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# Elliot Consulting Services - Business Resiliency Tips

**November 2007**

## Workspace Recovery Options

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**Greetings!**

The 2007 Atlantic hurricane season is winding down, and many of us in Florida feel very blessed that we dodged a few bullets along the way. While it may seem as though the 2007 season was a relatively quiet 'non-event', let's look back a few months and recall the facts.

The formation of Subtropical Storm Andrea on May 9th marked an early beginning to the 2007 season. On August 20th Hurricane Dean was upgraded to category 5 status and made landfall at that strength on the Mexican Yucatan Peninsula. Hurricane Felix reached category 5 status on September 3rd, and as a result, 2007 became one of four recorded Atlantic seasons that have had more than one category 5 storm; and the only time two Atlantic hurricanes have ever made landfall at category 5 strength in the same season. Both Dean and Felix ended up striking Central America and Mexico, and damage from the two storms was extensive.

Hurricane Humberto became the fastest developing storm on record to be so close to land. It strengthened from a 35 mph tropical depression to an 85 mph hurricane in 14 hours while only 15 miles off the coast of Texas. September had a record tying 8 storms but the strengths and durations of the storms were low. Hurricane Humberto also became notable as the first hurricane to make landfall in the U.S. since Hurricane Wilma in 2005.

Yet all the other tropical systems - Gabrielle, Ingrid, Jerry, Karen, Lorenzo and Melissa - were non-factors for Florida and the rest of the United States. When a storm did form it usually didn't last very long (an average of three days). It remained weak and poorly organized and was only a concern for open ocean shipping lanes. That's because the one constant during this year's hurricane season was wind shear -- strong, steady winds in the upper levels of the atmosphere. It was the wind shear that kept nearly all the tropical storms from intensifying into powerful hurricanes. Only Felix and Dean were able to steer clear of the hurricane-killer winds.

Just when many people thought it was safe to let down their guards, along came Hurricane

Noel -- the deadliest storm to hit the Atlantic this year. Noel ripped through the Caribbean claiming more than 100 lives, destroying thousands of houses and drenching Haiti and the Dominican Republic with 2 feet of rain.

The east coast beaches of Florida took a heavy beating from Hurricane Noel with tides running 1 to 3 feet above normal and battering waves nearly 10 feet high. Based on a preliminary damage assessment from Palm Beach County, Noel washed away around 12,000 truckloads of sand from area beaches causing $3 million to $4 million in damages, according to media reports.

The total number of storms so far this season has been above average -- 14 tropical storms developed this year. But most of the systems were short-lived and weak. Only Dean, Felix, and now Noel were the exceptions.

Technically the 2007 Atlantic hurricane season will end on Nomber 30th, but I think I'll keep a fresh stock of batteries on hand just a bit longer this year.

Stay safe, and be prepared!

This month's article on Workspace Recovery Options is written by Michael Connolly, Director of Business Development and Sales for RecoverySquad. We thank Michael and his team for this information which they have allowed Elliot Consulting to share with our readers.

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***Workspace Recovery Options***

RecoverySquad™
Disaster Recovery Solutions for Business Continuity

**Workspace Recovery Options**

by Michael Connolly
Director of Business Development and Sales
RecoverySquad

Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery (BC / DR) have always been forefront considerations in all types and sizes of organizations; however, over the last several years a dramatic increase in the number of companies with BC / DR related concerns has occurred. Yet many of these organizations continue to avoid taking all the necessary steps to plan and implement measures to meet their corporate and regulatory trepidations in the areas business processes, data recovery, and alternate work space.

Many companies are aware of the importance of BC / DR planning; however, there still exists a breakdown across industries in the realization that disasters and outages occur in many guises other than the commonly anticipated and media covered hurricanes, floods, tornados, and earthquakes such as localized power outages, sewage backups, software problems, and human involvement; be it intentional or accidental. In fact, in surveys taken of U.S. companies, hurricane related outages represent one of the lowest percentages among the aforementioned causes. Indeed, the "human factor" is high on the list of causes and is continually cited in articles as a contributing element in many disasters and unplanned outages. However, employees (i.e. human capital) are a necessary cog for the business machine to continue functioning.

