

Achieve Infrastructure Resilience During the Coronavirus Outbreak

Protect your organization from significant business disruption by improving infrastructure resiliency during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Business and IT leaders alike find it difficult to prepare a proportionate response to business continuity challenges like the coronavirus (COVID-19). Travel restrictions within an affected outbreak area limit resources altogether and decrease the availability of operations staff.

Infrastructure and operations (I&O) leaders specifically struggle to meet the increased demand for at-home infrastructure support, as the majority of citizens are teleworking indefinitely and globally.

Follow three steps to limit the impact of COVID-19 on I&O and improve infrastructure resiliency to protect your organization from significant disruptions.

Establish a workforce resilience program

Restrictions on travel and office closures are forcing employees to work from home. Spikes in demand cause telecommunications outages and limit the ability of teams to communicate with each other remotely.

To maximize workforce productivity during pandemics, establish a workforce resilience program that includes some basic guidelines. For example, limit demand that remote work inevitably causes on the help desk by using an online, internal collaboration community for employees to share problems or ideas or enabling the use of public cloud desktop as a service (DaaS) for telecommuters.

“DaaS offers quick scalability and a pay-as-you-go model to build workforce resilience in a short period of time,” says Kevin Ji, Senior Director Analyst, Gartner. “DaaS has been successful for small organizations and is now being adopted by midsize and large enterprise organizations alike, primarily for disaster recovery, elastic and temporary use cases like COVID-19. Building a company private cloud is not enough to sustain operations.”

Build an infrastructure response plan

Physical access to your facility may be restricted during the outbreak, regardless of the health of the employees. Prepare by building a data center response plan that includes:

A shortlist of authorized personnel to remain on-site and ensure that critical infrastructure can still be accessed

Automation of daily tasks like system health checks, performance monitoring and more.

Augment staff and contractors where needed to perform routine tasks.

Multiple points of contact at the operational support level to ensure that mission-critical IT services remain up and running. Have at least three workers assigned to each system.

“Anticipate the resources you will need on deck for short-term and extended recovery operations,” says Ji.

Use scalable architecture to support business continuity

Public lockdowns and fear of venturing out in public will create additional online traffic and digital business transactions. Organizations that can expect increased demand during a pandemic, like e-commerce vendors, must be able to scale up capability to handle exponential workload increases in a relatively short time.

Expand on-premises workload capacity by leveraging public cloud services, as the capacity of data centers is typically insufficient to support additional demand. Complement your public cloud provider with multicloud solutions to protect against resource shortages and the areas that are hit the hardest with traffic. An IT steering committee can enable I&O teams to develop pandemic service-related applications that support demand in affected areas.

Taken together, these protective measures will have the additional benefit of aligning IT operations in traditional industries with those of internet-based organizations after the COVID-19 crisis is brought under control and the risk level drops.