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The Hidden Cost of DOWNTIME for SA businesses

See estimated downtime costs for your industry, and learn how to protect your business.

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DID YOU KNOW THAT

67%

OF BUSINESSES

WILL FAIL

WITHIN

6 MONTHS

OF A DISASTER?

Why Backups Alone Aren't Enough

Most South African businesses have some form of backup. That's good - but it's not nearly the whole story.

Here's the difference:

- **Backup** = a copy of your data.
- **Disaster Recovery (DR)** = the ability to get your systems back up and running quickly after a disaster.

Think of it like this:

A backup is like having a spare tyre in your car. DR is like having a standby replica of your car that you can switch to and from, whenever you need to.

Without DR, you may have the data... but your systems (and business) are likely going to be down for hours or even days.

Estimate Your Downtime Cost

Downtime is more than just "systems not working." It costs you in three big ways:

1 **Lost revenue** - sales, deals, or transactions that can't happen.

2 **Lost productivity** - staff sitting idle or unable to work.

3 **Reputational Damage** - frustrated customers, missed deadlines, and compliance risks.

Even a few hours offline can add up to hundreds of thousands of Rands in losses - sometimes more than the cost of an entire year of protection.

Find your industry's downtime cost table to see what your business's estimated downtime costs could be. >

General Businesses in SA

Any business in SA is at risk, as downtime means lost productivity, lost revenue, and costly recovery in a market where continuity is already challenged by infrastructure instability.

Employees affected	1h	4h	8h
10	R28,000	R37,000	R49,000
50	R40,000	R85,000	R145,000
100	R55,000	R145,000	R265,000
250	R100,000	R325,000	R625,000

Assumptions (General): Avg loaded salary ≈ R200/h; revenue-at-risk multiplier 0.5× salary; fixed recovery cost ≈ R25,000 per incident.

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Financial Services (Banking, Insurance, Fintech) in SA

Banks, insurers, and accountants are highly vulnerable as downtime disrupts transactions, regulatory reporting, and customer access, exposing them to major financial and reputational risk.

Employees affected	1h	4h	8h
10	R83,000	R106,000	R137,000
50	R114,000	R229,000	R383,000
100	R152,000	R383,000	R691,000
250	R268,000	R845,000	R1,615,000

Assumptions (Finance): Avg loaded salary ≈ R350/h; revenue-at-risk multiplier 1.2× salary; fixed recovery cost ≈ R75,000 per incident.

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Legal Services (Law Firms, Compliance) in SA

Law firms can't afford downtime because missed deadlines, inaccessible case files, and compliance breaches directly damage client trust and reputation.

Employees affected	1h	4h	8h
10	R59,000	R86,000	R122,000
50	R95,000	R230,000	R410,000
100	R140,000	R410,000	R770,000
250	R275,000	R950.000	R1,850,000

Assumptions (Legal): Avg loaded salary ≈ R450/h (blended billable staff mix); revenue-at-risk multiplier 1.0× salary; fixed recovery cost ≈ R50,000 per incident.

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Property / Real Estate in SA

Property firms rely on constant access to contracts, listings, and compliance documents. Downtime can stall deals and cost millions in lost commission.

Employees affected	1h	4h	8h
10	R40,000	R70,000	R110,000
50	R80,000	R230,000	R430,000
100	R130,000	R430,000	R830,000
250	R280,000	R1,030,000	R2,030,000

Assumptions: Avg loaded salary ≈ R400/h (agents + ops blend); revenue-at-risk multiplier 1.5× salary (commission-driven pipeline); fixed recovery cost ≈ R30,000 per incident.

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Healthcare in SA

Healthcare providers cannot afford interruptions, as downtime blocks access to patient records and critical systems, putting both lives and compliance at risk.

Employees affected	1h	4h	8h
10	R107,000	R128,000	R156,000
50	R135,000	R240,000	R380,000
100	R170,000	R380,000	R660,000
250	R275,000	R800,000	R1,500,000

Assumptions: Avg loaded salary ≈ R350/h (clinical/admin blend); revenue-at-risk multiplier 1.0× salary; fixed recovery cost ≈ R100,000 (higher continuity/compliance overhead).

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Retail & eCommerce in SA

Every minute of downtime halts sales, disrupts supply chains, and erodes customer trust, making retailers highly vulnerable without DR in place.

Employees affected	1h	4h	8h
10	R64,000	R78,000	R95,000
50	R82,000	R148,000	R236,000
100	R104,000	R236,000	R412,000
250	R170,000	R500,000	R940,000

Assumptions: Avg loaded salary ≈ R220/h (store + HQ blend); revenue-at-risk multiplier 1.0× salary (direct sales impact); fixed recovery cost ≈ R60,000.

