

Cloud-Based Disaster Recovery Emerging as Top IT Priority



IDG RESEARCH STUDY REVEALS THAT MORE COMPANIES ARE LOOKING TO THE CLOUD FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY.

It's amazing how things change. Telephones used to be bulky instruments that sat on desks; now they fit into pockets and are more like mini computers. Disaster recovery used to require a complex configuration coupled with a costly hot site. But thanks to virtualization and the cloud, disaster recovery is now as simple as clicking a button to replicate data, support a failover, and manage data.

The pace at which businesses operate has changed too. It is common for enterprises to have an expansive global presence with 24 by 7 support for their products and services. Data has taken on a new importance. Productivity is a high priority that's dependent on global, disparate systems.

With so much riding on the reliability of technology, the cost of operational disruption is high. It's not just lost revenue and productivity, but also a risk of losing customers as a result of either system failures or data breaches. No matter how failure happens, significant repercussions affect a company's brand, reputation, and revenue.

How can organizations protect themselves from these situations? A recent IDG Research survey reveals that, even while cloud-based disaster recovery solutions offer a less complex, more affordable solution, enterprises are still using the equivalent of desk phones when sleeker opportunities with greater value are available.

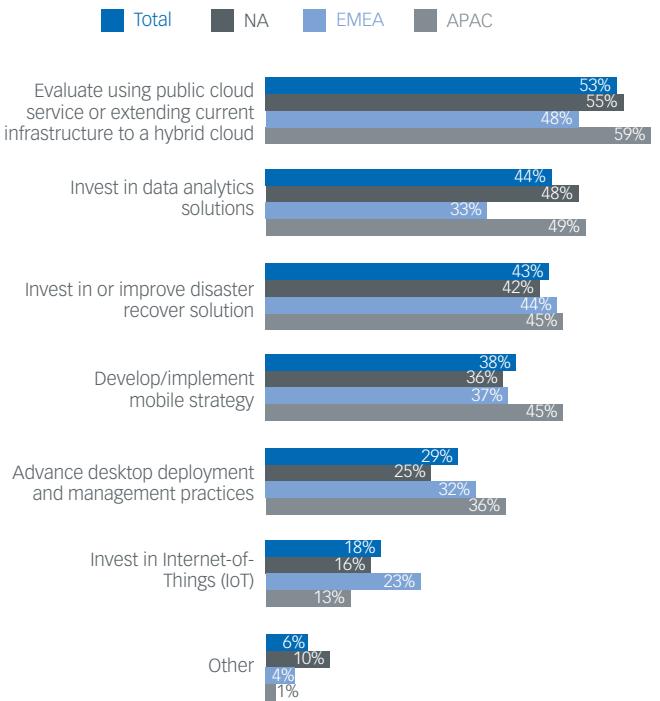
Moving Beyond Traditional Disaster Recovery

The IDG survey, which polled 400 global IT executives in early 2015, revealed that enterprises aren't ignoring disaster recovery. The fact is, most enterprises are highly concerned about disaster recovery and business continuity. One of the top three IT priorities for 2015 is



2015 IT Priorities

Evaluating and or investing in cloud services and disaster recovery solutions rank 1 and 3, respectively, among the top IT priorities of 2015



TOTAL BASE: 400; NA: 200; EMEA: 120; APAC: 80



evaluating and investing in DR solutions, as cited by 43% of respondents. Also in the top three priorities is the ability to extend infrastructure to hybrid cloud computing solutions.

For those who have a DR strategy in place, 62% plan to reassess or expand it going forward. This indicates a desire to take advantage of new capabilities, ones that can help them better protect their business in the new realities of digital business.

But not all companies are in the position of simply being able to improve their DR solutions. The survey also revealed a more worrisome set of results: Nearly 40% of those who rated their organizations' ability to recover their operations in the event of disaster or disruption as "fair or poor" further indicated that they either do not have a sound DR plan in place or are simply not confident in their existing plan.

There are also some noteworthy themes among the study's results. Along with those who are considering new DR solutions, respondents who do not have confidence in their current solutions cite that their top strategy includes disaster recovery-as-a-service (DRaaS).

The reasoning is clear: cloud-based DR solutions offer the flexibility of using operational expenses rather than capital expenses to implement a protection plan. In

addition, the cloud offers far less complexity compared to costly, maintenance-intensive secondary sites.

Protecting Both the Data Center and the Desktop

Clearly IT executives are focusing on their overall disaster recovery plan. Survey respondents indicated that they're not only concerned about the depth of data center protection, but also the breadth of desktop disaster recovery options. Here the results reveal a less prepared level of protection by enterprises.

While 50% of survey respondents have a formal disaster recovery plan in place for their entire organization, 36% say their plan only covers back-end infrastructure – essentially protecting the data center, but not desktops or remote offices.

The primary means of handling disaster recovery for desktops is through another virtualization technique, on-premises virtual desktop infrastructure, cited by 28% of respondents. In second place, at 21%, came the practice of handing out replacement laptops – a costly and time-consuming method.

