

EMERGENCY RESPONSE (ERP) CASE STUDIES

WHAT WORKS AND WHAT DOESN'T

5 Steps to an Effective Emergency Response is a White Paper we recently published to describe the steps for disaster recovery planning. It focuses on the main elements in ERP: 1) researching and assessing the risks; 2) writing the plan; 3) identifying and allocating resources; 4) training and practicing; and 5) keeping the plan current. The main emphasis of the process is to keep people safe and return the organization to normal as soon as possible.

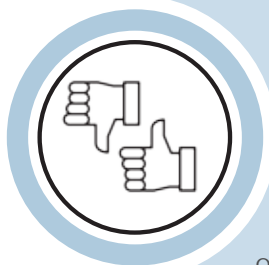
This white paper highlights ERP success stories and each case study is a successful application of one or more of those five elements. Some planners made great decisions on the fly in the face of trying circumstances. Others had great plans already in effect and took the time to train and practice. Those with the best plans looked after their people and came back on line quickly. Each learned from mistakes and omissions and strived to improve their plans.

WHAT DOESN'T WORK

The consequence of inadequate emergency planning is inadequate response.

David Nuttle, a contributor to FEMA's Protection Framework posts, observes that coming to grips with inadequate ERP response requires an understanding of its inherent flaws, i.e., failure to anticipate, adapt, and learn. Those flaws include:

- a lack of risk awareness or making faulty assumptions
- complacency and ignoring all warnings
- an executive mindset to avoid change with a tendency to protect the status quo
- turf wars
- "group-think" or herd mentality
- an unrealistic reliance on government help



WHAT DOES WORK

The following summarizes case studies of businesses whose leaders did the exact opposite of the foregoing. Their planning and execution focused on personal safety, contingency planning, and allocation of resources, all of which helped their businesses recover quickly, restore incomes, and help their communities.

TWO SURVIVOR STORIES FROM 9/11 GROUND ZERO

Morgan Stanley Financial Services ERP saved lives...

Morgan Stanley was headquartered in the World Trade Center in 1993 during the first terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. In the ensuing evacuation, the company learned a lesson that would save lives eight years later on 9/11. During the 1993 bombing, it took nearly four hours to evacuate its employees down more than 60 flights of stairs. Taking a close look at its operation and the potential for future risks, Morgan Stanley upgraded its emergency response plan. Its employees practiced the plan periodically.

On September 11, 2001, after the first plane struck One World

Trade Center, the company ordered its 3,800 employees to evacuate World Trade Center Two and Five. During the chaos that followed, Morgan Stanley succeeded in evacuating its employees in just 45 minutes.

Unfortunately, Morgan Stanley lost 13 people during the ensuing skyscraper collapse. Many more, however, could have died without the company's emergency response plan and training.

Childs Capital, LLC "trained in advance and knew what to do" ...

Childs Capital is a small business that did not have to struggle to recover after September 11th. It had a comprehensive emergency response plan and was back in business within seven days. Located very near Ground Zero, the company executed



an orderly evacuation and initiated its emergency plan. They had trained in advance, and everyone knew what to do.

The firm managed to cope with interrupted power, telephone service, and utilities. Their building's backup generator powered their computers, but their recovery plan relied on battery-powered laptops. They were up and running, albeit in a "limited capacity," within a week and back in business in less than a month.

DISASTER RECOVERY IN THE FACE OF AN F4 TORNADO AND TWO HURRICANE KATRINA SUCCESS STORIES

Aeneas Internet and Telephone headquarters was reduced to rubble...

On May 4, 2003, an F4 tornado, with winds of more than 200 miles per hour, swept through Tennessee. Eleven people lost their lives, and communities suffered more than \$50 million in damage. Aeneas lost company assets valued at more than \$1 million, and its home office was destroyed.

Aeneas company leaders had an emergency response plan. They put backup systems in place, deployed employees to work from other locations, and, according to CEO Jonathan Harlan, their customers "never knew the difference."

Aeneas was a successful example of worst-case planning for an actual event that turned out to be worst case. Their plan also included

a robust public information effort in which company officials kept customers informed of their progress.

Compucast Interactive remained active in New Orleans...

Providing web services to over 250 New Orleans-area businesses, Compucast Interactive had an emergency response plan in place when Hurricane Katrina blew away much of the city's internet service.

Compucast's owner, Judy Weitz, led an emergency response effort that included dedicated servers outside New Orleans in both San Francisco and Philadelphia in the event of a hurricane. Weitz moved to a local hotel with high-speed internet access to continue her work and make arrangements to evacuate her family.

In her temporary headquarters office, Weitz operated one of the very few website providers that was able to keep in touch with clients. She helped local client businesses with employee outreach, keeping email addresses functional during the critical days before the hurricane struck.

