National BILT Meeting Minutes
"Mega-BILT" Trends Discussion

MEETING DATE: **Tuesday, August 19, 2025**	MEETING TIME: 10:30am-11:30am Eastern	MEETING PLACE: Zoom
RECORDER: Mark Dempsey	RECORDING: Available upon request	PREVIOUS MEETING: AI Software Development vote meeting – June 3, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

BILT:		
Stacy Brandenburg, Hye Tech Network and Security Solutions LLC	Corey Kirkendoll, 5K Technical Services	Dan Tuuri, TrueNorth Companies
Brian Cunningham, J Strategies	Robert Packer, Converged Technology Group	Harsh Verma, Glocol Networks
Vincente D'Ingianni	Lynne Reynolds, Milestone Technologies	Craig von Collenberg
Achille Ettorre, Ettorre & Associates Ltd	Mark Richter	Ramya Krishna Reddy, QuidelOrtho
Rob Garretson, CareSource	Srinivas Sandiri	Kim Yohannan, MongoDB
Yair Alan Griver, CODE Staffing	Harvendra Singh	Teresa Younkin, Mosaic Life Tech, LLC
Bob Hitchins, Fidelity National Financial	Ravi Tandon	
NITIC staff: Ann Beheler, Mark Dempsey, Christina Titus, Larry McWherter, Stephanie Schuler, Alie Hernandez, Leah Palmer, Kyle Jones, Andie Bonkowske, Grayson McKeown.		

Agenda items	Discussion
NITIC and BILT overview	Larry welcomed the group and provided an overview of the NITIC grant (five years, $7.5 million from the National Science Foundation). He explained that today's meeting aims to discuss the current state and future trends of the IT industry. Larry told the BILT members that their anonymized feedback will be widely disseminated to educators nationwide. Educators on the call are invited to listen actively; educators can post questions in the chatbox. Ann provided an overview of the BILT (Business and Industry Leadership Teams) model. BILTs are business advisory councils that employ structured, repeatable processes. BILTs put employers in a co-leadership role. BILTs help align curriculum to workforce needs, but they also help build relationships between educators and employers.

Trends: Technical changes	Ann posed open-ended discussion questions to the BILT group: What are the technical changes that your company is facing now? How are you handling employee upskilling? One employer noted how his company is embracing AI technologies, especially as AI related to improving the user experience through faster response times; AI can be faster than a human employee. But a lingering question is whether or not users desire a "human factor" when interacting with customer service. His company allocates a "significant" amount of money to retraining and certifications and soon they'll be offering AI certifications. Learning AI skills is necessary to adapt to the transformation of the industry. From the chatbox: "Metrics around AI, including valuating the ROI modeling, validating quality is an area of emphasis in the next steps of our journey." Another employer noted his company spends a lot of time on data loss prevention (DLP) – where are the sources of data, what policies are in place, and how can we find leaks? He believes that individual states will create their own guidelines, rather than having a unified federal strategy. He also talked about the ongoing need for emphasizing the "human element" of security. Schools do a great job teaching technical skills, but new graduates also need to be able to understand security concepts like social engineering, which is a growing concern with AI. From the chatbox: "AI and cybersecurity having a strong connection makes sense. The schools that embrace this approach are positioned to deliver what today's companies need." One employer in the aerospace/defense industry said that AI is at the "forefront of everything that we're doing right now." Beyond using LLMs, they want to create and secure private AIs that contain proprietary information. That sort of AI isn't just going into their products; private, secure AIs are also a part of their everyday business. His company runs a large, internal AI certification program – those program graduates meet weekly to discuss others ways to use AI in the business. It's a very big effort. Ann mentioned that a number of community colleges are offering AI programs, which could offset the costs of internal training at companies. She has a statistic that shows 40% of AI students are over 40, which suggests they are incumbent workers. This could be a good avenue for community colleges to consider. From the chatbox: "Much of our technical content through our local community college workforce training initiatives has been white labeled third-party content. I have not yet observed any credit offerings in AI or emerging spaces." Another employer explained his company helps provide skilled workers and also train existing workers. He has trainers that regularly travel the country teaching end-user AI skills to private companies – they may visit the same company every four months to provide updates on how AI has changed since their last visit. His company helps create private AIs, which often involves a lot of data governance and data cleanup. One employer in the software development space noted many of his clients were reluctant to embrace AI mostly because of data breaches. He's found agentic AI to be "underwhelming" because it can be a challenge to get results if you don't craft the directions properly, although this is improving. AI overall is getting better in helping with codes and logic and code reviews, but there are still security concerns.

