



City of Sacramento Taps Quest Expertise In DR/BC Planning

Sustainability ranks as a key goal in the City of Sacramento’s Digital Strategy Plan, which articulates the City IT organization’s vision.

Not surprisingly, solid disaster recovery/business continuity (DR/BC) plays a vital role in meeting that goal, and, like most of the City’s IT projects, DR/BC planning is typically done in-house.

But the IT staff saw value in an independent third party’s perspective, so the search was on for a partner.

Beginning with Quest’s DR/BC workshop

After considering several firms, says Darin Arcolino, IT Manager with the City’s Technology Infrastructure Services, Quest was selected based on his team’s experience attending a free Quest DR/BC workshop.

“What Quest showed us during the workshop really impressed,” says Darin. “We met with several key members of Quest’s organization, had the opportunity to ask questions, get a sense of their level of expertise, and see how our teams might complement each other.

“In addition to performing an assessment of our environment, Quest developed customized recommendations for us — actual actionable items. This was a real workshop, not a sales pitch.”

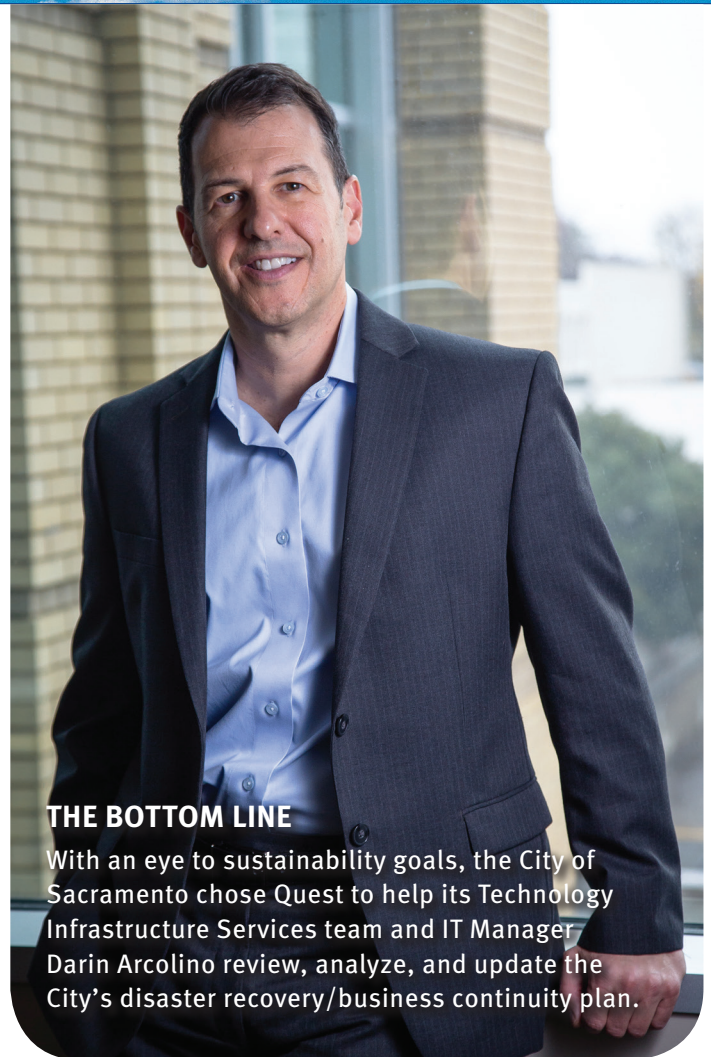
According to Darin, the team came away from the half-day engagement feeling “very confident and comfortable” moving forward with Quest as its partner in a comprehensive DR/BC preparedness review.

A DR/BC blueprint for the City

The scope of Quest’s in-depth DR/BC review focused both on the City’s critical business services and efforts to ensure business continuity, with Quest performing an inventory of all technical infrastructure, analysis of data backup and replication procedures, and a review of the City’s current DR/BC procedures.

Quest spent a good deal of time on-site, Darin notes, conducting business impact interviews with members of the City’s 24 distinct lines of business, determining user expectations in the

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THE BOTTOM LINE

With an eye to sustainability goals, the City of Sacramento chose Quest to help its Technology Infrastructure Services team and IT Manager Darin Arcolino review, analyze, and update the City’s disaster recovery/business continuity plan.

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FROM TIM BURKE...

IT Assessments: Get Insights from Experts

That moment when something happens and you realize it's time to make changes in your IT environment is unique for each enterprise.

But all such moments have something in common, too: you and your IT people soon find yourselves conducting what amounts to an assessment of how effectively your IT environment serves the business.

