

were using the landscape to help us anticipate opportunity and points of attack. I suddenly felt our strategy was becoming more meaningful than just gut feel and copying memes from others. We were thinking about position and movement. I was starting to feel a bit like that wise executive I had met in the lift in the Arts hotel in Barcelona when he was testing that junior (i.e. me) all those years ago. It felt good but I wanted more. How do I decide?

The dangers of past success

One significant problem around making a choice usually stems from past success and the comfort it brings. We had an existing photo service along with other lines of business which generated a decent revenue. We were comfortably profitable and life was pretty easy. Would it not be better for me to just continue doing what we were doing? Why rock the boat? I'd be taking a risk changing the course we were on. However, I had recently watched another company fail to manage change and was acutely aware of the dangers of not taking a risk. That company was Kodak.

Being an online photo service, I had a ringside seat to the fundamental shift happening in the image market between 2000 to 2005. The photo had been seen as something with value to customers due to its costs in terms of time and money to produce — the visit to the photo lab, the cost of processing and the wait for it to be delivered via the post. Film was at the centre of this and the only thing more annoying than waiting for it to be processed was not having enough film to take that next shot on holiday. Many times in the past, I had to make choices