

BS25999 – More than a trophy

The Business Continuity Standard BS25999 Part 2:2007 has enjoyed the most public launch of any standard ever into the market place. That launch has brought with it a flurry of discussion groups, seminars, awareness courses and implementation training, most of which is focused on gaining accreditation. To fuel these offerings and ensure demand, there is an almost self-fulfilling speculation as to the regulatory role BS25999 may play in the supply chain, framework agreements, and contractual arrangements and be used by regulators themselves.

My concern is that the phenomenal amount of work done by all the contributing agencies will not be used by a vast range of organisations who just want to have a good, workable plan and not expand their trophy case.

Part 1 of the Standard was written as a guidance note for those needing to have a business interruption plan. The Code of Practice highlights the key areas organisations should consider and gives examples of generic tasks that, in one form or another, should appear in a good recovery plan. Ensuring that, once implemented, a plan is kept up-to-date and alive is also subject matter in Part 1, as is keeping our eye on current and emerging threats that face us through a risk management perspective.

The Code of Practice had a purpose: to provide organisations with some recognised and accepted way of developing, implementing and maintaining a BCP. This it does admirably. It can be used independently of Part 2. Obtaining accreditation is not mandatory, well not yet anyway!

Part 2 has a different intended purpose: for use by auditor to decide if an organisation could be recommended for official accreditation to the Standard or not.

Is there more to it?

Many organisations may be frightened off by the apparent complexity and work required to attain the required standard and keep it. As a result, many dismiss the implementation, reviewing, maintenance and improvement principles set out in Part 2 that, if used appropriately, can help any organisation ensure it has that good workable plan when it needs it.

How can Part 2 be used informally? Find a friendly auditor who understands both the Standard and BCMS to explain where you as an organisation want to be and have them use the appropriate elements of Part 2 to help you get there and stay there. Your trophy will come when you use the plan and it works!

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