



Ribb"IT" Review

"Insider Tips To Make Your Business Run Faster, Easier, And More Profitably"

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As a business owner, you don't have time to waste on technical and operational issues. That's where we *shine!* Call us and put an end to your IT problems finally and forever!"
- Alex Bleam, Frogworks

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What The Difference Is Between Disaster Recovery And Business Continuity And Why You Should Care

Face it—downtime is depressing, difficult and downright dumb. You can't afford to lose business, customers and your reputation because of failed computer systems. That's why it's so important to pay attention to Disaster Recovery (DR) and Business Continuity (BC).

Almost every business depends on secure, reliable computer systems. It doesn't matter if you're a retail establishment, an online business or a service provider. You rely on technology in order to perform everyday functions.

The Costs of Downtime

The cost of downtime is significant. In this Internet-connected age, most companies lose money when systems are down. Customers cannot order products, so they go elsewhere for services. It's also difficult to communicate with people when your e-mail and web sites are inaccessible. Downtime hurts your competitiveness. Eventually your company's reputation can be damaged.

This is why Business Continuity is so much more important than simple Disaster Recovery practices. You want to prevent downtime instead of recovering from it.

So, what's the difference?

Disaster Recovery is simply one part of Business Continuity. The word "disaster" indicates a situation where continuity has been broken. If you are recovering from a disaster, your computer systems are down. Your business information systems essentially failed. Typical disruptions include planned, unplanned, intentional and unintentional events. A backhoe can snap a telecom line at a nearby construction site, for example. Malware or viruses might take down your local network.

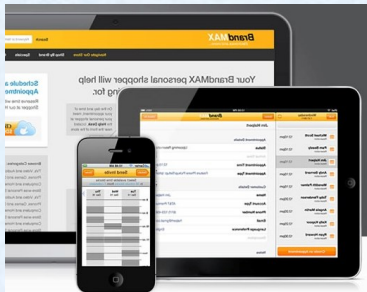
Business Continuity describes the way you eliminate disruptions. That's the big difference between DR and BC. When hard drives, servers or networks fail, BC practices ensure that duplicate systems are in place. When downtime occurs, BC systems instantly switch to copies of the same data you have been using all along. Users don't even notice the switch.

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Shiny New Gadget Of The Month

TimeTrade Online Appointment Scheduling

www.timetrade.com



Do you struggle with scheduling appointments with clients and vendors, trading e-mails back and forth to find the right time to meet?

With TimeTrade.com's self-service scheduling solutions, you automate the scheduling process—accelerating your sales and customer service while completely eliminating e-mail tag with clients or prospects.

With products ranging from a free personal site to a Workgroup option that includes integration with Salesforce.com, mobile scheduling from iPhones, integration with Microsoft Exchange and even smart routing to your sales team, you're fully covered.

If you ever struggle with setting appointments, try it out today with a free 30-day trial.

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Smart Business Continuity Solutions

These days you have several options to help keep your computers running and your information available 24/7. Storage solutions that contain backed-up, redundant hard drives, like Network Attached Storage (NAS) and Storage Area Networks (SAN) storage devices, help you recover in failure situations. Your users never see that a drive failed. Their data and applications are always available, even if hardware breaks. Similarly, modern networking technologies protect organizations from networking failures. Both these hardware solutions help you maintain business continuity when things break.

Many companies don't have the latest hardware and software installed, however. It's important to upgrade your systems in order to take advantage of the new solutions. You need to have a plan for dealing with natural disasters, hackers, viruses, legal threats and new rules governing data protection.

3 Business Continuity Considerations

Here are some key areas to examine:

1. Consider how important computer systems are to your bottom line. Do you rely on an internet connection for payment? If you lost your customer database, would that immediately impact your business?
2. Pay attention to your storage habits. Make sure all critical data is backed up to a central server in your office AND in another physical location. Your best option for offsite storage usually is a "cloud" backup solution such as our Frogworks Sentinel.

Think about installing a local NAS or SAN device that has several copies of your data on separate disks. Many of these devices now also have built-in cloud backup solutions.

Ice Cream and Lobster Dinners! We Want to Reward You For Your Referrals!

We get most of our clients through word-of-mouth and referrals. If you know a CEO, CFO, office manager, or association president who is having computer network problems, please let us know.

Do you know a business owner (or executive) who has 10-100 computers needs our help. They can use our assistance with their network, data backup, or security. Maybe they just want peace of mind, knowing we have their back 24/7. Or maybe they just need a second opinion about their technology road map.

To learn more, go online to <http://www.getfrogworks.com/referral/> and give us the name of a fellow business owner you know who might benefit from our services and we'll give you credit. Of course, there's no obligation for them to buy anything.

