

How Mission Critical is Your Social Network?

By David Nour, Founder – Relationship Economics

You won't believe this one. I recently logged into LinkedIn and it actually gave me the following alert: *LinkedIn is currently unavailable while we make upgrades*. What?! Hello?! I was simply distraught. I was in Dubai, UAE, preparing for a meeting with a senior vice president with whom I had scheduled the meeting through LinkedIn, and I desperately needed access to his profile. What now – I can't show up blindly!

As technologies such as e-mail and the use of Blackberry devices have become so prevalent in our lives, any disruption to that comfort zone is met with a sense of panic. Most of us cannot imagine going through the day without e-mailing or texting someone, 4CLO (for crying out loud). This begs the question, *How mission critical is your social network?* What critical piece of information instrumental to your personal and professional success would you need just in time, so that if the social link or connection were disrupted, it would cause irreparable damage?

What kind of information or access to information is truly mission critical and requires diversity and quality (the two most important assets in your portfolio of relationships in your social network) so that if or when destructed would force you to gather that information elsewhere?

Does the idea of redundancy or five nines (99.999%) availability apply to social networks? At what point do professional social networks such as LinkedIn become mission critical?

Other SaaS (Software as a Service) solutions such as Salesforce.com and NetSuite have already figured this out through the high availability of their hosting servers, as well as desktop sync functionality at the user level. The notion of a mission critical social network reiterates our premise that relationships are enablers. They are enhancers. They are accelerants. And as such, a social network by itself without purpose, goals or a plan has very little standalone value.

Add relevancy and context of social networks to deadline or event driven scenarios – think of meeting a trusted relationship on LinkedIn to help deliver a project by 3 PM on Friday afternoon and now we're getting close. Social networks now become a critical *need* and not just a *desired access*.

FedEx built its foundation on, "When it absolutely, positively has to be there." When online strategic relationships become an absolutely, positively "must have," at a precise point of need, that is when best in class social networks will rise to provide not only access, but intelligence as well. I can't wait . . .

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David Nour is a social networking strategist and one of the foremost thought leaders on the quantifiable value of business relationships. A native of Iran, David came to the U.S. with a suitcase, \$100 cash, limited family ties and no fluency in English! Fast forward 25 years and he has built an impressive career of entrepreneurial success, both within large corporations and early stage ventures. David is the author of Relationship Economics (Wiley, 2008), a senior management advisor, and a featured speaker for corporate, association and academic forums, where he shares his knowledge and experience as a leading change agent and visionary for Relationship Economics® - the art and science of relationships. To learn more, please visit: www.relationshipeconomics.NET or call 1-888-339-1333.