May Day may bring thoughts of summer barbecues, lying by the beach, or lately, Occupy protests. But none of those attractions lured our members from attending our 2nd meeting of the year. We started off the morning with a lovely continental breakfast hosted by Metron. They also provided a great buffet lunch and more importantly, a speaker who presented two technical talks.

Dale Feiste, Principal Consultant, Metron, began the session with “Cloud Computing and Capacity Management,” a good overview of the topic. He began by defining the cloud – “on-demand, self-service and quickly provisioned” – then talked about the challenges with managing capacity in this environment. A lively discussion ensued, leading many to want cloud providers and cloud users to speak on the subject. Dale cleverly coined a new acronym, “SLF – service level fantasies,” which resonated with everyone.

We were privileged to welcome another Mullen Award Winner, Erik Ostermueller, Sr. Software Architect with FIS. Erik is making his grand tour, presenting “Help Developers Find Their Own Performance Defects.” His thesis involves a better way to divide up the performance job between performance and development; the big stick may seem to work for a while, but collaboration and focus on a small number of “big hitters” works better. Comments from the audience validated his approach and his choice of the high value programming errors.

Our lunch meeting included an update on the Metron product line. These product updates are of high value – who has time to keep up on anything these days? I think most people were surprised to learn of new products, expanded focus and new partnerships. Local CMG meetings are a great value for vendors who want to meet directly with their target audience, sharing product information as well as thought leadership.

Nalini Elkins, Inside Products, offered us an introduction to a complex subject with “Complications with Digital Certificates.” She led off on a humorous note, “Not everybody is a good person. It is easier to find a ditch someone else has already dug and steal it.” Most of us were left feeling a bit concerned about security. Even the best appears to be not as secure as one would like and the performance implications of imposing tight security are non-trivial.

Dale Feiste closed out our program by giving the same attention to detail he offered on cloud to another important area – “SAN Attached Storage and Capacity Management.” Though everyone knows server capacity planning is essential, Dale made it clear that the new storage options present the same kinds of challenge and require the same diligence.

Join us for our next meeting on August 7th – details to be confirmed later.

Denise P. Kalm
NCCMG Secretary