Harnessing the power of business continuity

in a digital world

Contents

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Foreword

The digitalization of services has created many new opportunities for both service providers and users around the globe. It's changed the way businesses operate, the uncertainties and risks they face, and the needs and behaviours of customers.

We all rely on services to work 24/7, from utilizing cloud services that facilitate a remote workforce to the personal use of IoT devices. That's why disruptions like the recent global IT outages impact businesses and supply chains so dramatically. The effects can include loss of operations, downtime costs, customer impact, negative media coverage, and reputational damage to brands.

As a result, many organizations see business continuity management as a necessary cost centre. But this does not have to be the case for you.

Leading organizations are using their business continuity management system (BCMS) as an asset to unlock new growth opportunities, enter new markets, win new clients and add extra value to their proposition. They're also using the international standard ISO 22301, Security and resilience — Business continuity management systems — Requirements, to establish a robust BCMS.

This approach enables businesses to strengthen operational resilience, reduce risk, and assure stakeholders. Now organizations are taking this further, becoming ISO 22301 certified to turn their BCMS into an opportunity, gaining trust with customers and stakeholders and strengthening their competitive advantage.

In this whitepaper, we'll explore the market changes driving the need for more robust business continuity management and the many benefits of ISO 22301 certification.

Factors influencing today's business continuity landscape

A broad range of influences are driving the need for organizations to prioritize and strengthen their business continuity management.

By taking measures to understand the forces impacting businesses operations, you can go from responding to risks to proactively identifying and managing future disruption.

We've listed some of the key forces to keep on your radar.

Regulatory and best-practice updates

Business continuity-related regulations continue to evolve with different regions introducing and updating their own legislations and creating voluntary frameworks for organizations to leverage. For example, Europe's NIS2 Directive and the SEC's Rule on Cybersecurity in the US both necessitate the confidentiality, integrity and availability of services, where availability is enforced by robust business continuity management for digital services at its core. For organizations who operate across multiple jurisdictions, remaining compliant can become a complex task. These regulations help businesses minimize risk and downtime from cyber attacks.

61% of compliance teams have 'monitoring upcoming regulatory and legislative changes' as their long-range strategic priority[1].

Digital trust

Digital development is driving the next-generation society. Technologies like AI and the cloud have facilitated the creation of digital ecosystems for organizations, unlocking unprecedented levels of innovation and the creation of 24/7 services. While these solutions continue to transform working and individual lives, they are also at risk of cyber attacks and outages. Business continuity professionals face evolving pressure to protect these digital ecosystems from emerging disruption while building digital trust.

More than a third of organizations believe they are "highly" or "extremely" exposed to cyber risks[2].

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Societal and geopolitical disruption

Public demonstrations and political unrest can cause security concerns for organizations regardless of where you may be operating. For many across the globe, recent conflicts and unforeseen events have placed a renewed focus on risk assessments, business continuity and the wellbeing of employees through crisis management plans.

"Societal polarization and economic downturn are seen as the most interconnected – and therefore influential – risks in the global risks network, as drivers and possible consequences of numerous risks[3]."

Protecting revenue

Rising inflation and operational costs can have a direct impact on organizational resilience. It can influence a change in supply chain operations, or shift areas of investment from one area of the business to another. For those responsible for business continuity, this requires agility to ensure any risks that arise from operational changes are adequately addressed.

39% of organizations say inflation is a top threat for them[4].

Extreme weather and energy crisis

Climate-related events and ramifications account for the top five global risks for the next decade in the World Economic Forum's 2023 Global Risks Report. Climate change can cause disruption to organizations from extreme weather and supply chain disruptions, to energy scarcity. Many of these climate-change-related risks are unpredictable, which places pressure on business continuity professionals to ensure processes are in place to proactively protect organizations from them.

Almost a third of organizations say they feel exposed to the threat of climate change[4].

Meeting customer expectations

Today's customers expect businesses to be available around the clock, delivering seamless services without interruption. With 24/7 accessibility becoming the norm, organizations are under increasing pressure to ensure business continuity at all times. This means not only addressing operational risks but also building the resilience to meet evolving demands. A robust Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) allows you to minimize disruption and maximize service availability.

51% of people say a business needs to be available 24/7 to meet their modern-day expectations of convenience and accessibility[5].

Turning a cost into an asset with ISO 22301

Whether your business is large or small, the international ISO 22301 standard helps you establish robust business continuity plans. Using this best practice, you can identify potential disruption and protect your organization and reputation.

ISO 22301 empowers you to reduce the likelihood of unexpected interruptions and recover from disruptive incidents when they happen. It will help you build capacity and redundancy to deal with unforeseen events. It also enables you to use 'horizon scanning' to identify new disruptions and risks so you can address them in a proportionate way.

