



Cutting-edge versus bleeding-edge technology, and knowing the difference - by Meredith Lovejoy

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As technology design consultants, we are often asked what the latest and greatest technology trends are; what's worth the investment, and which are just fads? Designing sustainable, scalable technology solutions is a huge consideration when planning for corporate real estate improvements or acquisitions. The ramifications of the technology you select can have long-term financial, physical, and even emotional impacts on your business.

How do you know if you are getting the "cutting-edge" technology that will suit your business now and for the foreseeable future versus a "bleeding-edge" technology that has not been tested and is a high-risk investment? Conversely, how do you know the technology investment you make is not about to be rendered obsolete? Buildings can last for 100 years or longer; office leases can last 10-20 years or longer; technology can be outdated in less than one year.

That is where a knowledgeable consultant is imperative and most valuable. It is common for consultants to claim they provide cutting-edge solutions, but it is rare to find one with hands-on experience putting many of these solutions through their paces in its' own R&D lab.

Research and Development

TEECOM's self-funded Research and Development team, TEECOMlabs, explores and evaluates emerging trends in both software and hardware so that TEECOM can keep its clients and its own teams at the forefront of technology advancement, cutting through the hype to provide reliable, actionable insight.

One of the trends TEECOMlabs is currently working on is artificial intelligence, and more specifically, machine learning (ML). The team is working on training a neural network to place technology infrastructure devices in BIM models based on the patterns it recognizes from libraries of past work. Why? Because machines could save designers the many hours they spend performing these rote tasks, time they could devote to strategic conversations with clients, informed by infinite design options, obtained instantaneously.

As buildings gather more data about all kinds of performance, they can feed this data directly into the ML-enabled design process to drive continuous, fast-paced improvement. Today, you can buy bleeding-edge systems to capture specialized data about a facility, like fine-grained, real-time occupancy stats, but these products are often siloed and offer integrations that are far too brittle for long-term use. The cutting-edge approach is to step back and seek systems that align with the broader trend of gathering data but also provide robust APIs so performance data can be gathered and mined far into the future.

Deep Expertise

It is also rare to find a technology consultant with a high ratio of licensed and certified professionals. TEECOM's team of 140 full-time employees dedicated solely to technology design includes more certified professionals than our competitors and a higher percentage of professional engineers. This level of expertise results in better documentation and coordination, fewer mistakes and change orders, and better project outcomes for our clients.

TEECOM is thrilled to be part of the New York marketplace. We believe our self-funded TEECOMlabs, completely independent of manufacturers, installers, and integrators, and the depth of our licensed staff will help the commercial real estate community in New York make the most informed technology decisions that embrace the cutting edge and avoid the bleeding edge.

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