Business Continuity: Vendor Assessment and In-House System Review

Does your BC system help to ensure the Operational Resilience of your organization?

Although COVID-19 is at the top of everyone's mind today, there are many disruptive events such as natural disasters, cyber-attacks, and civil disturbances that occur without warning and present significant operational challenges to businesses. As the threat landscape continues to evolve, organizations must demonstrate not only business and operational resiliency but also the ability to adapt quickly to dynamic events that can apply stress to existing plans.
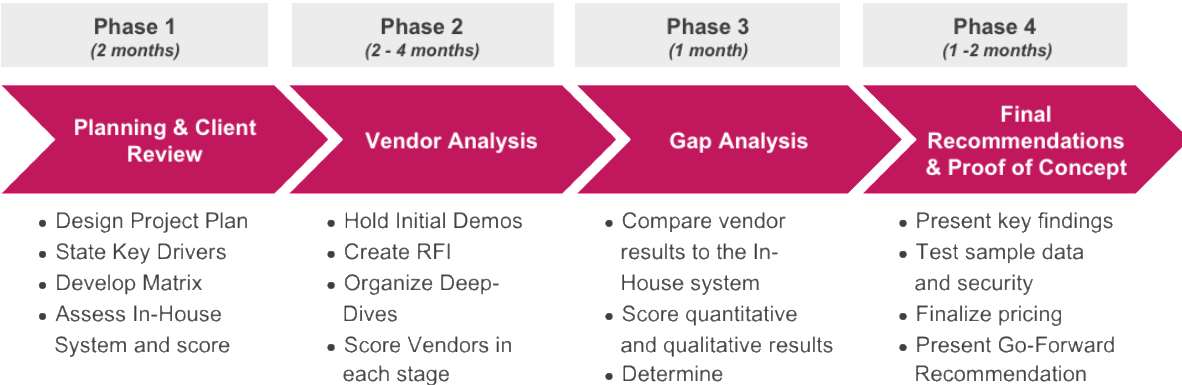
Legacy systems and technology platforms often don't include the functionality needed to attain operational resilience. Modern BCP platforms include components and modules that simplify and enhance resilience strategies, while comprehensively managing threats and providing transparency into business unit interconnectivity and dependencies.

Does your organization continue to operate with outdated BC systems that could threaten your ability to operate through a major disruption? Sia Partners proven methodology considers the specific requirements of your company and highlights potentially significant deficiencies that leave your business vulnerable to operational disruptions. We excel in assisting our clients in assessing their current BCP technology capabilities and in planning a future that includes state-of-the-art tools, ensuring that you are prepared for the next threat.

Sia Partners Approach

Using the following approach, Sia Partners performs a multi-phased BC Vendor Assessment and In-House System Review process for its clients. The timing of the project is flexible depending on our client's business and technical requirements.

Phase 1 *(2 months)*	Phase 2 *(2 - 4 months)*	Phase 3 *(1 month)*	Phase 4 *(1 -2 months)*
Planning & Client Review	**Vendor Analysis**	**Gap Analysis**	**Final Recommendations & Proof of Concept**
• Design Project Plan • State Key Drivers • Develop Matrix • Assess In-House System and score	• Hold Initial Demos • Create RFI • Organize Deep-Dives • Score Vendors in each stage	• Compare vendor results to the In-House system • Score quantitative and qualitative results • Determine	• Present key findings • Test sample data and security • Finalize pricing • Present Go-Forward Recommendation

| Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 | Phase 4 |

Project Planning

The following steps are performed to initiate the project:

Project Charter
A formal, short document that describes the project in its entirety, including objectives, methodology, and stakeholders It acts as a contract between the Sponsors, Stakeholders, and the Project Team

Governance Framework
Comprised of the rules and practices by which Committees ensure the accountability and transparency in a company's relationship with its stakeholders, customers, management, employees, and government

Project Plan
A document that summarizes assumptions and decisions, facilitates communication among stakeholders, and documents approved scope, cost, and timing.

Project Deliverables
A good or service produced as the result of a project such as a report, document, or software product, Deliverables should be agreed upon with the stakeholders and should help to meet the project objectives.

