BUSINESS CONTINUITY EVOLUTIONS

The Adaptive Business Continuity Newsletter

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BUSINESS CONTINUITY NEWS:

On 30 January, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern. As of 29 June, over 10 million cases have been reported worldwide along with nearly 500,000 deaths.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Mark Armour provides his ideas for delivering BC

This issue's spotlight is on Nina Wyatt, CISO with Sunflower Bank

A WORD TO OUR READERS

We hope that you and all of our colleagues in Business Continuity and related disciplines remain safe and healthy. Like everyone else, those of us in the Adaptive Business Continuity community have been working tirelessly for the businesses and communities we support. We apologize for the delay getting this newsletter in your hands.

Use the links at the bottom of this newsletter to reach out to us at any time.

WHAT'S NEW WITH ADAPTIVE BUSINESS CONTINUITY

We moved our Adaptive Business Continuity Foundations Certification course (cABCF) online!

Our own Dr. David Lindstedt has been a very busy fellow the past couple of months. And, before you ask, no, we don't know how he does it. Here is just a sampling of what he has been up to:

- Webinar with Caliber Academy: Ensuring Business Continuity: A Framework for COVID-19
- Interview with Shane Mathew and Mark Armour on The Failover Podcast
- LinkedIn Article: Standard Business Continuity Cannot Help You Now (and what to do instead)
- Participation with Mark Armour and our friends at Kingsbridge Consulting: 2020 Hindsight: all of your questions answered. You'll have to register to view the recordings…and yes, there is an original AND a follow up that we did in order to get to all the online questions we received!
- Another LinkedIn article from earlier in the year: Coronavirus and Christchurch: Actionable Advice from Protracted Disasters.

In addition, the Coronavirus Lessons Learned was developed to help the Adaptive BC Community identify and track their own lessons in responding to and recovering from the impact of this crisis.

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ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD

Below is information we've curated since our last issue that you probably won't find in any other publication. We hope you find this content of value. Many of the links below are COVID-19 related but we have made an effort to include additional content that we consider applicable or relevant to our world today. We encourage you to provide articles and materials that you feel are worthy of inclusion here.

Chinese Movie Studio upturned its business model due to Coronavirus

This article for The Conversation highlights the decisiveness that comes with an agile response to what might seem to be an overwhelming challenge. Western companies and BC practitioners alike should take note!

Reopening Hollywood: NBCUniversal Begins Return to Work on the Lot

In the entertainment news site Deadline, Dominic Patten provides a comprehensive look at NBC Universal's return to film and television production.

Might This Be the Beginning of Education?

Paul Hanstedt muses on how COVID-19 might affect how education is delivered – for the better!

How Retailers Can Build Resilience Ahead of a Recession

One of many insightful articles coming from McKinsey & Company. This one comes courtesy of Sajal Kohli, Nicholas Landry, and Steve Noble.

Getting Ahead of the Next Stage of the Coronavirus

Another great piece by the folks at McKinsey & Company. This one provided by Martin Hirt, Sven Smit, Chris Bradley, Robert Uhlaner, Mihir Mysore, Yuval Atsmon, and Nicholas Northcote.

Inside the Story of How H-E-B Prepared for the Pandemic

Comprehensive article by the fine editors at Texas Monthly. This one, by Dan Solomon and Paula Forbes, includes some great details provided by the Director of Emergency Preparedness for H-E-B, Justin Noakes.

The Adaptation Advantage

This one is a video presentation by Heather McGowan. Less business continuity and more overall resilience focused, this makes a good case for flexibility and comfort with change as both an enabler and predictor of capability.

Failing Forward: how to encourage sharing of what is not working

Tiina Pasanen shares here insight into how we can learn from failure and even foster an environment in which failure is not stigmatized.

20 Cognitive Biases That Affect Your Decision-Making

This is not a new one but remains extremely relevant. In it, Patrick Allan shares an infographic with detailed explanations of biases that not only affect day-to-day decision-making but can threaten all of our planning and preparedness efforts!

