



# Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity A Case Study from Colorado



# Background

- Between 2001 and 2004, the Colorado Secretary of State's Office moved significantly to incorporate e-government services into our service delivery model
- While electronic filing is offered at a 50-75% discount compared to paper-based filing, the agency continues to generate excess revenue
- Revenue generated almost exclusively through business filing fees; even though our fees are low, our office maintains a significant cash reserve

# The Event

- June 2004 – Massive unexplained power supply and disk drive failures in the agency's data center
- 21 days of major system outages; newer equipment seems more susceptible
- After 15 days of round-the-clock effort to identify the source of the problem, the data center is abandoned in favor of a temporary data center
- Day 17 – Surface samples of several raised floor tiles are tested; by the next day, the presence of "zinc whiskers" is confirmed
- Day 19 – Agency begins to restore web-based services
- Day 21 – All web-based services have been restored; certain critical systems were kept operational during the disaster, suffering at most outages of several hours

# The Fallout

- Over 100 power supplies rendered useless during a two-month period starting June 10, 2004
- Companies that rely on our office to provide information were unable to transact business
- Major rollout of new software systems supporting the administration of business entities was impacted; less user acceptance testing, fewer on-line enabled transactions than planned

# The Reaction

- “Decision Item” to provide disaster recovery and business continuity for the information technology systems maintained by the Department
- Probability of gaining support was optimal.
- Initial capital investment to support the development and maintenance of a disaster recovery facility provided by agency.
- Business Advisory Committee supported the approach of the office.

# The Approach

- Three alternatives presented
  - DR facility for SOS within state space maintained by another agency
  - DR facility for SOS with a commercial hosting provider
  - DR facility for state government through lease, acquisition, or co-location provider
- Agency recommended Alternative #1
- State's Commission on Information Management recommended pursuing Alternative #3

# The Project

- Four staff within SOS; 1 for agency DR/COB operations, 3 for enterprise duties
- Prepared Request for Information requesting full details of proposals from respondents
- Published, received fourteen responses
- Selected and awarded to a hosting and services provider

# Transition to Program

- Agencies procuring and preparing equipment for transition to the DR facility
- Several state agencies among the early adopters
  - Secretary of State
  - Department of Public Safety
  - Department of Regulatory Agencies
- Local governments also interested
  - Negotiated favorable terms for other potential government tenants
  - Already have had communications with county governments, municipal governments, school districts

# Awareness and Marketing

- Public-Private collaboration
- Media coverage – TV, radio, print
- State government outreach