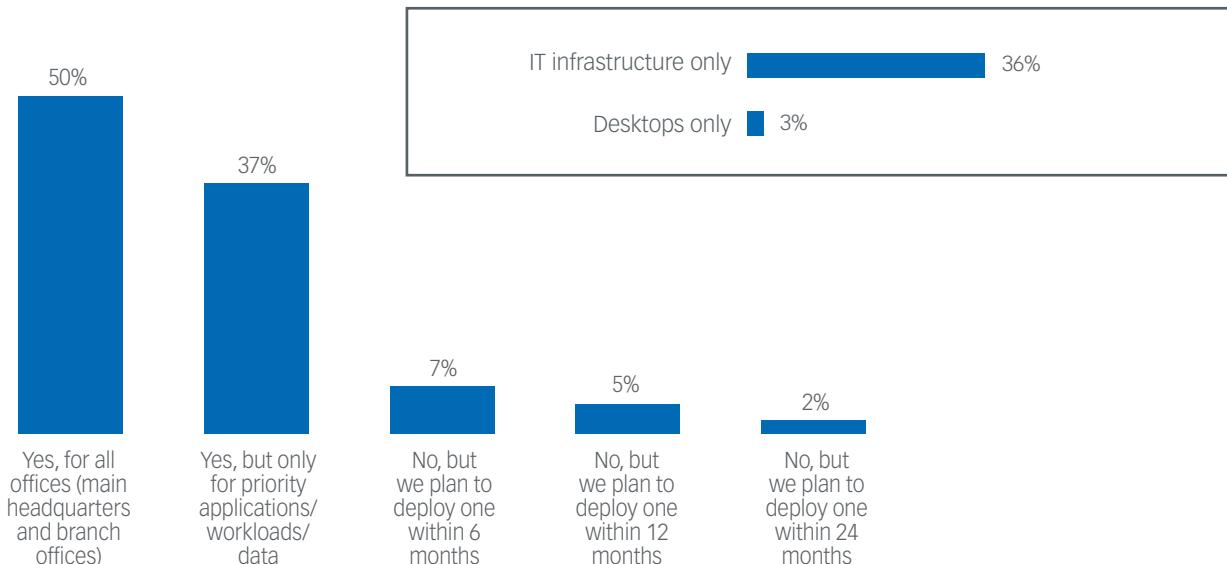
Creating a Holistic Disaster Recovery Strategy

How can enterprises bridge the gap in their current



Formal Disaster Recovery Plan

Only half of the respondents have a formal DR plan in place for the entire organization.



Cloud-Based Disaster Recovery: Desktop vs. Data Center

Disaster recovery for on premises environments focuses on providing protection for data and applications in the cloud without requiring additional data center facilities, storage, or system hardware capital expenses. Organizations can failover, run their systems in the cloud in the event of a disruption, and fallback when ready to resume system operations on premises.

Disaster recovery for desktops focuses on providing emergency cloud-hosted desktops and applications to end users in the cloud without requiring additional data center facilities or virtual desktop infrastructure. End-users can access their cloud-hosted virtual desktop from any device, anywhere, ensuring that in the event of disaster they can stay productive.

DR solutions, moving from their current solutions and taking advantage of new options? Just as they have with mission-critical applications and data, enterprises are becoming increasingly comfortable with using the cloud as a way to deploy disaster recovery.

What they want from a DR vendor is clear. Respondents cited a need for reliability (50%), security (49%), and compatibility with existing IT infrastructure (41%). Extending the option of a DR solution into the cloud reveals that respondents want ease of deployment and ease of management (cited as either “critical” or “very important” by 75%); cost reduction (68%); the ability to expand DR coverage beyond the data center (64%), and desktop disaster recovery (63%).