63 Books that Changed a Life in 2019

In our last issue, we shared a reading list from Sarah Powell. This time around we do one better and share a list of 63 books collected by Jesse Randall based on input he received from his LinkedIn followers.

The Future of Predictions

In this "nano audiobook", Professor Diana Derval provides some very simple and practical aspects of predictive systems. You are sure to find a lot of interesting observations crammed into just 8 minutes!

Risk Matters X.O Podcast Episode 2: Risk Perception and COVID-19 Impact

An eye-opening look at risk. Check out Episode 2 which features Jake Stenzler and Matt Mowrer speaking about biases that influence our perceptions of risk.

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Adaptive Tip: Enabling (not Delivering) Continuity

By Mark Armour, cABCF

A fundamental problem with our traditional approach to business continuity is that it is predicated on the belief that BC is something that can be delivered. This forms the foundation of our lifecycle and methodology-driven approach as it believed that, by properly executing a series of steps, a required level of preparedness will be the natural outcome. In truth, preparedness and recoverability is something we – as business continuity practitioners – can only influence and facilitate.

> **Facilitate** [*fuh*-**sil**'-i-tāt] *verb* 1. to make easier or less difficult; help forward (an action, a process, etc.) 2. To assist the progress of (a person)

So, what are some tips or tricks we can employ that take us out of this mindset that BC is provided by us rather than something we enable through facilitation?

1. **Stop defining recovery objectives.** Traditional time-bound objectives are designed to provide a single means of validating that business continuity has been "delivered". Satisfying such objectives becomes the driver and incentive within the business continuity space. Changing our mindset around business continuity starts with eliminating such focus. Instead of striving to satisfy an objective, look at business continuity as improving upon existing capabilities.

2. **Separate Technology Recovery.** Business continuity is about the delivery of services absent a resource – like Technology, Workspace and Staff. For this reason, time-bound parameters may make sense. When we understand this, we can separate our approaches. This is particularly important for business continuity practitioners who may have responsibility for both areas.

3. **Realize that capability already exists.** The Adaptive BC practitioner understands that recovery capability exists, regardless of whether formal programs and plans are in place. Through measurement, we can help the organizations we support to understand their level of recoverability, make informed decisions, and identify concrete steps that can be taken to improve.

4. **Stop focusing on compliance.** Compliance-driven programs reinforce the notion that business continuity is achieved by satisfying the requirements around execution of specific actions or delivery of materials. When we understand that such approaches only satisfy compliance mandates then we can start to think of business continuity as something that exists within a wide range of possibilities. Our goal should be to understand where, in that spectrum, our organizations sit and how we can improve.

5. **Skip the gap analysis.** Adaptive business continuity is about continuous improvement, not about satisfying an arbitrary objective. A gap creates the impression that there is a pre-defined recovery level that must be achieved, and the purpose of the program is to reach it. This can cause two problems. First, once levels are met, there is little or no incentive to improve even though improvement is always possible. Second, if objectives cannot be reached, then we put processes in place to accept the risk or shortcoming. This reduces or eliminates the opportunities to improve as such approvals are designed only to satisfy compliance requirements and disincentivize further progress.

6. **Eliminate the focus on risk.** The sooner we eliminate our focus on risk, the sooner we can get to our primary responsibility: preparing for the materialization of risk. Risk management teams do not take responsibility for preparedness so we should not be doing their jobs.

7. **No more plans.** This may be the most controversial but may also make the most sense. Eliminating our reliance on detailed documented instructions clears the path for a better approach to preparedness overall. If we remove plan documentation from our deliverables, the participants will not expect that their recovery can be scripted beforehand and, instead, consider the importance of flexibility and adaptability in response. In addition, if participants in our efforts do not expect that all their ideas and contributions will be written down for future reference they may be more apt to commit the important aspects of their work to memory through focus and practice. By doing this, we foster an environment of learning and a culture that is more focused on practice than on documentation.

