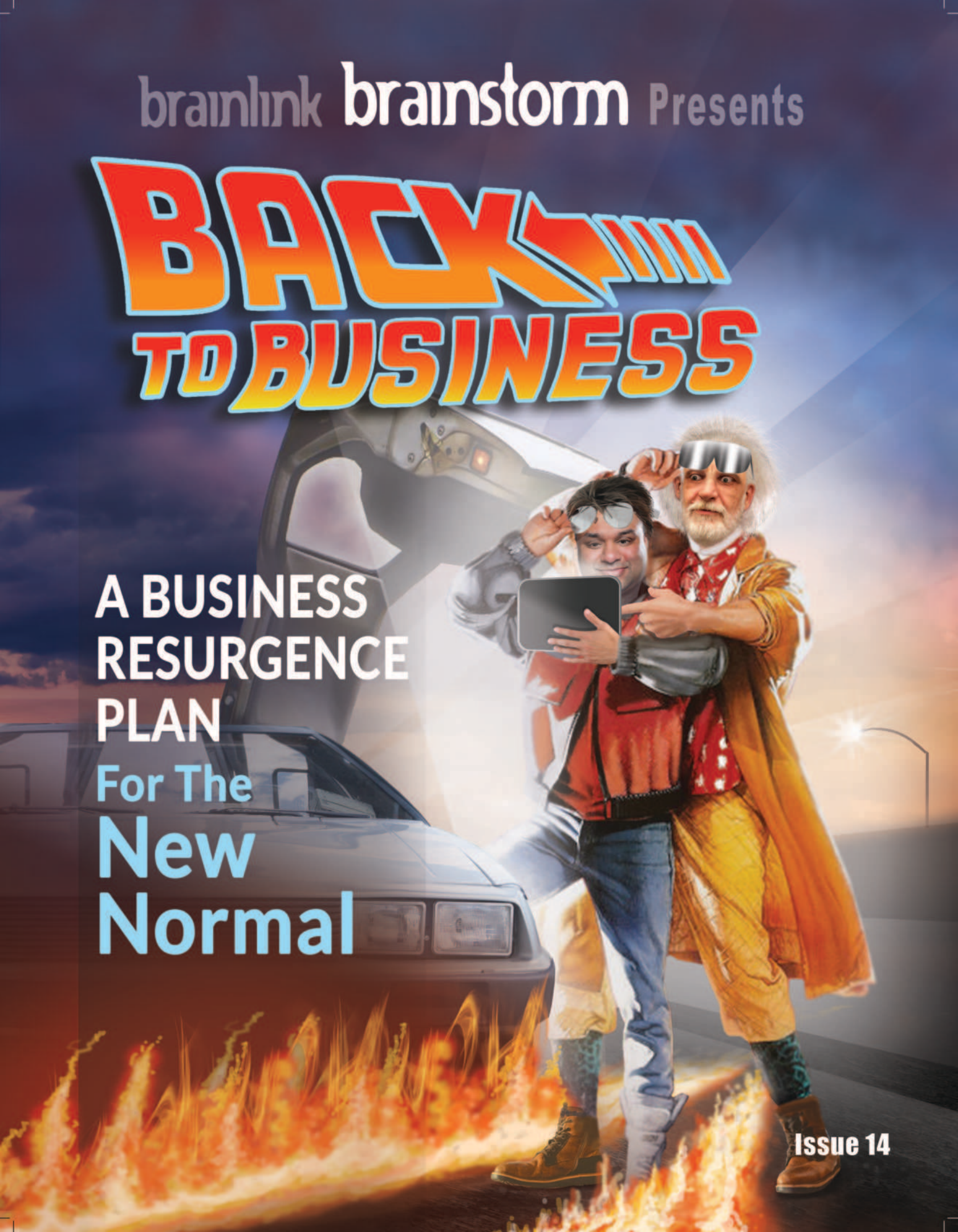
brainlink brainstorm Presents

BACK TO BUSINESS



A BUSINESS RESURGENCE PLAN For The New Normal

Issue 14

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BrainStorm | Issue Number: 14

RAJ IN THE MEDIA

VEEAM VELOCITY 2020

PLAY TO WIN!









