



Creative ITC

BUILDING BUSINESS RESILIENCE IN THE AEC SECTOR:

**DO YOU HAVE ALL THE
PIECES OF THE PUZZLE?**

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ARE YOU ACTUALLY PROTECTED AGAINST IT DISASTERS?

Historically, companies in the architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) sector have been slow to adopt new technologies. But times have changed.

In today's digital world, the speed and extent of innovation within AEC firms directly affects how competitive they are, leading to higher levels of IT investment by AEC companies compared to other industry verticals. Rapid advancements in technology enable organisations across the sector to boost productivity, unlock greater ROI and manage their day-to-day operations more efficiently than ever before — all with less risk and cost.

However, it's becoming trickier to maintain a competitive edge. There's an increasing reliance on data and technology across all business areas to facilitate mission critical tools, deliver client projects and support global teams. As such, firms leave themselves vulnerable to extreme operational, reputational and financial risk should even one link in the chain break. Growing data sets, continued app development and infrastructure complexity are some of the factors making it harder than ever for IT teams to ensure they have all the pieces of the puzzle needed for true business resilience.

Data losses can devastate your entire operation. And although losses can happen in many ways — such as accidental deletion or hardware failures — one of the biggest threats AEC businesses currently face is ransomware attacks. 44% of UK built environment firms reported that they've experienced a ransomware attack in the past two years. Shockingly, a quarter of those firms experienced between two to four attacks, so having robust defences in place is a crucial component of true business resilience.



61%

of businesses activated a disaster response over a 12-month period

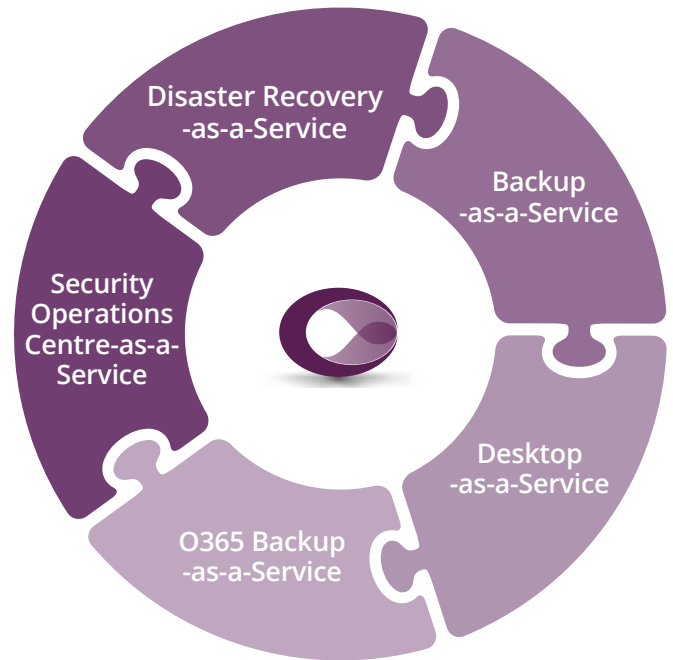
THINK YOU'RE PROTECTED? THINK AGAIN.

Unfortunately, the threat landscape is constantly evolving and not all business resilience solutions are created equal.

Traditional approaches to data management can't adapt to the scalability, mobility and flexibility demands of virtualized and multi-cloud-based IT infrastructures. In other words, they're no longer up to scratch.

That's why more companies are turning to as-a-Service IT models. Creative ITC delivers a range of cutting-edge, fully managed IT services to AEC companies of all sizes that complete the business resilience puzzle. Our team of experts handles the end-to-end process, from deployment to recovery, cutting total cost of ownership (TCO) and freeing up your time to focus on other crucial IT tasks and transformation projects.

In this guide, we'll cover the key components you need to ensure your business is truly resilient and explain how they combine to give you complete peace of mind that you'll be able to fully recover as quickly as possible.