Compucast remained at the center of web activity and one of the few ways for client employers to communicate online. Stranded employees found lodging assistance, and employers kept everyone in touch. Also, as one of the few New Orleans web servers on line, Compucast became the go-to organization for local news organizations for news coverage of local businesses.



Leidenheimer Baking rose to the occasion during Hurricane Katrina...

Leidenheimer Baking Company, founded in 1896, makes world-famous French bread for New Orleans traditional po'boy and muffaletta sandwiches served in the city's French Quarter. The company's president, Sandy Whann, is no stranger to hurricane planning throughout New Orleans' turbulent history of natural disasters.

On Saturday, August 27, 2005, weather forecasters issued the alert for Hurricane Katrina. Whann placed his emergency response plan into effect, while his family prepared to leave the city. His family out of the city, Whann stayed near the plant to keep minimal production going. Then he concentrated on his employees and their families, encouraging them to secure their homes and consider evacuation.

The following day, Whann secured the bakery operation both inside and out. He deployed his management team, who completed their assigned roles in securing the plant. Only Whann, his plant manager, and chief engineer remained in New Orleans during those tense days before Katrina wreaked flooding havoc on New Orleans. After completing the emergency shutdown, they left the city – Whann to Baton Rouge for a seven-hour drive, which, under normal circumstances, takes one hour.

Whann says that his detailed emergency preparedness plan helped him focus on what needed to be done during the limited time before disaster strikes. He attributes much of the success to a business evacuation kit he had prepositioned with financial and payroll records, utility contact info, phone lists for his customers and employees, and computer



backup files and hard drives – each of which was put in place in a mobile waterproof case that he could remove on a moment's notice.

Returning a week later to the destruction and damage to his plant, Whann concentrated on cleanup and repair. The most important consideration, though, were his employees. Fortunately, they were all safe, but still faced hardship and stress in their personal lives. Whann set up a carpool service to transport his employees from flood shelters to work, while remaining supportive and open for business.

In the end, Hurricane Katrina was so severe that it taught even the most experienced hurricane veterans new things about emergency planning. Since the flood and destruction, Whann has revised his emergency response plan to add details he overlooked. He has gained a deeper understanding of the importance of preparation.

“(Whann) attributes much of the success to a business evacuation kit he had prepositioned... which was put in place in a waterproof case.”

Texas dry-cleaning owner bounces back after Hurricane Rita slap-down...

Bill Munro, like the rest of his Beaumont, Texas, community, was surprised when Hurricane Rita struck. When the hurricane changed course

and forced his dry cleaning, uniform rental, and safety apparel business employees to evacuate, nearly a week passed before he could reopen. He had a basic emergency plan in place, but there were no provisions for loss of power and food shortages after the hurricane.



In any case, there was no demand for dry cleaning services among his customers, but his customers definitely needed laundry services. Munro, Inc. stepped up to fill the demand with a wash, dry, and clothing folding service for both the community and local contractors.

Afterwards, Munro began planning an upgraded emergency response plan. It included:

- detailed procedures for securing his plant before evacuation
- a better communications plan so that employees could report their whereabouts and situation within 48 hours
- stockpiling supplies (a three-day supply of bedding and linens and hygiene and food products for key personnel)
- designating an emergency response team with advance clearance for early return to the plant after the disaster
- upgrading emergency power generation equipment

Munro admitted that his emergency response plan deteriorated through neglect before Hurricane Rita. He was fortunate in that he had a communications plan, essentially a cellphone network, where he could find his employees, who were spread out during the emergency.

CONCLUSION

Fortunately, in the first two decades of the 21st century, there have been no terrorist attacks with the scope of 9/11. Also, there was a near-

decade hiatus of serious hurricane damage to the U.S. mainland. Those intermissions highlight the need to safeguard against complacency and the need for continuous review of emergency response planning, particularly in the aftermath of the 2017 quadruple blows of Harvey, Irma, Jose and Maria.

There will, no doubt, be more success stories from those recent events. The business leaders who put thoughtful emergency response plans in place will be the first to be back up. In the words of Bill Munro, "If businesses are up and running, individuals can receive a paycheck, and the community can stabilize."

ABOUT THE MEAD GROUP

The Mead Group is an industry leader in business resiliency and securing against unplanned events. We'll help you update your program and plan to match your unique needs and culture to known risks. When you are ready to upgrade your emergency planning preparedness, please contact us at www.meadgroup.com or call 1-206-777-7600.

Want more information/reading material?

Download our white paper *5 Steps for an Effective Emergency Response* here.

Sources for this white paper were Ready.Gov and as cited and linked in the text.

This guide is sponsored by Nexis Response, a Mead Group Company. Look for a downloadable copy on our website at nexisprep.com and meadgroup.com.