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he KIT — Knowledge & Information Technology

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➔ **Free Issue of the Cutter IT Journal**

The Cutter Consortium is offering KIT readers a free electronic copy of the April 2011 issue of the Cutter IT Journal, devoted to Value Chain Modeling, a key concept in business architecture. That issue's guest editor was Claude Baudoin. You can [download it here](#).

➔ **Schlumberger on the Use of "Improv" for Process, Product and Service Improvement**

Speaking of the Cutter IT Journal, the June 2011 issue was entitled "IT + Crowds: Wisdom or Madness?" Since many Schlumberger and ex-Schlumberger employees read the KIT, it is worth mentioning that one article (*"Maximizing the Improv in Product, Service, or Process Improvement: When the Crowd Is Both Developer and User"*, by Najib Abusalbi, Michael Carney, Sam McLellan, Trevor Muddimer, and Andrew Richardson) is about a practice used in one of their centers to crowdsource improvements through events called *improvs* -- a double entendre on "improvisational theatre" and "improvements."

Click [here](#) to read the abstract of the article. If you are a Cutter client, you can log in and download the article or the entire June issue of the Journal. If you are interested in gaining access, please [contact us](#).

➔ **Privacy Concerns Kill Google Health**

In May 2008, Google launched the "Google Health" application beta, allowing users to store all their medical data in one place so they could easily access it later from anywhere. Commentators raised privacy concerns, but at the time there wasn't the hypersensitivity that subsequent cloud offerings (and incidents) caused. Nonetheless, the offering never built up a large base. Google acknowledged the failure on June 24 when it announced that Google Health would close on January 1, 2012.

Officially, the application's demise is simply due to low usage, but it seems fairly obvious that the root cause is privacy concerns. This event may actually be a positive thing: it causes more discussion of the need for protection of personal information in the cloud, and it clears the way for new offerings with stronger privacy assurances, and perhaps a health industry-wide standard for data encryption and multi-factor authentication to store and access medical records.

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→ Internal Social Networks Revisited

The July issue of Vince Polley's [MIRLN](#) newsletter mentions a [June 26 article in the New York Times](#) about the emergence of internal social networks in many companies.

Some readers of the KIT may be familiar with a January 2011 Cutter Consortium Executive Update from Claude Baudoin, entitled "[If You Build It, They May Not Come](#)." The point was that internal social networks are borderline illogical on two counts: the critical mass may not be there, and an employee's social network isn't limited to his or her current colleagues. Some of the discussion in the NYT article seems to call internal collaboration media "social networks" a little carelessly. Therefore, it is not clear that all the examples cited are social networks in the full sense of the phrase. It also takes some time to see if, after the initial wave of interest, such a system really thrives as a social platform, not just as a discussion forum.

→ June 2011 OMG Meeting Highlights

The quarterly [Object Management Group](#) technical meeting took place in Salt Lake City on June 20-24. One important activity was the inaugural meeting of the [Cloud Standards Customer Council](#) (CSCC), "an end user advocacy group dedicated to accelerating cloud's successful adoption, and drilling down into the standards, security and interoperability issues surrounding the transition to the cloud." Membership in the CSCC is free, and there are already about 150 members.

Two interesting developments happened in the Analysis & Design Task Force:

- a new mechanism for "metamodel extensions" is being sought to replace UML profiles. which suffer from many deficiencies and, as their name indicates, only provide UML extensions;
- a new "foundation for the agile creation and enactment of software engineering methods: is also being sought. The idea is to allow software engineering practices (building blocks) to be assembled into complete methods. This new foundation may or may not be based on the existing OMG Software & Systems Process Engineering Metamodel (SPEM).

→ Seen Recently...

"A user story is to a use case as a gazelle is to a gazebo"

- Alistair Cockburn, in [his blog](#)