

It's always a perfect time to

EMBRACE

As 2015 drew to a close, two wildly successful, famously disruptive companies were making a splash.

Tesla Motors customers got an unexpected gift. Overnight, the electric vehicle pioneer sent them a self-driving car. For free. A day's drive due north of Tesla's California headquarters, a related and by now familiar scene was unfolding: the Uber ride hailing service had opened in the Calgary, Alberta market. And traditional taxi companies and the politicians who tax them were pounding their chests and screaming, "stop the progress!" Read more on [my LinkedIn blog](#).

Tesla and Uber illustrate with great clarity how change can quickly disrupt the economic balance of an entire sector. Long-dominant firms can find themselves struggling to remain relevant. Yet it doesn't have to be that way. There are examples of enduring success like Royal LePage all over the world; companies that understand what Harvard's Reeves and Deimler call the ability to foster rapid adaptation: "Instead of being really good at doing some particular thing, companies must be really good at learning how to do new things."

As industry leaders, it is our job at Royal LePage to detect and seek to understand the waves of technological and societal change sweeping real estate brokerage and the business world as a whole. We must bravely experiment with the new, and not be afraid to fail. We must embrace change.

To fight change because it is not good for us today is a fool's game. It is the buggy whip manufacturer protesting the automobile as too dangerous to be allowed on city streets. Change that benefits the consumer must be embraced, even if it is initially perceived as a threat to the service provider; to the status quo.

People, and particularly young people, those digital natives who are the housing industry's first time buyers, have already voted. They want information and convenience. As Janna Anderson, a professor at Elon University and writer on the future of the internet has said, "people have proven that they will give away personal information for something as small as a free cup of coffee."

The pace of change in the real estate industry over the last decade has increased rapidly. Last year, writer Stefan Swanepoel published the D.A.N.G.E.R. report (Definitive Analysis of Negative Game-changers in Real Estate) – a comprehensive undertaking

THE FUTURE IS ALREADY HERE:*

World's largest taxi company owns no taxis (Uber)

Largest accommodation provider owns no real estate (Airbnb Inc.)

Largest phone companies own no Telco infrastructure (Skype, WeChat, Viber)

World's most valuable retailer (IPO initially raised US\$21.8 billion) has no inventory (Alibaba Group)

Most popular media owner creates no content (Facebook)

*Source: [ibmforentrepreneurs.com](#)