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Manufacturing in SA

Production lines and logistics networks grind to a halt during downtime, creating costly backlogs, wasted resources, and lost revenue opportunities.
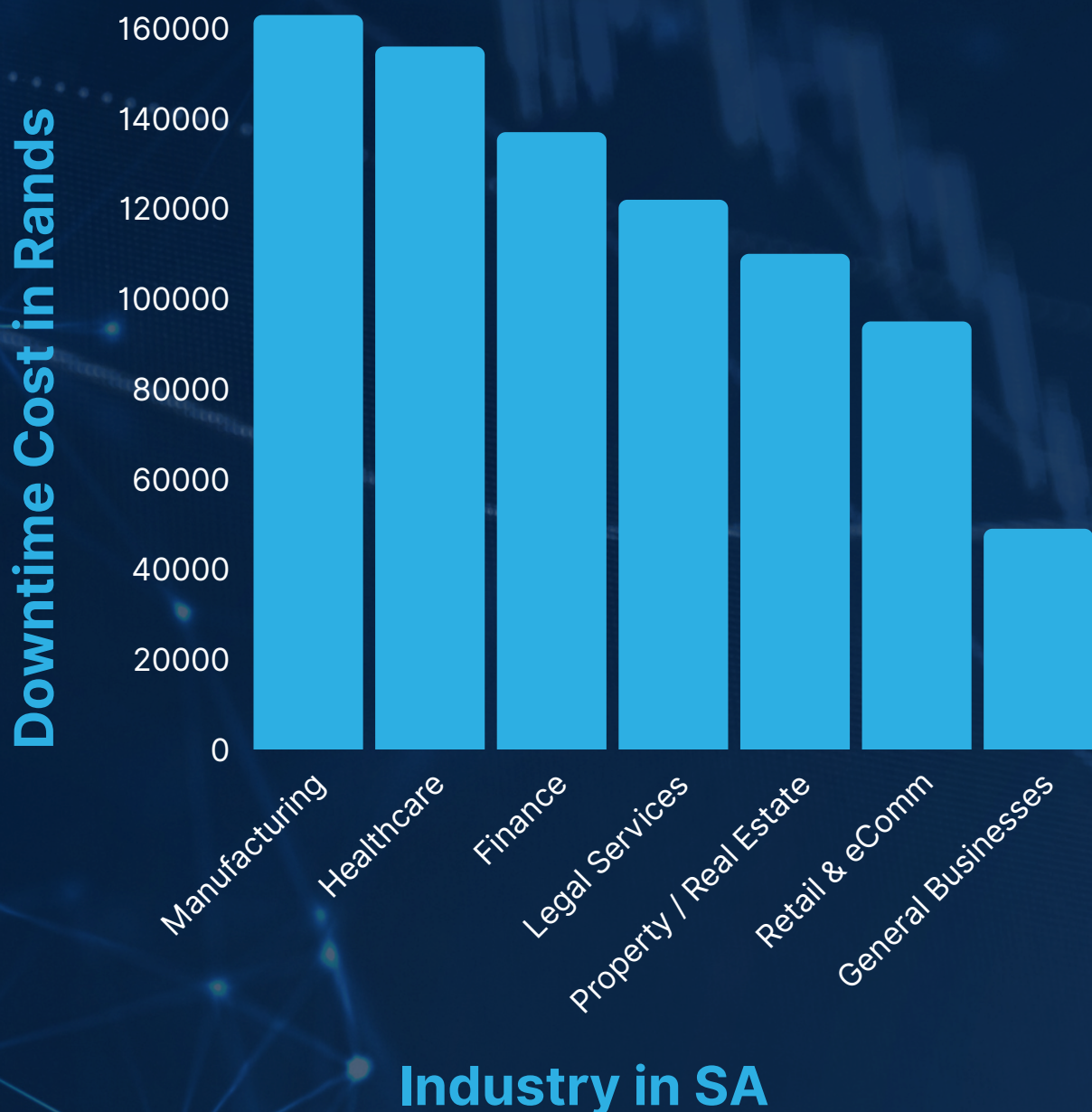
Employees affected	1h	4h	8h
10	R125,000	R141,000	R163,000
50	R147,000	R226,000	R333,000
100	R173,000	R333,000	R546,000
250	R253,000	R652,000	R1,184,000

Assumptions: Avg loaded salary ≈ R280/h (operators + support blend); revenue-at-risk multiplier 0.9× salary (lost output + rework); fixed recovery cost ≈ R120,000 (restart/cleanup).

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Approximate Downtime Cost Per Industry in SA

Downtime: 8 hours
Employees Affected: 10

Chart: Downtime Cost in Rands (y-axis) by Industry in SA (x-axis)

- Manufacturing: ~162000
- Healthcare: ~155000
- Finance: ~137000
- Legal Services: ~122000
- Property / Real Estate: ~110000
- Retail & eComm: ~93000
- General Businesses: ~50000

How DR Shrinks Your Risk

Disaster Recovery ensures that if disaster strikes - whether it's a cyberattack, power outage, hardware failure, or natural disaster - your critical systems can instantly start running on the cloud.

For your business, that means:

- Downtime is only a few minutes, not hours or days.
- You don't lose any critical data or have to pay recovery costs.
- Your customers aren't affected, protecting your reputation.
- Peace of mind knowing your business can recover fast, no matter what.

Put simply: Backup saves your data. **DR saves your business.**

Ready to Protect Your Business?

Most South African businesses are not prepared for downtime. But you don't have to be one of them.

Get in touch with us today to learn more about our award-winning Disaster Recovery as a Service (DRaaS) solution.

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Disclaimer:

This is an approximate estimation based on general industry data. Actual downtime costs will vary depending on your business and circumstances.

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