Tyler Disaster Recovery Services: A Sound Investment

Disasters happen. And when one strikes, having a viable recovery plan to implement makes all the difference as you work to get back on your feet. Many Tyler customers have found a simple solution to planning for the unexpected—Tyler Disaster Recovery Services.

City of Biloxi, Mississippi

Planning for the Unexpected

Industry: Local Government
Year Founded: 1699
Tyler Products Used: Tyler Disaster
   Recovery Services & ERP

Location: Biloxi, MS
Population: 51,000+ (2000)

The Facts: A Tyler customer since 2003, the City of Biloxi, Mississippi is rich in history. Biloxi became a haven for tourists thanks to a booming waterfront casino industry and a warm climate. The region offers a diverse natural environment from beaches, to forests, to bayous. Its location along the Gulf Coast also makes Biloxi a city that is far too familiar with hurricanes and tropical storms. With its long history of powerful storms, most notably Hurricane Camille in 1969, Biloxi wisely determined that they needed an automated, off-premises data backup service. They chose Tyler Disaster Recovery Services from Tyler. "Randy Manning, Information Systems Manager, saw this value and the city officials agreed to make that part of their Tyler ERP package," stated Tom Reno, Database Manager for the city. And, when Hurricane Katrina struck, they realized just how wise their decision had been.

A Worthy Investment

In Their Own Words:

"In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the Tyler Disaster Recovery Services proved its worth to the City," stated Mr. Reno. "During this time, everyone at Tyler showed genuine concern for our community. All requests were handled professionally and quickly. The Tyler Disaster Recovery team provided the service that the city hoped for when the plan was implemented," he added.

Clearly, Tyler Disaster Recovery Services is an investment worth making.

Timeline – Actual Events

Before Katrina:

Day -5, August 24, 2005

Before Hurricane Katrina strikes the Gulf Coast, the Tyler Disaster Recovery team leaps into action and proactively calls customer sites most likely to be impacted by the storm to offer advice and review plans.

Disaster Strikes:

Day 0, August 29, 2005

Hurricane Katrina hits the Gulf Coast. The hurricane causes unprecedented destruction to the region, leaving Biloxi particularly hard hit.

Day 1, August 30, 2005

No word from Biloxi.

Day 2, August 31, 2005

Still, no word from Biloxi.

Disaster Recovery in Action

Day 3, September 1, 2005

Mr. Reno is able to reach the Tyler ASP Systems support team via cell phone at 3:00 PM EST to declare a disaster on behalf of the City of Biloxi. He reports that although the city was hit hard by the storm, their city hall is still standing. The City Hall Annex, where the Information Systems department was located, received two feet of water from the tidal surge.

The city's server was not impacted, but they have no water, no power, and the office is covered with a layer of mud and sludge, making it impossible to operate from that location. They have begun to set up temporary facilities in the Community Development auditorium. However, payroll is due the following Tuesday and the direct deposit file needs to go to the bank the next day. With no electricity or access to systems, it is impossible for Biloxi to run payroll on their own.

The Goal
Process payroll and get systems on track

From the phone call, Mr. Reno discovers that the Tyler team has already set the recovery process in motion, having anticipated a disaster declaration from the city. He explained, "The Tyler team had already reconstituted Biloxi's database on their servers, anticipating that Biloxi would need to use the Disaster Recovery Service. A base payroll was discussed with a follow-up call planned for the next day."

Making Payroll
Day 4, September 2, 2005

Tyler Disaster Recovery team completes Biloxi's payroll, but the bank is not able to process the files. The team calls the Federal Reserve to find out if there are any alternate processing facilities for the bank. Tyler team members learn that the bank must first declare a disaster before being able to process elsewhere. The team verifies with the bank that they are not processing.

"When the follow-up call was made, Tyler had already processed the payroll. With no package delivery or postal service available in Biloxi, Tyler found a UPS store in Mobile, Alabama that would accept delivery and hold the package for pickup. The payroll department was able to verify checks and do an early payroll distribution," stated Mr. Reno.

Day 7, September 5, 2005

The City of Biloxi picks up paychecks in Mobile. By allowing the Tyler Disaster Recovery team to run the city's payroll on schedule, there is one less burden on the city as it works to get back on track. Getting payroll out on time in the wake of a major disaster like Katrina creates a positive ripple effect. Paid employees now have money to spend in the community. Thus the recovery process is underway.

Getting Back on Track
Day 14, September 12, 2005

By this point, Biloxi has been able to configure a temporary data center. Tyler prints one more set of checks while the city waits for equipment to arrive.

Mr. Reno stated, "Although the city Information Systems team was able to partially restore the city network within the next two weeks [following Hurricane Katrina], a combination of fluctuating power, a break in the fiber backbone, and damaged check processing equipment, prompted the payroll department to call on Tyler Disaster Recovery Services to process another payroll, which was promptly processed and delivered. This allowed the city time to receive replacement check processing equipment that was damaged by the hurricane. The equipment order was placed through Tyler and processed with deliberate speed."

He continued, "Once the city network was fully restored and stabilized, the Tyler OSDBA team helped with a restoration of the database. The Disaster Recovery team helped with some follow-up processing on our local server."

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