1.1 SET FORTH THE GOALS OF YOUR NETWORK PROTECTION PLAN

In broad terms, the goal of a Network Protection Plan should be to help the company achieve its business objectives *in spite of* numerous potential and real disasters. The data security section of the plan should address security issues to mitigate or… prevent computer disasters *before* they happen. The business continuity section of the plan, also called a business resumption or contingency plan, should help prepare for and identify steps to take *after* a disaster occurs.

A. Maintain the company's ability to serve its customers. A primary goal should be to restore the company's ability to serve its customers after a disaster as quickly as possible.

B. Avoid disaster and/or minimize losses caused by a disaster. Goals should include the implementation of measures such as computer access security and physical protection of hardware and software to help prevent computer disasters or minimize their effects.

C. Restart critical operations within an acceptable time frame. The plan should address not only the recovery of information and restoration of operations, but doing so within an acceptable time frame.

D. Identify the steps and resources required for recovery. Define the necessary actions required to resume business in a timely manner after any number of disaster scenarios. To do so, identify the key business resumption issues related to personnel, communications, facilities, and networked resources. The plan should then allocate appropriate financial and human resources reflecting the company's assessment of risk.

E. Gain the confidence of others with good communication. Another goal should be to earn the confidence of owners/stockholders, employees, customers, and vendors. Promptly after a disaster, communicate that the company has survived and can perform to meet deadlines and financial obligations. With proper planning and commitment of resources, the company can appear in control and functioning even after disaster, albeit in a restricted mode.

To prepare for disasters and achieve these goals, systematically consider the following techniques, which as a whole, make up your company's Network Protection Plan.