ACCESSING THE IDEAS CLOUD

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ABSTRACT
Success in today's knowledge economy requires access to the best ideas and people from around the world. However, most organizations are forced to deal with Joy’s [1] Law:

“No matter who you are, most of the smartest people work for someone else.”

Open innovation and using external communities and contests to solve tough problems is one way to overcome the constraints of Joy's Law. Leading firms in fields as diverse as fashion, software, pharmaceuticals and energy are accessing the global ideas cloud to tap into the intellectual depth and creativity of a global elite to find external solutions to internal challenges.

Our session will cover the following core topics:
- the logic of using distributed innovation systems to solve critical technological challenges
- how both external communities (e.g. open source) and markets (e.g. innovation tournaments) are effective “cloud-based” services that can be used to make significant progress on difficult technical challenges
- a framework to help determine when to use an ideas cloud rather than relying solely on internal innovation efforts
- examples of organizations that have implemented this approach -- lessons learned

Discussion will aim to connect the ideas cloud concept to routine operations of the firm.

[1] Bill Joy formerly chief scientist at Sun Microsystems and contributor to TCP/IP, BSD Unix and Java