

## Communicating Technical Concepts Homework

Read *New metaphors for understanding the new machines*

Available on campus at <http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=10563.10578>

(Off campus you must first connect to campus via the VPN.)

The following is a list of technical concepts that your community partner might not fully understand:

- Cloud computing
- Software application vs Software as a Service
- Web hosting
- Content Management System
- WordPress "Themes"
- API

Choose one of these, or pick another concept that has come up in your project, then complete the following in 1 page max.

### 1) OBSERVE:

- What questions or misunderstandings might a non-technical person have about the concept?
- What problems might they run into?
- Where could they get stuck in planning, managing, or sustaining a solution in terms of this concept?  
(You might have to speculate questions non-technical people tend to ask.)

### 2) SYNTHESIZE:

- From a technical perspective, how would you define the concept?  
(Try to define it in your own terms, without Google or Wikipedia.)
- What are the relevant design and implementation issues / tradeoffs / problems?

### 3) DESIGN COMMUNICATION:

- Explain the concept using **NO** technical jargon.  
(Write as if for someone with no formal technical background.)
- Use analogies, metaphors, physical models or other means to get across the concepts.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: (Note: this is an individual, not a team, exercise.)

1. Submit to Canvas before class.
2. Print and bring a copy with you to class.
2. Be prepared to present to the class one of your examples as fleshed-out on this page.