



Outsourcing DR to hot and cold site providers



by

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Learn when it is inappropriate to outsource DR to a hot or cold site provider in this Expert Response by Paul Kirvan.

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What are some organizations that offer hot and cold sites? Also, when is it inappropriate to outsource disaster recovery to a hot or cold site provider? And what are other alternatives to setting up hot sites or cold sites?



Several firms offer both hot and cold recovery site options. Determine your requirements before contacting any such organizations. They have many solutions available, so do the homework before contacting them. Here are some examples:

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Company	Web Site	Hot Site	Cold Site	Work Area
Agility Recovery Solutions, Charlotte, N.C.	www.agilityrecovery.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
American Business Continuity Centers, Woodbury, N.Y.	www.continuitycenters.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
Bigbyte.cc Corporation, Albuquerque, N.M.	www.bigbyte.cc	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cervalis, LLC, Shelton, Conn.	www.cervalis.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
DPS Management Consultants, Fort Worth, Texas	www.dpsconsultants.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
E.V. Bishoff Company, Columbus, Ohio	www.evbc.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
FirstMerit Disaster Recovery, Brecksville, Ohio	www.fmdrs.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
Florida Business Continuity Center, Winter Haven, Fla.	www.fbccdr.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hewlett-Packard, Roseville, Calif.	www.hp.com/go/bcrs	Yes	Yes	Yes
IBM Business Continuity and Resiliency Services, Somers, N.Y.	www.ibm.com/services/continuity	Yes	Yes	Yes
iLand, Houston, Texas	www.iland.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
MainframeBackup, Trumbull, Conn.	www.mainframebackup.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
Recovery Point,	www.recoverypoint.com			

Gaithersburg, Md.		Yes	Yes	Yes
Rentsys Recovery Services, College Station, Texas	www.rentsysrecovery.com	Yes	Yes	Yes
SunGard Availability Services, Wayne, Pa.	www.availability.sungard.com	Yes	Yes	Yes

Regarding when it is appropriate to outsource DR to a hot or [cold site provider](#), the use of hot and cold sites presumes that certain employees from the affected company will relocate to that site for a period of time, usually while the main site is being recovered and returned to normal. The possibility of the vendor's facilities being located outside the country may be a consideration because of legal and regulatory requirements, the need to comply with national laws from the other country, and the availability of suitably trained staff. If you want to have work area recovery as part of hot/cold site solutions, the recovery sites should be within a reasonable geographic distance of your offices. If your organization has many offices across the country, look for [hot/cold site firms](#) that have multiple recovery sites.

Always be mindful of the people issues associated with hot and cold sites. Specifically, be aware that if you contract for a recovery site that is a long distance (by car or public transportation) from your offices, your employees may balk at the commute and potential time away from their families. Don't arrange for [hot, cold or work area recovery](#) without discussing the people issues with human resources and your recovery team members.

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If your organization has multiple offices, consider setting aside [space for disaster recovery](#), such as a storage room or unused office space. Outfit the space to serve as a secure backup facility with [racks for servers](#), communications equipment, data storage devices and other relevant components. You may be able to back up your data center for less than the cost of buying or leasing recovery services.

If your organization is large enough to justify two or more data centers, determine how each center may be able to back up the others. To identify [additional recovery sites](#), a review of other available space, such as warehouses, may be advisable.

[Collocation](#) may be a viable option to a [hot or cold site](#). If the collocation center has the resources to support your predetermined recovery requirements, it may be worth the investment. The term "collocation center" could also be substituted for "[hot site](#)" depending on how the facilities are configured.

Cooperative recovery (sometimes called mutual aid) arrangements may be an option, in which your organization and others (hopefully not in the same business) pool funds and resources to build a jointly owned recovery facility that each can use. Be careful of each other's requirements, however. For example, if one member needs dedicated workspace, whereas other members have flexible requirements, be sure to configure the space so that all members can feel satisfied. Deciding how the facility and its resources will be made available when a disaster is declared is of paramount importance, especially if an incident affects more than one of the members.

This was first published in August 2012

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