*We **INCREASE YOUR TEAM'S PRODUCTIVITY** by responding quickly to critical issues, improving systems stability, reducing downtime and resolving long -standing performance issues.*

www.Brainlink.com | (917) 685-7731 | raj@brainlink.com

BRAINLINK SETS 2 WORLD RECORDS

FOR DISASTER RECOVERY WITH

VEEAM + AZURE

3.4 Gb/s RESTORES



Brainlink provides exceptional IT and business-process support to privately owned companies in the financial services and construction industries.

Brainlink's customers know the value of a proven business continuity disaster recovery (BCDR) strategy.

Brainlink's customers opt for a cloud-based BCDR strategy, putting them ahead of the national average.

VEEAM AND AZURE helps Brainlink protect their customers' productivity and profitability.

BRAINLINK'S WORLD RECORD FOR:

- Automating, accelerating and improving BCDR strategies for customers
- Reducing BCDR testing time by 99% (from 3,330 hours to eight hours)
- Saving $30,000 in mandatory overtime costs each year

For more information on how Brainlink can help your business's productivity and profitability, reach out to the Brainlink team right away at (917) 685-7731 or raj@brainlink.com

ENGINEERED BY brainlink POWERED BY VEEAM IN Azure



TOP 7 MISTAKES COMPANIES MAKE When Using Amazon AWS

Businesses move to the AWS cloud to save time,money,

and to free their technologists to do the work that delivers value to their customers.

But mismanaging AWS resources can quickly dilute your cost savings, put you at risk of security breaches, and cause problems in your cloud environment that require expensive, labor-intensive resolutions.

Managing AWS resources to maximize cost savings while experiencing optimal security and service takes some trial and error.

Avoiding these mistakes will help you strike that balance sooner and reap the benefits of the cloud. expensive, labor-intensive resolutions.

1. **Too Many Powerful Users:** Having too many users with permissions they don't need leaves your AWS environment vulnerable to catastrophes resulting from human error, configuration issues, and security threats.

2. **Running Anything as Root:** The AWS root account should never be used for day-to-day work — by anyone. Instead, create an Admin group for your power users and adhere to the Principle of Least Privilege for all other users and groups, assigning role-based access to the services a developer needs to do her job.

3. **Not Using AWS CloudTrail:** CloudTrail is an invaluable administrative and auditing service, logging all actions performed via the AWS Management Console, the AWS SDKs, command line tools, and other AWS services.

4. **Leaving Connections Wide Open:** Many admins leave their ports open to the world, jeopardizing your environment's security by making it possible for any machine, anywhere, to connect to your AWS resources.

5. **Not Taking Advantage of CloudWatch Alarms:** CloudWatch is natively integrated with more than 70 AWS services such as Amazon EC2, Amazon DynamoDB, Amazon S3, Amazon ECS, AWS Lambda, Amazon API Gateway, that automatically publish detailed 1-minute metrics and custom metrics with up to 1-second granularity. CloudWatch allows users to monitor resource use, application performance, operational issues and constraints.

6. **Overestimating AWS Responsibility and Support:** Remember: AWS is responsible for the security of the cloud, and you are responsible for your security in the cloud. That means that AWS is responsible only for the infrastructure they provide — you're responsible for all aspects of what you do upon that secure infrastructure.

7. **Not Using CamelID:** Brainlink's CamelID and the Dromedary Security platform stops hackers in their tracks. This machine-learning platform analyzes your AWS security in realtime, and alerts you to security mistakes, cost overruns, hacks in progress.

For more information about using Amazon AWS for your business , reach out to the Brainlink team right away at (917) 685-7731 or raj@brainlink.com



HOW TO STOP HACKERS BEFORE THEY STEAL $114,236

- **In their SHARED RESPONSIBILITY MODEL documents, Amazon(.com) states that protecting your data is your responsibility.**

  (See https://aws.amazon.com/compliance/shared-responsibility-model/.)

