Chapter XIII
Business Continuity Management

CHAPTER OVERVIEW

After explaining several continuous computing technologies in previous chapters, the book focuses on business continuity management in Chapter XIII. Ensuring higher levels of data and applications availability and hence improving the business continuity is not a one-time job. Contrary, it represents a process that has to be managed in an efficient and effective way. It encompasses numerous activities that have to be planned and managed. This chapter introduces the main concepts, standards and approaches of business continuity management.

THE SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE OF BUSINESS CONTINUITY: EXTENDED CHURCHMAN’S DEFINITION

In order to give more comprehensive definition of business continuity from the perspective of systems approach, additional dimensions of the second Churchman’s system definition cited in the beginning of the book will be used in this section.

According to Churchman “…there exists a client whose interests (values) are served by S in such a manner that the higher the measure of performance, the better the interests are served, and more generally, the client is the standard of the measure of performance.” In our case, the entire business system represents the client of its information system. The higher the measure of performance (e.g., availability
ratio) provided by information system, the better the interests of an organization are served.

Churchman continues with the following dimension: “…there exists a decision maker who - via his resources—can produce changes in the measures of performance of S’s components and hence changes in the measure of performance of S.” Decision maker in our case will be one or more IT specialists including system administrator, network administrator, IT manager, business continuity manager, including CIO as well. All of them, via their resources that they use, administer or manage (information technologies), can make decisions and produce changes in the measure of performance of S’s components and S as a whole (information system). System administrator, by using system administration tools, techniques, utilities, and so-called “tips-and-tricks” on the system operating platform can “produce changes in the measures of performance of the system” (enhance the system availability ratio).

Churchman’s designer, who conceptualizes the nature of S in such a manner that the designer’s concepts potentially produce actions in the decision maker, and hence changes in the measures of performance of S’s components, and hence changes in the measure of performance of S, in our case, will be an IS designer, IS system developer, CIO or even CEO, who may propose or create such solutions or define such business objectives that can be later implemented by IT specialists. The designer’s intention is to change S (IS) so as to maximize IS’ value to the client (business system, organization). Designing and implementing a business continuity plan is a typical example of such activity.

**INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS CONTINUITY MANAGEMENT (BCM)**

Business continuity management (BCM) involves several measures (activities) that have to be planned in order to achieve higher levels of the system/application availability ratios. The section introduces the main BC concept and standards.

Over the past decade, information has become an organizational resource that has to be managed in an efficient and effective way just like any other resource. In practice, however, many organizations still keep information management activities within computer centres even though information has become a corporate asset. Organizational management cannot be effective if it does not integrate organization-wide information management as well. This is in particular important for contemporary businesses, which require continuous computing platform as a main prerequisite for business continuance. Therefore, modern business needs an efficient integration of business continuity management into organizational management,
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