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# Is Your Company The Next Target (Or Google Or Argentina) Of A Massive IT Failure?



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A sign is posted explaining a technical glitch at a Target store in San Francisco on Saturday, June 15, 2019. (AP Photo/Michael Liedtke) ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yes, that pun was intended. But in all seriousness, Target, Argentina, Google? Take a ticket. Who's next?

Bloomberg reported that an internal [Target glitch](#) may cost the company up to \$50 million. Cybersecurity incidents perpetrated by malicious actors may make the headlines more often because they are full of crime and international mystery. However, a plain old technology failure that is related to internal problems such as lack of investment or human error can be just as devastating. The Target glitch occurred over just two hours this past Saturday, June 15, 2019. That's right—the day before Father's Day. Saturday is a peak sales day and sales are even more likely to spike around a holiday, which is why retailers should always be planning for potential disruptions on those days. None of this is surprising. All of it is predictable.

Also over the weekend, a [huge blackout](#) left tens of millions of people without power across three countries in South America. Surprised? We shouldn't be as I wrote in my article about [the biggest business risks of 2019](#). Our power grids are vulnerable across the world, because we are not investing infrastructure and it really doesn't look like those investments are coming any time soon. Does your company have a plan for how to operate in the dark? You should, or it could be lights out.

And today, I took the time to write this article because my [Google Calendar](#) was down. That is still an evolving situation and we don't yet know why it happened. We may never know. But we do understand the effects of it and we can plan for what we will do when we lose access. Many, many organizations and individuals rely on Google Calendar so the problem will not be isolated to Google, but will have a ripple effect on the productivity of a lot more people and organizations. If even mighty Google hasn't invested in an ironclad business continuity management strategy, how are your other suppliers doing?

Companies need to invest in business continuity management. Business continuity principles teach us to focus on the *effects* of disruptions both big and small rather than on the *causes* of those disruptions. That way, when our systems go down or the lights go out, we have a plan in place for how to pick up the pieces. When was the last time you reviewed your plan? Since you probably don't know

where your next appointment is thanks to Google, now might be the time to dust it off and take a look.



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