- **In essence, AMAZON WEB SERVICES will protect the "apartment building" (the AWS Infrastructure), but you are responsible for the contents of your "apartment".**

CUSTOMER Security "in" the cloud

- Customer Data
- Platform, Application, Identity and Access Management
- Operating System, Network & Firewall Configuration
- Client Side Data Encryption & Data Integrity Authentication
- Server -Side Encryption (File System and/or Data)
- Networking Traffic Protection (Encryption, Integrity, Identity)

AWS Security "of" the cloud

- Software
- Compute | Storage | Database | Networking
- Hardware/AWS Global Infrastructure
- Regions | Availability Zones | Edge Locations

In practical terms, this not only means that it is **absolutely necessary to have proper backups**, but you must also have a documented disaster recovery strategy and alarms everywhere, such as: Spending alarms, Resource creation alarms, Resource shutdown alarms, Security group creation, modification, and deletion alarms, Privileged access alarms.

However, you must **prevent "alarm fatigue"**. It does no good to bombard your team with a thousand or more alarms a day (configured properly, AWS alerting is extremely noisy).

To address this dilemma and provide a balance between security and efficiency, **Brainlink developed the Brainlink Dromedary Platform for our clients and their internal security teams**.

Dromedary configures thousands of alarms in AWS and analyzes them using advanced machine-learning technology which then delivers just the important and critical alerts to clients and their teams via email, SMS and Slack.

SO, HOW DID WE SAVE A CLIENT $114,236? Here is an example:

11:00 a.m. - Saturday, **hacker compromises** a developer access key.
11:01 a.m. - **Hacker logs into client infrastructure**, creates security group and tries to run five p3dn.24xlarge instances for cryptomining.
11:05 a.m. - **Dromedary alerts the security team** that unauthorized security group has been created, and resource spin up has exceeded boundaries.
11:10 a.m. - **Attack fails**. Hacker's security group is not approved to create the instances, so Dromedary prevents him/her from running up a huge bill.
11:15 a.m. - **Hacker** logs in again, restores a server from backups and **tries cryptomining**.
11:20 a.m. - **Dromedary** has lit up the security teams Slack with **red alerts**.
11:25 a.m. - **Security team** logs in, **revokes developer keys** and snapshots the affected AWS resources for for forensics.
12:30 p.m. - All AWS security keys have been revoked and incident has been reported to AWS security. **Attack cleanup complete**.

TIME FOR BEERS.

In less than ninety minutes our client went from being actively attacked to business as usual. Can your team do that?
If not, give us a call at 917-685-7731 or email support@brainlink.com.

P.S. We saved our client $114,236 by preventing five p3dn.24xlarge instances which cost $114,235.95 a month.

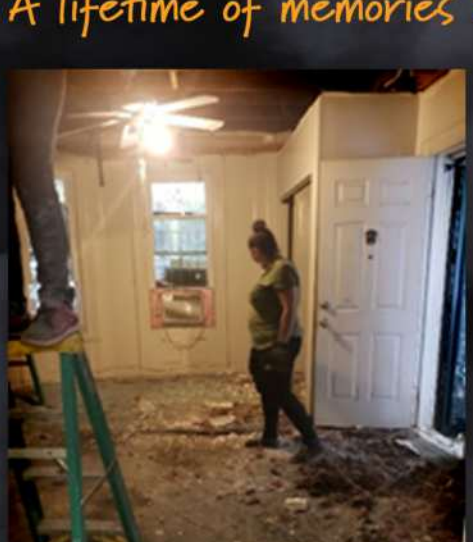
LESSONS LEARNED FROM A HOUSE FIRE

Imagine going away on a trip, and coming back to this. . .





A lifetime of memories reduced to this. . .





And this. . .



July 29, 2019 –

- Sharon and I are in Denver.
- Kids are at home with my parents.

AND SO IT BEGAN...

10:45 P.M. – My phone rings–Internet is off at home and Wi-Fi offline.

10:46 P.M. – I call my younger daughter to see if Fios is offline again. She says she smells smoke. I ask her to wake up her grandfather and have him check.

