

Insight: Media Management in Japan Before and After the Disaster

by Shinki Fujimoto

Background

Following the catastrophic earthquake this year, I received inquiries from prospects regarding media storage. This article illustrates how customers' attitudes toward disaster recovery plans have changed before and after the earthquake.

On March 11, 2011 at 2:46 p.m., I felt the ground shake outside of the Shinjuku station on my way back to the Tokyo office where I had just finished a meeting. Once I arrived home, I learned from TV news reports that there were 247 aftershocks. Fifty-three of these aftershocks had a magnitude of 6.0. The effects on the records management industry after this disastrous event took place can be seen in the following cases.

Case 1

Prior to the disaster, I was involved in a business negotiation with a potential client in Japan. They visited our facility in February to discuss their final decision that required a contract to request for record storage use of our Tokyo facility, rotating in at a daily or weekly interval. The final contract was not yet signed when the earthquake occurred.

Subsequently, I contacted the person in charge. He informed me that their policy had changed. Their Asia headquarters asked them to use their Osaka office, located 500km (or 310 miles) from Tokyo for data storage. The decision maker thought that the Osaka office would be safer than any other warehouse in Tokyo. Eventually, they followed through and utilized their Osaka office as their media tapes storage facility.

Case 2

I received an inquiry from an employee who worked for an international law firm in Singapore. During our video conference, the customer wanted to start media rotation in Japan. The company kept backup tapes in their office vault, but felt it was necessary to outsource to a company with a global footprint, expertise, secured, state-of-the-art facilities and resources such as Crown to help protect their valuable data. Crown won the account during the video conference.

Case 3

An IT Manager was looking for a media management service provider that best fit with his compliance requirements. He researched services and prices of some leading service providers in Japan, but discovered that they were all similar. In looking at other factors influencing his decision, one of his requirements was that tapes must be sent to Hong Kong immediately if a disaster occurred.

With the unique requirement that excluded many record vendors, Crown and its global footprint proved to be an ideal match since it has a facility near the airport where the customer's headquarters is located.

Unfortunately, there was no shipping service available from the airport. Crown alternatively offered an option of using a respected air courier service and explained the efficient same-day shipping and pick-up services it could offer to solve their problems and meet the important requirement by the client. Crown won the business.

Conclusion

The true effectiveness of disaster recovery plans can be tested only when companies are actually faced with the unfortunate events. It is, however, necessary to have the best plan in place to protect a company from losing valuable information and resulting in disastrous consequences. Selecting the right records management service provider is crucial to a company's survival after a disaster strikes.

The criteria for considerations should include:

- capabilities and global footprint
- secured, state-of-the-art facilities
- level of expertise in the field
- resources to support its customers

Crown is among the very few records management companies that can offer the services such as moving tapes from Japan to Hong Kong or to other countries. We can offer alternative shipping methods to be more efficient and alleviate the difficult circumstances. In addition to all of the above reasons and our customer-oriented approach, disastrous consequences can be avoided with the use of the right records management company, such as Crown.