SHARE:

The KIT — Knowledge & Information Technology
No. 218 - 18 June 2018

In This Issue

Consulting Services

- IT Strategy
- Enterprise Architecture Roadmap
- Business Process Modeling & Analysis
- Enterprise Software Selection
- IT Innovation Briefings
- IT Due Diligence
- Executive IT Seminars
- Cloud Computing
- Security Maturity
- Software Process
- Knowledge Strategy
- Technical Communities
- Knowledge Capture
- Taxonomy development
- Enterprise Social Media

Contact Us:

cébé
IT & Knowledge Management

Highlights from Viva Technology

Amid all the recent hoopla about France welcoming innovators and scientists, Viva Technology held its third annual exhibition on May 24-26 at the Porte de Versailles convention center in Paris. The first thing that one noticed, even before the official start of the event, was the roster of VIPs who spoke at the event, including President Emmanuel Macron, Microsoft's CEO Satya Nadella, IBM's Chairwoman/President Ginni Rometty, Uber's CEO Dara Khosrowshahi, Cisco's CEO Chuck Robbins, Wikipedia founder Jimmy Wales, Mozilla Foundation Chairwoman Mitchell Baker, and Facebook's Chairman/CEO Mark Zuckerberg. So yes, beyond the Gallic pride involved, there is substance to the technology boom in France.

A second observation is that, perhaps under the influence of an apparently "frank" discussion held at the Elysée Palace the day before, all these industry chieftains said that with the power of technology comes the responsibility to use it wisely. Nadella spoke of "privacy, security, and ethical AI." Khosrowshahi mentioned the shift in the skills required of the workforce, and the inadequacies of the traditional education system to retrain people as they need new skills during the course of their careers. La Poste's Chairman/CEO Philippe Wahl mentioned the increase in energy consumption from the increase in parcel deliveries (10% a year in Europe).

A third observation is the importance that was given to development in Africa, especially when it comes to the deployment of mobile technologies in a continent that never got fully wired. Orange's boss Stéphane Richard said that cell phone penetration in Africa is already twice that of India, Internet traffic will multiply by 15 in the next 3 years, but investment is still too low. Representatives from some African countries bristled at the attitude of foreign companies that are only willing to invest in Africa if they can repatriate their profits to their US or European headquarters instead of reinvesting them locally.

The exhibit booths were numerous -- and minuscule. They were clustered around the large booths of the companies that run startup incubators: Orange, Thales, Siemens, Microsoft, HP, etc. One was almost reminded of the Japanese keiretsu or Korean chaebol systems. This points to an idiosyncrasy of the financing system: without a venture capital system quite similar to that of the US, French startups need to cluster around a corporate "big daddy" that supports them. Is it a benefit or a drawback?

Among the themes addressed by those innovators, the most frequent were:

- The Industrial Internet of Things, in particular for predictive maintenance
- Drones -- with a surprisingly strong presence of Swiss entrepreneurs
- Blockchain
- Security
- Subscription-based services (pay-per-use)
- Geolocation
- Freelancer contracting

In spite of logistical issues (inept crowd control, insufficient air conditioning during some unseasonably hot days in Paris, long lines everywhere, and a mostly useless WiFi network), the event was undeniably a success and an eye opener. Mark your calendars for the next iteration on May 16-18, 2019.

Are you interested in more detailed notes, such as a list of startup companies we found the most promising? Contact us.

Reader Feedback re "Social Data in Russia"

In the last issue, we talked about the banning of certain social media in Russia due (officially) to data residency issues. We wrote: "Remember that many of the blocks put in place by regulators can be defeated by moderately competent users through proxy servers or virtual private networks."

Bertrand du Castel replied: "Not that easy anymore. Witness commercial services that detect VPN access. Private individual proxy servers are the new frontier..." More comments welcome!

AI World Conference and Expo

The third annual AI World Conference and Expo will take place in Boston on December 3-5, 2018. The program promises 70+ sessions and 200+ speakers. Click here to go directly to the conference program (the home page is filled with meaningless general statements). "Early bird" rates expire on June 29, hence this early announcement. Those rates range from $149 for the exhibits only to $1645 for the entire conference.

Seen Recently...

"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it."

-- Margaret Fuller, author (1810-1850)
quoted in Anu Garg's newsletter A Word a Day