SPOTLIGHT: NINA WYATT

The Spotlight for this edition is on Nina Wyatt, Chief Information Security Officer for Sunflower Bank. Nina became involved in Business Continuity (BC) in 2006 when she was tasked with completing a Business Impact Analysis (BIA). For the past fourteen years, she has been responsible for Business Continuity and Technology Disaster Recovery at Quicken Loans, Talmer Bank, Chemical Bank, and now Sunflower Bank where she is responsible for BC as part of her role. Nina has also developed a Youth Risk and Resilience program in an attempt to educate youth about the methodology, practice, and value of making risk-informed decisions. The program also provides youth with a high level overview about the many career opportunities that exist in areas of Risk Management, Business Continuity, Emergency Management, and Cybersecurity.

Tell us about your experience in BC and what led you to Adaptive in Particular?

I became interested in business continuity back when I was tasked with completing a BIA. I learned so much more information about the business in which I worked than I ever could have learned organically in my own role. The process of learning about the business and seeing the connections shared between so many parts of the organization was very interesting. I saw a purpose of business continuity beyond its usage in response to a disruptive event. I was also able to work organizational preparedness into other responsibilities such as asset management and new hire training. Like many people I've heard about, I considered a lot of what I did Adaptive before there was even a name for it. It wasn't until I saw an article about preparing for impacts instead of events, that I saw there was an approach that tied together many of the things I believed in, but wasn't seeing promoted elsewhere in the discipline.

How would you describe your approach to Business Continuity?

I like to take an all-encompassing approach to business continuity. This means tying it together with people, processes, and technology which benefit from heightened awareness and a common understanding of shared dependencies. Particularly with so many IT services outsourced, it is critical to understand what risks you may unknowingly accept, and how you can engage with stakeholders early on to proactively prevent risk and the adverse impacts that can result.

From early on in my career in BC, I was very excited about it and used every opportunity to work it into a conversation, communication, or as part of a wider message. I also try to incorporate "out of the box" methods through managing the program. In particular, I like to get people excited about BC so I have my own song list which I use at preparedness and training events. It includes numbers like *You Left the Water Running* by Otis Redding and *We Didn't Start the Fire* by Billy Joel. It also means engaging people when something happens that can be used to draw attention to the value that BC offers. Anything you can do to spark interest, amp people up, or set yourself apart, helps people understand the program and it's intent. It also helps people understand that their roles are connected to so much more than the people, technology, and third party service providers they interact with day to day.

It is easy for a single employee, supporting an individual role, to attribute their responsibilities to a single line process, or single business function. The reality is that that single employee, performing that individual role, is likely supporting three different lines of business, two strategic objectives, and a myriad of functions. Conversely, a single decision the employee makes which affects the desirable outcome of that process could adversely affect much more than a reporting requirement or sales objective. It is extremely valuable that all contributors in a company understand their role and the connection it serves to the rest of the company. The value in this approach moves beyond the "annual review, updates, and testing" but actually inspires cultural change by building upon the knowledge of how the organization operates and establishing channels to share that information.

I would attribute my success to my mentors along the way – I have been truly blessed to work with some amazing people in my career journey and I wouldn't be where I am today without them.

Any guidance for those that are pursuing their own Adaptive BC Path?

Two pieces of advice I can think of:

1. I think it is easy for Business Continuity and Risk professionals to get cornered into making decisions on behalf of the business. In reality, the practitioners should be providing information - painting a picture, so to speak - so the business is enabled and equipped to make risk aware decisions.
2. Never underestimate the value of disruption. Leverage disruptions to strengthen your relationships and to make a positive difference in your organization going beyond "what to do when something goes wrong." Be the voice and advocate for change which excels the organization's ability to prevent things from going wrong in the first place.

RESOURCES

Remember, we have a list of smart and knowledgeable advisors who you can contact for Adaptive questions, help and support: https://www.adaptivebcp.org/advisors.html

CONTACT US

If you wish to participate or have a contribution you can make in the form of a presentation, article, or other medium, we are always happy to help tell your story and promote your experiences.

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