

OCTOBER'S BUSINESS CONTINUITY MONDAYS

Watch BC Mondays' videos!

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Image by Pixabay

Did you miss October's Business Continuity Mondays or would you like to watch them again? No problem, all webinars are now available online. Make sure to take notes: you will hear a lot of inspiring ideas!

Covid-19, hybrid working, crisis management and survival were a few of the main topics of October's Business Continuity Mondays, a series of short TED-like talks organised by the BCP Teams from the Council, Parliament and

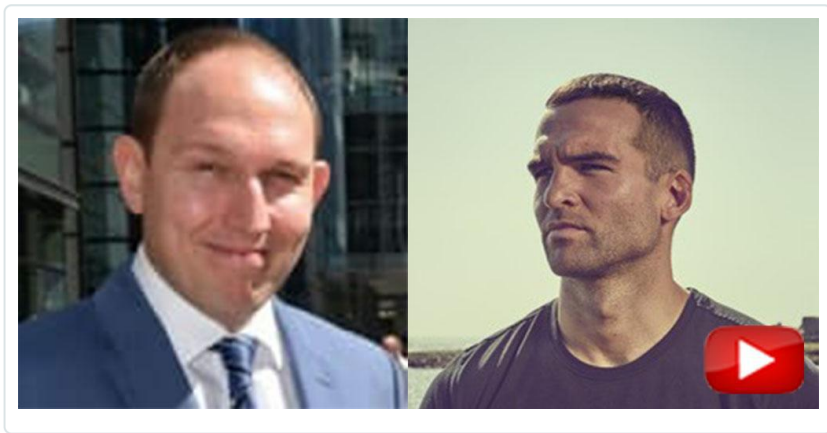
Commission in collaboration with the EUSA (European School of Administration).

Together, they arranged for business continuity professionals to share their fascinating stories and experiences. If you missed the talks or would like to watch them again, they are now available through the links below.

NOTA BENE: The direct links to Zoom videos no longer work, but you can still watch the recordings through EU Learn. Search for "BC Mondays" and you should get all four.

October Business Continuity Mondays 2021 has been very encouraging in the level of participation, with over a thousand participants in the four live talks from more than 30 institutions and agencies. The initiative was a success not only in terms of participation but also in terms of the 'really interesting talks for everybody', as pointed out by the BCP team. They will definitely repeat it and are already looking for exciting speakers for next year.

Survival: Cruise Ship vs Rowing Boat



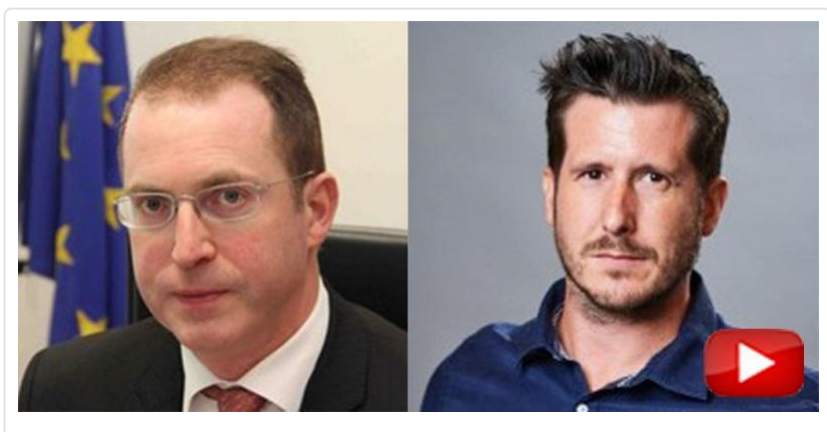
John Frost, head of business continuity for Marks & Spencer international, winner of the Business Continuity Institute award for 'best recovery' in 2020, talked about his experience in a multinational organisation with 70,000 employees, emphasising how a good and balanced team can ensure business continuity:

'Of course, if you want to go fast, go alone, achieve lots of small wins, but then when you look around, it may feel quite lonely. If we are to go far, we have to go together. And the only way organisations are going to stay resilient is to work together because we aren't going to get any more resources'.

Max Thorpe survived his two-man boat capsizing and then catching fire during his attempt to break a world record rowing across the Atlantic Ocean. What does it take to break a world record? He revealed details of his journey and explained resilience from the point of view of a survivor:

'The real essence of resilience really is that ability to bounce back and overcome adversity. The experience of a worst-case scenario actually became my superpower, and I think it just changed my way of thinking about the future and about how to better prepare for uncertain environments like the ocean. I think the first thing about resilience is that you need to be able to adapt your way of thinking about those environments that you operate in and the challenges that you might face'.

Business Continuity behind the Scenes



Philippe Van Damme, director of Digital Workplace & Infrastructure at DIGIT, reflected on how, during COVID, big public organisations have continued with their business very successfully thanks to contingency measures and plans, even though they were facing the unexpected:

‘Being prepared is one thing, but it's not enough. You need something else at the same time. And that is, to be honest, very hard to find in public administrations, including the Commission. We need to combine preparedness with a culture that enables agile and fast decision making’.

Maarten Plasschaert, personal advisor to the CEO of Infrabel, shared his experiences and insights into how they are managing the current crisis:

‘Continuity arrangement from the past were very much used during the pandemic crisis. Although we did not specifically foresee it, we had thought of a fire or technical outage in which the alternatives (like a second train cabin) could be useful. During the pandemic, it was very much appreciated by the management that we had worked on this’.

Integrated Risk Management and Crisis Management



Benno Bühlmann, former Director-General of the Federal Office for Civil Protection (FOCP) in the Swiss Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport, explained the need for integrated risk management, proactive preparedness, and management skills to deal with disaster and emergency situations:

‘Business Continuity Management is a cornerstone of an integrated risk management process. These actions are a key success factor of critical infrastructure protection and country resilience, as well as organisation and company resilience’.

David Horobin, former head of crisis management and security at the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), summarised what he learned for the next big crisis and shared essential practices in crisis management:

‘We need to think about crisis management by observing, diagnosing and interpreting complex and

ambiguous situations. Naturalistic decision-making is another thing - building trust both internally and externally, and then how are things being communicated and how does that then influence the perception of others’.

Hybrid Working Is More than Moving Furniture



Frank Van Massenhove, a former chief of staff to the Belgian minister for social affairs and president of the Belgian federal social security service, offered his staff the ability to work when and where they wanted, changing the organisation’s culture and leadership style in a way that has endured beyond his retirement in 2019. He shared his insightful views and answered questions on these topics:

‘In every decision you make as a manager or as a leader of your organisation, you have to think: what will be the result for the relationship of our people with their families? If it’s a worse situation, don’t take that decision. Think differently, do something else. Make sure that people can spend a lot of time with their family and friends. Otherwise, it won’t work’.

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