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# Use business continuity as leverage in IT projects

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*Learn how your business continuity group can help attract IT project customers, cut costs, generate revenue, and ensure vendors meet your data security and DR needs.*

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Many companies are looking for overhead groups within their organizations to downsize or eliminate. Business continuity groups are vulnerable to these cuts, unless the company performs work in the government sector. Most government contracts require proof of business sustainability through disaster and outages, especially if you have control of the government's sensitive data. But if that's not the case in your organization, then your business continuity group may be on the chopping block.

## What is business continuity?

Business continuity is the activity performed by a group to ensure that critical business functions continue to be performed in the face of outages, disasters, and other negative or unexpected circumstances that may affect the company and its customers.

## How can you show business continuity's value?

If your company's IT projects involve working with a lot of outside customers and providers, you may be able to keep your business continuity group and even turn it into a revenue generator.

Here are four ways that IT project managers can help show the value of the group:

**Ask the business continuity group to put vendors to the test.** When you're focusing on your company's capabilities, it's easy to overlook that vendors need to meet the same criteria. Get the business continuity personnel to analyze current and potential vendors to see if they meet your data security and disaster recovery needs on your projects. The business continuity group can help you ensure that you're not left out in the cold by one of your vendors if a disaster should strike.

**Use the business continuity group as a sales tool for new business.** Enlist business continuity personnel (preferably the business continuity director) to meet with new clients and prospective clients. Then ask the business continuity group or director to present findings and test data to prospective clients to help seal the deal. Be sure to make the business continuity group an active part of your projects at kickoff and beyond as you plan for the worst and hope for the best in your many engagements.

**Look for ways to use the business continuity group to leverage cost savings.** Utilize the capabilities of the business continuity group as leverage with insurance providers, etc. With the security that the business continuity group brings to your company, you may be able to negotiate better rates with current providers and seek out new providers willing to give you better rates.

**Utilize the business continuity group and their planning tools when reviewing staff reduction scenarios.**

The business continuity group maintains key data within your organization and is often the best source of information and scenarios on how your internal organizations and data interact. Use the business continuity group to help plan cutbacks and layoffs that won't leave your business without key information and personnel if issues should arise.

## Summary

Business continuity will always be an overhead group unless you're in the government contracting business, so it's no surprise that the group is often considered a luxury during the really difficult times. It takes some creative vision to see it, but the business continuity group can truly become a revenue generator for your company and can help bring in new IT project customers