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➔ Jazz

[Gostai](#), the French startup company that created the Urbi robotic middleware a few years ago, has now produced its first actual robot, Jazz, focused on telepresence applications. Jazz can be:

- [Jazz Connect](#): your remote eyes, ears and mouth in a meeting
- [Jazz Security](#): a watchman patrolling your building at night, sending pictures and alerts back to a distant control room;
- [Jazz Icon](#): a roaming ambassador on an convention floor, attracting people's attention and getting them to come to your booth.

➔ Cloud: Healthy Debates or Revisionism?

After the initial enthusiasm for cloud computing -- and occasional appearances by snake oil salesmen -- a form of revisionism seems to be taking place. In a recent debate in the Cutter Trends Council, negative opinions seemed to dominate.

Claude Baudoin's *Executive Update* for Cutter, "[Cloud Computing: Both Less and More Than You May Think](#)" is a recent attempt at a dispassionate look at the cloud phenomenon. In addition, Claude wrote a partial dissent to an assertion by Lou Mazzuchelli. This will be published soon by Cutter.

➔ Content Management Interoperability

In this Digital Landfill [blog entry](#), Stefan Waldhauser of WeWebU Software explains why he thinks the CMIS (Content Management Interoperability Services) standard from OASIS will transform the Electronic Content Management (ECM) industry in 2011. "CMIS is the SQL for Content Management," he says, and claims that CMIS, combined with open-source content management systems like Alfresco, will make content repositories into commodity products.

➔ A Database in the Cloud

Some of us have wondered for a while why there were cloud offering for documents such as memos, spreadsheets and presentations, but not SQL databases. Granted, the technical difficulties associated with the ways users and applications interact with a database are greater, but it was only a question of time.

Last month, the poster boy of the Software-as-a-Service movement, Salesforce.com, launched [Database.com](#). Interestingly, the data model includes "pre-built data structures" to support social network applications (profiles, feeds, status updates, user groups, etc.).

Another innovation is that the pricing model allows you to play, and even develop a serious application, for free: up to 100,000 records, 50,000 transactions per month, and 3 users, you pay nothing!

LSU's Optical Networking Testbed

The Center for Computational Technology (CCT) at Louisiana State University (LSU) has unveiled a virtual testbed for high-speed optical networking -- the Cyberinfrastructure of Reconfigurable Optical Networking (CRON). This effort, funded by the National Science Foundation, follows on advances made by LSU in actual high-speed networks in recent year.

Multi-GPUs for Numerical Simulation

NVIDIA has selected two German research groups to form a research center on the application of CUDA (NVIDIA's Computer Unified Device Architecture) to numerical simulation: the Fraunhofer Institute for Algorithms and Scientific Computing (SCAI) and the Institute for Numerical Simulation at the University of Bonn plan to develop a massively parallel molecular dynamics simulation package adapted to the use of multiple Graphical Processing Units (GPUs). The press release does not say how much funding is involved.

Seen Recently...

"And it ought to be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things. Because the innovator has for enemies all those who have done well under the old conditions, and lukewarm defenders in those who may do well under the new."
-- Machiavelli, The Prince, ch. VI, written ca. 1505