AEC FIRMS PROTECTING THEIR BUSINESS RESILIENCE WITH CREATIVE ITC:



Allies and Morrison



BENOY



BroadwayMalyan^{BM}

FeildenCleggBradleyStudios

Foster + Partners



SHEPPARD ROBSON



Thornton
Tomasetti

WilkinsonEyre

POPULOUS

DISASTER RECOVERY-AS-A-SERVICE (DRaaS)

According to IDC, the average cost of downtime caused when disaster strikes a business is an eye-watering \$250,000 (c. £205,000) per hour across all industries and organisational sizes. But, such disasters can do much more than just cost you money. They can permanently close your business down.

To make matters worse, as virtual servers become more commonplace, the risk of downtime due to software problems or cybersecurity vulnerabilities increases. From power outages and hardware failures to human error, there are so many factors threatening your business' resilience.

Whilst regular backups help minimise disruption, it's not the same as an effective disaster recovery (DR) strategy. A backup is nothing more than a copy of your data. A DR plan is the insurance that guarantees its recovery. Having a robust disaster recovery (DR) strategy in place — that you're certain it will work if needed — is the only way to guarantee swift recovery, and reduce downtime and data loss following an incident.

The main problem is, implementing and maintaining an effective DR strategy is easier said than done. For example, DR resources must be tested and managed regularly — on a quarterly, six-monthly or, at the very least, annual basis — to ensure they work properly. Without enough time or resources, such a steep commitment is impossible for many companies in the AEC sector.

Fortunately, disaster recovery can be simple when you opt for a fully managed DR service. Creative ITC's Disaster Recovery-as-a-Service (DRaaS) features an industry-leading Recovery Point Objective (RPO) and Recovery Time Objectives (RTO). With near real-time replication, you'll experience just seconds of data loss, rather than hours or days, and you can guarantee that users will be back online fast. As a result, productivity won't take a hit and your customers will continue to receive the high level of service they're used to. Disaster averted.

As a fully managed DRaaS solution, you'll never have to design and deploy your own DR platform, retain expensive equipment, or make additional hires.



Creative's highly qualified technicians tackle deployment, day-to-day management and optimisation, liberating your engineers' headroom to focus on more transformational work. Plus, Creative will perform tests with no impact on business operations nor break in replication, giving you peace of mind you'll always be able to fully recover as quickly as possible.

Designed with AEC companies of all sizes in mind, Creative's DRaaS makes it possible for even the smallest teams to enjoy the same level of protection as some of the largest players in the industry — without needing the budget to match. For a predictable monthly fee, you can insure your business against countless business disruptions and eliminate the headaches that come with managing a DR strategy.



OUR LAST DR TEST TOOK 5 DAYS AND WAS ONLY A PARTIAL SUCCESS. THE DR TEST MANAGED BY CREATIVE ITC LAST MONTH WAS 100% SUCCESSFUL, WITH NO INTERRUPTION TO OPERATIONS AND EVERYTHING BACK UP AND RUNNING IN JUST 5 HOURS.

— GLOBAL DIRECTOR IT INFRASTRUCTURE,
INTERNATIONAL CONSTRUCTION GROUP



BACKUP-AS-A-SERVICE (BaaS)

When it comes to maintaining business resilience, managing and protecting your vital data is paramount. But, in today's complex IT landscape, there's an art to running successful backups.

The days of simply hitching up vulnerable tape drives to PCs and servers are long gone. Virtual machines (VMs) have become more mainstream as a result of big data and analytics. Moreover, multiple vendors and technology silos only make legal and compliance matters more challenging than they need to be. Navigating all those hurdles to back up your data eats valuable time and resources that you could be using elsewhere.

The good news is, there is a way to simplify the process. Creative ITC's Backup-as-a-Service (BaaS) provides a single solution and contact point for all your backup requirements. Delivered as a fully managed service and following industry best practice, Creative's data specialists take care of everything to ensure your valuable customer, business and employee information is safe. And it doesn't matter where the data sits. Whether you use physical on-premise servers, containers, laptops, SaaS-based applications, multi or hybrid cloud infrastructures, we've got you covered.

With BaaS, you'll also benefit from the latest, industry-leading cloud storage technology, which is optimised for continuous data protection (CDP), typical retentions, and ad-hoc recoveries that get you up and running again fast. Plus, using layered, air-gapped cloud security, restrictive account access and data isolation, Creative's BaaS solution safeguards your company from disruption caused by ever-increasing cyberattacks.

