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INTERNET/ Semantic Technology Conference Unveiled the Future of the Web

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I recently attended the 2010 [Semantic Tech conference](#), held at the Hilton in downtown San Francisco. This event is probably the most popular venue for the enterprise world and for researchers to be able to discuss and see what's new and where we are at in real world applications and solutions based on semantic web technologies.

If you are not familiar with Semantic Web, the idea behind it is that information can be given a precise meaning so that computers (and humans) can be able to find it, correlate it and use it in efficient ways. [For more details about semantic web you can see [this article](#), and [Tim Berners-Lee on the next Web at TED's talk](#)].

This year there were four main industry tracks (Financial, Government, Pharmaceutical / Health Care and Publishing) and more than a dozen topics covered by the talks and the tutorials during the 5 days of the conference.

The keynotes well represented future trends, and current issues in the semantic web universe: In the opening keynote Dean Allemang from Top Quadrant and Prof. James Hendler from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute commented on a series of clips presenting different "views" of semantic web. It was interesting to see that approaches and requirements for semantic web solutions may differ between Academia and industry.

David Siegel, author of the book [Pull](#) proposed the concept of a "personal data locker": a sort of online container of "metadata" about ourselves (preferences about everything, medical history, etc.) allowing people to pull "everything to them on demand - products, services, information, knowledge, and advice." You may think that this is too "Orwellian" but the keynote of David Recordon highlighted the power of structured and interlinked information currently available through the [Facebook Opengraph protocol](#) used by the famous "Like" button.

Throughout the tutorials and the conference days, the sense of excitement among the participant was palpable.

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