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Are we in business doomed to fall over?

The economic climate is really biting. Our Retail institute Tesco has reported a drop in sales for the first time in over a decade, high street shops are left vacant with little encouragement from Mr Cameron that things will improve soon, the Grim Reaper really is amongst us.

What chance then have we got to be successful in business at this juncture when Information and Communications Technology (ICT) is crashing down around us, wiping millions off the bottom line.

A power failure at a major exchange in Birmingham saw massive numbers of British Telecom (BT) Broadband customers across the United Kingdom cut off. BT said those affected numbered in to hundreds of thousands (5% of its total customers), with business users particularly badly affected, many reporting considerable lost revenues. Where was the affected businesses back up plan? Where was BT's back up plan? Rather more, what compensation was offered and where was their apology?

Shares in Supergroup, the company behind the Superdry brand, fell by 30% after they reported problems at a distribution warehouse would hit profits and stock levels by millions. They reported the botched upgrade to their ICT systems caused poor size availability in their shops. I would love to see the contract with their ICT supplier who provided the system, as there appears to be no sign of 'compensation' in their press releases!

Add to these woes the fact that cable theft, affecting power and telecommunications, seems to be a criminal disease spreading across the nation, and Blackberry recently reported a crashed server in Slough that, early on, according to Blackberry impacted 'some' subscribers in Europe, Middle East & Africa. No Blackberry, it was millions and where is your back up plan?

In my experience the failure of ICT is the main reason that is more likely to bring a business to its knees. The trick is having something in place to get you back up and returning to some sort of normality as quickly as possible. Do what you can do to understand what risks you have associated with your ICT resilience, put something in place to mitigate the risks, then cross your fingers that BT or Blackberry don't fail. Sounds like a great plan eh!

Somewhere along the line the regulators have to reassure the government and we in business that providers of the national infrastructure in respect of power and ICT have back up plans that are exercised and will work. **Otherwise we are all doomed to fall over.**

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2 b continued can really help you and your business to continue regardless of the situation faced. Let us know by visiting our website www.2bcontinued.co.uk using the Contacts page or e-mailing me direct at trevor.partridge@2bcontinued.co.uk My full contact details are listed below.

Thank you once again for taking the time to read these newsletters. We hope you find them informative.

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