5 Ways Disaster Recovery is Like Jack Bauer

If you don't swoon at the words "disaster recovery," we don't blame you. After all, the term sounds kind of pragmatic. No-nonsense. Mandatory. We get it, but things may just change when you start thinking of disaster recovery in terms of Jack Bauer from *24*.

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Executive Summary

Wait, *the* Jack Bauer? The guy who shot, karate-chopped, and strong-and-silenced his way through nine seasons of the Emmy Award-winning series *24*? Yup. That's the one. And lest you forget, his kick-butt anti-terrorism chops even resurrected the series long after it had been given up for dead.

Jack Bauer has been one of the most popular (and controversial) TV characters of the last decade. After all, he's known as much for his grit as his good looks. And it's probably just a coincidence that *24* has aired (and re-aired) during the same period of time that disaster recovery has become more sophisticated. Or *is it*?

This paper explores the ways disaster recovery is *just like Jack freakin' Bauer.* We hope the similarities will surprise you — and teach you a bit more about why modern disaster recovery is a must-have for any business.

You Don't Know Jack

In case you're not in-the-know, Jack Bauer is the central figure of Fox's long-running series *24*. As the star of the fast-paced show, Jack Bauer epitomizes everything a Counter-Terrorist Unit (CTU) operative should be. He's wary and worldly. He's quick on his feet and even quicker with a gun. And his fierce heroism has earned him thousands of hardcore fans who hang on his every gunshot and car chase — even when they stretch the limits of reality.

At heart, Jack Bauer is a simple fellow. He just wants to protect the president from assassination, keep Los Angeles from becoming a nuclear war zone, stop terrorists from destroying the United States, and keep the people he loves safe. He's a lot like disaster recovery — a seemingly low-key industry that's got plenty in common with this handsome hero.

The field of disaster recovery has made major strides over the past decade, and not a moment too soon. Data and virtualization have both ballooned during this time, and the risks of relying on easy access to ever-increasing data have grown as well. As companies rely more on service, applications and data, the need increases for quick, solution-oriented and cost-effective backup and recovery. As businesses diversify and evolve, the need for personalized, robust disaster recovery solutions grows even greater.

Think of the last time you had a service interruption, crash or breach:

- Did it last hours or days?
- Why did it happen?
- How did it get fixed?
- What kind of impact did it have on your productivity, morale, reputation and bottom line?
- When's the last time you experienced a hard drive crash? A power outage?
- Do you feel ready for your next data disaster?
- How fast can you recover from a service loss or outage? Is it within the recovery time objective or service level agreement set by your stakeholders?
- Are you prepared for "the call" telling you your system has been compromised or simply obliterated?
- How old is your hardware? Your software?
- Did you know that many companies that experience a catastrophic outage or loss of service expose themselves not just to inconvenience but to bankruptcy?

While that wake-up call might have you fanning yourself, it wouldn't make Jack Bauer break a sweat. That's because — like disaster recovery solutions — Jack Bauer is an ever-evolving solution machine. Focused and solution-oriented, he's ready to do what it takes, 24 hours a day, and look good doing it.

Sure, the metaphor may seem over the top — until you look at what's at stake. A large enterprise is as complex as a foreign country, with competing interests, tight budgets and high stakes. When services, applications or virtual machines go awry (or go away), your business can suffer real consequences. Trust us — you don't want to be on the other end of the phone when you learn that your data center or primary IT site has been compromised or destroyed altogether. Luckily, great disaster recovery solutions share a lot with the hero who brings it all to the table on *24*. Here are just five things they have in common.

1. They both get the job done in extreme circumstances.

Let's not forget about the many times we've seen Jack Bauer in a bizarre, outlandish or just plain extreme situation — kicking butt and taking names. He's equally at home in the White House, an embassy or a filthy prison. Jack Bauer isn't fazed by words like "nuclear," "homicide," "assassinate" or "nerve gas." Those are just signals for him to show up and do what it takes to get the job done.

That's like disaster recovery. Some may shrug at the idea of a targeted attack, a data breach, a system-wide failure, an overheated data center or a catastrophic weather event. Much like Jack Bauer, disaster recovery laughs and asks for more. After all, it wouldn't be disaster recovery without the disaster — and the right disaster recovery solution is robust enough to withstand even the most horrible circumstances known to man or machine.

Are you ready to pick up the pieces and get the job done, even in the most extreme circumstances? Ask yourself whether your business is ready to operate seamlessly during a disaster. You probably can't survive weeks or even days with little or no access to your data center and mission-critical applications, but with the right disaster recovery solution, you won't have to.

Remember: True heroes get the job done, no matter how extreme the circumstances. So do great disaster recovery solutions.

2. They both do what they have to do to keep you safe.

Want to upset Jack Bauer? Attack someone innocent or disenfranchised. Violate a promise. Give him a mission. Any of the above circumstances unleashes a well-rounded pro willing to throw anything and everything away in order to complete the task at hand. Jack Bauer doesn't work; he lives, 24 hours a day, even if it means tossing everything aside to get from point A to point B. Maybe that's why he's such a compelling hero.

Likewise, your disaster recovery solution shouldn't care if it's a holiday weekend or the middle of the night. A disaster recovery solution doesn't care if you have a newborn baby or a birthday party to go to. Disaster recovery does what it takes, regardless of how uncomfortable the circumstances are. Like Jack Bauer, disaster recovery is focused on its mission at all times, and the risks and challenges of its mission are what push it to its greatest heights.

Are you ready to do what it takes to keep your company "always up" and operating? What's your disaster recovery plan? Ask yourself whether your company is prepared to respond to disasters at inopportune moments. What are your nighttime and weekend coverage like? How do you deal with holidays? What if key staff members are unavailable or incapacitated?