Status Reporting
An important communication tool used by Project Managers to keep clients, team members, and stakeholders up to date

Stakeholders
An individual, group or organization who is impacted by the outcome of a project. They have an interest in the success of the project, and can be within or outside the organization
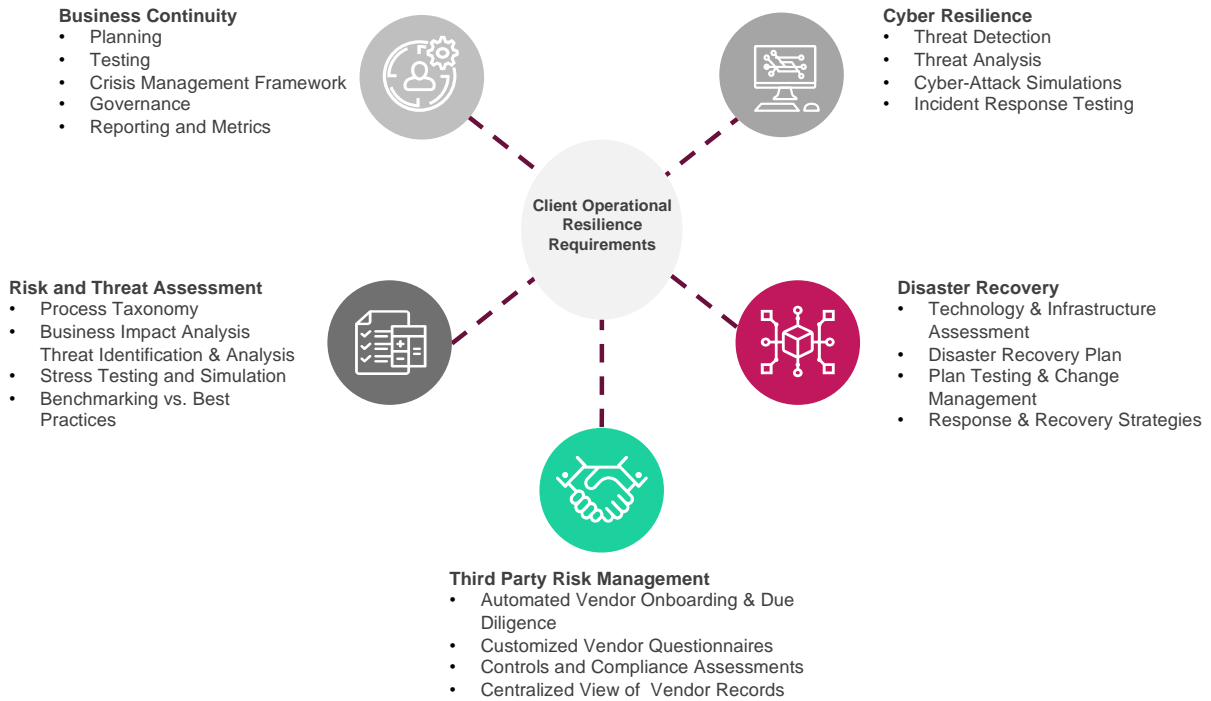
Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4

