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Hello!

It's finally spring, and tax-season is mercifully behind us.

We've been meeting with many of our customers, and there's a decent amount of optimism around. Whatever your business plans this spring, we wish you success!

In this newsletter we bring you the following from our blog:

- [Blackout! The Cloud in action](#) (scroll down)
- [My Kindle Nightmare, and what you can learn from it](#) (scroll down)

Here's a few more that just missed the cut:

- [Why you should do your own sales and marketing](#) ([read](#))
- [Snuffing out smoking employees](#) ([read](#))
- [Social media campaigns, will they work for you?](#) ([read](#))

If you haven't already, you should [subscribe](#) to our blog.

Have a great month!

All the best,

Rafi Kronzon and Josh Feder
Co-Founders

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We have a blog for small businesses that offers daily tips and discussions. Click below to read it.



Blackout! The Cloud in Action

This past Friday was a perfect example of why we're big fans of online software and services (AKA "The Cloud").

We share a floor in our building with two other businesses. On Friday there was a short circuit on the floor that required an electrician to shut down power to the whole floor. If we had a regular phone system, an in-house Exchange server, or any critical applications on our servers, we would not have been able to provide services for our customers.

Instead, all we had to do was go online, activate our disaster management scenario for our VOIP system, which forwards all calls to our cell phones, and have our employees grab their laptops, go to Starbucks for internet access, and we were fully up and running in 10 minutes.

Here's our basic IT infrastructure:

- Phone Systems: [M5](#) & [Verizon Wireless](#)
- Email / Blackberry Enterprise Services: Hosted Exchange & BES with [Intermedia](#)
- Internet Access: Three lines with automatic failover (1 T1 – 2 DSL lines from different providers)
- PSA (Professional Service Automation): [Salesforce.com](#)
- IT Management Software: Hosted [Kaseya](#) / Hosted [Logmein](#)

We do have some servers and software we use in-house, but almost none of it is critical to day-to-day operations. The only exception is [Quickbooks](#). We wish they had a decent online product, but they don't.

Read this article in our [blog](#)

My Kindle Nightmare – And what you can learn from it



About three months ago, I finally decided to buy a Kindle. I know, very late for a techie, but I'm generally not an early adopter when it comes to lifestyle products. I play with stuff a lot (see our [review](#) of e-books), but don't like using first generation products. I guess Microsoft ruined me. Or maybe I'm just cheap.

Anyway, I loved it, and immediately starting reading a ton. That's when the reboots started.

My kindle decided it needed to reboot itself constantly. Sometimes while I was reading, but most often while it was just sitting in my bag. After doing a bit of useless online research, I decided to call Amazon.

They were very kind, but didn't seem surprised. They made a few suggestions. The first was to return their Kindle cover, which may or may not have been causing the reboots. The second was to keep the 3G feature off – which annoyed me. Why should I have to disable a function I paid extra for? I tried their suggestions, but the reboots continued.

A week later, Amazon sent me a "new" (read "refurbished") one. Guess what? More reboots. This time, almost exclusively while I was reading. Then the screen died. OK – stay calm. I again called Amazon support, this time, an apologetic representative offered to replace the Kindle again and issue a \$25 credit. I'm now waiting for my third Kindle.

So – what can we learn from this experience? First of all, that Amazon is having a hard time with the Kindle – their first real product in a transition from reseller to a manufacturer. I can't imagine I'm the only one with these issues, and all these replacements must cost a lot. It seems that even a large, smart, successful company can have trouble when entering new markets.

Second, and more importantly, Amazon is doing the right things in dealing with these issues. They are focusing on quality customer service. I never had to wait on hold, and the reps were almost all local, well trained, and had authority to fix the problem.

If you're a small business going into a new market, or just starting up, remember that it's OK to make mistakes – even the big boys do. The important thing is to manage those mistakes the right way.

Read this article in our [blog](#)

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