And while self-assessment can be valuable, it also has limitations that can be overcome with the help of a third party who has the expertise to ask questions and elicit information, perspective, and insights that often escape those too close to a situation.

An assessment managed by an experienced technology partner can help you understand your technology options, firm up project plans and processes, determine who's responsible for project components (including the often-neglected, like maintenance), show you where your technology skillsets are strong and weak, and anticipate future needs — anything from reviewing what you have to developing an RFP.

So do *you* need an IT assessment?

The answer is yes if you've never done one, if you're unsure about where your IT infrastructure is heading (e.g., if a major vendor undertakes significant changes to a primary technology), or if you haven't done an assessment within the last 18-24 months.

Remember: a good IT assessment partner never tries to sell you. They act as a facilitator, helping you gain the knowledge and insights you need to get your enterprise where you want it to go.



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DR/BC Workshop & Assessment (Cont. from p. 1)

event of a disaster, and translating those results into targets for RTOs (recovery time objectives), RPOs (recovery point objectives), and MTD (maximum tolerable downtime).

The result was a 57-page Quest document with an executive summary that, Darin says, “functions as a blueprint for us to use in strengthening our DR/BC plan as well as providing strategies for implementing reliable and resilient systems citywide.”

Prioritizing essential services with Quest's help

Of the many information elements Quest provided, Darin was particularly pleased by the service tiering that ranks applications based on whether they're foundational, mission critical, critical, or important.

“This was a real workshop, not a sales pitch.”

“The tier rating is extremely valuable,” he reports. “We can use it as a guide to adjust our backups based on RTO, RPO, and MTD expectations. We were able to take that data and prioritize the services which are essential to City business needs, then design them for high availability and site failover based on the tier levels identified.”

Budget numbers provided by Quest are another big plus, says Darin, “helping us to prioritize our implementation schedule, especially with regard to our budget cycle.”

Quest's team: a wealth of DR/BC expertise

The entire process — interviewing the line-of-business participants, reviewing the City's infrastructure, and delivering the executive summary — took several months.

Critical to its success, Darin believes, was the enthusiasm of all involved, including the members of his IT staff and the City's line-of-business participants as well as Quest's team.

“We're fortunate to have access to someone like Senior Technical Consultant Shawn Davidson, who has a wealth of DR/BC expertise and an uncanny knack for asking participants just the right questions during business impact interviews,” says Darin. “And Sean Daniel, our Quest Account Manager, is always responsive to our needs. He was a very engaged and knowledgeable contributor to this effort.”

Future work with Quest will focus on leveraging the many advancements in storage technologies. As Darin notes, “Intelligent storage helps meet DR/BC objectives.”

Quest's Workshops and Assessments: From Risk Management and Networking to App Dev

What kind of help do you need to keep your technology infrastructure up-to-date and competitive?

Quest offers a wide range of non-obligatory ways to get you started:

Risk Management

DR Workshop: Develop a DR testing plan with Quest's on-site testing, analysis, and documentation of results.

Security Workshop: Avoid becoming a victim of hackers, scammers, crooks, and disgruntled employees.

Risk Management Workshop: C-level discussion that identifies your risks as well as mitigation solutions.

Security Policy Workshop: Build a security policy that fits the needs of your organization and its stakeholders.

Backup and Data Recovery Review: Identify the best backup/recovery solutions for your unique needs.

Physical Security Assessment: Uncover infrastructure and physical security gaps.

Firewall Review: Identify threats and get solution recommendations.

Business Continuity Workshop: Spot gaps in processes and procedures, get recommendations for agile recovery.

Endpoint Malware Threat Assessment: Prevent malware threats.

Cloud/Virtualization

Cloud Workshop: A table-top discussion outlining cloud requisites and solutions.

Desktops as a Service Trial: Run your own end-point devices on Quest's DaaS.

Network and Infrastructure

Wireless Review: Identify vulnerabilities, get solution recommendations.

Network Health and Infrastructure Check: Analyze performance levels, network support of voice and video traffic, and network redundancy.

Storage Workshop: Examine storage health and availability goals, then get recommendations.

End-of-Life Check: Perform a network scan to identify a range of vulnerabilities, followed by recommendations for improvement.

Audio Visual Assessment: Review your current AV environment, then get customized recommendations.

Application Development

Web Application Security Scan: Use one target application to identify potential security threats, then learn about recommended solutions.

Database Health Check and Analysis: Identify server bottlenecks, reduce application response times, and discover the root causes of slow database performance.

