

Modern Data and Corporations are Fragile

In 410 AD, the Roman army pulled out of Britain. The collapse of the Roman society in Britain was fast and pronounced. In less than 50 years, Roman Britain was a faint memory and former Roman towns were being farmed with nobody living there. The prior widespread trading was gone. The Roman society in Britain had totally collapsed. It was far more fragile than nearly anywhere else in the Roman Empire. We, too, live in a fragile society

and businesses are at risk from both internal and external fragility.

Our society is quite fragile and the speed at which we discard technologies and move on to the new is part of the fragility. We are living in a Chaotic system that staggers

from one problem to another because of weather, other countries, and luck. It only functions because many people are working to ease the situation when we run into a wall. We do well to have our disaster recovery plan both in place and tested.

Compare the technology for recording business transactions today with those technologies used in the past. Archeologists have dug up hundreds of clay tablets recording many details of trade and transactions as far back as 5,000 years ago. They have discovered clay tokens that were used as far back as 10,000 years ago in the first societies.

Today, we store transactions on magnetic disks or laser written disks. But, we are constantly changing the technology used. Who, today, can read an 8-inch floppy disk? Or a floppy disk

of any kind? And every technology is dependent on electricity.

Our electrical system is the most complex network in the country and is fragile. It is a wonder that we have not had more blackouts. As population increases, the number of blackouts is increasing. Part of that is due to more places being wired for electricity as well as the increased complexity of the electrical network. The electrical system is supported by many

people monitoring it all the time. Yet, recently, a bird dropped a fish on a power line causing an over two-hour blackout. Squirrels, birds, and racoons cause blackouts all the time and the sun can cause massive electrical blackouts.

We are dependent on our computers and those are under attack. The archives

are full of stories about companies that had a computer failure or cyberattack only to find out that they do not have current backups or that they cannot even read the backup disks. It isn't good enough to run a backup process if you never test the backups to see if they can be read. In many cases, the company goes under after such an incident.

Chaotic systems can suddenly turn on us. Any demonstration of simple Chaotic systems will show them going suddenly in random directions. We can have a business disaster at any time.

It is time to test our disaster recovery plans. Test the backups to make sure that they can be read. Verify that antivirus programs and firewalls are up to date and working. Consider what would happen to the business if the building burns down. Build resiliency into what we do.

Chaotic Systems Turn On Us

Break the Rules!

If you want to make a significant change in your business, break the Rules. We operate with a bunch of rules in our head that can hold us back. By breaking the rules, we can see how to improve things and get significant results. While we can argue about whether Uber and Lyft can be profitable companies, there is no question that they have been breaking rules right and left. In many cases, Uber moves into a town without any permissions and breaks many laws to get started. However, when breaking rules, make sure that you are following the data.

Every company operates with a history of what works here and what does not. Many times, the people with seniority share the stories of how they got things done and teach the new people how to do the same. This becomes part of the corporate culture and "way of doing things".

Yet, often, those are the ways that are holding the company back.

There are a couple of ways to find out what is holding your company back. One question is: what would be the company that puts you out of business next year? So, what are they doing that you are not? Another question is to ask what are the core values of the business and what parts of the business are not following those values? In many cases, the conflict between what the company's values and what a portion of the company is doing shows what can be changed.

Follow the data when breaking rules. We can break the wrong rules by not looking at the data. Many a startup company breaks rules only to find out why those rules existed and the company fails.

The Rules of your business can be holding you back. Break the Rules.

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Risky World

An architecture firm installed some smart drawing pads without changing their default security. Those drawing pads got compromised and were being used to send malicious traffic to another company's web site. The architecture firm was able to stop it before it got very far as they might have been at legal risk if their equipment had been found to cause harm.

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