

Inside Business

The Hampton Roads Business Journal

Advanced Search | Search by Date

 Tuesday, September 22, 2015 
[NEWS](#) [EVENTS](#) [LEGALS](#) [PEOPLE](#) [SPECIAL REPORTS](#) [ABOUT US](#) [BUSINESS FOR SALE](#)
[MARKETPLACE](#)

DAMAGE CONTROL - Don't be caught with your guard down

[View](#)[Repeats](#)**Updated: June 6, 2014 - 3:48 pm****Posted: June 6, 2014**

Cox Business and Inside Business have organized a panel discussion on June 17 to address aspects of business continuity to help companies adapt to whatever the situation might be. We begin the discussion here:

**Jim Carroll**

Executive Director of the Small Business Development Center
Vice President of Small Business for the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce

Panelists Jim Carroll, Yao Ming, Raymond F. Smith and Hui-Shan Walker will participate in the June 17 Executive Discussion Series.

Jim Carroll was born in Darby, Pa., outside Philadelphia and grew up in Lebanon, Pa. A graduate of Villanova University, he went on to serve in the Navy for 21 years as a commissioned officer. During his career he earned a master's in international relations from Salve Regina College, a master's in national security affairs and strategic studies from the U.S. Naval War College and an MBA in international business from the Cass Business School, City University of London. Since 1997, he has served as the executive director for the Hampton Roads Small Business Development Center Inc. and vice president for small business for the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce. The center provides one-on-one counseling and training and education programs for small businesses throughout the 18 cities and counties in southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore. He was formally recognized by the SBA in 1999 for his actions to support recovery efforts in Franklin in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd and again in 2008 and 2014 when his center received the SBDC Innovation and Excellence Award. Since assuming the director's position, he has led the center's staff in providing assistance to more than 10,000 clients, helping small business owners generate more than \$350 million in economic impact, creating or saving more than 8,000 jobs in Hampton Roads.

How can businesses be sure their plans for disasters and business continuity can be adaptable to any situation?

While every disaster is unique, they all have one aspect in common - they will affect a large group of people. These people may include your customers, suppliers and supply chain, your employees, and your family. Businesses have to be prepared to deal with a plethora of issues following a disaster and the best way to do so is to ensure that you have a strong infrastructure in place. By infrastructure I mean, offsite storage of data critical to your businesses survival; policies and procedures in place and understood by both employees and management such that a response to a disaster will be automatic; and maintaining access to sufficient capital to cover short-term costs - approximately two to three months of working capital.

Should businesses be using social media as a way to communicate with employees and customers in case of an emergency or service interruption, and if so, how?

While social media is one of the tools that enables businesses to reach out to both employees and customers, there may be a real chance that, for a variety of reasons, it may not be accessible. You have to have a mixture of "old" and "new" media to get the word out as quickly as possible. Use all the tools available to you to get your message into the market.

Remember, your customers are experiencing the same situation and they will be faced with their challenges as well. Thinking that you can return to "status quo ante" is not realistic. A new strategy will need to be developed and implemented to meet the demands of a greatly changed marketplace.

Ming Yao

Director for Crisis Management and Business Continuity
Cox Enterprises Inc.

Ming Yao is a retired special agent of the U.S. Secret Service, where he worked for 24 years, last serving on the director's staff as the deputy assistant director over human resources and training. He also held numerous other roles in investigations, training and protective assignments with President George Bush Sr. and President George W. Bush. Currently a director in corporate security for Cox Enterprises Inc., where he has worked for nearly 10 years, he is primarily responsible for crisis management, business continuity and corporate support for the company during times of disaster.

How can businesses be sure their plans for disasters and business continuity can be adaptable to any situation?

In order to ensure a program is adaptable to any disaster you must at the very least have some core elements. Core elements include emergency protocols/programs for communications, employee safety and accounting for employees during any disaster. All previous disasters have shown that communications and humanitarian needs are two of biggest issues during a disaster. If you can't communicate, keep your employees safe or account for them, you can't even begin to put your business back together. Account for your people, make sure they're safe and then you can focus on putting your business back together again. Safety, food, water and money needs must be met for any large-scale disaster.

Additionally, you need executive support. The executive support is key. From here you can build a program that has key elements including regular updates, multiple scenario tabletop exercises with all key managers present. This also includes building a business continuity culture that looks at business impact analysis, and pre-event planning and emergency preparedness. The BIAs can assist businesses looking at highest risk areas and help prepare and mitigate risks. Multiple different scenario exercises can help prepare businesses to face all hazard challenges.

Should businesses be using social media as a way to communicate with employees and customers in case of an emergency or service interruption, and if so, how?

Yes, companies should use social media. Approximately two-thirds of the American population use social media to stay connected with family and friends. Also, during disasters, official news outlets are no longer the most immediate or sole source of information. Social media communication is going to happen during any event and a company that neglects it would be missing a big opportunity to communicate with employees or customers.

Instead companies should be aware of it, guide the use of it and even leverage it. Companies should try to stay ahead of negative interruption postings, and try to be as transparent as possible. They should post status information that they have on hand and hash tags in order to track information and also to dispel any misinformation before it comes out. It's harder to dispel misinformation once it is out there.

