

“effective” thing to do was to get rid of this entire part of the value chain. It’s a bit like the utility platform question. I can either invest in making my infrastructure and platform components more efficient by automation or I could just plan to get rid of that entire part of the value chain by using a utility platform. Often the “efficient” thing to do is not the “effective” thing.

However, a word to the wise. This was 2008 and the idea of getting rid of custom built racks and adopting a move towards using infrastructure from a utility provider was not welcomed. It’s easy in 2016 to say “this is obvious” but that’s because most people now have the benefit of hindsight. In 2008, such ideas were seen as radical and even dangerous. The changes necessary were far from welcomed within the organisation and it was fought every step of the way from executives to the ground floor. Without the courage and conviction of the CEO and a few “rebels”, the company would have happily spent millions on robotics and would be still building custom racks today.

From experience, you should be careful with both your use of simplification when viewing a landscape and the inertia that exists. You should be very careful of process improvements focused solely on efficiency. You should be extremely careful when dealing with the corporate corpus.

The company in question was a manufacturing company, the real scenario had nothing to do with computing and yes, they were about to spend many millions making a highly ineffective process more efficient. They didn’t, they are alive and doing well. I also kept the