



Software Performance Systems, Inc.

CASE STUDY

# Library of Congress Continuity of Operations Plan

## Situation

The Library of Congress serves as the research arm of Congress, includes the U.S Copyright Office, and sustains and preserves a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations.

The Library of Congress employs extensive IT resources to digitize, search, and disseminate its holdings. IT is the enabling technology to make knowledge available to Congress, preserve and make available a comprehensive record of American history, and share its collections through the National Digital Library Program.

The Library had very limited continuity of operations plans or capabilities to sustain operations in the event of major disruptions or emergency.



## SPS – Problem Solved.

SPS created a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) that specifies functions and procedures to continue or resume IT-supported operations following a disruption or emergency. The COOP defines roles, responsibilities, and lines of succession. It identifies possible disaster scenarios and corresponding corrective steps. SPS designed the plan to work in conjunction with other Library emergency and contingency plans, and emphasized formats that are easy to use, update, and distribute.

SPS included call trees for assembling emergency teams and a decision tree leading to COOP-activations. For each activation phase and organizational unit, SPS defined checklists of steps required to implement the COOP and ensure continued system support. SPS assembled a drive-away kit for personnel deployed to the alternate facility, providing them basic tools, information, and materials required to establish connections, synchronize databases, and interact with system users.

## Methodology

SPS employed a holistic approach, assigning domain experts to each COOP discipline and leveraging SPS infrastructure and software systems expertise. The project team consisted of business process experts, system and software architects, and network engineers. SPS conducted frequent team meetings to ensure discipline experts exchanged status information, avoided duplicate work, and synchronized their respective content.

SPS followed the guidelines and methodologies identified in Federal Preparedness Circular 65, Continuity of Operation; NIST



## CASE FACTS

### Sector

Federal Government

### Organization

Library of Congress

### Customer Profile

The Library of Congress (LOC) is the world's largest and most comprehensive library, maintaining a collection of more than 124 million items.

### Business Challenge

In order to comply with the Federal guidelines, the Information Technology Services (ITS) Directorate of the Library of Congress required a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP).

### Solution

SPS developed a COOP that not only met Federal directives but also provided the ITS with a COOP that will serve as the basis for more extensive planning.

### Client Benefits

The LOC currently meets Federal Executive Branch Preparedness Circular 65 directives. The ITS is now able to respond to disasters by following a single set of procedures.

Special Publication 800-34, Contingency Planning Guide for Information Technology Systems; and OMB Circular A-130, Management of Federal Information Resources. Our approach incorporated other facility and organizational continuity of operations and telecommunications plans as well.

Officials involved in continuity of operations planning often note that a “COOP not tested is no COOP at all.” In full agreement with this observation, SPS conducted COOP testing, training, and exercise sessions using materials directly from



the COOP. Based on these activities, SPS updated and clarified many areas of the COOP, ensuring that managerial and technical personnel could use the COOP during stressful rapid-reaction scenarios. In particular, the COOP clearly identified manual tasks and steps required to activate remote site COOP facilities.

## Lessons Learned

SPS quickly realized that maintaining the COOP was as important as creating it. To ensure an always-ready COOP, SPS organized time sensitive data in discrete appendixes; each assigned to a responsible party, and included a section dedicated to COOP maintenance instructions. Additionally, SPS identified COOP tools to partially automate COOP update and publishing.

## Results

The Library met its objective of complying with Circular 65 and has a usable and maintainable COOP. The single COOP document reduced the time and cost for COOP maintenance as compared to maintenance costs of other Library system documents and procedures.

***“In the last few years in Washington we have seen enough events, both big and small, interrupt government operations to know the importance of continuity of operations plans.”***

*—Tom Davis (R-VA), chairperson of the House Committee on Government Reform*

## ABOUT SPS

Software Performance Systems, Inc. (SPS), a small business based in Northern Virginia, is a privately held information technology services provider. Established in 1995, SPS specializes in the design and integration of large web-based solutions for Federal, State, and Local Governments and commercial clients worldwide. SPS has been honored with many national awards, including: #10 ranking in the Computerworld Top 100 Best Places to Work in IT, Deloitte's Virginia Technology Fast 50 and North America Technology Fast 500, and as a SBA Exporter of the Year. More importantly, SPS solutions helped our clients win prestigious awards, including the Grace Hopper Federal Government Technology Leadership Award, the E-Gov Pioneer Award, the Excellence.gov Grand Prize Award, and the Government IT Agency Award for Excellence in Government. **SPS...proven over time.**