



Hy Cite turns to Infinite Blue to build a stronger, more resilient organization

Old-fashioned door-to-door selling requires cutting-edge methods to coordinate data and keep the cookware flowing

Hy Cite premium cookware lines are exclusively sold worldwide through the company's network of Authorized Distributors in the Americas and in Asia. From its US headquarters in Middleton, Wisconsin, Hy Cite must manage offices in Mexico, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia, and the Dominican Republic. These offices provide product development and distribution, financing, marketing, and customer service to the company's consumers and distributors, which requires adept coordination and terabytes of information in multiple languages. Systems that enable the company to address disruptions and threats to profitability and recover from them quickly are essential and can be particularly tricky with Hy Cite's multiple locations.



Challenges

A search for better business continuity

Understanding that business continuity (BC) was critical to its far-flung operations, Hy Cite brought Ryan Hietpas on board in April 2021 with a mandate to implement a new BC solution. There was an existing BC vendor, of whom Hietpas said, “There was nothing foundational that was truly established to support a program and its growth and implementation across the enterprise.” That meant BC would need to be reframed as a critical tool if the company was to grow.

Though Hietpas had developed his own tools at his previous stop, he built out a list of attributes required to create the BC program Hy Cite needed, then reached out to a half-dozen companies for bids, including Infinite Blue. Hietpas told his Infinite Blue account executive that Hy Cite would need to generate a BIA and BC plan for every critical function and facility, assess their risks, then test the plans and adjust accordingly.

Customization, flexibility, and user interface key to the choice

After seeing BC in the Cloud, Hietpas realized immediately how it would meet his needs. But more than the specific technology, “Infinite Blue took the time to listen and understand my needs, and building rapport was important,” Hietpas said.

For starters, while each of Hy Cite’s locations needed to run the same process, Hietpas recognized the value of creating individual plans. “I’m estimating probably between 30 and 40 individual BIAs for these departments,” Hietpas said.

The tool from the vendor to be replaced was not user-friendly. “The previous tool that we built was all Java. I couldn’t just make database edits, and we couldn’t just make changes to the tables. And we couldn’t just add fields or whatever else was needed,” Hietpas explained. He didn’t have that problem with BC in the Cloud and really liked that Hy Cite could quickly work with the basic product. “While we made some customizations, we also did a lot of stuff out of the box. I think the software is really well done.”



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Hy Cite

BC in the Cloud's great flexibility met Hy Cite's need to implement dozens of BIAs. Overall parameters can be constructed centrally. Then control of the BC function can be moved to each individual unit. According to Hietpas, "The goal is to decentralize the process and have our users in this tool more than just when they are making updates to BIAs and plans. This was intuitive and user friendly."

Hietpas was also excited about the analytics capabilities of BC in the Cloud. "The demo pushed the tool's ability to be able to pull data on almost any field that you can possibly think of or create."

Solutions

BC in the Cloud rollout and support

Hy Cite fast-tracked the implementation, moving from inquiry to rollout in just three months with frequent meetings in which Infinite Blue's implementation team trained Hietpas on the platform top to bottom. Hietpas said, "The implementation team did a great job. I wanted to be taught how to use the tool, how to add fields, and not screw things up." Once Hietpas fully masters BC in the Cloud, he intends to educate his team on its everyday use and focus his energy on bigger BC issues.

Hietpas finds it easy to rely on Infinite Blue. "Our customer success contact has been great at showing me how to run and create reports. She kind of swooped in and has been supporting me ever since. It is a team of problem solvers, and that I appreciate."

Analyzing gaps between the plan and ideal implementation (gap analysis) has already yielded surprises Hietpas is addressing. "I discovered we are missing a lot of data in certain systems, especially contact information ... no managers, no locations, no office phone numbers. I've got to have accurate contact information for employees." Ultimately, he notes, "if you can't pull the data and start making decisions based on that, all the work's kind of moot." He's looking forward to adding Infinite Blue's mass notification solution, Sendigo, and contact information will be critical.



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Results

Integrating BC in the Cloud into Hy Cite's BC/DR future

Hietpas sees Hy Cite relying on Infinite Blue into the future in a fully implemented, fully integrated BC program. Then, he says, "when business decisions need to be made, they will take business continuity into consideration. Are we expanding in the right areas? Are we growing the company in a way that is going to help us be resilient? Are we creating single points of failure when we're choosing technology solutions? How can we build a system that is going to withstand certain types of operational impacts or prevent operational impacts?"

After the initial implementation, Hietpas says that he plans to use BC in the Cloud to look at employee safety, generating emergency response plans for each Hy Cite facility. Beyond that, he's looking to have the company's IT department address potential IT outages or disruptions.

Eventually, Hietpas intends to examine the risks involved in the company's supply chain (third-party vendor risk assessment). "Most of our tools are not internally developed. We rely on vendors," says Hietpas, "So, we created a whole middle table of vendor products and services, and then we're assigning recovery time objectives (RTOs) to each of those so that we can look at them related to the RTOs for our processes." He expects the tool to spot vendors not meeting obligations, which he hopes will become part of the vendor management process.

To sum up Hietpas' experience thus far: "I appreciate all the support over the past several months during our implementation. It's been a really great experience overall. So, thank you."



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