



## Surviving Hurricane Season: Nine Ways to Hurricane-Proof Your Business

Recommendations on Business Continuity Best Practices from VoiceNation

### Learn how to:

- **Prevent financial losses due to interrupted communications**
- **Continue normal business operations during and following a hurricane**
- **Serve customers and find dispersed employees**
- **Audit your crisis communications system for potential gaps**
- **Leverage innovative communications services such as live answering and virtual PBX to provide the support you need to keep a hurricane from destroying your business**

Thousands of businesses failed after Hurricane Katrina because they simply lost contact with their customers and employees. Even large companies with disaster plans spent as long as 60 days finding and contacting all their staff. How can you protect your business communications if a hurricane creates havoc in your region?

Says Joe Schiavone, a business continuity expert with VoiceNation, “Companies can’t afford not to back up their voice services. Many don’t realize how affordable it is. VoiceNation has most clients completely protected in about a week. Our simple but robust system can handle everything from rerouting calls to your employees to backing up incoming fax orders or sending all voicemail to email. Today’s technology can take care of your communication needs in a crisis.”

VoiceNation offers the following recommendations for staying in touch and staying in business:

1. **Develop more than one back up plan.** If extensive power outages or regional telecommunications infrastructure damage makes one alternative unworkable, ensure that your critical business communications are automatically re-routed through another supplier. VoiceNation has the country’s most robust suite of communications re-routing services available to help your business succeed in emergencies.
2. **Create and publicize a communications plan.** Critical elements include:
  - **Establishing a team responsible for ensuring your communications systems work as major storms threaten your area**
  - **Publicizing a schedule for releasing information as a storm approaches and through its aftermath**

- Retaining multiple copies of contact information (land line, cell, satellite phone numbers and home email addresses) for all employees, key vendors and customers
  - Creating a clear chain of communications and ensuring it works by performing communication drills
  - Developing a “bullet-proof” process for communicating business and employee status
3. Publicize a toll-free hotline number that employees can access from anywhere in the country to receive updates so they know how to contact their managers, what actions the company is taking, and when to return.
  4. Create a dedicated Web site hosted outside your region to communicate business status to employees, vendors and customers. A publicized web site can simplify notification to large groups and reduce load on phones and IT systems in a crisis. The web site can let customers know what services you can offer, any special conditions, and changes in your operations.
  5. Contract for back up phone support from a national live answering service provider such as VoiceNation that can provide trained operators to accept your calls, calm your customers and employees, and keep your business running.
  6. Arrange for your phones to automatically find your key staff by cascading the call to alternate contact numbers, home phones or cell phones. VoiceNation’s Virtual PBX allows customers and suppliers to reach staff through your main number, regardless of their actual location, and to set up “find me” numbers that can ring multiple locations simultaneously or cascade from one number to the next.
  7. Provide robust teleconferencing services to enable staff, customers and vendors to continue to work collaboratively from wherever they are.
  8. Plan to forward faxes to another phone number or email address so you do not lose incoming orders. VoiceNation’s business continuity support services not only re-route faxes, but also back up faxes digitally on VoiceNation servers so they are available when business operations return to normal. VoiceNation can also email faxes to appropriate parties.
  9. Contract with a company that can continue to take orders and requests for information for you as a back up. With Web forms for your business, VoiceNation’s remote operators can keep your business in business.

With today’s communication technology and a sound crisis communication plan, natural disasters need not become business disasters for your company. VoiceNation is the leading national provider of communication system back-ups for disaster recovery and

business continuity. VoiceNation clients include thousands of small businesses as well as Fortune 500 such as Blue Cross and AIG.

VoiceNation can help you protect your critical business communications in a crisis. To learn more about how VoiceNation's affordable solutions can protect your critical business communications and keep your business in business, call 866-766-5050 and ask for Joe Schiavone, VoiceNation's business continuity specialist.

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### ***About VoiceNation***

VoiceNation is committed to helping businesses succeed by providing creative cost-effective telephony solutions. VoiceNation provides outsourced voicemail, Virtual PBX, answering services and disaster recovery services to businesses of all sizes throughout the United States.