



Disaster Recovery for Communications

Many companies and organizations are realizing that data recovery in the event of a disaster, while important, is only part of the disaster recovery planning process.

Equally important is planning for voice. Especially when a disaster strikes, it is essential to be able to communicate with customers, suppliers, and of course staff.

Some organizations have taken the step of establishing off-site disaster recovery centers. Such centers are equipped so that some or all of the organization's staff can work out of the center as if they were in their own offices, with access to information and voice services. Other organizations have Appia's IP-CTX or Legacy service.

Appia IP-CTX

With IP-CTX, call control (the main function of a PBX), auto attendant, voicemail, and other PBX functions, as well as the connection to the phone system, are located in Appia's operations centers, which are housed in secure, telco-grade facilities.

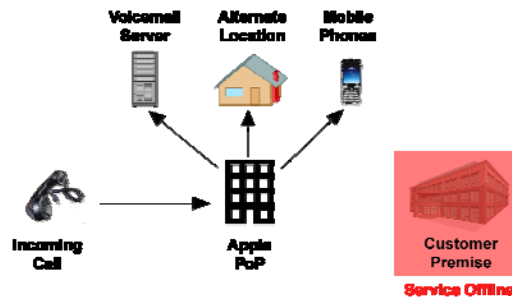
When disaster occurs, calls can be rerouted to mobile phones or home phones, or to check voicemail from time to time and respond accordingly. (Appia also has a service that notifies a landline or mobile phone when a voicemail is waiting, thus eliminating the need to check voicemail at all.)

Appia Legacy

With Appia's Legacy solution, the organization has a standard PBX located at its premises. Also located at the premises is a router with a connection to Appia's operations center. Since the company's telephone number arrives first at Appia's operations center and then is sent to the PBX, in the event of a disaster, it is a simple matter to forward calls to Appia's Virtual Reception.

Virtual Reception comprises a telephone number and an auto-attendant that is programmed as the organization wishes. When disaster occurs, the organization arranges for calls to its main number to be forwarded to the Virtual Reception number.

The following drawing shows how both IP-CTX and Legacy work in the event of disaster.



STANDARD ONSITE PBX

The most prevalent voice deployment is for an organization to have a PBX – along with connections to the local telephone system – at its premises. The risk is obvious: Should a disaster make the PBX inoperable, the organization would be without voice services until the services are resorted.

Aside from arranging a disaster recovery center, two options are available.

- Replace the PBX with Appia’s IP-CTX solution. As noted, with Appia IP-CTX, disaster recovery is built in, since the services of the PBX are located off-site. The transition from working at the office to working remotely is seamless to callers.
- Use Appia’s Virtual Reception service, as described earlier.

OPTIONS FOR OFF-SITE DISASTER RECOVERY CENTERS

Should an organization decide to invest in an off-site disaster recovery center (DRC), it can use Appia’s IP-CTX on a stand-by basis.

Under this approach, the organization invests in the number of IP phones it needs for the people who will staff its DRC, along with one or more stand-by phone numbers. In the event of disaster, calls are forwarded to the standby number and then to the DRC, using an auto-attendant and/or the routing rules the organization establishes ahead of time.