Gathering of Operational Resilience Requirements

Sia Partners gathers Operational Resilience requirements through various sources of client information including training documents, policies and procedures, leading published reports, and stakeholder meetings. Below are sample business and technical requirements enveloped for an existing client.
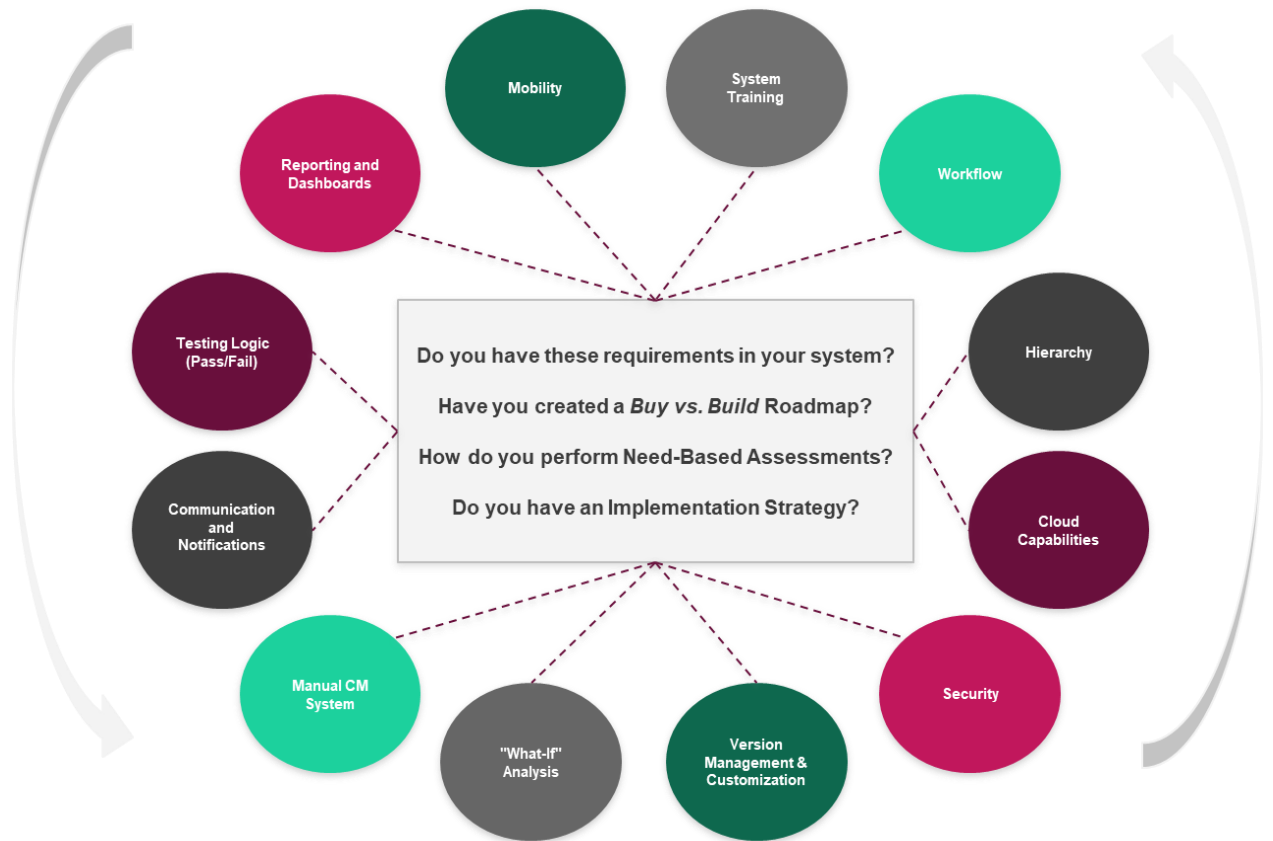
Business Continuity
- Planning
- Testing
- Crisis Management Framework
- Governance
- Reporting and Metrics

Cyber Resilience
- Threat Detection
- Threat Analysis
- Cyber-Attack Simulations
- Incident Response Testing

Client Operational Resilience Requirements

Risk and Threat Assessment
- Process Taxonomy
- Business Impact Analysis Threat Identification & Analysis
- Stress Testing and Simulation
- Benchmarking vs. Best Practices

Disaster Recovery
- Technology & Infrastructure Assessment
- Disaster Recovery Plan
- Plan Testing & Change Management
- Response & Recovery Strategies

Third Party Risk Management
- Automated Vendor Onboarding & Due Diligence
- Customized Vendor Questionnaires
- Controls and Compliance Assessments
- Centralized View of Vendor Records

| Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 | Phase 4 |

Key Operational Resilience Functionality

Sia Partners can help clients to enhance their current in-house system or to identify the appropriate vendor solution to meet their business and technical requirements. Below are some key functionality areas requested by our clients.

Mobility

System Training

Reporting and Dashboards

Workflow

Testing Logic (Pass/Fail)

Hierarchy

Do you have these requirements in your system?

Have you created a *Buy vs. Build* Roadmap?

How do you perform Need-Based Assessments?

