

Vincent Ryan

1/19/2025

## CSD380 Module 2 - Linked In Technical Debt

LinkedIn started in 2003 and quickly grew by 2015 to have 350 million members. This growth wasn't sustained on the backend with newer, more modular code. Servers were overloaded, and systems were fragile and resistant to updates. In 2011, Kevin Scott launched Operation InVersion. The goal was to refactor and holistically rebuild the software to manage the technical debt accrued over the years.

This was a risky but necessary maneuver as the company had just gone public and promised many things to its stakeholders. Management agreed and approved the project, which took two months to complete. Ultimately, the more flexible, secure, and sustainable architecture gave developers an easier time working with their software. As a metric for success before the project, they offered 150 services, but now they offer more than 750.

There are a few main takeaways. Pay down your technical debts; it's unavoidable. The longer you put it off, the greater an undertaking it will be to correct. LinkedIn was out of commission for two months after waiting a decade to correct it. The other takeaway is that this also needs to be a priority from management's perspective. Had the complaints of employees working long, rigorous hours not been seen as "business as usual," they could have gotten on top of this issue much sooner, boosting team morale and productivity.