

Just One Thing

By Richard Dolewski

Examine **JUST ONE THING** in the Data Center. Be impactful in how you deliver your JD Edwards experience to your business users. Keeping your applications resilient and available is always top priority. Develop a complete Cloud Application protection and availability roadmap to ensure success to support your most important customer ... **your business**. Protecting today's complex IT environments from catastrophic events is challenging for many organizations. Data loss and prolonged application unavailability are significant risks that all businesses face.

Setting and prioritizing your IT goals to meet business objectives can be a tricky task. In prioritizing projects, consider these Absolute MUSTS to transform your Data Center from aging monolithic designs, flawed data protection solutions, unrecoverable applications, or lacking systems availability. Failing to protect against Data loss events and disasters cause an alarmingly high number of companies to fail.

Energize your IT and Data Center operations back into shape to keep pace with the speed and needs of today's economic climate.



Healthy Disaster Recovery Plan – Healthy Business

Book a meeting with your Disaster Recovery Plan. Yes, I am serious! Create a **calendar entry** right now, book a meeting room, schedule the team, and make it happen. We all know that having a fully tested Disaster Recovery solution is vital to the health and continued success of your business. How often should IT perform a health check of their DR Plan? It should be a minimum of twice a year, or with every major infrastructure deployment or application upgrade like JD Edwards 9.2. Out of sight, out of mind is not a working solution!

Many of you have realized the benefits of virtualization, yet you may not have been able to step back and analyze how to maintain your disaster recovery capabilities with a cloud-based technology foundation. Challenging IT priorities, limited staff, and competing budgets prevent you from taking the next step. Today's dynamic business environments are based on a seamless flow of information. Organizations have invested in their IT infrastructure because they increasingly rely on technology to conduct business to sustain profitability. Management views technology as a necessary business enabler.

Never ignore the truth about your level of DR readiness. Disaster Recovery is your last line of defense against severe business impact regardless of the circumstances. When your business is down for an extended period of time, the market share impact could result in millions of dollars of lost revenue. Does your company have a comprehensive DR solution that would allow your business to function in the event of a disaster? Can you demonstrate repeatable and timely recovery of your business? Will the DR Plan work as written or does it require super **HUMAN** intervention. Remember the 3C's in DR Planning Methodology: Keep your plan **Current**, Keep your plan **Complete**, and Keep your plan **Comprehensive**.

The **questions to ask** in your DR Planning meeting:

1. Are the current servers in DR scope recoverable in a disaster?
2. Does the business understand how long it will take IT to recover the Business (Recovery Time Objective)?
3. Does the business understand how much data may be lost (Recovery Point Objective)?
4. Have your business expectations changed? Is IT still aligned with the Business?



Communicate, in simple terms, your capabilities and success criteria of the DR Plan and emphasize the delivery to your business. Ensure your message clearly describes **business** outcomes — not **IT** outcomes. **Business folks do not speak the language of IT.** Start thinking in terms of business interruptions and financial impact of Systems Availability. Traditional DR methodology relies on declaring a disaster in order to use the backup or standby infrastructure in FEMA related events like hurricanes, floods, or fire. However, most application availability interruptions are due to much more unexpected, everyday failures. Yes, IT must plan for the worst, but they also must plan for the more likely scenarios like server or entire rack failure, or power outages or a communications failure. IT and Management must both work on building inner business core strength and - keeping your business healthy regardless of any disaster-related event.

End your Bad Habits – Perform a DR Readiness Assessment

The value of successfully implementing architecture and application management extends far beyond the walls of your DC. Your business relies on availability, scalability, and technology currency to maximize the value of your infrastructure investment. IT expertise demands your ability to maximize your ROI, keep expenditures predictable, lifecycle management, and free up valuable IT resources needed to focus on more strategic organizational initiatives.

The objective of a readiness assessment is to formally review your current infrastructure reference architecture and availability state for the entire Data Center. This includes examining in detail every server and logical partition supporting the current business application environments. You must discover and document the applications, server platforms, network and storage devices that represent the protection tier in the Data Center.



Never assume that all systems are properly managed and conform to industry compliance standards. The assessment will identify exposures and current practices deployed within your server infrastructure. Your goal is to develop systems availability, scale, automation, messaging, and data protection recommendations per application. This must also include critical applications that span across several servers and/or partitions and their underlying technology foundation.

Performing a readiness assessment is also **Disaster Prevention**. In other words, money well spent. Your primary responsibility is to protect your corporate data, your business' greatest asset. With so many interdependencies within the data center; IT should examine all production workloads, potential single points of failure and associated risk factors. Companies with mission-critical data centers and a low tolerance for downtime must maintain precise system availability and disaster recovery prevention measures. This means that **COMPLETE** data protection, resiliency and uptime strategies when fully implemented and tested will provide you the availability your business demands.

Conduct a workshop with your IT staff to determine the technical readiness of the servers supporting your business today. The objectives should be oriented toward gaining an understanding of the current operating environment. This assessment will essentially be a review of everything that is in place today and what is required to run your business efficiently, effectively, and be able to deliver availability and recovery in a disaster.



The workshop should include all production workload servers, storage, network, server and network dependencies, application profile, flow of information between applications, existing operational and recovery procedures, backup/replication strategy and data center facilities. The measurement of success is application level recovery within the desired Recovery Point (RPO) and Recovery Time (RTO) Objectives defined by the business.

Assessment of your Data Center Capabilities:

- Current cloud infrastructure environment
- Gap Analysis for DC
- Technology refresh and consolidation opportunities to reduce spend
- Critical Server Definition – Mapping of servers, dependencies & interfaces
- Overview current backup, logical/hardware replication and recovery model
- Create data loss/exposure models
- Technical analysis of Network (WAN/LAN) topology
- Technical analysis of SAN environment
- Technical analysis of virtual/physical compute environment
- System and data security compliance
- Design for High Availability vs Disaster Recovery – BUSINESS VALUE.
- Monitoring and centric message management – UPTIME VALUE
- Identify key business processes (Internal/External) & associated IT systems
- Examine Hybrid, Internal and External cloud options

During your assessment, you must rationalize your organization's ability to utilize the private cloud deployment to help your company achieve new business milestones in availability security and control, while releasing the burden of everyday IT challenges. Findings from your documents will provide a basis for acceptable level of risk, technology or configuration improvements, remediation activities, and project scope, which equates to positive impact to the business.



IT must sunset traditional Data Center deployments and transform itself away from monolithic designs, and labor-intensive execution. Nothing will undermine the credibility of IT leadership more than JD Edwards instability, extended break fix periods or broken software or hardware integrations. IT must implement a culture of inclusion in **business delivery** not just **IT delivery**.

3 Kinds of People in IT

Those that make things happen

Those who watch things happen

Those who wonder what has just happened

The time is now to examine **JUST ONE THING** to change to protect your Business and run the Data Center effectively. It seems basic, but this is the most fundamental principle of running IT.

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Richard Dolewski is a recognized SME and award-winning speaker specializing in Business Resiliency, Cloud Architecture, DR Planning and Backup & Recovery Program Design.