

FROM THE CEO

IT HAS TO BE A TEAM EFFORT

I wonder at times whether there is too much faith placed in the ability of technology to come up with solutions and improvements to systems which the technology is really not yet able to provide. Then again, maybe the technology is fine but those who design and construct technology based systems don't really have the capacity to put it together and make it work as envisaged.

One doesn't have to look far to find technology systems that didn't work properly when switched on for the first time – or indeed the second, third and fourth time. And then there are the questions of ongoing reliability and life expectancy.

Even small systems such as office computer networks have initial problems, so it comes as no surprise that complex systems such as myki, train brakes, taxi dispatch, submarines, signalling, roadway tolling, and aircraft also have teething problems. It would be reasonable to suggest that the chance of teething problems rises exponentially with the complexity of the system.

Perhaps the problem lays in the expectation of those who write the specification to meet everyone's wish list instead of writing a practical and technological achievable specification that meets the essential needs of the system. Wish lists instead of needs lists can lead to very expensive and potentially unstable systems.

Then again, perhaps the problem lays with those assigned the job of managing and overseeing the building and testing of the system. If these people don't know what is needed and by when then the design and construction will tend to be leaderless and could be based on guesses.

When things do go wrong it is misguided thinking to point the finger at a particular individual or individuals. The reality is that things are achieved and things fail not because of the individuals but because of the team of individuals. Whether its myki or your football team, the same thing applies – it's the team that counts and it's the team which is accountable.

I also think there is, by the very nature of the way of things, a clearly defined accountability break point between those who decide what is needed and those who provide for that need. It's the break point between policy (decision) and implementation (process). Nonetheless, all involved have a responsibility to see that things happen properly and achieve the desired outcome.

A bit like the delivery of good taxi services really, everyone involved has a responsibility to do their part in delivering the desired outcome.

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