees

Our fee structure is available upon request. We are flexible in charging, meeting the client's requirements for either per diem or fixed fees.

Where a proposal includes a fixed fee, the customer will be invoiced on agreed tranches during the period of the project, with a percentage of the fee payable in advance and also a sum held back until sign off the project as completed to the specifications agreed at the start. The agreement will include provision for additional charging should our involvement exceed the agreed timescales for reasons outside our control (e.g. changes in specifications / objectives, delays due to operational constraints within the customer's organisation).

1.8 Standards

We ensure that our processes meet the client's regulatory compliance requirements that may be specific to their business sector and / or their geographic location. All reports, plans and procedures and other documentation we produce are to ISO9000 / BS25999 standards. Internal working practices follow ISO9000 best practices, and are open to audit by customers and potential customers.

2 Our Approach

The following is an overview of the Company's approach to Business Continuity Management. It is a point of pride that we recognise that every customer is unique, with differing operational environments and, therefore, requirements. The overview provides generic information to all our business continuity planning activities.

2.1 Business Continuity Planning

A business continuity plan is developed to manage the response to any incident which severely disrupts the customer's ability to operate normally. The development of a continuity plan includes three critical steps which we advise all customers to consider :

- Business Impact Assessment to establish which are the most critical operational functions
- Risk Assessment to identify the potential exposures which may exist and possibly impact those functions
- Corrective action to remove this identified risks, or at least to reduce them to an "acceptable" level

A business continuity plan should be considered as a "living" document, changing and evolving with the organisation. In order for this to happen, the customer has to "own" the plan from the outset, being fully involved in its development. Therefore, we do not support the approach taken by many agencies who collect data based upon fixed criteria (e.g. their own software package), remotely follow a plan-building process and present the "finished" package. If, in the event of an incident, the plan needs to be activated, the customer may have to work with something they may not have been sufficiently involved with to understand. Maintenance and testing are also often very difficult in this case.

2.2 Plan Ownership

Our approach is to work alongside the customer, including the relevant staff who would be involved in plan invocation, to develop a set of procedures with which they are fully conversant and are confident will meet the objectives. "Ownership" means Involvement.

This is not to say that we play only a project management role; the development of the plan is a partnership. We do the basic groundwork and build the plan, but in full co-operation with the customer's team(s) at every step. At the end of the day, it is the customer who might have to use the plan, and it is important that staff are fully aware of the plan content, priorities and procedures.

2.3 Needs and Objectives

Our approach to the development of individual plans is dependent very much upon the customer's needs and objectives. However, we recommend that plans should be kept flexible and easy to follow. We do not recommend attempting to define every conceivable potential incident and to write a set of procedures to cater for each one; experience shows that this could never be complete. Not all disasters are major incidents. Therefore, an effective plan is one that is developed to provide those responsible for recovery and continuity of business functions with the necessary (sometimes detailed) information on what steps to take and what points to consider to enable maximum response to an incident. The plan should give the Continuity Management Team the flexibility to respond to an incident in the manner most suited its potential impact upon business functions and to the business priorities of the moment.

2.4 Project Stages

As part of a customer's proposal information, we supply an overview of the typical project steps we follow, together with the customer, to develop a completely suitable and customised strategy and appropriate planning which relates directly to the customer's unique business environment. We consider these project phases to be the minimum to develop a structured plan for each area / site for which a separate plan is required, although, with multiple sites it is probable that many tasks within the overall structure would be duplicated / shared.

2.5 Variables

In every case, there are major questions to be answered prior to the development of a plan.

2.5.1 What will the plan cover ?

Will it be sufficiently broad in scope to cover all areas and activities of the business, or narrow in scope, only covering "central facilities", such as IT systems and services, communications (voice and data)? Our recommendation is to include all functions, at varying levels of detail. The decision is the customer's.

2.5.2 What scenarios is the plan designed to meet ?

As indicated above, there is a danger that, if a plan is too finely tuned, detailing specific scenarios, the eventual incident requiring response will not be on that list, thus possibly negating all the benefits of having a plan.

2.5.3 What level of procedural detail is required ?

If the plan procedures are fully detailed to "work instruction" level, on-going maintenance may be onerous, and the plan may not be sufficiently flexible to adapt to various potential disaster situations. Procedures which provide guidelines on actions to be taken and points for consideration give flexibility of response and generally reduce maintenance effort.

Where detailed, step by step, instructions to carry out a task are required, these are usually part of the normal function of the relevant department, and are usually "dynamic" in nature. That is, they are regularly, if not frequently updated / changed to maintain pace with business changes. Including them, in full, adds to the maintenance of the plan. Our recommendation is to identify such items as "critical documentation" in the plan, and to ensure that a security copy is held with the plan for when it may be required.

2.5.4 In what form will the plan be developed ?

There are a number of software packages available for developing and maintaining recovery plans. We support their use where appropriate, and are able to advise on the most suitable for specific business sectors and customer requirements; however, our experience has shown that most of these, to date, are very sophisticated (eg require lots of detail) and are not always suitable. Using a specific software product may not be the right solution to meet the needs. Using standard office tools (e.g. word processing, graphics, spreadsheets) for all the elements of a plan may still provide a more individual result; an added advantage is the ease of maintenance, as it does not require specific expertise, other than that currently considered as normal in most organisations.

The software world within Business Continuity is changing constantly and rapidly, so we maintain the flexibility of recommending the most suitable solution for each client's individual needs. We are able to assist the client in the choice of the most suitable software solution for their specific purposes.

2.6 Recovery Teams

We encourage customers to adopt a team-based ideal; that is, the incident response, recovery and continuity activities and responsibilities are delegated to functional teams, each of which is most suited to carry out the tasks required. Unless it is the express wish of the customer, we recommend that these teams, and if possible, their members, should be defined and included in the plan. Teams should be as small as possible in the early stages of recovery, to ensure efficiency of response.

2.7 Recovery Service Providers

Where a project may entail reviewing recovery / continuity service providers, and assisting the customer choose the most suitable service to meet requirements, we have an established decision analysis methodology to support this selection process. However, the final decision on the selection of any service provider is always the customer's.

3 Timescales / Project Phasing

3.1 Project Planning

Following acceptance of a proposal, we will define and agree specific timescales, responsibilities and deliverables.

3.2 Factors

The time taken for the development of business continuity planning will be influenced by a number of important factors :

- The selection of a suitable software package, if required.
- The selection of IT hardware, work area, communications and other recovery services, and other facilities providers, if such needs are identified.
- The availability of key personnel to participate in major project phases (eg assessment of requirements and development of departmental / team recovery / continuity tasks)



contact

Pentire Solutions Ltd
4 Queens Crescent, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, RH15 9EU
Tel. +44 (0)1444 257088
www.pentire.co.uk

To find out how Pentire Solutions can help you address your business continuity management challenges, email us at pentireinfo@pentire.co.uk