

Survive, Revive, and Thrive

By Sharon Miller Trackman, Qube Global Software

The rebound from economic distress post-recession has been slow coming. But to those businesses who have embraced the concept of 'survive, revive, and thrive,' the light at the end of the tunnel has never burned brighter. Countless stories exist about how to survive a recession, but how do we return our businesses to profit making mode now that the economy has turned itself around?



In fairness, there most likely isn't any one industry that hasn't fallen victim to disaster stories of foreclosures or downsizing. Not to mention, who hasn't heard 'I can't afford it' more times than 'sure, I can buy that right now!' We have become all too familiar with 'how does it feel to want' rather than the satisfaction of immediate gratification.

To elaborate on how this affects us in the workplace, I'll define each word in its proper context. By definition: to survive is to remain

alive or in existence, to live on, to continue to function or prosper; to revive is to return to consciousness or life, and to become active and flourish again; to thrive is to grow vigorously, to gain in wealth or possessions, to progress toward or realize a goal despite, or because of, circumstances.

In summary, explore, discover, and map a clear path to your vision of the future by thinking long term.

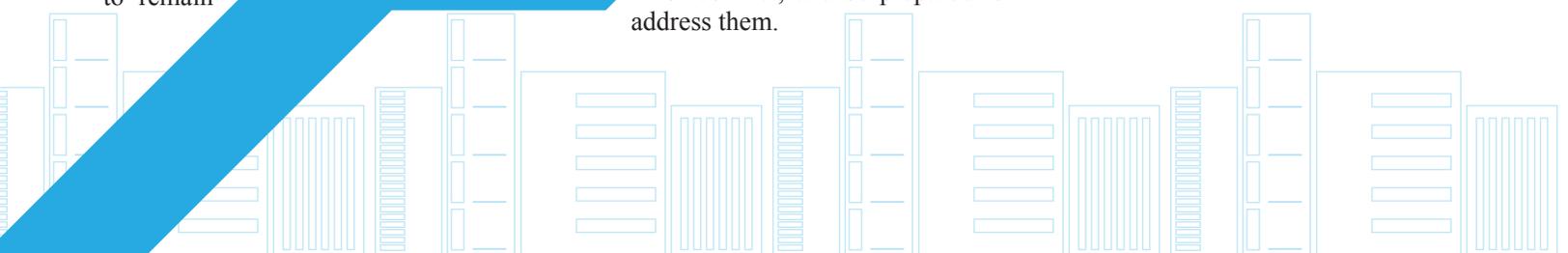
If your business is still running in survival mode, ask yourself some of the harder questions. What could you be investigating? Did you solve existing problem(s), or is there anything else you should be doing? Realize that answering these questions can open up additional doors of conflict, and be prepared to address them.

The use of technology (or fabricated intelligence) vs. humanity serves as an example to this challenge. Sellers of



software are human service providers that sell machinery and its technology to users that require technical assistance.

How is it that technology can stand up to humanity in the business world? Can either clearly communicate to the user what it's like to use the product? Is the information presented in a logical sequence? How consistent is the system? How flexible is it, and how forgiving is it to human error? Fundamental flaws in technology trace to missing features from a lack of clear communication with the user.



In reality, there will always be a fundamental conflict between humans and machinery. Human beings are flexible creatures. They are unpredictable, creative thinkers who can solve problems and retain memories that are subject to error. They receive and process information through their five senses, interpret information based on personal experience, and recognize complex patterns and are sensitive to their environment. Human emotions influence their actions. They have goals, take risks, and have expectations.

Machines are faster than humans, more accurate and consistent. They excel at repetition and can respond instantly. They have no sense of time...only memories of inputted history. Machines can't be distracted, are not affected by mood, and most of the time, they do as they are told.

Since software is only as strong as its weakest link, talk to those links.

Be a forward thinking company: complete survive, get out of revive, and work toward answering new challenges posed by technology users in preparation for thrive. As an example, sellers of software have different goals and standards than users of software. In judging the effectiveness of the product, businesses must understand that technology is worthless unless it empowers those who use it. Find the balance between the needs of the business and the requirements of technology users.

Innovative software is driven and guided by collaboration between the business entity, cutting edge technology and the ultimate goal. Make quality training a priority by integrating new ideas and concepts that will improve user performance.

The reality is that technical glitches can occur at any time. But when the quality of said software compromises our business, our personal privacy or our safety, no one is amused.

Successful manufacturers of consumer goods create something more than good products. They create great experiences. To thrive, stay focused on creating a unique experience for the user. The necessity to create technology that responds to changes in the marketplace represents an improvement in the user experience. Balance business and technical requirements with user needs, whereby the quality of the experience determines your level of success.

By building a software blueprint for better performance platforms, speed up routine tasks, improve overall processes, manage costs, increase margins, generate revenue and market share, and improve overall efficiency and effectiveness.

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In software development, a prototype likely becomes a product's prerelease version; subsequently becoming the product itself. Reorganizing and renaming the same old methodology won't solve a problem. A development cycle poses three significant risks; accuracy, innovation, and cost. But there remains a cycle of disappointment and failure that can sabotage and break a company's business. By reconfiguring the standard software development process, an accurate understanding of processes can reveal a tremendous amount of information about what the future can look like.

In summary, the formula for recovery is only as complicated as your business allows it to be. Set and exceed your goals for survival. Enable your business to be revived because you worked the plan. Subsequently, you will thrive as a forward thinking company, beating the recession by generating new revenue streams. ■