

## The KIT – Knowledge & Information Technology

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**→ Cybersecurity and the Energy Grid**

The fall weather in Cleveland was a perfect backdrop for a gloomy assessment about the energy grid's readiness to sustain a cyberattack during the EnergyTech 2016 conference that took place on Nov. 28-30, sponsored by INCOSE (International Council for Systems Engineering) and hosted by Cleveland State University. The "tabletop exercise" that concluded the event yesterday was excellent food for thought, bringing the ideas of disaster recovery and business continuity to the highest degree of importance, considering that almost nothing in a modern society, including access to clean water, is possible if the electricity supply fails.

On the brighter side, the conference track on systems engineering showed a good level of agreement that addressing critical infrastructure with a "system of systems" approach that includes explicit models -- an approach known as Model-Based Systems Engineering or MBSE -- holds the key to simulating and analyzing vulnerabilities to reduce the risk.

Claude Baudoin's notes from the conference will be available in a few weeks. You may [put your name down](#) to receive them when ready.

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**→ Discussion on Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning**

[Register here](#) for the Association for Computing Machinery's (ACM) next webinar, "Town Hall with Peter Norvig on A.I., Machine Learning, and More", presented live on Thursday, Dec 8 at noon Eastern US time (17:00 UK, 18:00 Europe) by Peter Norvig, Director of Research at Google. The open, interactive Q&A session will be moderated by Rosemary Paradis, Principal Research Engineer at Leidos Health and Life Sciences.

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**→ Watermelon SLAs**

In [this article](#), Mark Kellett, IT Service Design Manager for Bank of Ireland, complains about what he calls "watermelon SLAs" (Service Level Agreements): they're green on the outside, but red and mushy on the inside.

While the article is a thinly disguised infomercial for a company called ServiceNow, the interview of Kellett and another colleague at the bank point out that the disparity in SLAs and the lack of standards makes it particularly hard to control levels of service when one integrates cloud services from multiple providers -- including when the customer is playing the role of integrator itself as a result of outsourcing most of its IT capabilities.

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**→ Top Software Platforms for the Internet of Things**

Forrester Research has published a ranking of integrated software solutions for the Internet of Things, based on 25 criteria. While the report is behind a paywall, the summary lists [the companies' names](#). And at least one, General Electric, lost no time in using the Forrester report to reinforce its advertising about its [IoT platform](#) named Predix.



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## → Coming Soon to a Newsletter Near You

The next issue of the KIT, the last one for 2016, should come out on December 16 and will feature short reports from the most relevant sessions at the Object Management Group's and Industrial Internet Consortium's meetings, which are taking place in San Diego on December 5-9. Expect to hear about our progress on:

- documenting risks and regulations that affect data residency
- standards for the Industrial Internet of Things, in particular for energy
- cybersecurity, systems assurance, and risk management

And if you're interested in those activities but couldn't make it to San Diego, mark your calendars for the following round of meetings, March 20-24 in Reston, Va., near Washington DC's Dulles Airport. [Contact us](#) for more information.

## → Seen Recently...

*"Great systems aren't supposed to be easy to build, they're supposed to be easy to use."*

-- Keith A. Butler, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, expert in model-based design of critical interactive systems, at the last meeting of the OMG's Analysis and Design Task Force

*"It doesn't exist unless you create it... I mean' you're all engineers, so that's the story of your life, right?"*

-- Ebie Holst, founder of SplashLink, an Internet marketplace for water industry projects, being interviewed during the EnergyTech 2016 banquet dinner