Often when a disaster or unforeseen outage strikes, organizations are focused on the 7x24 logistics of recovering and/or relocating mission-critical systems, applications, and data to ensure continued information access and a normal business operating environment for not only its own stability but to maintain client and/or shareholder trust. Unfortunately, this common mindset, while vastly important, is the tip for the recovery iceberg. The availability of critical business functions extends beyond mere server / application uptime and the myriad of data protection solutions available. An integral part of many organizations is the core office and personnel functions that contribute to all daily operations of the business. As such, it is imperative that any business recovery strategy include not only a computing platform with operational logistics to recover critical processes and applications but an alternate facility to recover and ensure continued access by critical end-users. This is known as workspace recovery as well as other names including end-user recovery, alternate worksite, and mobile worksite. Regardless of the moniker, all workspace recovery solutions include an alternate location for critical personnel to travel to in the event of a disaster or outage that provides desktops, chairs, computers, office equipment (e.g. copiers and fax machines), phones with voice services, and data communications.

Until recently, only two basic models for workspace recovery existed in the industry: "regional recovery" centers and "mobile recovery" units. A regional recovery facility is designed to accommodate hundreds of end-users and is often a considerable distance from a company's primary headquarters based on the limited number of geographic locations. This solution requires personnel to travel, which may or may not be possible based on the nature of the disaster. Further, many employees will opt not to travel based on personal concerns for self and family. A final point here is that travel to a distant facility will be necessary in this model regardless of widespread or building localized outage. A mobile recovery unit is designed to be transported to a location near a company's primary offices and requires a large, permitted parking area to deliver the unit. In certain disaster scenarios, such as Hurricane Katrina, the mobile trailers cannot be delivered unless an alternate parking location is available away from the disaster area. Data communications, unlike a regional recovery center's installed telecommunications, is achieved through an available telco hitching post located at the parking site or through shared satellite bandwidth solutions.

Both of these legacy models are subscription-based whereby many customers are subscribed to each center seat or trailer and pay an on-going monthly fee. Upon declaration of service need, customers receiving services are invoiced for large declaration fee and daily use charge while in use. The first customers to declare and claim all limited center seats and/ or trailers are the first, and only, customers to receive services.p

Today, a unique and innovative model has emerged in the workspace recovery industry known as "local recovery", which incorporates best practices of the regional and mobile models but minimizes the risks associated with them. The local recovery model, also monthly subscription based, integrates the solid, installed infrastructure of a regional recovery center with the local access benefit of the mobile recovery unit using hundreds of existing building locations throughout the U.S. to deliver workspace services and allow

utilization by subscribed customers. The nationwide coverage and large network of locations minimizes delivery risk associated with disaster or geography as well as considerably lowering the customer-to-service subscription ratio. This equates to more customers receiving their subscribed services when they need them. Further, declaration and daily usage costs in this model are maintained at lower amounts based on economies of scale and location availability.

RecoverySquad pioneered using the local recovery model, through its understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the currently existing models, in its Recovery Operations Center (ROC) services. RecoverySquad's unique offering utilizes proprietary relationships with over 1500 hotels with multiple locations in every state allowing for a choice of location (s) within a desired distance, city, state, and/or region. Customers can target a local recovery site in a specific geographic location based on minimum distance requirements or a desired city. If the disaster or outage situation negates the initially chosen ROC location, RecoverySquad will make available alternate ROC locations in the same region and/or adjacent perimeters.

The processes and hindrances involved in the recovery of business operations and personnel are daunting necessitating the need for service providers with the appropriate skill sets, solutions, resources, and recovery focus. While there is no lack of providers for BC / DR services in the market, a need does exist for a provider with genuinely viable, flexible, and cost effective solutions that are customizable to an organization's specific requirements. RecoverySquad's mission and philosophy fulfills that need by providing innovative and quality services that ensure nonstop business continuity and recovery from core processes, to systems and applications, to critical personnel.

## About Michael Connolly

Michael K. Connolly, Director of Business Development and Sales for RecoverySquad, has a built a 23-year successful career in worldwide business development, BC / DR consulting, and delivery of various managed IT services and solutions. Traveling extensively throughout the world, Mr. Connolly has introduced emerging and existing technologies to major corporations on every continent while holding senior level positions with a number of key technology organizations including SunGard Availability Services, Qwest Communications, Exodus Communications, Wang Laboratories, Conner Software Products, and Archive Corporation.

Mr. Connolly maintains high levels of expertise and knowledge in BC / DR standards and practices as well as being a regular guest speaker at industry events including the Florida Chapters of the Association of Contingency Planners (ACP), Information Systems Audit and Control Association (ISACA), and various storage / security user groups.

Prior to his position with RecoverySquad, Mr. Connolly held a regional sales management position with SunGard Availability Services considered the pioneer of information availability and disaster recovery solutions. Mr. Connolly holds a Masters of Business Administration and a Bachelor's of Science degree in Computer Information Systems from the University of Arizona.

