The IT Failure Blame Game

Try to match failures and glitches with their reported causes

When IT systems fail, there's always a reason. If you dig deep enough, at the root of any problem are human decisions: sloppy code, insufficient testing, poorly understood dependencies, and incorrect assumptions. Yet when we read about (and report on) failures, the language we use tends to assign blame to inanimate technology that can't defend itself or get fired.

From our archive of failure coverage we've extracted verbatim excerpts that tried to assign blame or identify the cause of a failure. You're likely to notice some trends about blame and accountability.

Match each failure to its reported cause by clicking one of the boxes below. After answering, you can follow the links to see the excerpt in context.

Viewing Question: 1 of 10
FAILURE:

Toyota Recalls 1.9 Million Cars to Fix Software Flaw

Toyota software bug in power converter might cause car to slow down and stop unexpectedly.

WAS CAUSED BY:

Domain Name Servers (DNS)

a server issue

still trying to determine what caused the problem

the sensitivity of the software calibration, particularly when 'a combination of factors such as high engine vibration at idle when the seat is initially empty and then becomes occupied' or an 'unusual' seating posture are factors

officials did not adequately monitor the development and completion of the implementation tasks

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