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The KIT — Knowledge & Information Technology

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Special Issue

Focus on the Cutter Summit 2010

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→ Cutter Consortium Summit 2010 Claude Baudoin's summary

The Cutter Consortium's annual Summit, held in Cambridge, Mass. on October 25-27, provided its usual succession of deep and spirited conversations about IT strategies.

[Rob Austin](#) (Chair, Harvard Business School CIO Executive Education program, and Professor of Managing Creativity and Innovation at the Copenhagen Business School), said as he introduced the Summit that "we've just lived in 'interesting' times" and that the renewed emphasis on IT cost cutting is the "revenge of the accountants." Later on, Rogelio Oliva (also ex-HBS, now teaching at Texas A&M) led a case study in which, indeed, management looks at IT costs first before even thinking about IT's value.

Cloud computing was examined from several angles. [Lou Mazzuchelli](#) debunked some myths in his keynote, claiming that the utility metaphor is flawed. But the cloud exposes the fact that IT's strategic value is no longer in servers or applications, but in data. Therefore, "data governance" is becoming critical, and "data risk" is a key issue in the cloud. This point was reinforced (and perhaps exaggerated) during the ensuing panel, especially by security expert [Andy Fried](#). Lou also looked at the one-sided fine print concerning data recovery in Amazon's EC2 agreement.

[Jim Highsmith](#)'s keynote on Agile Leadership reminded me of past discussions about why a traditional IT organization often seems unable to provide a rapid response to changing business needs. "People are so used to 'plan-do' that they have a lot of difficulty moving to 'envision-evolve'." Some people learn the basic rules of agility, but don't go past the basics. "Traditional managers expect projects to be on track early and off-track at the end; agile managers expect the opposite."

[Robert Scott](#), former VP of Innovation and Architecture at Procter & Gamble, gave a fascinating, candid and often humorous account of their 8-year journey to create a successful Shared Services organization. This resulted in outsourcing 6,000 people, but also had a profound and positive transformative impact. For example, P&G's new Global Business Services division is now a provider of project management services to the entire company; and IT was renamed "Information and Decision Solutions," which got rid of the often misleading "T" word.

Following a keynote by [Bob Benson](#) on "IT Governance in Tough Times," a panel on business/IT strategies focused on the existence of shadow IT organizations in lines of business, why this is the case, and how to deal with this.

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[Vince Kellen](#), CIO of the University of Kentucky, led a breakfast roundtable on "social media and its business effects." He pointed out that the people who are in charge of marketing and competitive intelligence are typically not those from the generation that is the most comfortable with social media, even though they might be the ones who benefit most.

Parallel half-day workshops filled the third day of the Summit. [Mike Rosen](#) used a case study format to depict the customer-centric enterprise architecture journey of Wells Fargo, including their use of SOA, in "How Architecture Has Resulted in Competitive Leadership." I led an interactive workshop entitled "Cloud Computing: Hype, Fear, Reality and Pragmatics." Rob Austin led a "CIO and IT Managers Forum," [Israel Gat](#) and Jim Highsmith led one on "Technical Debt Assessment: the Science of Software Development Governance," and [Mitch Ummel](#) helped close the event with his workshop on "The Changing Face of Government IT: E-Gov Trends and Opportunities."

Please contact [Claude Baudoin](#) if you're interested in more information about any of these topics.

Heard Recently...

"Without exception, all my biggest mistakes occurred because I moved too slowly."

- John Chambers, CEO of Cisco, quoted by Jim Highsmith

"Talk to the business seven times: the first five, they don't listen to you because they don't want to change and they think you're an idiot. The sixth time they listen to you, and the seventh time you can start having a dialog."

- Robert Scott, former VP Innovation & Architecture at P&G