

Disaster Recovery Planning and Preparation

A data loss event can take place on account of any one or more reasons. Some of the causes may be owing to the fury of nature while the other causes may be because of neglect by man or perhaps accidental.

Data can be lost on account of any of the following reasons:

Natural Disaster: A natural disaster can strike any one, any where. It need not come with a warning attached to it and man has got little or no control over natural disasters. Anything ranging from an earthquake to a flood or a volcanic eruption or a tornado or any other natural disaster has the capacity to wipe out not only the data stored on computer systems but even the computers and the buildings in which the data is stored.

Fire: Fire can very easily be termed as an extremely potent enemy in circumstances where it is not under the control of man. In the event of fire, as in the case of natural disasters, not only can one lose precious data but even the computer hardware and the site at which the data is stored. Another problem with fire is that when attempts are made to control or extinguish the same, then material used for this purpose such as water and foam can easily cause further damage to the computer hardware with increased possibility of damaging or destroying the data stored in them.

Power Failure: A power failure may interrupt ongoing work on the computer system and prevent the individual from taking a back up of the work in due time. In such a scenario one is bound to lose any or all the data that has been recorded on the computer but not saved in the nick of time.

Hardware Failure: A hardware failure can also be the cause of a data loss event. In the case of the computer systems using the hard disk drives as their secondary data storage media, the most common and potent hardware failure is the hard disk drive crash. In the case of a hard disk drive crash, the data on the hard disk can be lost for good and the loss increased many folds until and unless the computer system is immediately shut off.

Software Failure: A software failure or a logical failure is a more common and more widespread reason for the loss of data as compared to a hardware failure. This can also destroy the data stored on a computer system.

Some of the other reasons for data loss are:

Accidental Deletion of Data

Intentional Deletion of data

Misplacement of Data Storage Media

Administrative Errors

Software Bugs

Corruption of Data

Computer Virus

Sabotage etc.

Irrespective of the causes behind it, the companies need to safeguard their interests from a possible data loss event. In order to do so, most of the major corporations etc, have disaster recovery or contingency or business continuity planning in place.

Disaster recovery planning entails making copies of important data and storing them at a site different from the original site. This will mean that even if a data loss event does take place, the company will be able to fall back upon its copies to conduct its day to day operations without much interference.

These sites are known as back up sites. These sites are termed hot, warm and cold depending on some parameters. The various sites are:

Hot Site: This is the most expensive back up site. These sites are expensive because not only do they have full computer and other associated machinery but even the data is so up to date that the site can be up and running in a matter of hours in case of a data loss event. They are ideal for operations where time is of great essence.

Warm Site: A warm data back up site is different from a hot site. This site will have all computer systems and associated machinery. However the similarity ends there. A warm data back up site does not have copies of the data. Thus it cannot be as effective as a hot site is in the event of data loss.

Cold Site: This has neither the copies of back up data nor computer machinery and is thus the most inexpensive of all the three.

About the Author

James Walsh is a freelance writer and copy editor. If you are concerned about data loss and would like more information on [Data Recovery](#) see <http://www.fields-data-recovery.co.uk>

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