Enterprise File Sharing Trial: 30-day test drive of our file sharing platform.

DID-YOU-KNOW?

What Makes the Complexity Challenge Worthwhile

Two-thirds of IT professionals say today's increasingly complex technologies make their jobs tougher, and they fear losing control as these technologies proliferate.¹ Of greatest concern are precisely the technologies that have become competitive necessities:

- › Mobile devices and wireless networks (most worrisome to 55%);
- › Cloud applications (50%);
- › Virtualization (49%);
- › Bring your own device (43%); and
- › High-bandwidth apps like video or streaming (41%).¹

Unsurprisingly, this complexity has spawned IT support bottlenecks. A majority of IT executives acknowledge they struggle to offer consistent IT support across their businesses — often because of the heavy adoption of cloud services.²

For 38% of public sector IT pros, complexity ranks as a top difficulty in managing IT operations.³

Many complain that these new technologies add complexity without (yet) simplifying operations — not least because, as 53% of public sector IT pros admit, their organizations lack end-to-end IT system visibility, which they blame on insufficient resources, siloed data, and lingering reliance on manual and ad hoc troubleshooting.³

Yet, more than 70% also say these new technologies deliver a key value-add: the ability to glean important insights from data.³

¹ <http://www.eweek.com/small-business/tech-complexity-giving-it-professionals-headaches.html>

² <http://www.cloudcomputing-news.net/news/2016/may/18/cios-bemoan-increasing-it-complexity-their-organisationsagain/>

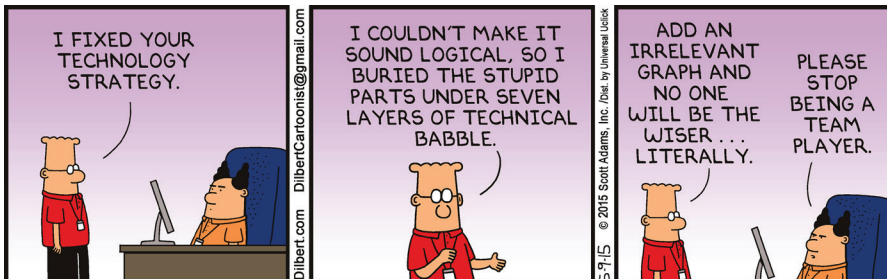
³ <http://www.apmdigest.com/public-sector-challenged-by-it-complexity>

What's New...

Gartner's Top 10 2017 Strategic Technology Trends

Once again, analyst firm Gartner is crystal-balling strategic technology trends – this time for 2017:

- 1 **AI and advanced machine learning.** Pervasive parallel processing power, massive data sets, and advanced algorithms to manipulate that data have combined to spawn deep learning, neural network, and natural-language technologies that understand, learn, adapt, operate autonomously – and predict. What needs predicting in *your* business?
- 2 **Intelligent apps.** Watch for advanced analytics, autonomous AI-powered business processes, and AI-powered conversational and continuous interfaces.
- 3 **Intelligent things.** Autonomous vehicles, drones, and robots are just the beginning as IoT (Internet of Things) devices get smarter and more collaborative.
- 4 **Virtual and augmented reality.** The real and virtual worlds are blending and transforming how we interact (think immersive training, remote experiences).
- 5 **Digital twin.** Dynamic software models – digital twin proxies representing things and people – will be used in simulation, analysis, and control.
- 6 **Blockchain.** Distributed ledgers that sequentially group value exchange transactions promise to inject trust into untrusted environments, reducing transactional friction with transparent access to information in the chain.
- 7 **Conversational systems.** These enable the shift from people adapting to computers to computers “hearing” and adapting to a person’s desired outcome.
- 8 **Mesh app and service architecture.** Modular, flexible, and dynamic solutions that support multiple users in multiple roles using multiple devices to communicate over multiple networks will be delivered via cloud and serverless computing, containers, microservices, APIs, and events.
- 9 **Digital technology platforms.** Every organization will have some mix of platforms for information systems, customer experience, analytics/intelligence, IoT, and business ecosystems.
- 10 **Adaptive security architecture.** In this intelligent, digital, meshed world, security must be fluid, adaptive, multilayered, and capable of utilizing user and entity behavior analytics. It must also be addressed early in app and IoT design.



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What we offer:
<http://www.questsys.com/ePlaybook>

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Disaster Recovery Workshop
<http://www.questsys.com/disaster-recovery-services/disaster-recovery-workshop-video.aspx>

Security Workshop
<http://www.questsys.com/security-workshop-video.aspx>

Cloud Workshop
<http://www.questsys.com/cloud-assessment/>

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