10:40 P.M. – Dad confirms he smells smoke coming from my home office on the third floor. Dad calls 911.

10:45 P.M. – Mom, dad, both kids are out of the house. FDNY arrives.

11:00 P.M. – I call Jason Greenberg at Phoenix Adjusters to let him know we have a house fire.

4:00 A.M. – FDNY and investigators have left. Neighbors offer help, vultures try to get dad to sign papers. Thankfully, he refuses to sign anything. 8:00 p.m. – Sharon and I arrive home from Denver. The living room ceiling has fallen in. The kids' bedroom has a giant hole where the ceiling used to be. The house smells of nasty fumes, smoke, soot and something indescribably horrible. A wet, shaggy nightmare scent full of wet carpets, soaked clothes, rotting books and a fridge full of groceries turned off for forty-eight hours.

Ugh...the only clothes Sharon and I have are in the rollers we took on the trip. The only clothes our daughters have are what's in their go-bag; my mom and dad are left with just the clothes they were wearing.

"At this point, data doesn't matter, Documents don't matter and 401Ks don't matter."

I've got to get my family out of this dangerous, toxic place we called home, and into a safer environment.

We grab the medicines, ready cash (you did learn from hurricane Sandy and start keeping emergency cash in a safe, accessible place, right?), pots, pans, favorite chai cups and hightail it to my sister's house. Thankfully, she and her husband are generous souls who took us in without notice, and turned their home over to us.

Fast forward one month to September 2019. Sharon and the kids and I are living in a fabulous new apartment in Forest Hills. For the first time in their entire lives, our daughters are living away from their grandparents. And for the first time in our lives, Sharon and I are home alone. . . with two teenage daughters and each other.

"To say we were stressed is an understatement."

The fire has forced mom and dad to live with my sister for the past six months; it forced Sharon and I to examine the nature of our marriage and the assumptions we lived by. It required all of us to pare down our possessions (I will never buy another tie or braces again – I have too many!).

The fire opened discussions within the family about the importance of:

- Family
- Strong social networks
- Excellent health insurance
- Written wills
- Emergency cash
- Personal and business disaster recovery



THE UNSUNG HEROES

"None of us could have survived this ordeal alone."

"We needed a league of superheroes to help us succeed, like these:"



Mom and Dad – Dad showed incredible strength on July 29th when he climbed three stories in his sleep to check on the fire. To top it off, he's been taking care of mom ever since. And though I've had good days and bad days, dad has been a rock throughout. Thanks dad, for being an amazing example of what an awesome dad, granddad and nanu looks like. Mom has been inconvenienced the most because everything is different for her now– not only has she lost her home, her bedroom and her way of living, but she's also had to adjust to a different TV, with different ways of watching and a new bathroom, among other things. But despite it all, mom's been a resilient trooper.

Charles Rawls – My best friend of 30 years, mentor and VP of operations – he showed up at 11 p.m. on a Monday night to help safeguard our family and offer his personal and moral support.

Jason Greenberg at Phoenix Public Adjusters – He was on a plane to Israel, heading to a bar mitzvah, when I called him about my house fire. His team of experts jumped into action and brought sanity to our lives.

Meena and Indy – Thanks Sis for letting us invade your house for a month.

Steve Klebanow – Thank you for cleaning all our clothes (and showing us just how much excess clothing we have!).

