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→ In Memoriam: Ken Orr

Ken Orr, who was first known for the structured analysis and design methodologies on which he collaborated with Ed Yourdon, Dominique Warnier and others in the 1980s, died on June 14 at age 77. He was a professor, consultant, and author of software engineering books and papers. In recent years, he was a Fellow and Senior Consultant at the Cutter Consortium, which gave me the privilege to meet him and appreciate his intellect, experience and leadership. Always curious to explore new trends, Ken led seminars on agile software development and on big data for some of our common clients in the last couple of years.

-- Claude Baudoin

→ Materials Modeling and 3D Printing

A 3D printer produces parts that do not quite have the same structure as traditional parts. The way the material is deposited and the properties of the powder being deposited results in objects with widely varying degrees of resilience, flexibility, etc. This has led Arthur Sebert and his colleagues at New York-based 3D Matter to develop software ([OptiMatter](#)) to combine the modeling of material properties with 3D computer-aided design (CAD) to "help users analyze the best choice of material type, material supplier and printing parameters for their specific applications."

→ Takeaways on IT in the Oil Industry

At the Data Driven Production conference in Houston (June 7-8), we heard some of the ways in which the industry is trying to reconcile IT with "OT" (operational technology) and dealing with the imperatives of automation while cutting budgets due to the low price of crude oil. Here are some takeaways that can apply to many other sectors:

- A major oil company's CIO said that he "eliminated the issue of chargeability (of IT costs) by setting an annual goal for value creation."
- To him, agility means "not more than 6 months and \$500K before showing a minimum viable product." That's certainly going in the right direction, but one would hope to shorten the iterations to six weeks rather than six months.
- Automation and Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) projects are sometimes justified by environmental concerns (e.g., deploying sensors to detect leaks). It's not necessarily that oil executives have endorsed ecology -- it's often just that they fear the fines and regulatory oversight that result from violations.
- Acknowledging the lagging adoption of IT solutions and standards, a speaker said "we're boldly going where many others have gone before."
- Remote support centers are still described as if they were a fancy new thing.
- Most of the people leading "data driven" projects have only a faint idea of what's involved in cybersecurity, extremely low expectations of "real-time" systems response times ("we poll every hour"), and don't understand the difference between latency and bandwidth in a communications network.
- "Organizations do not need a big data strategy, they need a business strategy that incorporates big data."

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- "People talk about the three V's of big data: volume, velocity, variety. They should be talking about the four M's: Make Me More Money."
- "Sometimes, the data is more important than the product: Uber doesn't own the cars and doesn't employ the drivers, yet it has a market capitalization of more than \$50 billion."
- "Management doesn't support standards -- it supports getting the job done."
- New Yorker-style cartoon: "As his data lake slowly turned into a data swamp, Carruthers regretted not investing more in data quality."
- "If you don't do small data well, you're going to have a hell of a time doing big data."
- "It's interesting that the graphical symbol used for a database looks a lot like a silo."

→ Drones and Cyberthreats

Researchers at Johns Hopkins University conducted tests on a popular type of drone sold in retail stores, and found three distinct ways in which they could remotely take control of the drone or cause its control software (and the drone itself) to crash.

→ Seen Recently...

"There are 1200+ vendors in the Big Data space -- so date, don't marry!"

-- Irina Prestwood, Analytics Team Lead at Chevron