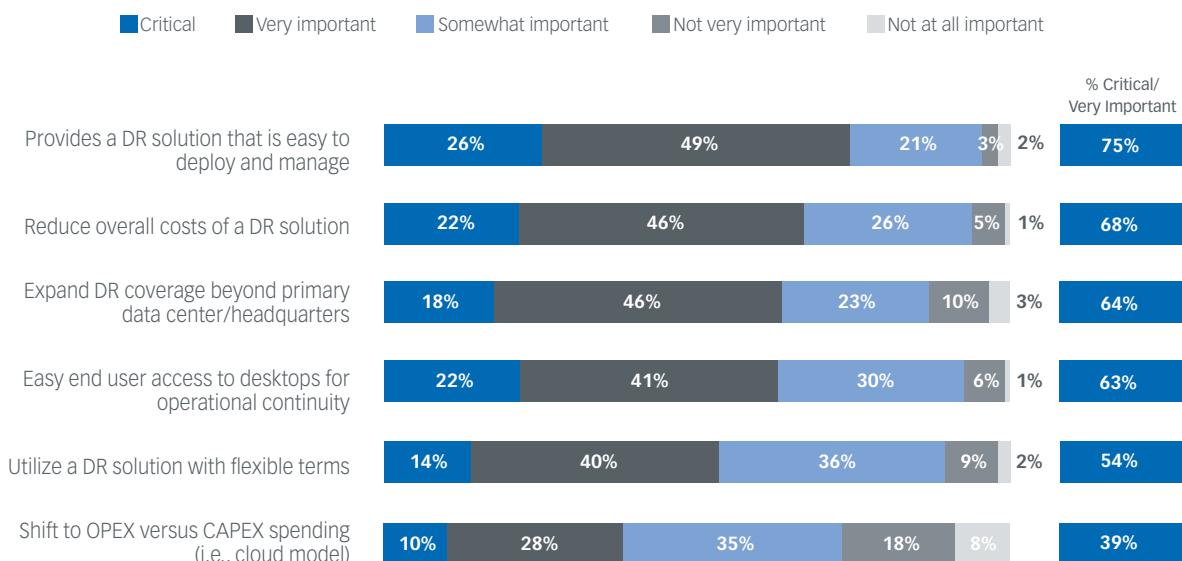
Other factors are related to financial concerns like flexible terms of use and being able to shift investment from CapEx to OpEx. Financial issues resonate, especially with CIOs, 77% of whom say they want to reduce overall costs of DR solutions.

Some enterprises are already making the transition to the cloud. Approximately one-quarter of respondents have already deployed cloud-based DR for their IT infrastructure, while an additional 36% plan to do so within the next two years.



Factors Motivating Interest in Cloud-based DR

The top driver of interest in cloud-based DR is ease of deployment and management; C-level executives place a far greater importance on shifting CAPEX to OPEX than do other respondents



Total base: 400

At the same time, enterprises are also paying equal consideration to how they can protect their workforce through desktop DR solutions, in order to ratchet up reliability across the enterprise. In this area, nearly one-quarter of respondents have deployed cloud-based solutions to protect their workforce, and an additional 31% plan to within the next 24 months. When evaluating DR for desktops through cloud-based solutions, the top three considerations are cost (cited by 75% as either “critical” or “very important”) ease of implementation and use (cited by 74%); and service level agreements (cited by 70%).

The good news: Enterprises understand that combining DR capabilities under a single vendor would help them derive specific benefits. As 65% of respondents noted, they would consider using the same vendor for both IT infrastructure and desktop DR, citing three key advantages.

- First, they would benefit from a single point of vendor contact for both infrastructure and desktop solutions.
- Second, they would benefit from integrated services rather than having to deal with multiple DR solutions, each with their own cost, licensing, and training issues.
- Finally, they would be able to protect infrastructure and desktops in the same centralized location.

What Enterprises Should be Thinking About

Taken together, these survey results reveal that enterprises recognize that they have new cloud-based DR options to protect their entire business and workforce. And that using cloud-based DR solutions can provide a sound strategy for implementing and/or enhancing business continuity

Transitioning to cloud-based disaster recovery is more like a step than a leap. Enterprises are using cloud computing to support more applications than ever before, and it makes sense to offload something utilitarian like DR so that increasingly expensive IT resources can focus on strategic, rather than tactical, issues. Thanks to the cloud, it's easier today to ensure the reliability of data at lower costs.

Ensuring holistic protection across the enterprise is also rising in importance, as organizations face high ramifications for data loss. Internally, when systems go

Protecting Your Business with VMware

VMware offers cloud-based disaster recovery solutions for infrastructure and desktops with vCloud Air Disaster Recovery and Horizon Air Desktop Disaster Recovery, respectively.

vCloud Air Disaster Recovery, built on VMware vSphere® Replication™, provides a cloud-based failover environment for dependable recovery in the event of an operational disruption. Asynchronous replication at the hypervisor layer allows you to easily configure virtual machines in VMware vSphere® for disaster recovery.

Horizon Air Desktop DR, enables organizations to ensure workforce continuity with affordable cloud-hosted desktops and applications. In the event of a disaster, IT can get end-users up and running quickly with the speed of the cloud, enabling them to be productive instantly, from any device, anywhere, with a secure workspace connected to corporate resources.

Based on the foundation of VMware vSphere, these cloud-based disaster recovery solutions deliver the reliability, security, and performance that IT expects, along with VMware support that they know and trust.

To learn more about cloud-based disaster recovery from VMware, visit [vCloud Air Disaster Recovery](#) and [Horizon Air Desktop DR](#).

down, there is a loss of employee productivity. Externally, when the same thing happens, the negative customer experience drives distrust and even abandonment. Operational disruption leads to loss of revenue and, eventually, a diminished reputation.

Cloud-based disaster recovery solutions provide a win-win-win situation for enterprises: higher levels of reliability; higher levels of security; and higher potential for cost advantages. To preserve and protect data and productivity, businesses need to continue to re-evaluate their disaster recovery plans and take advantage of cloud-based options.