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➡ It's a New Year!

Welcome to 2017, and fasten your seat belts, as it may be a bumpy ride. Pundits are publishing forecasts, and if those are as inaccurate as were most U.S. election polls, they are not worth the e-paper they're printed on. But seriously, what are some of the current trends to watch?

- A certain "deglobalization" of IT may happen, generally because of privacy and data residency concerns. Major cloud providers are opening data centers in countries in which they want to do business without running afoul of laws and regulations. This may worsen before regulations get harmonized and supported by data tagging, labeling, and exchange management facilities. There will be little political will to work on such solutions if protectionism increases in the U.S. and Europe in particular.
- Cybersecurity will continue to emerge as a public concern, not just an arcane technology issue, largely because of recent hacks by state actors. The discovery of the Grizzly Steppe code on a Burlington Electric laptop on Dec. 30 highlights the vulnerability of the power grid to cyberattacks.
- In spite of those risks, Internet of Things adoption will continue to grow, and companies will seek to better mine the information they collect from sensors and mobile devices, generating new value streams.
- Natural language recognition and synthesis will become more embedded in our daily interactions with systems. Many of us have already received calls from a new generation of fairly sophisticated telemarketing robots in 2016, so prepare to say goodbye to those real people with noticeable foreign accents improbably called "Sheila" and "Jason." The silver lining? Don't worry about being rude to the robot.
- Models, models, models... We need to model business capabilities, value and risk, business processes, architectures, cyberphysical systems, etc. As long as university graduates arrive on the professional market knowing Java but not UML, BPMN or ArchiMate, we will continue to produce poor, complex, fragile systems. There are signs that this situation is starting to change... very slowly.

➡ Data Residency Discussion Paper

We were successful in assembling a group of about 25 people willing to contribute to the writing of a discussion paper on Data Residency, including participants from IBM, Google, SAP, Tata Consulting Services, and more. This will be a joint effort of the Object Management Group (OMG) and the Cloud Standards Customer Council (CSCC). The first collaboration conference calls take place on January 3 at 1600 GMT (for Americas and Europe participants) and on January 4 at 0300 GMT (for Asia/Pacific). If you would like to join us, let us know and we will share the conference number with you. All contributions are welcome (examples of issues, policies, types of sensitive data, laws and regulations in existence around the world, relevant industry/domain standards, etc.)

Cloud 1, Law 0

The attempt by the FBI to obtain a suspect's e-mail that is stored on a Microsoft server in Ireland has highlighted the complexity of data residency issues, and it's not over yet. In this article included in Vince Polley's always interesting MIRLN bulletin, the FBI is arguing that the courts have made it impossible for them to obtain the evidence because in many cases, a cloud provider "cannot reliably identify the particular foreign countries where a customer's email content may be stored." Good news for privacy advocates, bad news for law enforcement... and a likely contest coming up between regulators and cloud operators.

KM Buyers Guide

KM World has published its Fall 2016 Buyers Guide, containing descriptions of 17 KM solution vendors. This is clearly not an exhaustive list, and in fact it is a "pay to play" deal, meaning that the companies that are listed are those who paid the advertising fee, unrelated to any objective evaluation. The Web site does not show how to get the combined contents of previous editions in order to build a more comprehensive catalog. Still, this may be a useful list and it takes little time to browse it. The guide also contains a survey on KM trends.

Seen Recently...

"I think we're just beginning to grapple with implications of data as an economic asset."

-- Steve Lohr, technology and economics reporter at the New York Times, interviewed by Roberto Zicari in his OODBMS Journal

"No one can replicate your data. It's the defensible barrier, not algorithms."

-- Andrew Ng, co-founder of Coursera, Chief Scientist at Baidu, quoted by Steve Lohr in the same interview