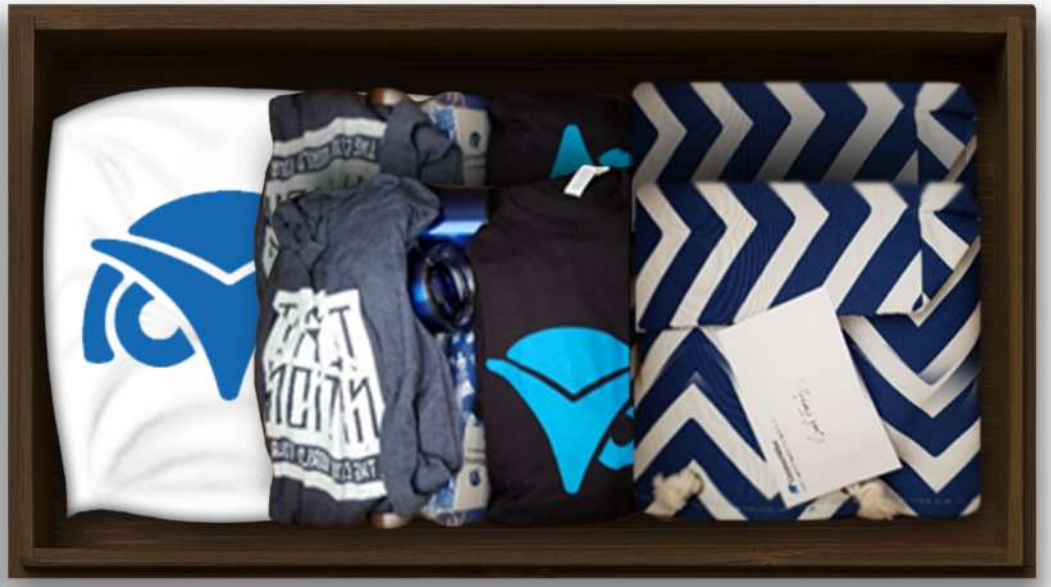
Jeff Greenberg – Thanks for stepping in as a public adjuster while Jason was in Israel.

Rob Picchioni – Thanks for the excellent demolition work and cleanup.

My friends in **Gotham Networking** for help, offers of help, and moral support.

Tina and Varun – Thank you for bringing joy into our lives by schlepping the baby back and forth from Maryland multiple times.





MORE UNSUNG HEROES

The HTG Evolve staff and Connectwise – When we were short on clothes, they sent us a lovely care package full of T-shirts (which are super comfortable!), water bottles and a beach towel. For two weeks, Sharon and the kids and I lived in those tees. To date, they have become our favorite comfort shirts.

David Edwards at Heron Wealth – Thanks for giving me a sanity check on our finances.

The staff at Parker Towers – Our new apartment rocks!

Our amazing therapists and counselors – Surviving a fire is stressful. It's hard on the adults and even harder on the teens whose life it upends. Anger, grief, rage, depression – they all reared up. Our counselors and therapists are helping us deal with the trauma and giving us the life skills we need to cope with it.

VEEAM – We switched to VEEAM as our backup and disaster recovery platform in January 2019. In August 2019, VEEAM helped me recover critical Brainlink servers and personal data into Azure in less than ninety minutes.

Our amazing clients – Thank you for not noticing that I was unavailable for three weeks! Also, thank you for letting our team take care of you. And, most importantly, a personal thank you for offering moral support and good advice when I confided in you.

Our team at Brainlink – Charles, Greg, Anna, Hardy, and V – Thanks for carrying the workload while Sharon and I were busy focusing on our family. Not only did we survive the fire, Brainlink posted our best quarter ever in Q4 2019!

The HTG18 group – No one knows what running a business is like except for a fellow business owner. Thanks Bobby, Arlin, Trevor, Tarah, et Al., for offering us support and help during our ordeal.

Trevor and Tarah – An extra special thanks for introducing us to Alexa! Alexa-controlled devices make our lives much, much easier.

So, what lessons did I learn?

1. My family is a bedrock of amazing women (mom, Sharon, Meena, Tina, Ari, Allie, Adi, and Ananya).
2. The GOTHAM network is a life saver (Jason Greenberg, Steve Lichtenstein, David Edwards, Corey Bearak, and Scott Bloom – you guys are gems!).
3. Knowing a good public adjuster before a disaster is critical – and Jason Greenberg is fantastic!
4. Learn to read your insurance policies. And ask an expert for help!
5. Having a business and personal Disaster Recovery Plan matters!

Hurricane Sandy redefined our personal DRP.