Most Valuable Activities By Jennifer Bleam

As a busy executive, have you taken the time to determine what your Most Valuable Activities are? Your MVAs are those activities, that only you can accomplish, that directly correlate to making your business grow. I can't tell you what yours are, but they probably revolve around revenue, marketing, or sales.

Once you determine what value you bring to your organization, spend the week intent on spending as much time as possible on those MVAs. Then ask yourself, "Specifically, what is keeping me from focusing more time on my Most Valuable Activities?" Common distractions are email overload, phones incessantly ringing, or the paper monster.

If you're struggling to nail this, please email me (Jennifer@getfrogworks.com.) I'd love to help!



How Long Would It Really Take To Crack Your "Strong" Password?

How many @'s, %'s and other crazy symbols are in your password right now? Are they really all that necessary? According to a recent Carnegie Mellon study, the answer is no. The only thing that really influences your password strength is its length! Not whether it has X minimum characters or Y maximum characters. And not whether it has a kazillion combinations of numbers, letters and other doodads that are bound to confuse most of your employees.

Regular Password Changes Decrease Security

In the recent past, regularly scheduled password changes were a common friend of network security. However, with most computer users now requiring upwards of 20-30 passwords between work and home, this whole password security game has gotten a bit out of control. When pressed to change their password regularly, your poor employees start to use "sucky" passwords pretty quickly because they need something that is easy to remember. Or just as bad, they create a good password and then write it on a sticky note to put on their computer monitor so they don't forget!

How To Choose A Strong Password

You want to choose a password that is hard for anyone to guess. Ideally you would want to use a lengthy string of letters, numbers and odd characters AND still be able to remember it easily. One way to do this is by creating a random phrase and using the first letter of every word, substituting +s or &'s for the word "and" or numbers like 4 for the word "for" (or any similar tricks that are easy for you to remember). As an example, the phrase "I love my computer guys and they are the best company for me!" would translate to a password of "ilmcg+trtbc4m." That's easy to remember and almost impossible to crack. In fact, you can test out your password at http://passfault.appspot.com/password_strength.html to see just how strong it really is. The password we created above would take 1,306,628,104 centuries to crack.... Now that's a strong password!

Using A Password Management Solution

Even if you have a strong password, you should never use the same password on different websites. Your online banking password should be different than Facebook, which should be different than Gmail, which should be different than your network password at work. A quick and easy way to remember all of these unique strong passwords is to use a "Password Management Solution." A few of the most popular tools you can test out are KeePass, RoboForm and AnyPassword. These tools allow you to securely keep track of all of your passwords while remembering only one.

Spooky Silliness



What's a ghost's favorite dessert?
I Scream Sandwich Cookies

Knock knock.
Who's there?
Phillip.
Phillip who?
Phillip my bag with candy, please!

Why didn't the skeleton go trick or treating?
Because he had no guts!

Do zombies eat popcorn with their fingers?
No, they eat the fingers separately (gross)

What's a mummy's favorite kind of music?
WRAP

How do monsters tell their future?
They read their horoscope...

What is a vampire's favorite sport?
Casketball...

Why do mummies have trouble keeping friends?
They're too wrapped up in themselves...

What kind of streets do zombies like the best?
Dead ends...

What is a skeleton's favorite musical instrument?
A trombone...

Business Execution—Are You REALLY Getting Focused?

Here we are, the last quarter of the year. Have you stayed focused on your goals and achieved those things you set out to do before the year's end?

It takes discipline to focus. Many of us might fool ourselves into thinking we are focused. Here are some signs that you may not be as focused as you would like to believe:

- At the end of the week, you are asked what you did this week and nothing great comes to mind. “Yup, it was a good work week. I worked hard, really hard. And I did the usual stuff, you know, meetings to drive my team forward, etc...”
- You finish each day tired, without a deep sense of accomplishment.
- When asked, “What is your number one priority?” you think: “Well... I have 5 number ones...”

Try an age old formula to get more focused:

- Make a list of 3-5 priorities, in order. Start your day and think about what you need to get done in order of priority.
- Decide to remain focused on #1 and get it done before moving on to #2.
- When you complete all the items on your list, your day is done. Celebrate your victories and enjoy the rest of your day. This makes you stronger for tomorrow.

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Guest Article Provided By:



Patrick Thean is the author of [Execute without Drama](#) and an award-winning serial entrepreneur who has started and exited multiple companies. Patrick is the CEO of Gazelles Systems and the co-chair of the MIT Enterprise Forum and EO's world-renowned Entrepreneur's Masters Program—a highly exclusive three-year program that provides successful entrepreneurs with practical education to grow their businesses.