Do you have an Implementation Strategy?

Cloud Capabilities

Communication and Notifications

Manual CM System

"What-If" Analysis

Version Management & Customization

Security

| Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 | Phase 4 |

In-House System Review

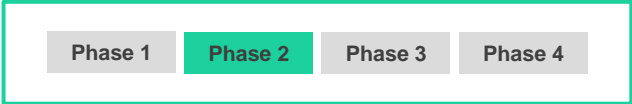Sia Partners performs a detailed analysis of the client's existing system with the following approach:

- Reviews internal user guides, manuals, training docs
- Conducts interviews
- Distributes and scores and RFI designed for the client
- Performs and scores Deep Dive Demonstrations
- Analyzes technology capabilities
- Reviews results with client

The following are select results from an In-House Review for a Sia Partners client:

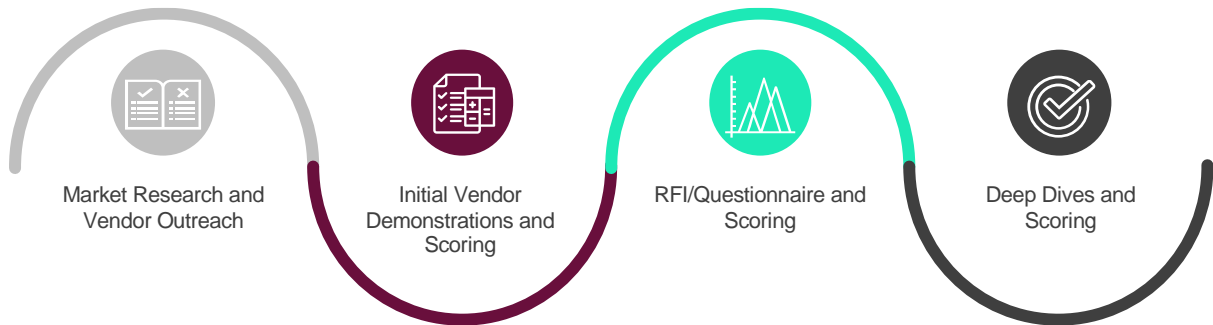| Category	Priority	Max Score	In-House System (Average Score)
Planning	3	15	12
Plan Testing	3	15	11
Crisis Management	3	15	N/A
Reporting	2	10	7
Mobility	2	10	N/A
Pricing Model	3	15	N/A
Total	-	80	30

Notes:

- Max score is based on priority (3 is highest) and a 5 point scoring process
- The client system did not have Crisis Management or Mobility functionality and these areas were not scored
- An analysis of the Pricing Model would not be performed for a client

| Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3 | Phase 4 |

Vendor Analysis and Scoring

Sia Partners performs a detailed vendor analysis in four stages: Market Research and Vendor Outreach, Initial Vendor Demonstrations, RFI/Questionnaire, and Deep Dives. An objective scoring methodology is used to assess the vendors in each stage.

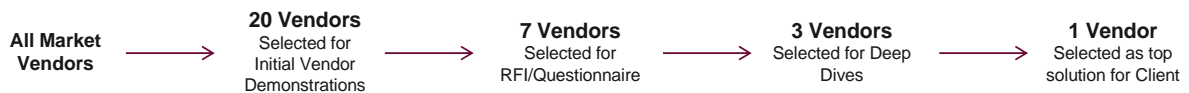| Market Research and Vendor Outreach	Initial Vendor Demonstrations and Scoring	RFI/Questionnaire and Scoring	Deep Dives and Scoring
Vendors are invited to perform high level demonstrations to determine which vendors would proceed to the next phase of the Assessment. We conduct Market research based on key factors such as key Company info, awards and reputation, etc.	Vendors best meeting the client's requirements participate in high level demonstrations to showcase their systems. Based on guidelines provided, the vendors present their strongest components. Demonstrations are scored on various categories to determine which vendors move on to the next stage.	Based on the scoring outcomes of the initial vendor demonstrations, Sia Partners selects the top vendors to participate in the RFI phase. An in depth and detailed RFI is created, and is sent out to vendors. Once received, vendors are scored based on the same categories utilized in the initial vendor demonstration stage.	Based on the scores for the RFI responses, Sia Partners will invite the top scoring vendors to participate in Deep Dive Demonstrations. These demonstrations show key components of their system. Using a scoring template, the vendor with the highest score is considered the top vendor solution for this client.

