

GLIMPSES

VS.

GLITCHES

Free Glitch Glossary the Entry Set



Kevin Donovan

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GLIMPSES VS GLITCHES

***FOR THE BUSINESS
OWNER***

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Published by Kevin Donovan Norfolk, Virginia

First Edition

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OPENING

Before the Introduction

There is a moment every business owner knows.

Not the launch day. Not the first profitable quarter. Not the year everything finally clicked.

The other moment.

The one that arrives quietly — usually on a Sunday night before another week of the same problems — when the honest question surfaces whether you want it to or not.

Why isn't this working the way it should?

You've tried things. You've hired people, fired people, changed the menu, updated the website, run the promotion, read the books, attended the seminars. Some of it helped for a while. None of it fixed the thing underneath.

And the treadmill kept moving.

Here's what nobody told you.

The reason the treadmill keeps moving isn't the economy. It isn't your competition. It isn't your team or your location or your timing or your price point.

It's a program.

Five prehistoric survival programs — built for a world of predators and scarcity and tribal hierarchy — now running your pricing strategy, your hiring decisions, your response to competition, and your relationship with the customer who has

been loyal to you for ten years and just quietly stopped coming in.

You didn't install these programs. Nobody asked your permission. They were running before you opened your first location and they'll keep running until you can see them clearly enough to step outside them.

This glossary gives you the first set of names.

And once you can name what's running —

It loses most of its authority over you.

INTRODUCTION

Two Words You Need Before You Begin

Every entry in this glossary uses two words. They are worth understanding before you read a single entry.

A Glitch is the program running. Not a character flaw. Not a failure of intelligence or ambition or effort. Just prehistoric hardware doing exactly what it was built to do — in a business context it was never designed for. You didn't install the glitch. It came with the equipment. But once you can see it running you can stop being inside it long enough to make a real decision.

A Glimpse is the moment you step outside it. Brief. Unannounced. Requiring no technique. The moment the noise separates from the signal and something clearer comes through. You have been having Glimpses your whole business life. This glossary is going to help you recognize them for what they are.

One more thing before you begin.

Open this anywhere. Find the entry that makes you slightly uncomfortable — the one where you recognize something you've been doing without quite admitting it.

That discomfort is the signal.

That's the glitch introducing itself.

ENTRY SET ONE — THE FOUNDATION GLITCHES

The programs that run the business before the business knows they're running

The Blockbuster Syndrome

The deep conviction that what worked before will keep working — not because the evidence supports it but because change feels like an admission of failure.

Recognized by the language: *we've always done it this way, our customers know us, we don't need to change what isn't broken*. The machine has confused identity with strategy. The business isn't just what the owner does — it's who they are. Changing it feels like dying.

Blockbuster didn't lose to Netflix because streaming was inevitable. They lost because the machine running their boardroom couldn't distinguish between protecting the business and protecting the self. The evidence was available. The market was signaling clearly. The status program was louder than the signal.

This glitch doesn't arrive as stubbornness. It arrives as loyalty to what worked. As respect for what was built. As the completely reasonable conviction that the thing that got you here deserves to be protected. The machine is not wrong that it matters. It is wrong about which threats are real.

The inquiry: Who is the I that cannot afford to change? Where is the business that would survive if it could?

The Build It They Will Come Loop

The founding myth of almost every failed business. The belief that a great product creates its own audience — that quality speaks for itself, that the market will find what it needs, that marketing is somehow beneath the work itself.

This isn't laziness. It's a status program running at full volume. Marketing feels like begging. Selling feels like admitting the product isn't good enough to stand alone. So the business owner builds, perfects, refines and waits.

And the market never gets the signal it needs to respond.

Recognized by the slow bleed — not a dramatic failure but a gradual quieting of customers that the owner explains as everything except the actual cause. The product was real. The audience was real. The signal never got sent.

The inquiry: Who is the I that is too good to be heard? Where is the product that sells itself?

The Superior Vendor Glitch

The unconscious belief that the customer should be grateful. That the product or service is so obviously valuable that the customer's complaints, hesitations or preferences are not feedback but ingratitude.

Recognized by the language used about customers internally — *they don't understand, they're unreasonable, they don't know what they want*. The moment a business starts explaining its customers rather than listening to them the Superior Vendor Glitch is fully installed.

The customer ranked as a mechanism to be managed rather than a person to be served. The tribal belonging circuit doesn't fire at being managed. It fires at being seen. And the customer who stops feeling seen stops coming back — usually without explaining why.

Recognized by the steady erosion of market share to smaller, hungrier competitors who actually answer the phone.

The inquiry: Who is the I that knows better than the person paying? Where is the business without the customer's trust?

The Numbers Blindness Loop

The executive or owner so focused on metrics, dashboards and quarterly reports that the human being behind the number disappears entirely.

Numbers are the exhaust of human behavior — not the engine. When market share erodes it doesn't show up in the dashboard until long after the customer has already left emotionally. The piranha problem — small competitors taking tiny bites from every direction — is invisible to someone watching for sharks.

The meeting that reviews last quarter's numbers instead of next quarter's customers. The report that shows the trend without anyone asking who is behind the trend and what they are trying to tell us.

Recognized by the organization that is always surprised by the customer's behavior despite having access to all the data.

