



“Complexity creates confusion, simplicity focus.”

E. De Bono

BCM Conceptual design & architecture

All organizations whether large or small have aims and objectives such as to grow, to provide services and to acquire other businesses. These aims and objectives are generally met via strategic plans to achieve an organization's short, medium and long term goals. Business Continuity Management (BCM) will ensure that these aims and objectives are not compromised by unexpected disruptions.

Definition of Business Continuity Management:

“A holistic management process that identifies potential impacts that threaten an organization and provides a framework for building resilience with the capability for an effective response that safeguards the interests of its key stakeholders, reputation, brand and value creating activities.”

(The Business Continuity Institute)

Conceptual Design

Business Continuity Management is still a relatively young discipline and growing in maturity and standardisation. It is therefore no surprise that people may have very different views, opinions and comprehension about BCM. Vital for the success of a future BCM programme is that it is built on solid foundations.

With BCM being a holistic management process, it includes or touches a number of disciplines such as Risk Management, Corporate Governance, Crisis Management, Disaster Recovery, Human Resources, Facility Management...). Obviously, it is very easy to get confused or lost.

Therefore it is key to build a common view and understanding with the key stakeholders on a number of strategic topics:

- What is BCM?
- What are the costs/benefits involved with BCM?
- Why do we need BCM?
- What do we want to achieve?
- What would be the BCM scope?

BCM Architecture

As soon as consensus has been reached on the previous questions and the decision is taken to go ahead with a BCM Programme some tactical decisions must be made.

About Aszure

Aszure is specialized in operational risk management consultancy and staffing. Operational risk management, information security, business continuity and compliance to laws and regulations are major cornerstones of our services.

Aszure assists its customers with the incorporation of operational risk management at all levels and in all areas of their organization, including day-to-day operational decisions. No decision should be taken in any organization without applying proper operational risk management. It can be applied throughout the entire life cycle of any activity or project. In order to minimize risk, it is however preferable to apply operational risk management is applied at the beginning phase of a project or operational activity.

About Aszure Academy

Aszure offers, through the Aszure Academy, an extensive education and awareness program, covering several open classes, events and customized education experiences.

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At this point in time the organization should be considering things like:

- What is the most appropriate governance structure to support the BCM programme?
- What BCM standards/good practices will be chosen to build the BCM programme on?
- Will the BCM programme be staffed internally or is external expertise required?
- Will specific tools, applications and/or templates be used to support the BCM programme?
- Will the BCM programme follow a lifecycle approach?
- Is a future BCM certification for the organization a key objective?

Methods

In close collaboration with your organization, Ascore will select the method that suits best to your specifications and organizational culture, to come to clear answers to the above questions.

Outcomes and Deliverables

Conceptual design results in agreements upon the key criteria for the BCM project:

- Objectives and ambitions
- Pursued benefits
- Scope/coverage in all its dimensions
- Reach of the BCM programme
- Requirements

While taking into account business priorities, the key stakeholders will:

- Decide when to initiate the BCM programme;
- Appoint the executive sponsor for the project;
- Appoint a competent individual to develop & implement the BCM programme;
- Provide a clear and concise briefing to the BCM programme manager at start up;
- Provide a formalized statement of commitment to the programme.

Benefits

The holistic view and approach of the BCM conceptual design and architecture method guarantee that BCM is looked at from different angles and considerations.

Following on the conceptual design and architecture phase the key stakeholders will have developed a common understanding of the subject matter.

A lot of the complexity that may have been around in the embryonic phase will have been clarified.

A clear and concise brief at the early stages of the programme will greatly contribute to the clarity and focus it requires.

Next step

The conceptual design and architecture phase will be followed by the first step of the BCM Lifecycle. (see **BCM Programme Management** flyer).

Interested in world-class education and training on business continuity, crisis management, disaster recovery or pandemic planning: visit the website of the BCM Academy Belgium (www.bcmacademy.be).

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