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Gartner Highlights 27 Technologies in the 2008 Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies

Green IT to Gain Momentum Through 2009, Driven by Concerns of Climate Change and Opportunities to Save Costs Through Energy Efficiency

Egham, UK, August 11, 2008 — Gartner, Inc. has identified 27 emerging technologies and predicts that eight of these will have a transformational business impact and should be strongly considered for adoption by technology planners in the next 10 years, according to the report "Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies, 2008."

"Although Web 2.0 is now entering the Trough of Disillusionment, it will emerge within two years to have transformational impact, as companies steadily gain more experience and success with both the technologies and the cultural implications," said Jackie Fenn, vice president and Gartner Fellow. "Later — in between two and five years — cloud computing and service-oriented architecture (SOA), which is moving up the Slope of Enlightenment, will deliver transformation in terms of driving deep changes in the role and capabilities of IT. Finally, public virtual worlds, which are suffering from disillusionment after their peak of hype in 2007, will in the long term represent an important media channel to support and build broader communities of interest."

Technologies and trends at or around the peak of the Hype Cycle in 2008 (see Figure 1) that will reach the plateau in two to five years are:

Green IT — Along with broader societal pressure for environmentally sustainable solutions, IT has the opportunity — and in many cases, a requirement — to improve the "greenness" of its own activities, as well as to contribute to broader company and industry environmental initiatives.

Cloud computing — As companies seek to consume their IT services in the most cost-effective way, interest is growing in drawing a broad range of services (for example, computational power, storage and business applications) from the "cloud," rather than from on-premises equipment. Many types of technology providers are aligning themselves with this trend, with the result that confusion and hype will continue for at least another year before distinct submarkets and market leaders emerge.

Social computing platforms — Following the phenomenal success of consumer-oriented social networking sites, such as MySpace and Facebook, companies are examining the role that these sites, or their enterprise-grade equivalents, will play in future collaboration environments. The scope is also expanding to incorporate the notion of social "platforms," or environments for a broad range of developers to build on the basic application.

Video telepresence — High-end videoconferencing systems (for example, from HP, Cisco, Teliris and others) that utilize large, high-definition (HD) displays and components to show life-size images of participants in meeting rooms or suites have proven significantly more effective than earlier generations of videoconferencing technology in providing a strong sense of in-room presence between remote participants. High cost is currently the barrier to broader

adoption.

Microblogging— Pioneered by Twitter (although other services such as FriendFeed or Plurk are also available), microblogging is a relatively new addition to the world of social networking, in which contributors post a stream of very short messages (fewer than 140 characters) providing information about their current activity or thoughts, which can then be subscribed to by others. The phenomenon has caught on among certain online communities, and leading-edge companies are investigating its role in enhancing other social media and channels.

Figure 1. Hype Cycle for Emerging Technologies, 2008

Source: Gartner (July 2008)

"Following the trend of the last few years, many of the new entries on this year's Hype Cycle, including microblogging, social networking platforms and cloud computing, are making their impact in the consumer world before they hit businesses," Ms Fenn said. "Other technologies that have passed the trigger where they start to be interesting to businesses include 3-D printing, surface computing, augmented reality and mobile robots. We expect early adopters to start applying these in novel ways and driving new classes of application, such as using 3-D printers to dramatically change the supply chain by creating products and replacement parts at the point of need."

Ms Fenn has been authoring the Hype Cycle for emerging trends for 13 years. She said the emerging technologies Hype Cycle focuses on strategic technology and innovative function within IT. It is the broadest aggregate of Gartner's Hype Cycles, highlighting emerging technologies from all areas of IT that technology planners should evaluate as part of their emerging-technology plans.

"The Hype Cycle should be used along with a planning model such as the Priority Matrix (see Figure 2), which highlights the technologies we believe are worth adopting early because of their potentially high impact," Ms Fenn said. "However, the actual benefit will vary significantly across industries so planners need to ascertain which of these individual opportunities relate most closely to their organisational requirements."

Figure 2. Priority Matrix for Emerging Technologies, 2008

Source: Gartner (July 2008)

Ms Fenn is co-author of Gartner's upcoming book "Mastering the Hype Cycle: How to Adopt the Right Innovation at the Right Time" to be published by Harvard Business Press in October. Ms Fenn and Mark Raskino, vice president and Gartner Fellow, explain a market-tested approach that offers a smarter way for companies to sort through the hype and choose the right innovations at the right time. The book can be pre-ordered at amazon.com.

In addition, Ms Fenn discusses Gartner's Hype Cycles for 2008 with Gartner research vice president and distinguished analyst Jeff Comport in a [podcast](#).

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