All Market Vendors → **20 Vendors** Selected for Initial Vendor Demonstrations → **7 Vendors** Selected for RFI/Questionnaire → **3 Vendors** Selected for Deep Dives → **1 Vendor** Selected as top solution for Client

| Phase 1 | Phase 2 | **Phase 3** | Phase 4 |

Gap Analysis

Based on the results of a detailed In-House Review and the Vendor Analysis, Sia Partners compares the client's current system to the vendors reviewed in the Deep Dive Demonstrations and uses the results to make a build vs. buy recommendation to the client.

Category	Priority	Max Score	Vendor A	Vendor B	Vendor C	In-House System
BIA	3	15	12	15	14	12
GUI	3	15	14	15	6	11
Crisis Management	3	15	12	15	9	N/A
Mobility	2	10	6	8	7	7
Regulatory Support	1	5	4	3	4	3
Total	-	60	48	56	40	33

Key findings from a sample Gap Analysis include the following:

- Updates to components of the system are required including the Business Impact Analysis (BIA) module and the Graphical User Interface (GUI) to keep up with new industry standards and offerings
- The client's system lacks important global BC capabilities such as active and integrated crisis management and remote access through mobile tools. These capabilities are now generally standard in the marketplace and no longer considered "unique" or "nice to have."
- The client should develop a regulatory support process for monitoring best practices and trends in BCM Technology
- Vendor B had the highest total average score and was selected.

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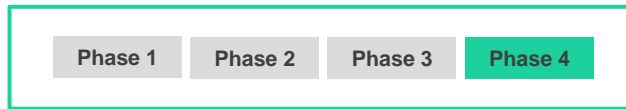
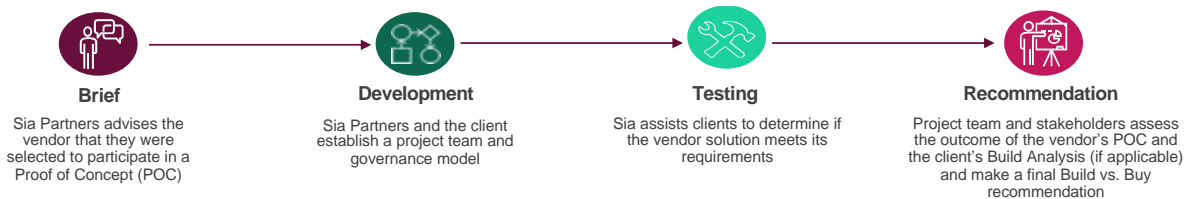## *Final Recommendations & Proof of Concept*

Final Recommendations:

Sia Partners proposes one of two options: 1) Retaining / Enhancing existing system or 2) Choosing the top vendor. In sample assessments, we have recommended a vendor system to our clients for the following reasons:

- Meets or exceeds business requirements with best-in-class functionality
- Offers a *Build vs. Buy* pricing model with a reasonable cost and a flexible licensing model
- Excels in the initial demonstration, RFI, and deep dive demonstration stages
- Possess a strong company history, financial strength, and experience in the client's sector
- Earns positive reviews from existing clients
- Exhibits professionalism throughout the assessment process *(e.g. timely responses, quality marketing materials, adaptability)*

Proof of Concept:

Once a vendor is selected, Sia Partners will assist our clients to test the chosen vendor solution to determine how the system meets current and future state requirements. Sia Partners will also assist in a Design-Build Analysis and rationalizing proper SaaS vs. Out-of-Box pricing structures.

Brief
Sia Partners advises the vendor that they were selected to participate in a Proof of Concept (POC)

Development
Sia Partners and the client establish a project team and governance model

Testing
Sia assists clients to determine if the vendor solution meets its requirements

Recommendation
Project team and stakeholders assess the outcome of the vendor's POC and the client's Build Analysis (if applicable) and make a final Build vs. Buy recommendation

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