

to do. Somehow, we needed to find a way to flourish as the unwritten purpose of every organisation and of every organism is always to survive. Using our maps, we determined that creating a utility platform or infrastructure play was the best option as there were established product markets, these markets were suitable for utility provision and incumbents would have inertia to change. Both approaches would not only enable us to build a new business but free up capital through more efficient use of resources in our existing business. However, infrastructure itself was capital intensive and despite our profitability we had imposed constraints from capital expenditure to being both profitable and cashflow positive each and every month.

However, I gambled that if we believed the market was about to change then others would see the same. Some new entrant such as Google would play the infrastructure game. If they launched such a play, we could then exploit this by building our platform on top rather than just consuming our own infrastructure. The timing was going to be critical here. We could make enough savings from our existing business through the provision of our own utility infrastructure environment to initiate our own public platform play. To grow the new business quickly, we would need someone else to make that big infrastructure play or else constrain our own platform growth to a manageable level. I had talked to the rest of the board, highlighted this future trillion-dollar market opportunity and bought enough slack (or rope depending upon your point of view) to do it anyway.