The RELEX case gets more interesting when it is compared to what is happening across SaaS more broadly. This may not mainly be a layoff story. It may be a meter story.

A lot of SaaS firms are now running into the same structural problem from different angles. The product may still be strong. Revenue may still grow. Usage may even rise. But the market is starting to ask a nastier question: what exactly is being measured, what exactly is being sold, and is the old revenue logic still attached to real value?

That is where the old seat model starts looking shaky. For years it was convenient: more users, more seats, more revenue. Easy for sales, easy for finance, easy for valuation models. AI starts breaking that logic because one person with strong AI support can produce much more than before. Activity can go up while seat demand compresses. More work flows through the system, but fewer humans may be needed around it.

That is why the pressure in SaaS now looks increasingly structural, not cyclical. Some firms are still growing and still getting punished. That usually means the market is no longer arguing about execution. It is repricing the model underneath.

And this is where it gets dangerous. The pricing model may already be aging. The meter may already be drifting. The compensation model may still be rewarding behavior built for the old world. People keep doing what they are measured on, and companies keep getting what they chose to measure. The remarkable part is that a compensation model can still pay out handsomely even when it is marching cheerfully somewhere in prehistory.

That is why this matters for RELEX as well. Not because RELEX is identical to Atlassian or any other SaaS company. It is not. But because the same broader question now hangs over the sector: if software starts doing more of the work itself, how should value be priced, measured and compared across firms and across time?

And seat-based pricing is only one version of the problem. Usage-based pricing aligns better with activity, but makes costs less predictable. Outcome-based or value-based pricing sounds smarter, but is much harder to define, measure and sell. Under AI, all of these can shift because AI changes not only the tool, but the unit of work itself.

That is why the RELEX case may matter more than a standard “AI layoff” headline suggests. Many SaaS firms have already cut people. That alone proves very little. The more interesting possibility is that RELEX may be making a more explicit and more radical move toward a world where the company is judged less by old headcount-linked logic and more by how efficiently value is actually created, captured and delivered.

That is when SaaS stops being just a software story. It becomes a meter story.

Or in Finnish terms: the sauna still works, but someone changed the electricity meter. The löyly feels the same right until the bill arrives.