The inquiry: Who is the I that manages the score instead of the game? Where are the people behind these numbers right now?

The Corner Office Glitch

The executive who has confused their position with their identity so completely that protecting the title, the office, the board presentation and the perception of success has become more important than the actual health of the business.

Decisions get made based on how they will look rather than what they will do. Bad news gets filtered before it reaches the top. The consultant gets brought in to confirm what the executive already believes rather than discover what is actually true.

Recognized by the gap between what the internal reports say and what the front line employees know. Recognized by the moment the corner office view becomes more important than the customer's view.

*The inquiry: Who is the I that needs this title to be right?
Where is the leader when the corner office is empty?*

The Seminar Merry-Go-Round

There is a version of the seeking program that wears the costume of self-improvement so convincingly that it takes years to recognize it as avoidance.

The business owner who has attended every seminar, read every book, hired the coach, joined the mastermind, paid for the retreat and filled the notebook. Who can tell you exactly what each speaker said and why the next event is going to be the one that finally moves the needle.

Meanwhile the business is still waiting.

The tell is not how many seminars the owner has attended. It is the ratio. Knowledge acquired versus decisions made. Frameworks absorbed versus experiments run. Notebooks filled versus conversations had with the actual customer sitting twenty feet away who could answer the question the seminar was supposed to address.

The knowledge that actually runs a business — the specific, local, relational, hard won knowledge of your customer, your team, your market — is not available at any price point in any ballroom in any city. It is available the moment you get off the carousel.

The inquiry: What decision have I been waiting for the right seminar to make for me? What would I do tomorrow if I already knew enough?

The Tribal Billboard Exploit

It started with a cartoon mouse on a t-shirt in the late 1950s and became the most profitable exploitation of the status scan and tribal belonging circuit in commercial history.

The musician who figured out that a logo on a shirt said not *I attended this concert* but *I belong to this tribe and I want you to know it*. The athletic brand whose swoosh didn't say *I bought these shoes* but *I am the kind of person who performs, competes, wins*. The customer who became the billboard. The billboard that became the status symbol. The status symbol that became the product.

Phil Knight didn't sell athletic wear. He sold membership to a tribe worth belonging to. And the customer funded the entire advertising operation.

The question for every business owner is not whether this dynamic exists. It always exists. The question is whether your brand represents a tribe worth belonging to — or just a transaction with a logo on it.

The inquiry: What tribe does your brand actually represent — and would your customers wear it proudly or just own it?

The Brand Champion Glimpse — Set One

The moment a business owner stops seeing a transaction and starts seeing a relationship. A customer who comes back not because they have to but because they want to. A review that says something more than the product deserved. A referral that came from genuine enthusiasm rather than a loyalty program.

The customer isn't just buying a product. They're joining something they want to be associated with. They're becoming a Brand Champion — not because they were incentivized but because the business made them feel seen, valued and part of something worth defending.

You didn't manufacture that. You just stopped doing the things that prevented it.

*The inquiry: Who would stay if the discount disappeared?
What are we actually offering that makes someone proud to say they're ours?*

Where To Go Next

What you just read is Entry Set One — The Foundation Glitches.

Seven programs. The ones that run the business before the business even knows they're running.

There are thirty-six named Glitches in the complete Glitch Glossary. Five entry sets. Every one of them following the same format — the program named, its felt texture described, a real world example, and the inquiry that creates distance from it.

And underneath all thirty-six — just five prehistoric survival programs doing exactly what they were built to do in a world that no longer exists.

The Complete Glitch Glossary is available now at glitchaudit.co and on Amazon. The full business owner series — all thirty-six entries across all five sets — plus the synthesis that shows you exactly how every glitch traces back to the same five programs running underneath your business right now.

Glimpses vs Glitches for the Business Owner is where the full story lives. The twenty-five years of closed door production meetings and Fortune 100 campaigns and real businesses succeeding and failing from the inside. The journey that shows you not just what the programs are but where they come from and what becomes possible when they stop running.

And if you're ready to go deeper — the Revenue Architecture Session and the upcoming weekend workshops are where the real work happens. A room full of business owners who

recognize themselves in everything you just read. And a guided experience of seeing the programs clearly — together.

You've already had the first Glimpse.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Author Bio: Kevin Donovan

Kevin Donovan is a veteran Director, Producer, and Marketing Specialist with over 25 years of experience at the highest levels of national media. Having successfully executed over **300 national television campaigns** for global giants like **McDonald's, Ford, and Miller Lite**, Kevin spent decades mastering the art of the "Mechanical Mind" before he knew it had a name.

His career involved hand-in-hand collaboration with the world's most elite advertising agencies—including **BBDO and Leo Burnett**—to conceptualize and trigger the very survival and status-defense circuits he now teaches readers to dismantle. Whether directing **Arnold Schwarzenegger** and **Chuck Norris** or managing high-stakes productions for **National Geographic and Warner Brothers**, Kevin's life has been a front-row seat to the biological "software" that runs human behavior.

After forty years as a "high-level seeker" in the personal development world—fire-walking with record-breakers and studying with the industry's founding minds—Kevin realized the "seminar merry-go-round" was just another mechanical loop. Today, he uses his unique lens as a "media programmer" to help others identify their own internal code and finally "take off the shirt."

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