Organizations around the globe have been driven by innovation and efficiency as the two basic imperatives of survival and growth. The events of September 11th, the Asian financial crisis, the impact of natural disasters like the earthquake in Taiwan in 1999 have suddenly put a third imperative into perspective - resilience. In a recent survey conducted by the Economic Times of more than 700 CEO’s of global companies, innovation, efficiency and resilience are recognized as the three most important aspects that will ensure growth in the next decade. While Business Continuity Planning necessarily encompasses the whole gamut of getting the business back on track in the event of an earthquake, the seismic resilience of nonstructural components is a large part of this equation due to the enormous dependence of organizations on some types of equipment, such as information technology infrastructure. Some organizations duplicate entire infrastructures in different seismic zones for the sole purpose of redundancy.

The Business Imperatives of Seismic Resilience

Jay Lewis, President, Terra Firm, Inc.

Abstract

For two decades, the business of building seismic resilience into our structures has hovered on the edge of viability. Government support for research, regulation and infrastructure improvement has ebbed and flowed. At times the industry has neared critical mass, where economic activity would sustain the generation of new products, techniques and services. With an increasing awareness of the vast economic consequences of a significant earthquake, in a large modern urban area, conditions may now be right for this industry to become a player in the world economy.

Biography

Jay Lewis is the founder and president of Terra Firm Earthquake Preparedness Inc. a fully integrated seismic risk mitigation company based in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Terra Firm offers seismic risk assessment, mitigation program design, engineering and project management services. With an MBA specializing in international finance from Syracuse University, he has been involved in the construction industry for forty years as a building scientist, researcher, consultant, journalist, broadcaster and contractor.

Previously, Jay was a designer and manager of BC Hydro’s Power Smart energy conservation program. He is the author of three books and numerous papers on the efficient use of energy and seismic mitigation issues in buildings. Most recently he has presented papers on the applications aspects of earthquake engineering in buildings at International Conferences in Harbin and Hong Kong, China, Vancouver, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Ottawa.