

# TUG MoM REVIEW

THE NOVEMBER 2005 MEETING OF MEMBERS

## TUG Presents a Triple Feature

If there was a Marquee above the Meridian Banquet Hall on November 23rd, it would have looked something like this:

*Toronto Users Group presents:  
Triple Feature*

*Trevor Perry / Robert Eckersley / Trevor Perry  
One Night Only*



**Stephen Bingham**

### Matinee Performance

With **Trevor Perry** in town to talk to us about SOA, we felt that we had to avail ourselves of this opportunity to hear one of Trevor's non technical presentations as well. To this end, Trevor presented the latest addition to his catalogue: GET OVER IT!

In this piece Trevor presented us with 15 questions, that we answered using the crayon (yes he gave us crayons!) and paper provided. The answers were ranked 1-5, based on the following legend: (1) Trevor is a big liar. (2) I don't think he is right. (3) Hmmm...he might be right. (4) Wow! I didn't know that. (5) Heck. I already knew that.

The essence of this presentation is that we are surrounded by lies, so GET OVER IT. Now this is not as negative as it first appears. To illustrate this point, we were given the example of *air bags*. Have you ever noticed that in the movies, whenever the air bags deploy during a car accident they stay inflated for an extended period of time? Trevor informed us that in reality the air bags actually deflate relatively quickly. As proof he offered a photo of his previous vehicle – make and model unknown.

An informal poll showed that many in the audience claimed “they already knew that” to the majority of the questions. This light-hearted session was a great warm-up for the more serious topics scheduled for the rest of the meeting . . .

Photos by Léo Lefebvre



**3:30 speaker Trevor Perry**



**TUG MoM — Meridian Banquet Hall — November 23, 2005**

◀ **at left: TUG's IBM Liaison Stephen Quan with IBM jacket prize winner Mario Villavecce and TUG President Léo Lefebvre**

## Second Act

Joining us for the second session of the evening was **Robert Eckersley** of Information Builders, with a non-commercial commercial on “The 6 Rules for Practical Business Intelligence.” Due to conditions beyond our control, Robert’s usual co-presenter **Joe Walsh** was not able to be with us this evening.



**5:00 speaker Robert Eckersley**

**Rule #1 – Know your audience.** Robert has broken the user community down into 3 core groups — (1) **Power Users:** more technical than business. Able to create reports and queries from scratch. This group accounts for 3% of the user community. (2) **Analysts:** 50/50 Business vs. Technical – capable of using a tool to perform analysis

and find answers. This group accounts for 12% of the user community. (3) **Non Technical Business Users:** Data driven – access must be easy. This group accounts for 85% of the user community.

**Rule #2 – Plan for Practical Deployment.** Understand the various methods available for getting information to your audience and work on the simplest method first. By this we mean the fewest number of mouse clicks possible.

**Rule #3 – Develop a culture of Measurement.** Put People in charge of metrics. Ensure everyone understands the metrics they affect and how that in turn affects the strategy of the organization. Example: Sales are up, but profits dropped — why? Returns are up.

**Rule #4 – Make the Information Useful.** A single piece of information does not paint an accurate picture. The total sales for a quarter do not indicate if the company did well or not. Add in the sales figures for several quarters and the picture starts to come into focus. Provide a comparison to the previous fiscal year and now you’re in color!

**Rule #5 – Ensure collaboration between IT and Business.** The proper collaboration between IT and the business will ensure that the IT department can support the applications that the users need. If IT has too much control then the end user may get lost

in the shuffle. If the users have too much control then IT may lose the ability to properly support the environment.

**Rule #6 – Expect Change and Make Improvements.** Change is a constant. Reduce ad-hoc requests by making frequent requests part of your standards list.

## Intermission

Our president **Léo Lefebvre** announced that the location of the January Meeting of Members will be the Living Arts Centre in Mississauga. **Glenn Gundermann** introduced the TEC 2006 committee and informed those in attendance of what’s new at TEC for the coming year. After the dinner break Léo re-introduced **Trevor Perry** for his session on SOA – Service Oriented Architecture.

## Top Billing

Trevor started his presentation by reviewing many of the confusing and conflicting definitions of SOA in the media these days. The problem is that everyone has a slightly different way of understanding and hence describing SOA. But in the end it comes down to an architectural concept that defines the use of “services” to meet the needs of users.

Services were defined as the transformation of applications into component business processes. There are four criteria for SOA:

(1) **Componentized:** Use standardized services interfaces for applications and resources.

(2) **Interoperable:** Allow easy information exchange.

(3) **Modular:** Allow for the components to be mixed and matched to meet the needs of the user.

(4) **Scalable:** Provide the user with a basic set of tools that are fully integrated into their environment, with the ability to add additional resources as the need arises.

To try bringing the concepts of SOA together in a fashion that was easy to understand, with out all of the hyperbole, Trevor used his unique sense of humour to explain SOA with a visual demonstration.

## Curtain Call: Adding a Business Process

Prior to the start of the session, Trevor had placed several items throughout the room. These included file folders with coloured tabs, boxes, and building blocks. To illustrate the concepts of SOA, Trevor first had us conceptualize our existing



7:00 speaker Trevor Perry



"SOA transporter" Kathy Gregson



Door prize winner Ken Davis

environments by running pieces of yarn from a central location at the front of the room to those in possession of the boxes handed out previously. As each connection was made, the box was moved to the front of the room and was taped to the other boxes. The end result was less than pretty.


To illustrate SOA, Trevor called out the various colors of the building blocks that were scattered around the room. As each color was called out, the yarn was run

out again, however this time volunteers collected the building blocks and brought them to the front of the room. We were able to see that getting the next building block or business process was less cumbersome than in the previous example.

At the end of the day, before starting to implement SOA, Trevor recommends putting a seasoned architect in charge of the project. Do lots of research, including reading up on all of the vendor hype. It will pay off in the end.

### Dénouement

Thank you to both Trevor Perry and Robert Eckersley for a great evening!

I hope you had a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. See you on Wednesday January 18th at the Living Arts Center in Mississauga. 

**Stephen Bingham** is a Technical Analyst for CGI, and is also the TUG Secretary. He can be reached at [stephen.bingham@cgi.com](mailto:stephen.bingham@cgi.com).

Photos by Léo Lefebvre



Audience participation — demonstrating SOA vs. legacy architectures