

# YOU SPOKE AND WE HEARD

## BVP SURVEY SUMMARY

### SPOTLIGHT ON PREPAREDNESS: STEPS TO WRITING YOUR PLAN

#### The ultimate goal of a Business Preparedness Plan (BPP):

To save lives and allow your company to resume critical operations within twenty-four to forty-eight hours of a serious emergency.

**Step 1:** The BPP template is available online at [www.pacificedc.org](http://www.pacificedc.org). Click the "Business Preparedness Planning" link. The PCEDC is also out delivering hard copies to businesses this month. Call the office number below for your copy.

**Step 2:** Follow your ready-to-use plan template to complete the following items to include in your Business Preparedness Plan:

- Employee Contact List
- Key Supplier/Vendor Info
- Key Contacts
- Critical Business Functions
- Recovery Location

- Vital Records
- Critical Phone Numbers
- Critical Suppliers
- Equipment/Machinery/Vehicles
- Computer Equipment
- Voice/Data Communications
- Event Response Steps
- Miscellaneous Resources
- Disaster Response Checklist

**Step 3:** If you haven't already, please take a moment to complete our "Ready, Respond, Recover" survey on Business Emergency Preparedness: [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com).

#### Why is this Plan Important?

Just read the testimonials at [www.pacificedc.org/testimonials.htm](http://www.pacificedc.org/testimonials.htm) to know how valuable this plan is when you need it. With the BPP in place

know they're important. Refer to your customers as Clients and require your entire sales team to do the same and see what happens.

**2) If you're not using e-mail or a website to communicate with your best Clients on a regular basis, you're missing out on an effective, low-cost means of advertising. Start an E-zine!** (A periodic publication distributed by e-mail or posted on a website which focuses on one subject area).

- Use an E-zine to send your Clients information they can use and include your products as an additional benefit of reading what you send. Your e-mails won't be nearly as effective if all you do is send sales offers.

- Examples: If you have a pet store, give pet care tips. If your business is home improvement, give a step-by-step how-to on

### BUSINESS CONTINUITY

#### Questions Every Business Needs to Ask Itself:

**Do we have regular on-going training in Client care skills?**  
**Do we talk about how to delight our Clients at staff meetings?**

With the tourism season soon upon us, do your Client service people know the answers to common questions they'll be asked? Questions like:

- What restaurant would you recommend?
- What lodging accepts pets?
- Is there a \_\_\_\_\_ nearby? (Pharmacy, bookstore, pet store, RV /automotive repair, public bathroom, other service, etc...)
- Where is the local Visitor's Bureau? [www.funbeach.com](http://www.funbeach.com), [www.visit.willapabay.org](http://www.visit.willapabay.org), [www.opwa.com](http://www.opwa.com) Contact your local VB to familiarize yourself and staff with local activities.

Regularly discussing common requests at staff meetings can make all the difference in giving great service that will bring you repeat business *and* project a positive outlook on our area to visitors. Pacific County is *Nature's Best Effort!* We've got something for everyone!

and available in multiple locations, all emergency contacts are at hand. Step-by-step procedures are in place for various types of emergencies. Management will have the necessary info and resources

to provide decisive leadership for a successful recovery. And, employees will be able to efficiently and effectively carry out their tasks and responsibilities to get your business back up and running.

### Q & A—

#### MARKETING

*You Asked:*

**How can I increase my sales without spending a lot on advertising?**

*We Answered:*

**Remember: Repeat Clients spend on average 33% more than new Clients. It costs six times more to sell to a prospect than to an existing Client.**

#### 1) Clients, not customers!

Using the right term for your patrons can make a huge difference in repeat business. Why? The word "customer" implies that the person just buys things from you, and maybe only once. "Clients" (capital C) are people you care about, that you have a long-term working relationship with, even if they only come back once a year. You want people to feel good about doing business with you - let them

one project a week or month. Be creative. What do *your* Clients want to learn about?

- *You don't even have to write it from scratch!* Use the internet as a resource for ideas, tips, even full how-to articles to share with your Clients. Just be sure to site your sources.

- Make sure you can measure the results of every advertising offer. Include a code or keyword on your e-zine that must be used to receive the discount or special, just like you would with a coupon or newspaper ad.

#### **How to: Collect e-mails from your Clients.**

- The PCEDC has a form we can send you to personalize for your business and keep on your front counter. Just call the PCEDC for this ready-to-use sign up sheet. Or, make up slips with Name, E-mail, Area of Interest, and Comments.

- Get your clerks to ask Clients if they want to sign up for your E-mail Thank You Club (or name of your choice). When people ask what a Thank You Club is, your clerk explains that it's free and it's our opportunity to thank our loyal Clients by sending special offers that aren't advertised. Plus we'll send you a periodic tip on....

- In addition to providing news and tips related to your business, you can use the "Thank You Club" to advertise seasonal inventory you want to move.

- For best results, give an incentive to your clerks for signing people up and it's a win-win-win all around. Then train clerks and encourage them to share sign-up strategies that work.

*Sources: Keith Lee, American Retail Supply and Barbara Wold, Global Retail & Consumer Expert*