Raymond F. Smith

Business Continuity Analyst/Records Manager
Navy Exchange Service Command

Raymond Smith is a business continuity/disaster recovery analyst at the Navy Exchange Service Command with principal responsibilities that include performing analysis of business unit operating processes to determine continuity requirements in the event of a disruption. Smith came to NEXCOM in 2009 from the Defense Commissary Agency following a three-year assignment there as the IT business continuity/disaster recovery analyst and continuity of operations specialist. Before that he was a senior consultant for Robbins-Gioia and SI International, with assignments at the Army Materiel Command, the Veterans Administration and American Management Systems Inc. He has a bachelor's from Northeastern University in Boston in finance and economics and two master's degrees - one in computer science and an MBA - from Fairleigh Dickinson University, Teaneck, N.J. He holds CBCP, PMP and Security+ certifications. Smith is a retired army lieutenant colonel with IT and personnel specialties and a former civil service employee, retiring from the Army Corps of Engineers where he served as director of information management for the North Atlantic Division for 16 years.

How can businesses be sure their plans for disasters and business continuity can be adaptable to any situation?

In my experience dealing with both small and large businesses, the "one size fits all" or the "all events" plan requires introducing a large number of variables that may be counterproductive in the development of the plan. It may also be daunting to the developer and lead to a poorly developed plan or no plan at all. Instead, I have found that developing your plan around your three most likely scenarios and/or risks - worst-case to limited outages - will provide a plan that can be adapted to the in-between incidents or events.

Testing your plan with varying scenarios is key to determining whether you will be ready to respond to an event and how effective that response will be.

Should businesses be using social media as a way to communicate with employees and customers in case of an emergency or service interruption, and if so, how?

Most definitely. We are a wired society. Social media is another tool that, utilized properly, can be a major asset in communicating with your employees, associates and families. Most military commands now have official Facebook and Twitter accounts that they use to communicate a wide variety of information, including emergency incidents/events. Many, for example, use their Facebook pages as an official means to communicate base alert status, gate closures/delays, weather-related incidents, as well as information exchange during exercises. The importance of social media has been well-tested recently in response to the several recent active shooter events, including the recent incident at the mall in Maryland and at Fort Hood, Texas. Use of social media in conjunction with other methods such as emergency/mass notification systems can be an effective means of getting critical information to/from employees and customers during an emergency or service interruption.

Hui-Shan Walker, CEM, CFM

Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Hampton

Before taking this position in Hampton in December 2011, Hui-Shan Walker was deputy coordinator of emergency management for Chesapeake for 12 years. Prior to that, she was director of emergency services/information systems for the Portsmouth-West Chesapeake Chapter of the American Red Cross. Walker holds a certified emergency manager designation through the International Association of Emergency Managers. She has held many leadership positions in emergency management, including past president of the Virginia Emergency Management Association, past chair of the Regional Catastrophic Planning Team for the Virginia Beach-Norfolk-Newport News MSA, past chair of the Hampton Roads Emergency Management Committee, former chair of the Hampton Roads Regional Emergency Management Technical Advisory Committee and former representative on the Hampton Roads Area Maritime Security Committee. She has been the local government representative on FEMA Region III's Regional Advisory Council for many years. Walker holds a bachelor's degree from Emory University and a master's of public administration from Old Dominion University.

How can businesses be sure their plans for disasters and business continuity can be adaptable to any situation?

An "all hazards" approach should be utilized in developing and testing plans for disasters/emergencies and business continuity. Often, disasters/emergencies are unpredictable. Therefore, through an all hazards planning approach businesses can be better prepared to respond and recover from an event no matter what the hazard.

Some key steps in disaster preparedness that businesses should consider while planning are:

Assessing risk (both internally and externally), assessing critical business functions, assessing and preparing your supply chain, backing up your data, creating a crisis communication plan, assembling an emergency supply kit/to go box of key items, reviewing insurance coverage, planning/identifying an alternate location to operate from, creating an emergency plan/business continuity plan, and testing your plan(s).

Planning and preparing when there is not an emergency is the best time. We always want to plan for the worst, but hope for the best.

Should businesses be using social media as a way to communicate with employees and customers in case of an emergency or service interruption, and if so, how?

Although we live in a fast-paced information world today, there are many employees and customers who do not use social media daily to communicate and get their

information. Being cognizant of this and developing communication plans with other "tools" that are not considered social media is very important and necessary.

However, social media is one tool in the "toolkit" that businesses can use to efficiently communicate with their employees and customers in the event of a disaster or service interruption. Having an effective social media strategy and then adjusting it to fit an emergency is a critical part of a business's crisis communication plan. One of the things to consider in a social media strategy is teaching/sharing how to effectively use social media to get accurate information about your business during an emergency with your employees and customers. This will help with managing misinformation that is an inherent risk of utilizing social media during a crisis situation.

Technology is changing so fast and social media is changing the way we share information today. Creating a social media strategy that includes service interruptions, disasters/emergencies that can be adjusted as needed is vital to any business. Building redundancy into systems is part of the business continuity plan. However, planning to get back to the basics should also be considered if and when technology goes down for a period of time.

To register for the event, go to:

<http://insidebiz.com/cox-eds>

TAGS [Banking and Finance](#) [Environmental/Utilities](#) [Summer 2014 Pre-Event](#)

SHARE [Login to post comments](#) [SHARE](#) 

Pilot Targeted Media: [Apartment Book](#) | [Auto Guide](#) | [The Flagship](#) | [HREW Guide](#) | [Military Newspapers](#)
[PilotOnline Business Channel](#) | [Style Weekly](#) | [Targeted Productions](#) | [Tidewater Parent](#) | [VOW Bride](#)

Our Affiliates: [NSA Virginia](#) | [American Marketing Association](#)

© 2015 Inside Business – The Hampton Roads Business Journal :: All rights reserved.

[Inside Business](#)

About Us: Inside Business is The Hampton Roads Business Journal, providing daily business news in print and online to the Hampton Roads and Tidewater area.

150 West Brambleton Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia 23510 -United States

Call Us On Phone: 757-222-5353 | Or Email Us: [Contact Us](#)

[Get Directions to our Office](#)

