

# **Business Survival in the Age of Computing**

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# **The real world is unforgiving**

“The sea will try hard to kill you...”

## What business survival means –

- Protect your assets
- Reconstitute operations
- Replacability triage:
  - People
  - Data
  - Infrastructure
  - Inventory

## Business survival depends upon records:

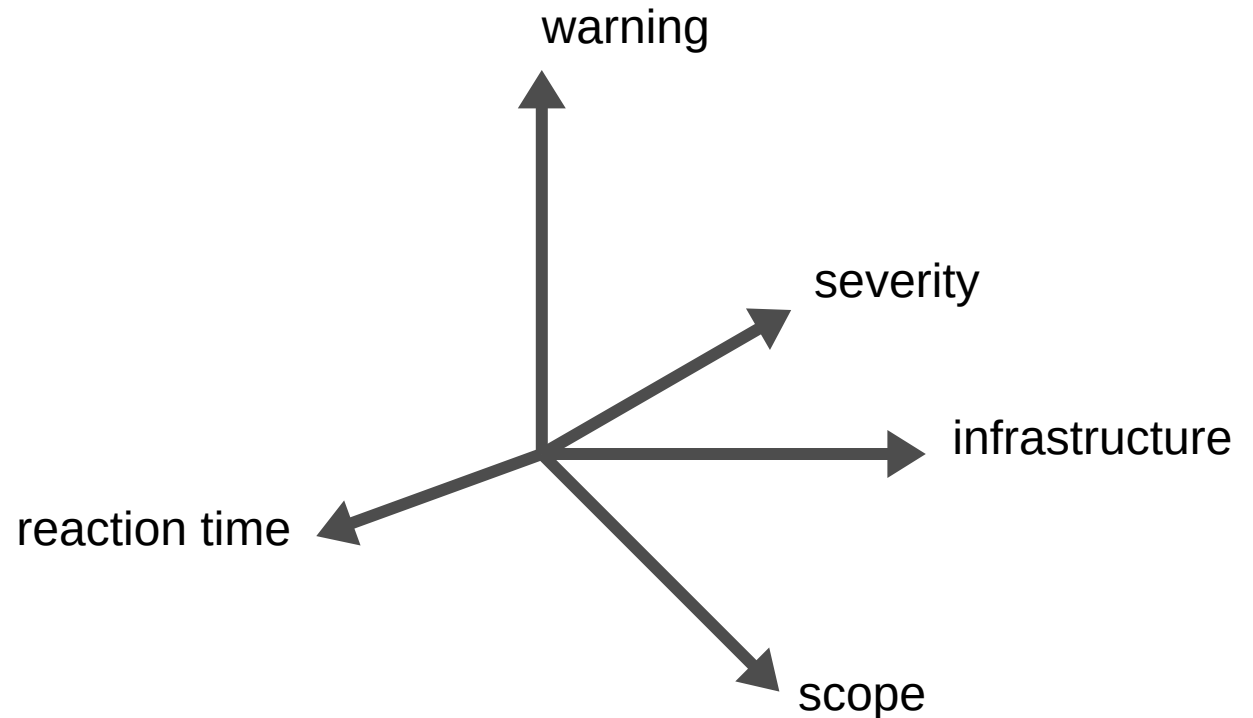
- The Good News: computerized records are easy to transfer
- The Bad News: computerized records are delicate

## Business survival is NOT disaster planning

- wrong focus
- focus on the “after”, not the “disaster”

## Events are not 1-dimensional

- warning
- severity
- infrastructure/affected area
- reaction time



## **Snap Decisions under time pressure == Errors**

- pressure produces blind spots
- no time for thinking
- pre-planned procedures buy time

## Classic analogues

- military – get inside your opponents decision loop
- sailing – the dangers of fast reactions when sailing
- flying – over-controlling



## The lessons –

- pre-defined triage
- declare “events” early
- better 50 unneeded events than a single missed event

## No Warning Events

- earthquakes
- car bombs
- September 11, 2001 – World Trade Center
- Machine Room fires

## Events with warning

- forest fires
- weather (e.g., Katrina, tornadoes)
- fires outside the machine room
- flooding

## Catastrophic versus Slow Progress

- Tidal waves w, w/o warning
- Katrina
- forest fires

## What can be done?

- pre-planned triage
- upload over broadband
- 15 minutes of warning is an eternity
- How much data accumulates per day?
- How important is each class of data?

## After the event – Reconstituting Operations

- understand business issues
- Instant: hot site, OpenVMS wide area clusters
- Short Term: cold site
- Long Term: site reconstitution
  - logistics
  - documentation
  - outside personnel
  - outside infrastructure

## **Survival is not a technical issue – it is a business issue**

- priorities must be set by management
- decreasing interruption time often increases costs exponentially
- Do you already own your own hot site?
  - outside locations/plants
  - pre-existing company network
  - work from home/hotel
  - VPN infrastructure

## Planning for incidents

- perspective is effects, not causes
- “Emergency Procedures” check rides
- simulation systems for training
- separate technical exercises from procedural
- practice makes perfect



# When events happen – “Rules of Engagement”

- no sanctions/reprisals if within policy
- reasonable policies
- authority to act
- feasibility of command tree  
 (“Who is present when?”)

## In closing –

Appropriate business survival planning is feasible for all organizations, from the family home to the Fortune 5.

## Questions?

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Session Notes & Materials:

<http://www.rlgsc.com/ieee/NewOrleans/2005-11/index.html>