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Why do organisations think that being resilient is bad?

One of the areas that I find perplexing within the Australian organisational culture is the ‘she’ll be right mate’ attitude that we take to the supply of critical resources like communication, power, water and skilled staff.

What makes this attitude so concerning is that when these critical resources are not available we can always find someone else to blame for our pain. Take for instance this recent article in the [Canberra Times](#) where a significant number of traders in the Canberra industrial precinct of Hume suffered the loss of internet services for a week

Whilst I can’t comment on how they were treated by their service provider in this instance, it is not all that uncommon for internet access to fail users and as such it should not be seen as ‘black swan’ type of event. So why would organisations, which are so reliant on a connection that a couple of days down time would cause such significant impacts, not take the obvious steps to protect themselves? You then add to this the assumption that they can blame the provider, whom I suspect made it very clear in their service contract that they can’t be held responsible, CAN be held responsible for the loss (but who reads contracts?). In many ways this is like running out of petrol for your car and then blaming the manufacturer.

The difficulty in many instances is that organisations spend all of their focus on those business aspects that they can measure against their core functions, such as creating products and servicing clients, because this is what they do day to day. This focus on what is both obvious and important means that they don’t necessarily appreciate the wider range of infrastructure that makes all their work possible - because its just there, like the internet in the above mentioned case. This narrow vision prevents them from seeing how these other resources are just as important with regard to how those resources enable their core functions to work. That is until they lose them and it becomes quite uncomfortably obvious. When the loss does occur we try and shift the ownership of the problem onto another entity. This is not all that surprising when you think about it, as no one likes to feel unwanted discomfort or pain. In these cases, we want someone else to feel the pain in our stead, for much the same reason that we get a smile out of those internet videos when some poor individual takes a hit to somewhere sensitive – it’s because we are not feeling the pain.

The fact is that we need to take ownership of our own ability to move through the pain and get on with our work. I am not suggesting that every business needs to become a member of the local Domsday Preppers chapter but just like we watch our fuel gauge in the car we need to assess our own situation and ask relevant questions. We need to understand what is critical to enable us to achieve our goals and ask ourselves – is it enough to get to where I need to go? Where could I get more on the way if I need it? And if we are not happy with the answers – what can I do now to make sure I am not walking down the road to find the nearest Petrol Station?

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