	Another employer talked about how her company has launched "skill badges," which are earned through 60-90 minute sessions on company-specific skills, some of which includes AI. It's been successful and effective. Now the company is sharing it with academic partners and corporate clients. One employer from the healthcare industry noted that half of the companies she works with are ready to do small AI pilots, but the other half remains reluctant because of security issues. She is seeing more education in data standards organizations. Data in healthcare is very regulation-driven. Those data associations are starting to develop rules about AI algorithms and AI transparency. These are small steps, but it is happening. If you don't have good data, your AI algorithms won't work. This is especially challenging when working with data sets from different agencies. She noted that there's a tendency for smaller companies to follow behind the larger companies and let those larger companies make mistakes first. Ann suspected that soon employees will start to take mandatory AI awareness training just as most employees today must take annual cybersecurity awareness training. Another employer agreed that there is a big push towards AI, but noted that people still need "human contact." He's seen companies develop training where leaders' likeness and voice is completely AI-generated. He believes it will be hard to maintain training budgets that are not reliant on generative AI. The appeal of AI, of course, is to reduce cost and increase productivity. He also noted there remains a bias towards community college graduates. Ann discussed her work with a previous set of employers to persuade them and their HR departments that two-year community colleges can provide skilled technicians. One strategy was to showcase successful students. One employer said he is seeing more and more new hires getting into the door with only two-year degrees.
Trends: AI concerns	Ann asked her next question: what are you most concerned about with respect to AI, in terms of changing your portion of IT? One big company is starting to look for software developers who have AI co-developer experience. AI for now can provide some "fairly decent" code reviews and pull request evaluations. The AI tools are getting better. What he sees changing is a better integration of AI into the workflow. According to Sam Altman, we won't have developers much longer; Altman wants to use AI to replace a lot of the workforce. This drive to replacement, not augmentation, is what this employer sees as the greatest risk and concern with AI. Ann wondered where the entry-level jobs will be if AI takes those jobs. Where will new graduates go if there are no jobs working a help desk or pulling cable? From the chatbox: "My clients are hiring interns to help with the grunt work needed to use AI in the enterprise, which is most often leading to hiring after graduation." One employer doesn't think AI will take over jobs. Instead, he believes AI will augment things. We have to teach people how to successfully prompt AI, which means we have to "teach people how to teach." In working with LLMs, you are telling the AI how to do a task in the same way you'd be telling another person. Ann asked if prompting will be going away. One employer said no – even if LLMs learn more and more over time, knowing how to create an AI prompt will remain a skill.

	Another employer talked about the work he's doing with AI to improve public safety. He is using AI and IoT "for good" to develop – with the help of student cohorts – early disaster warning systems and emergency management. One employer agreed with Ann that he's heard talk of prompting going away, but that's a mischaracterization. He noted that AI systems are evolving to the point that people will soon no longer need to be "prompt whisperers." Prompting will stay relevant, but it will shift. In day-to-day uses, prompting likely soon won't be needed – simple, abbreviated commands will suffice. It's only in more complex, high-stakes business tasks that AI prompting may remain required. From the chatbox: "I disagree that prompting is going away. On the contrary, I see it becoming a bigger and bigger skill. Prompting an AI is essentially teaching." Another employer agreed that AI prompting won't be going away. It will continue to be important in complex "bespoke" business situations. He noted also that those working with AI will need to develop an "exceptional command" of English to make their prompts precise and clear. Likewise, employees working with AI will need to understand formal logic and how to organize complex processes. He's had good experience with philosophy majors because of the way they've learned to analyze and think. To him, the biggest technical challenge working with AI is finding ways to use it to help deliver information faster. As AI technology increases, he agrees that first-line workers may be replaced, but noted that's not sustainable because companies eventually have to hire new people. He suggests finding a way to "pre-accelerate" new workers, which means getting AI into more people's hands sooner so they are ready to use it on the job. From the chatbox: "We cannot overlook the ability of AI to learn and adapt to the work styles of the people they support. I see AI currently developing speeches and email in the correct tone. language, and even emotion of the person being supported. The models are learning all of these things over time - the time required for this learning is days, not weeks." From the chatbox: "[Our region] just announced another $10B data center investment… I do wonder if more of the AI processing moves back to local devices, versus needing to be remotely computed in a data center." Another employer references the systems engineering "V" and pointed out that AI can play a role at every step – collecting and analyzing customer requirement documents, create use cases, generate code. All of this requires good prompting.
Trends: Quantum impacts	Ann posed one more open-ended question: At what point do you see quantum computing affecting your company's daily business, and what do we need to do about it? She referenced frequent news stories about the risk to cybersecurity that quantum computing poses. One employer suggested that quantum isn't yet "real" to him, but he recognizes that when quantum breaks encryption, it's going to create a huge impact. For now, he doesn't see a lot of industries embracing quantum because they're not yet "compute constrained." There are some big jobs that take a lot of power, yes, but a larger, widespread demand for quantum isn't there yet. Where quantum will be needed – situations that are compute-constrained – will be on complex tasks like building massive simulations or AI systems.

	From the chatbox: “Quantum isn't a discussion in our setting or with any of the clients I'm working with. General awareness, but still feels quite distant. “ Another employer noted that crypto is where quantum will likely have the first impact. Security is already an issue with crypto and quantum is very good at doing large math problems. As soon as someone can use quantum to create accurate financial projections, portfolio optimizations, or systems logistics (which might appeal to airlines), businesses will jump on it. He thinks it will take time still to get all of that integrated. From the chatbox: “We will build better mice when quantum creates that mousetrap.” Another agreed that “post-quantum cryptography” (PQC) is going to create big challenges. Consider if all of the security certificates around the world are made obsolete in two years. He sees preparation for PQC as very urgent. That’s work that AI can assist with. From the chatbox: “I think entry-level workers need to understand context and the human touch. People, at least for now, still buy from people in everything we do - you can’t replace this yet.” One employer talked about how he didn’t think people truly appreciate the speed and pace of change in IT and AI. Things are moving quickly. AI is learning – the AI of tomorrow will be able to do more than the AI of today.
Conclusion	Larry announced that the next BILT meeting will be November 4, at which time the BILT will vote on and discuss entry-level job skills in infrastructure and cloud. NITIC will host another trends meeting like this in early 2026. He and Ann thanked everyone for their time and expertise.
Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 4 (10:30am-12:00pm Central/11:30am-1:00pm Eastern) – job skills vote and discussion on infrastructure and cloud	