## About RecoverySquad

Formed in 1998, with a complete focus on consulting and BC / DR services, RecoverySquad incorporates an average of 25 years experience among its founders, engineers, and employee. RecoverySquad's mission and philosophy, beyond total Quality of Service, is to provide the most innovative, cost effective, flexible, and reliable services possible. RecoverySquad's team of expert recovery engineers utilizes proven methods, procedures

and the latest technologies to provide customer's assistance before, during, and after a disaster or outage. RecoverySquad has currently developed, implemented, and executed BC / DR strategies and services for multiple Fortune 500 companies.

RecoverySquad recognized that the execution of recommended recovery strategies always suffered due to the inadequacies of services offered by disaster recovery vendors providing services such as hot site, mobile recovery, and end- user workspace. To provide alternate solutions and deliver a higher quality of services, RecoverySquad developed its own full suite of services that provide customers with strategies and solutions that deliver a lower cost of ownership and reduced risk.

RecoverySquad offers innovative "local" workspace recovery in over 1500 locations across the United States. The service includes, at a minimum, desks, computers, voice services, and bandwidth in each location. This vast network of locations allows for multiple location availability in a given state and the lowest subscribed customer-to-facility ratio in the industry. The local recovery model removes one of the most common components in continuity planning failures - the geographic displacement of employees during a disaster or primary facility outage.

Michael Connolly and the team from RecoverySquad will be at CPM 2007 EAST in Booth #209 next week in Orlando.

Click here for more information about RecoverySquad

## CPM 2007 EAST

Contingency Planning & Management (better known in the industry as 'CPM') will be holding their CPM 2007 EAST conference in Orlando at the Gaylord Palms Hotel from November 13 - 15th.

Bill Hastings and I will be speaking at CPM 2007 EAST on Wednesday, November 14th from 2:45 - 4:00 pm in the Sun C conference room. The topic of our workshop is "How to Find the Weak Areas in Your Business Continuity Plan" and we certainly invite you to stop in and enjoy our presentation. The workshop will focus on how to use predictive failure analysis to expose the flaws in your BCP plans, and then use industry best practices to build a plan which focuses on business resiliency.

Click here for more information about CPM 2007 EAST

## Useful BCP Links

- Florida Business Disaster Survival Kit
- Dept of Homeland Security / FEMA
- IBHS - "Open For Business"
- Florida Division of Emergency Management
- National Hurricane Center
- Tampa Bay Hurricane Guide

## About Elliot Consulting

Elliot Consulting Services (ECS) was founded in 2003 to provide organizations with business continuity planning and emergency preparedness services. Being prepared for the unexpected is the key to the resiliency of one's business. A disaster can be the smallest setback that disrupts normal operations or an unavoidable catastrophic event. Business resiliency is not just about the process of recovering from a disaster - it is also about maintaining continuous daily operations and protecting your critical business operations, systems, and procedures. A resilient business is prepared to help prevent or minimize the loss or damage to life and property, and more quickly return their employees to work, restore essential services, and re-open the business in order to affect a full and swift economic recovery.

Business Resiliency Planning is a process which helps companies protect their information, their people, their physical infrastructure, and their means of doing business before, during, and after a time of crisis. A solid Business Resiliency Plan starts with a thorough understanding of your critical business functions and then explores the risks and vulnerabilities which could impact those procedures. This impact analysis factors in the downtime tolerance of an organization to operate during a crisis, and helps prioritize the recovery and restoration procedures. Elliot Consulting has the experience to review all components of an enterprise's business operations and then to propose solutions to protect those assets. The ultimate goal of this plan is to ensure the stability and continued success of your business.

Elliot Consulting functions as a third party advocate and facilitator to help companies create, develop, and implement all-hazards business resiliency and crisis management plans, and pandemic response strategies, which are designed to protect their vital business resources and operational processes. ECS can also review, audit, and help modify existing disaster recovery and business continuity programs to ensure that the essential components of their organization will continue to function in the event of an unplanned disruptive incident. The team from Elliot Consulting will also assist with staff training and simulation exercises, and regular plan validations and updates to test the thoroughness of a company's preparedness model. The ECS consultants are professionally-certified business continuity planners and business resiliency specialists with Fortune 200 experience. Our consultants are trained in the Incident Command System as developed by the National Incident Management System (NIMS); and a variety of recovery, restoration, and resiliency strategies.

Click here for more information about Elliot Consulting Services.

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