Using your BCMS as a competitive differentiator

You can also use your ISO 22301 BCMS to become more agile, sustainable and efficient as you follow and adhere to the standard.

It also prepares you to respond to unexpected events in a measured and considered manner that streamlines processes.

Through certification, you gain trusted third-party proof of your business's effective use of valuable resources, differentiating your organization by building trust among clients that your products and services will be there when they need them.

In short, ISO 22301 brings countless benefits to both the organization and professionals, including the ability to:

- enhance organizational resilience;
- improve risk management processes;
- ensure a systematic response to crises;
- increase trust among stakeholders;
- strengthen horizon scanning;
- ensure the appropriate amount of safeguarding is in place;

- demonstrate leadership during a crisis;
- streamline efficiencies in daily operations;
- actively prevent risks;
- minimize costs associated with downtime; and
- enhance your business continuity knowledge and skillsets.

Unlock your competitive advantage with BCMS certification

ISO 22301 specifies the requirements for a management system to protect against, reduce the likelihood of, and ensure your business recovers from disruptive incidents. But how can you be certain your implemented BCMS fully aligns with the framework?

Working with a trusted partner to certify your BCMS to ISO 22301 is a critical step to differentiate your organization and strengthen your future-readiness.

Certification demonstrates to your stakeholders, customers, and partners that you have a world-class BCMS that operates at the highest levels and enables you to:

Elevate understanding

Ensure the importance and understanding of your BCMS so that staff are competent to effectively manage any scenario. This will require commitment from senior leadership, a cross-organizational clarification of roles and the implementation of the required skills in key departments.

Certifying your BCMS will provide greater clarity to stakeholders and increase employee engagement and understanding of the BCMS.

Improve risk transparency

Use the process of certifying your BCMS to identify and mitigate new and existing risks to your organization and share findings across the organization.

The process can also be used to identify regulatory obligations or the impact on wider society in the event of disruption.

Enhance reputation

Build confidence in the marketplace with a certified BCMS, retaining and gaining the trust of your internal and external stakeholders.

Trade on your enhanced reputation and use it to win new business and build stronger relationships with existing customers and partners.

Strengthen resilience

By implementing best practice and undergoing a trusted auditing process, you can reduce the frequency and impact of disruptions to your organization. And, in turn, return to business as usual as swiftly as possible.

In summary, BCMS certification benefits include the ability to:

- Achieve a robust BCMS by undergoing a thorough auditing process by experienced independent experts to understand opportunities for continual improvement.

- Inspire consumer trust in your ability to continue operations through a disruption.

- Build trust with key stakeholders, from key customers to partners, boards and investors.

- Protect your business reputation by adhering to legislative requirements in a way that not only matches expectations, but surpasses them.

- Significantly reduce the financial losses and operational impact by proactively planning for potential risk.

- Create a competitive advantage by turning the expected cost of legislation into a true differentiating asset.

Developing best practice at the forefront of the evolving digital landscape

Having been on the frontline of technological progress for more than a century, BSI has been working with organizations globally to minimize the impact of disruptive incidents and reduce their likelihood. BSI has been at the forefront of ISO 22301 since the original Business Continuity Standard, BS 25999-2 was pioneered by us in 2007. And we continue to be at the forefront of developing and evolving standards to keep organizations resilient and robust.

Backed by technical prowess and a robust network of industry leaders, academics, and professional bodies, BSI is committed to advancing the digital trust agenda. Partner with us to navigate the complexities of business continuity with confidence.

Supporting your journey towards certification

Whether you're new to business continuity management or want to enhance your current system, we can help. As your trusted partner, we ensure your system maintains operational resilience, fosters trust, and increases customer trust for a competitive edge.

Understand and prepare with Training and Qualifications

Strengthen your knowledge on what ISO 22301 Business Continuity Management does, how to implement it, and how to audit your system in our range of training courses and professional qualifications. We also offer courses focused on key skills that bolster your abilities and knowledge as a Business Continuity professional, such as a Business Impact Assessment, and Crisis Management.

Discover our courses

Measure your readiness with Pre-Certification Assessments

As an optional early-stage review, a Gap Assessment pinpoints areas where your existing BCMS does not meet the requirements of ISO 22301.

A Pre-Assessment is also highly recommended, completed prior to certification audit to ensure everything is in place.

Identify your BCMS gaps

Getting and maintaining certification

We conduct the formal certification audit to evaluate your BCMS against ISO 22301. This comprehensive review ensures that all aspects of your business continuity plan are compliant and effective. Once you successfully complete the certification audit, BSI awards you with an accredited and international-recognized certification.

Get ISO 22301 certified

Partner with us

Connect with BSI today to learn more about how we partner with you to turn resilience into a business advantage through business continuity management.

Contact us