

Do We Really Need The Internet?

By Jim Edwards

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As someone who earns their living entirely online, I considered myself the last person I ever thought would ask the question, "Do we really need the Internet?"

However, the extended power outage of almost 4 days, ongoing loss of Internet access, combined with many other events surrounding the recent Hurricane Isabel caused me to reassess my priorities.

When "high-tech" business gets into a head-on collision with a natural or man-made disaster, we all need to ask, "Do we really need the Internet?"

Well, when you're in line for 3 hours to get gas so you can siphon the tank to run your father-in-law's generator in order to save \$1,000 worth of food in three freezers - you don't need the Internet, you need the expectation that you'll find gas.

When you're driving around for 2 hours trying to find ice so you can have a cold drink and make your family more comfortable on a 90+ degree day - you don't need the Internet, you need patience and a sense of humor.

When a good friend of yours falls 30 feet off a ladder while helping his neighbors cut a tree off their house, fractures his back and neck, punctures a lung and must be airlifted to the hospital in critical condition - you don't need the Internet, you need faith he'll be okay!

When the hurricane's destruction threatens to ruin the surprise 50th wedding anniversary party you've been planning for over a year for your parents - you don't need the Internet! You improvise and set up a human communication network that spreads the word to dozens of people who still show up and throw a party that creates

memories that will last a lifetime!

When you can't turn on your computer to get work done, you can still grab a good old-fashioned pen and legal pad and get more work done in the peace and quiet without phones, fax or email to distract you than you could ever get done when things get back to "normal."

It struck me last night as I struggled to get my high-speed Internet connection going again that I was much more stressed over getting a stupid piece of hardware to function than I was over driving 50+ miles to find gas just two days before!

In fact, looking back, I was more proud of the fact that on Saturday I found what was probably the last cold six pack of beer in all of Southeastern Virginia than I was about my last successful online product launch!

And after spending many days and nights in the dark, I realized that the Internet represents the ultimate convenience, but it's also the ultimate business risk because so much can happen to shut the Internet down or prevent you from accessing it.

If recent events taught me anything, they taught me these three truths about life:

1. Life is fragile and valuable - don't take it for granted.
2. Nothing is more important than the safety and well-being of family and friends. Sometimes it takes a calamity to remind us.
3. Anyone who depends on the Internet for their entire livelihood should seek to diversify how they make their money - just in case the Internet disappears one day when you least expect it!

-- Jim Edwards is a syndicated newspaper columnist and the co-author of an amazing new ebook that will teach you how to use fr-e articles to quickly drive thousands of targeted visitors to your website or affiliate links...

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