Remember: No job is too big if it keeps you operational. This rings true for heroes and disaster recovery solutions alike.

3. They never take a break to sleep (or go to the bathroom).

Sure, it requires a bit of suspension of disbelief to think that Jack Bauer can really do what he does without a bit of shut-eye and a potty break, but he makes it happen and makes us forget about anything else in the

process. With every moment so momentous, so meaningful, so loaded with adventure and danger, who's got time for bodily processes?

A great disaster recovery plan is automated and human-proof. It doesn't need creature comforts, so it can show up when the going gets horrendous and the stakes are high. And — unlike mere, fallible, non-Jack-Bauer humans — disaster recovery is not susceptible to panicked decision-making and reactive floundering when the worst comes to pass. When you have great disaster recovery, you can relax, kick your feet back, and act like any *24* viewer.

Are you prepared for round-the-clock disaster recovery? Ask yourself: What kind of disaster recovery plan do you have now? Do you even know what kinds of solutions exist on the market? How often do you test your disaster solution? What's your plan for the day you get the call?

Remember: There's no rest for a protagonist — or a disaster recovery solution.

4. They're both updated in real time.

Remember when *24* came along and completely changed the way we view television? The show's premise is simple — each season follows 24 hours in the life of Jack Bauer, and each episode packs in a lifetime. Not only are Jack's actions updated in real time, minute by minute, but he's always relying on the best intel to help him make decisions and act boldly.

That's not unlike disaster recovery. Real-time updating is the bread-and-butter of the technology that could save your business. Great disaster recovery systems embrace this concept by constantly updating, automating and allowing immediate detection of deviations, crashes and breaches. That's one place where an instant-gratification mentality really pays off.

Are you ready to update your disaster recovery system in real time? Ask yourself: Does your disaster recovery solution update and operate in real time? Why or why not?

Remember: Life happens in real time. So should disaster recovery updates (and TV shows).

5. If you cancel them, you'll regret it and renew them both later.

Remember when Jack Bauer went away — for four years? We do too. It was hard to live with the knowledge that Jack Bauer was a fugitive from the law (and a canceled man). The show that had seemed like a frivolous distraction suddenly seemed like a gem. Luckily, Jack Bauer has fans. Dedicated fans. Rabid fans. They complained until Fox renewed the series in 2014, much to the joy of anyone who loves explosions, betrayals and Kiefer Sutherland.

Similarly, disaster recovery may seem optional, but once it's gone, you'll suddenly realize just how great it is — like when you decide to cancel your contract days before a fire or tornado lays waste to your data center, or when a mysterious and seemingly unsolvable targeted attack destroys your new site, exposes your customers' data and earns you the ire of your board of directors.

If you've ever suffered this kind of disaster, you'll recognize the face-palming and miserable hand-wringing that can accompany it. That is, unless your disaster recovery solution is so great that you never live through a worst-case scenario.

How current is your disaster recovery plan? Ask yourself: Are you ready to suffer the consequences that could occur if you let your disaster recovery solution lapse, fail or go offline?

Remember: The test of a great disaster recovery solution (or TV show) is how much you'll miss it when it's gone.

Summary

How heroic is your disaster recovery solution? Disaster recovery — like Jack Bauer — can accomplish a lot for your business. Consider yourself to be on the right track if you choose and implement a disaster recovery solution that:

- Gets the job done—no matter what the circumstance
- Does what it takes to keep you always operating
- Never rests
- Updates in real time if a service changes and can no longer recover within the time set by business, auditors or compliance regulators
- Is so great, you'll never let it go

Look to heroes like Jack Bauer when you choose your disaster recovery solution. If it isn't seamless, insanely talented and almost impossibly powerful, it probably doesn't cut the mustard.

A note to those who don't have a disaster recovery solution at all: chances are you're more like Jack Bauer than you think, in a very bad way. See that ticking time bomb in your hand? It's your business, and it may not survive its next assassination attempt. Scary? We think so too. That's why we're so passionate about disaster recovery.

Only You Can Save the World

Why do we love Jack Bauer so much that we follow him around the world? It's simple — for Jack Bauer, success is saving the world, and we can't wait to see how he succeeds. If you want to achieve the more modest, but still important goal of saving your company, you need the best disaster recovery solution there is. You need Unitrends.

What's Unitrends? We're an award-winning IT protection and disaster recovery provider committed to producing recovery assurance so reliable, so effective and so impressive, they put even Jack Bauer to shame. Our reputation has been built on our platform of engagement, experience and excellence, and we have a long list of stellar clients and impressive awards to prove it. The awards are just the beginning — at Unitrends, the difference begins with a disaster recovery solution worthy of protecting the thing you value most — your company.

We know all about the devastation of an unexpected attack, a data center breach or a hardware failure. Sure, they're not the detonation of a nuclear bomb, but each can have the same effect on your business. Each moment of downtime is a dollar lost, a hit to your reputation and a breach of trust that can do damage to your peace of mind.

At Unitrends, we pride ourselves on our customer-centric business model, working shoulderto- shoulder with clients and providing disaster recovery solutions that assure recovery. We bring expert teams — backup and storage vets, customer service specialists and more — to the table to help build the solution that matches your exact need. And much like Jack Bauer, we've vowed never to settle for second best.

Great disaster recovery solutions know that there are people behind the machines — people with livelihoods, incomes and reputations to preserve. At Unitrends, we deliver responsive, real-time solutions to protect your people along with your services, data and applications.

Get in touch today to discuss disaster recovery solutions from Unitrends. Jack Bauer would approve.

Ready to see Unitrends in action? Watch us crash a server and restore it:
www.unitrends.com/product-demo