

Is your data protected when the power fails?

By [Hemant Harie](#)

21 Feb 2019

Reliable power is in short supply in South Africa and outages are becoming increasingly common, leaving businesses unable to access their systems or data.



Hemant Harie, managing director at Gabsten Technologies

Not all businesses have the financial and physical capacity to retain an alternative power source, such as a generator, uninterrupted power supply (UPS) or even a solar solution. When a power outage strikes, the business loses access to its system and staff are unable to work until the power returns.

The consequences of outages

Unfortunately, if the power does go out as a result of load shedding, a business's system goes "down". Unable to access data, businesses cannot transact or operate in any capacity. Essentially, this leaves the business "dark" for up to several hours and possibly even days – depending on the severity of the outage.

In such instances, businesses suffer severe financial losses: not transacting means no business which translates to lost revenue. The business also spends money on resources and staff who are effectively rendered unproductive for the duration of the outage.

However, if frequent power outages occur then it can also cause damage to hardware, through the likes of power surges (when power is restored) and the strain of systems shutting down and restarting.

The impact on data

Regardless of which platform a business chooses to store and backup its data, be it the cloud or on-premise servers, data storage is also reliant on hardware.

Data is generally a business's most important asset and loss – or loss of access - to data can be detrimental. Often, a loss of power can cause data to corrupt, rendering it irrecoverable, especially when that data is in the process of being backed up. Data that already resides on storage devices can be rendered inaccessible, not just during a power outage but after the fact, too.

Protecting data

It's relatively easy to lose data due to a power outage, but it's just as simple to protect it and ensure losses don't occur. Almost more important than protection – and certainly from a data loss due to power outage point of view – is data availability.

Any business should have a replica of its data off site, or in a separate location from its primary data storage facility. This allows the company to have a secondary backup in the event of a data loss, whether through power outage or any other disaster.

It's also important that the business backs its data up on an ongoing basis. Traditional working hours are a thing of the past, and technology has enabled mobility. Employees need to be able to access systems and data from anywhere and at any time.

A nightly backup may suffice for businesses that stick to traditional in-office hours, however a mobile workforce needs access to up-to-date data at any given time. Cloud data storage was made for a mobile world, and can be configured to backup data as it is created.

Finally, the business should ensure its Business Continuity (BC) and Disaster Recovery (DR) plans cater to any event and should regularly test these plans to ensure that data is recoverable and business can resume with minimal interruption.

Where possible, businesses should invest in alternative power solutions. However, where this is not possible, businesses should enable their workforce to work, and access data, from alternative locations, creating an “always on” environment.

Data specialists

Data has become a specialist skill in and of itself. To ensure the best possible data protection and availability is in place, businesses should engage with data specialist consultants who understand their data's value and how best to manage and protect it.

Data specialists will be able to help the organisation to evaluate its data so that only relevant data is backed up and protected, saving the business in storage and recovery costs, and helping to centralise data in such a way that the right data is accessed by the right people as required.

Organisations need to have peace of mind that their data is accessible, protected and available at all time, so that they can focus on maintaining operations and business functionality when power fails.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Hemant Harie is managing director at Gabsten Technologies

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>