

## **Facility Management Technology & Disaster Planning / Business Resumption**

**By Jerry Kokos and Eric Teicholz**

Since the September 11th attack and subsequent anthrax attacks, a great deal has been written about disaster planning and response – yet it has been estimated that fewer than 20% of the Fortune 500 companies have disaster planning and recovery plans in place.

Disaster planning deals with people, places, assets and processes. From an organizational standpoint, regardless of its genesis, a disaster occurs when an institution cannot function as intended.

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- Eric Teicholz**

A disaster plan deals with how both commercial and not-for-profit entities plan for continuity of operations when a disaster strikes. Business/service resumption defines activities associated with how the organization responds to disasters so that the facility can resume normal operations immediately.

Facility management (FM) automation can, and should, be a critical part of disaster planning and service resumption. FM information management is often used to store data associated with people (HR), places or locations (CAD/GIS), assets and, increasingly, workflow communication and collaboration. Software can be used to develop, document, test and assist in the execution of disaster planning and resumption processes. Use of the web means that data can be stored off-site. Automatic and wireless notification tools are available to support e-mail, telephone and pagers. Vendors are just beginning to address these issues and develop specific templates, forms and even application suites that address various phases of crisis planning and management. Many of the FM automation vendors have posted relevant white papers on their web sites and have implemented some form of crisis management application software or templates.

### A 3 - Stage Process

Disaster planning and business resumption are often considered to have three-stages:

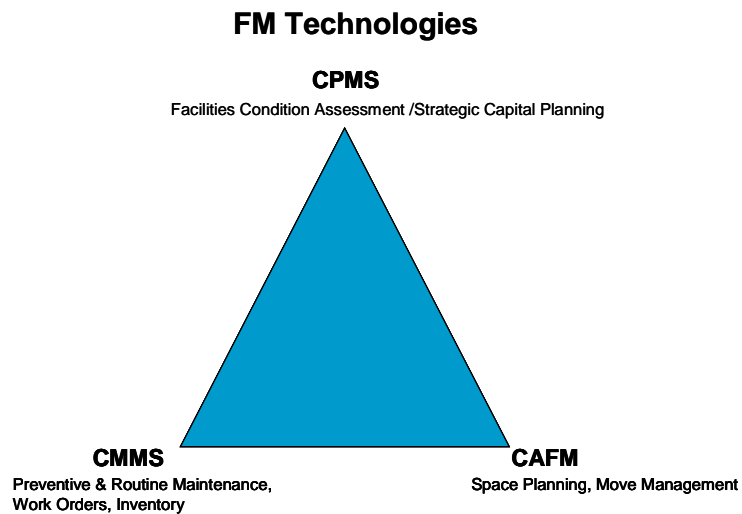
1. Planning,
2. Response, and
3. Recovery.

1. Planning means being ready for a disaster. Tasks include assessment of various risks, creating response policies and procedures, selection of management and response teams, assessing risk, establishing alerts and notifications, documentation of relevant issues and business processes associated with, for example: state, local and federal agencies; customers and suppliers; media; employees and; the public. FM technology databases might include employee locations and associated critical assets, means of egress and evacuation plans, contact information, workflow automation, utilities and telecom data, help desk maintenance and support, fire protection and security plans and hazardous material planning.

2. Response is associated with the plan execution to maximize life safety and the protection of property, and minimize financial loss and business disruption for the organization. Tasks include the deployment of the plan, often in an off-site command and control center. Communication of current information between crisis team members for continuity of operations (COOP) is of critical import. Workflow, the Internet and automatic notification and wireless communication are usually the most significant technologies.

3. Recovery, or getting the organization to function as intended (business resumption), in the shortest time frame, with minimal personnel injuries, damage, liability and financial loss, is the primary goal of the recovery phase. Facility Condition Assessment/Capital Planning Management Systems (FCA / CPMS™) and Computerized Maintenance Management Systems (CMMS), and cad-centric

space planning systems (CAFM) and are the primary FM technologies available for supporting recovery. CMMS components often include work order, service/work desk, inventory, procurement, before and after asset comparisons, move planning and execution, stacking and blocking, work and project management, and financial planning.



CAD-centric CAFM s system provide valuable space planning data.

FCA / CPMS systems assess the condition of a building, prioritize critical deficiencies, calculate the cost of the correction of the deficiency, develop life-cycle costs for various building systems and assets, and develop financial models for budgets and capital plans. FCA / CPMS systems also may store critical functional conditions information to be used to rank the facilities' overall criticality with respect to the organizational mission. Benchmarks such as a Facility Condition Index (FCI) and Program Adequacy Index (PAI) can be leveraged to optimize overall disaster response readiness.

The combined integration of CAFM, CMMS, and CPMS can be used to support key aspects of disaster recovery on local and global levels.

One example is using the FM data repository establish alternative use scenarios relative to equipment, major building systems, and buildings themselves. Having a FM database supports the development of a wide range of real-time alternative strategies, for example, the use local dormitories as temporary housing or noting which specific buildings or building systems are redundant.



## Conclusion

The September 11 attack dramatically impacted all organizations and illustrated the importance of disaster planning and services/business recovery. Although it is impossible to prepare for every disaster, scenario planning and risk analysis have proved effective planning tools. Businesses that recovered fastest from this tragic event tended to have one or more of the following characteristics:

- Strong management commitment to disaster planning and business recovery;
- Clearly defined, prioritized and documented business and incident/emergency management processes, trained crisis management teams, and response preparation and testing;

- Alternative space to support critical operations and a knowledge of these operations (people, places, things and processes);
- Current FM and IT databases and technology (especially the Internet and other alternative methods for communication and offsite record/data storage, work flow and wireless technology). It is clearly important to have a current, accurate picture of your facilities portfolio as a prerequisite of disaster planning.

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