As part of its true business resilience offering, Creative enables you to meet Recovery Point Objectives (RPO) and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) targets for even the largest data sets. So, you can rest assured that your data protection strategy is 100% compliant.

Consolidating your backup strategy with a fully managed solution isn't just great for continuity and compliance. You'll also stamp out the costs of maintaining backup storage media, transport of media to a remote, secure location, and hours spent managing and troubleshooting backup systems. Business resilience has never been simpler or more cost-effective.

100%

Compliant data
protection strategy



O365 BACKUP-AS-A-SERVICE (O365 BaaS)

It's likely that some of your most valuable data lives in Microsoft Office 365 apps, and you may think you're safe from data loss.

It's a common misconception that Microsoft fully backs up your O365 data, but that's not the case. Although Microsoft provides short-term retention, its focus is on maintaining the O365 infrastructure so it's ultimately your responsibility to protect your data.

Consequently, 1 in 5 organisations have lost data that they mistakenly thought was being safely backed up. Even more worryingly, 76% of data stored in Office documents and applications still isn't being backed up, meaning it too could become permanently lost.

Aside from service outages, some of the most common causes of data loss include overwriting, accidental or malicious deletion, migration errors and bad integrations, so it can happen at any time. Frustratingly, conducting regular backups across Exchange, SharePoint, OneDrive and Teams domains isn't straightforward as there are so many moving parts to consider. As such, AEC firms without the necessary time or resources may end up having to neglect O365 backups so they can focus on other time-sensitive activities.

The problem is, O365 backups cannot be ignored as reliance on Microsoft apps continues to increase at an exponential rate. For example, Microsoft Teams' ability to facilitate agile, real-time collaboration and file sharing makes it a popular choice for AEC project teams. However, once those projects are complete, you may need to retain the records and associated files on a long-term basis for legal and compliance needs, and failure to do so could result in serious consequences. Therefore, a purpose-built O365

backup solution is the best method of securing the data and any associated interconnections between applications.



That's where Creative ITC comes in. With O365 Backup-as-a-Service (O365 BaaS), Creative does all the heavy lifting to deliver on-premise or cloud back-ups. As such, you'll have complete peace of mind that you'll always be able to retrieve important data to meet business needs, regulatory requirements and compliance audits. Unlike other solutions that only safeguard limited parts of your data — causing you to purchase costly add-ons — Creative provides complete protection that scales as your O365 estate changes.

Plus, you'll always have complete visibility over your data protection status, giving you control over all systems, users and devices.

SECURITY OPERATIONS CENTRE -AS-A-SERVICE (SOCaaS)

Cybercrime is becoming increasingly sophisticated and attacks are on the rise.

Typically, speed of action determines whether an attack will be successful or not. But, even when organisations invest in the latest technologies to boost threat detection and response, breaches still occur. Many IT teams are spread too thin, meaning alerts get missed or ignored. In fact, 2 in 5 IT and security professionals feel overwhelmed by alerts and over half admitted that they've overlooked a cybersecurity issue to prioritise another business activity. Unfortunately, AEC firms face mounting threats as cyber criminals recognise the potential to disrupt major infrastructure projects, so it's essential to shield your organisation at all times.

Creative ITC's Security Operations Centre-as-a-Service (SOCaaS) solution is a 24/7 managed service that boosts internal security and IT teams to ensure your organisation benefits from a more robust, proactive security posture. Using the cloud-native Arctic Wolf® platform, which processes over 200 billion events daily, our team expedites the threat detection process, simplifying incident response and eliminating alert fatigue for true resilience in an ever-evolving threat landscape.

Highly trained cybersecurity experts operate as an extension of your existing IT team, providing an immediate response to threats and applying their learnings to strengthen resilience over time. The moment an incident arises, the Triage team focuses on tactical approaches and works in collaboration with your staff until it's resolved, alleviating the pressure and safeguarding your company. And, as part of the managed service, the Concierge Security Team concentrates on the strategic implications of an attack, identifying areas for improvement and strengthening your security operations in the long term.

