

UPS needed for security systems

An uninterruptible power supply (UPS) device is considered an integral part of any electronics equipment installation, but often has been ignored where power supply is a matter of life or death - security systems.

By [Gary Jameson](#) 23 Mar 2010

The main function of a UPS is to ensure the quality and continuity of electricity, regulating the power to one critical load, while providing protection against supply irregularities, surges and lightning. Back up during blackouts (power failures) is yet another important function.

While the recent South African power crisis accelerated education and awareness around the importance of having some form of a power management solution in place, the focus has remained on business systems such as servers, PC equipment and infrastructure. However, in a country like South Africa, security systems are essential to protecting the assets of any individual or business and are as susceptible to damage as all other electrical equipment.

Every business, no matter how small or large, is at risk. People may only notice power disturbances when the lights flicker or go out, but their security systems and other electronics can be damaged by many other power anomalies that are invisible to the human eye and degrade equipment over time.

Evaluate business risk

It remains good practice to evaluate the power quality status of a business; to know what is at risk and to take the necessary steps to keep a business going during a power cut. While it is advisable to have a detailed assessment conducted by a trained professional, answering the following pertinent questions will give business owners a good indication of how at risk their business is to experiencing power quality problems

- Do you have electronic equipment that is especially sensitive to power quality disturbances?
- Is your office building more than 10 years old?
- Do you have equipment that operates 24 hours a day?
- Do you have a modem line or coaxial cable entering your facility?
- Does your business have more than five users on a computer network system?
- Does your business lack adequate protection against power quality disturbances, like point-of-use surge suppressers and UPS for critical equipment.

Protect your business against any power-supply fault

An answer of yes to three or more of these questions means the business has a higher risk of experiencing power quality problems. High availability power is the key to keeping things running and security systems need to stay up as much as PCs.

Businesses must ensure they are protected against any type of power supply fault and should proactively monitor power to ensure that all security systems remain at their optimal levels. A good starting point is to determine which devices would benefit from continued operation in the event of a power outage and then support these with a UPS. Also, protect and manage structured wiring and networking applications with a

UPS that enables remote management of automation functions, and ensures protection in the event of a power outage.

Eaton Corporation is a diversified power management company with 2008 sales of US\$15.4bn (about R110bn) and a global technology leader in electrical components and systems for power quality, distribution and control - www.eaton.com.

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