1. **THE GO-BAG IS UPDATED TWICE A YEAR WITH:**

   - Current, comfortable clothes
   - One to two weeks of prescription medication
   - One month of over-the-counter medication
   - One pair of shoes, slippers and seven days of under clothes
   - Cell phone chargers and laptop chargers
   - Copies of health, dental, house, business, life, long-term care and disability policies
   - Copies of relevant medical records in paper and USB drive
   - All family photos, music and critical documents stored online, securely in the cloud
   - All passwords secured in LastPass Enterprise

2. **KEEP EMERGENCY CASH ON HAND –** Enough to check into a hotel for a week (especially in the event that all ATMs are down).

3. **PRACTICE HAVING YOUR FAMILY LEAVE THE HOUSE IN FIVE MINUTES OR LESS –** Keep doing this drill until everyone knows what to take, what to leave and where to meet.

4. **PRACTICE YOUR BUSINESS DRP –** We perform disaster recovery drills twice a year for Brainlink and our clients. The fire revealed that two of our critical servers were still at the house in my home office--not any more! Everything Brainlink runs on is in Amazon AWS or Microsoft Azure and replicated to multiple regions.

I hope you never have a disaster – not fire, flood, burst pipes – zip, zero, zilch.

On the other hand, if you do, I hope you've prepared. And Practiced.

Your DRP is only as good as the people who execute it.

Leaving your daughter's stuffed bear behind because it wasn't considered important in previous DR tests hurts. It really hurts. She misses her bear daily – and we never considered how powerful sentimental objects can be.

Learn from our ordeal – strengthen your family bonds; get to know your insurance brokers; make friends with a public adjuster; make a go-bag for the home and another for the office. Teach your family members to do the same. Teach your employees the same.

Live a fabulous life!

Yours,
Raj and Sharon

BACK TO FUN

brainlink
Funnies





Children are like pancakes.
The first one is always a bit weird.

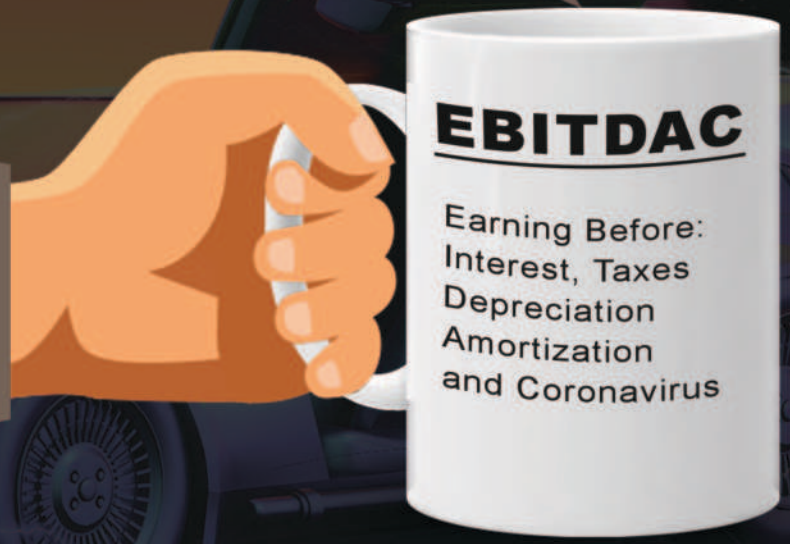


Morning forecast:

Slightly exhausted with 100% chance of needing coffee. Scattered sarcastic comments through the afternoon.







WHY BRAINLINK?



Our staff is
HIGHLY TRAINED
WELL DRESSED AND POLITE
All 3 are non-negotiables



VIP SUPPORT to key employees.

SOPCULTURE
PROCESS + DOCUMENTATION = $$ PROFIT $$

User-Friendly
DOCUMENTATION & SOPS
to your staff



RECOGNIZED experts in
BUSINESS CONTINUITY PROCESSES



We provide Business-Class service for Business-class clients.

Our clients are billionaires, hedge funders, celebrities, and more.

White Glove service with a smile is what we deliver.

For more information why you should choose Brainlink for your business ,
reach out to the Brainlink team right away at (917) 685-7731 or raj@brainlink.com