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With information technology being the ubiquitous powerhouse that it is today, many may think that it can't put a foot wrong. These people would be wrong, though, as there have been many technology blunders in the past, from bad software development to mobile application developers who have "advertently or not" released virus-infected software onto millions of unsuspecting smart phone owners. But with technology being at the heart of everything nowadays "from the electronic chip in our passports to holding sensitive government information" the aforementioned blunders are small fry compared to potential disasters. In no particular order, here's a rundown of some of the most epic IT project fails ever.

• Y2K bug. Perhaps the biggest and most notorious of them all, the Y2K bug had the developed world gripped in fear in 1999, when everyone had been scared witless by a media blitz that all the computers would reset at midnight on January 1, 2000, leading to a crash. This bug would wipe out stocks, bank details, in fact pretty much anything digital "which is, of course, most people's entire lives now. Fear was widespread, because no one knew exactly what would happen "would it be the end of the world as we knew it? Would all our stocks and money vanish into thin air? Or would we be able to reset the clocks to the present day and restore the information from stored back-ups? Would the back-ups even work? The reality was an underwhelming relief; as the world watched the clock with bated breath, as the digital numbers flashed from 11:59 to 12:00, nothing happened. Computers remained on, stocks, shares and money stayed put, and the computers around the world showed the correct year. Aside from helping to shift a lot of newspapers, and perhaps a nuclear bunker to the particularly paranoid, it was a bona fide non-event.

• EDS and CSA. The Electronic Data Systems (EDS) left the Child Support Agency (CSA) in a spot of bother when the IT system spectacularly failed, leading to fewer than half of the 320,000 applications received being processed. With EDS providing 85 per cent of the Department of Work and Pensions's systems, the issue was monumental, leading to around 95,000 single parents missing out on owed payments, which amassed to a total of £45 million per year. To add insult to injury, the computer system, which was delayed by almost two years, cost £400 million to get running - something that those in developer jobs had to contend with.

• Siemens passport services. The National Audit Office revealed that Siemens computer system was not properly checked by those in IT jobs before being introduced to handle new passports, leading to problems amassing £12 million for the taxpayer. Immigration minister Damian Green revealed that Siemens received more than £265 million more than it should have done on a contract to build and maintain passport IT systems. The extra money was a result of fees charged to those applying for a new passport, in part due to the fees more than trebling since the contract began. In 1999, the cost for a standard passport was £21, or £31 for a passport issued over the counter. In 2011, that cost rose to £77.50 and £129.50, respectively. On top of that, thanks to passports not being able to be issued on time, at least 500 holidaymakers missed their departure dates. This was because Siemens's Passport Application Support System (PASS), created in 1999, had errors in scanning forms, and the extra processing time slowed down the issuing of passports quite dramatically.

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