Rather than shelling out on more complex tools or making additional hires, outsourcing to Creative provides a cost-effective way to defend your organisation without causing you to compromise on business-as-usual work, or customer and employee satisfaction. Our fully managed SOCaaS solution is a key part of ensuring AEC firms have true business resilience, making it quick and simple for organisations of any size to deploy world-class security operations that continually guard against attacks in an efficient, sustainable way.



DESKTOP-AS-A-SERVICE (DaaS)

Remote or hybrid working not only plays an important role in day-to-day operations for many AEC firms, but it can also help avoid downtime should the worst happen.

More than just a way to boost employee satisfaction and facilitate collaboration for multi-disciplinary project teams, a remote working infrastructure can also protect your company from unpredictable disasters. In the event of a flood affecting on-premises IT systems, for example, businesses without the necessary IT infrastructure to allow home working would have to bring their entire operation to a grinding halt.

However, not all hybrid working IT infrastructures are up to the job of supporting high-performing remote workers such as architects, designers and engineers. Traditional Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) are unable to mirror the seamless experience users get from office-based IT. So, in addition to leaving your network open to cyberattacks, you may find that your employees lose access to vital tools and applications, and struggle to share large files. Unsuitable infrastructures not only lead to annoyance and unnecessary downtime, but can also put projects at risk of delay or financial overruns, and affect the client experience. Evidently, new infrastructure is needed to ensure AEC business are truly resilient.

Many AEC firms have turned to virtual desktop infrastructure (VDI) to facilitate remote working, though not all platforms deliver consistent results. Unlike self-managed off-the-shelf VDI systems, Creative ITC provides a fully-managed Desktop-as-a-Service (DaaS) solution. DaaS is delivered on its award-winning VDIPOD platform, which was purpose-built for the AEC industry to provide real-world superior performance for power-users. It is the only solution that can seamlessly combine on-premise, cloud and hybrid models.

When combined with a full suite of business resilience services, including BaaS and DRaaS, Creative's DaaS enables AEC firms to have their employees back up and running fast should the worst happen. With all your data, tools and apps backed up in a secure, central location, you won't lose important work and users won't experience extended periods of downtime. Subsequently, your critical infrastructure projects can continue uninterrupted — even if disaster strikes.



THANKS TO CREATIVE'S VDIPOD, OUR DESIGN TEAM WAS UNAFFECTED BY A CYBERBREACH, CONTINUING LIVE PROJECTS UNINTERRUPTED. THE INFRASTRUCTURE HAS BEEN TESTED FURTHER AND PROVEN ABLE TO COPE WITH OUTAGES — PLANNED AND UNPLANNED — MEANING OUR MULTI-DISCIPLINARY, INTERNATIONAL TEAM IS SUFFICIENTLY MORE AGILE, EFFICIENT AND ROBUST.

— DIGITAL CONSTRUCTION WORKSPACE MANAGER, GLOBAL CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING FIRM

COMPLETE THE PUZZLE FOR TRUE BUSINESS RESILIENCE

In today's tech-reliant world, protecting your business is more challenging than ever. Business practices and technology are evolving at breakneck speeds, meaning the shields you currently have in place may start showing cracks that weren't there yesterday. Siloed IT work practices, technologies and vendors only add to the problem further, so it's crucial to strengthen and consolidate your defences before it's too late.

ARE YOU SURE YOU HAVE TRUE BUSINESS RESILIENCE?

Remember, it's not enough to just back up your data. To maintain true business resilience, there are many components you need to consider. For example, is your data backup granular enough? Have you covered all cloud data and O365 apps? Is there a good balance between restoring critical IT services and getting users back up and running? When did you last run a successful full DR test? Are you sure your RTOs still achievable? How confident are you that you'll be able to recover quickly from a highly likely ransomware attack?

Creative ITC takes a joined-up, proactive approach to maintaining your defences, acting as the missing piece of the puzzle you need to ensure true business resilience, both now and into the future. That's why we're the trusted IT partner to some of the world's leading AEC companies.

READY TO MAKE YOUR BUSINESS MORE RESILIENT WITH CREATIVE ITC?

To learn more about how Creative ITC can help safeguard your organisation, contact us at hello@creative-itc.com.



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