

Higher Ed Continuity Planning

**SOFTWARE
BUYING GUIDE**

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READY



CONTINUITY PLANNING & HIGHER ED

Continuity Planning is the process of evaluating and planning for the continuity of your institution's most critical functions if an adverse event occurs. Continuity planning spans everything from the evaluation of functions through to testing plans, and then through to the event response and recovery of functions.

In light of COVID-19, continuity planning has received more attention in higher ed than ever before. Often, continuity planning is thought to be for large adverse events—natural disasters, infectious disease outbreaks, man-made events like an active shooter—and while continuity plans are important for these bigger events they are also important for the smaller adverse events like a burst pipe, power outage, etc.



In higher ed, this is a bit more complex for a couple of reasons. First, higher ed continuity planning is multi-pronged, and must consider both business and academic departments, requiring plans for more than the traditional business functions. Additionally, there are many entities that function almost as their own small organization within the larger organization. These unique characteristics of higher ed make continuity planning more critical for a more robust, coordinated response to adverse events.



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HOW DOES CONTINUITY PLANNING SOFTWARE HELP?

The unique nature of higher ed continuity planning makes the planning process complex and cumbersome. Combining your continuity planning expertise with the expertise of department leaders requires a lot of collaboration. Efficiently achieving this level of collaboration is quite the challenge without a quality software solution. It's important to evaluate solutions for their ability to efficiently enable this process.

High-quality continuity planning software allows you to:

- Collaborate and plan all within one system
- Report on the status of your projects while also providing an accurate picture of the level of recoverability of the institution
- Access plans in the cloud anytime, anywhere, from any internet-connected device
- Distribute the workload for more efficient and thorough planning

With so many moving parts and plans to manage it is critical for a continuity planning software to provide a reporting feature that paints a picture of the institution's resiliency and recoverability derived from the critical data captured in the plans. What are our most critical functions and applications? What should we plan to recover first? Where should we focus our attention and resources? Also, knowing what critical functions operate out of a single building will be extremely helpful if an event occurs within that building.

Reporting makes this information available, with limited effort, helping to manage the continuity planning process without consuming copious amounts of time.

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HOW DOES CONTINUITY PLANNING SOFTWARE HELP?

Being cloud-based is one of the most critical elements of a continuity planning software. The reason for developing continuity plans is to prepare for unexpected adverse events, some of which will displace you from your normal work location and potentially even from your normal work city. Having access to your continuity plans and related documentation anywhere, anytime, using any internet-connected device, is essential for response and recovery.



A superb continuity planning software should help distribute the workload that is required for a continuity program. When the required, rigorous workload resides with a select few individuals it makes thorough planning more difficult. Continuity planning software allows continuity plan coordinators to distribute pieces of the planning process to the individuals most qualified to complete them, reducing the load and improving the quality of the information gathered in the plan.



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What To Look For In A Continuity Planning Software For Higher Ed

When looking for a continuity planning software it's important to ensure the software will actually be a solution, and not increase the workload. Will it help distribute the workload for more efficient execution and higher quality information, or will it require a good deal of guidance and oversight? Will it provide robust reporting? Will it allow you to collaborate with stakeholders across campus? Is it designed for higher ed and the unique needs of your institution?

It's important that any continuity planning software solution be capable and prepared to:

- Efficiently enable you to involve all stakeholders
- Thoroughly capture the critical information required during an adverse event
- Build a culture of resilience on your campus

You are the continuity planning expert at your institution, and department leaders are the experts on the critical functions of each department. A solution should allow you to blend both areas of expertise, reducing the inefficiencies of the planning process, resulting in higher quality plans. Involving department leaders is only as easy and efficient as the software you use.



When looking for a continuity planning software solution, consider how much time will be required for department leaders to learn the software and continuity planning basics.

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SOLUTION CHECKLIST

General

Does the solution offer:

- ☐ Robust reporting?
- ☐ Role-based permissions?
- ☐ Single Sign-on?
- ☐ PDF plan output?
- ☐ Business, academic, and research continuity planning?
- ☐ **Cloud-based** access to be available anytime, anywhere, from any internet connected device?

Configurability

- ☐ Can you configure the software to fit your institution's processes?
- ☐ Can you set up/configure campus-wide information (buildings, applications, departments, etc.) to simplify and improve the experience of department leaders?
- ☐ Is the application capable of the right mix of validation of data and flexibility to add unexpected items?

Easy To Learn & Use

- ☐ Can department leaders navigate the plan-building module easily and with minimal training?
- ☐ Are end users guided by a questionnaire-style format to prompt the information needed for a thorough continuity plan?

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CONTINUITY PLANNING SOLUTION CONSIDERATIONS

When considering and selecting a continuity planning software evaluate what comes with the software.

- Does the software vendor offer supportive **customer success** services?
- Do you get a **community of peers** in addition to the software solution?
- Is your feedback regarding the software, services, and related elements influential?

Kuali Ready offers all this and more.

If you'd like to learn more about how Kuali Ready can help your continuity planning efforts, you can contact us at resilience@kuali.co.

About Kuali Ready

Kuali Ready is a continuity planning suite **designed specifically for higher ed**. This includes understanding the unique critical functions and what is required to recover those during an emergency event. Kuali Ready allows for collaboration and managing the set of continuity plans in one place while accommodating the varying continuity planning aptitudes across campus.



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