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# The story begins.....

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April 18, 2008

### Ingres Executive to Present at Upcoming Scale 6X Women in Open Source Conference Senior Vice President Emma McGrattan to Detail her Role and Rise in the World of Open Source

REDWOOD CITY, Calif., Feb. 6 /PRNewswire/ – Ingres Corporation, a leading Open Source Information Management software and services company, announced today that Emma McGrattan, senior vice president of engineering at Ingres, is a featured speaker at the Scale 6X Women in Open Source (WIOS) conference. The WIOS conference, which aims to promote women and girls in the Open Source world, is scheduled for Friday, February 8th, prior to the 6th Annual Southern California Linux Expo, which will be held at the Los Angeles Airport Westin Feb. 9 - 10.

McGrattan's session, entitled "From the Keyboard to the Boardroom and Back Again," runs from 10 a.m. - 10:50 a.m. (PT) and details her rise from a lonely woman engineer who climbed up the management ladder in a male dominated field, and her eventual realization of her real love for writing code and playing with Open Source software.

McGrattan has worked with Ingres since 1992 and is a pillar in the Ingres community, rising through the ranks to occupy a senior leadership position. She started as a porting engineer, working on UNIX code, and is now responsible for the Ingres Emerging Technologies Team which is responsible for such cutting edge technologies as the Ingres Icebreaker family of appliances. She has contributed to Ingres and the Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) community both in code and in promoting global open source development.

"Having worked very hard to attain the role of senior vice president of engineering, in a male dominated profession, I have realized that I'm actually happiest writing code and evangelizing open source software," said McGrattan. "In my session, I hope to show how I rose through the ranks of software and the lessons I learned when I chose to dive into my first open source project more than 13 years ago. I made my mark by writing new rules and staying true to myself. I hope to inspire

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## What is it about girls and IT?

By Jessica Twentyman  
 Published: May 14 2008 04:17 | Last updated: May 14 2008 04:17



A middle-class home in 1980s Dublin, and a young girl with an aptitude for maths and sciences has just eagerly announced to her engineer father that she intends to follow in his footsteps. His response: "I'd never hire a woman as an engineer."

Emma McGrattan did not take that paternal guidance to heart. Today, she is senior vice-president of engineering at Ingres, an open source database company, responsible for the development and integration of the company's flagship database and associated products.

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# What did I say?

*"My work is incredibly rewarding to me and I hate to think that talented young women might be missing out on that."*

*"In general, code written by women is more straightforward and more practical - it's clear what problem the functions are meant to solve and why. Male programmers are more likely to hide clever tricks behind complicated code. These differences can be complementary if blended correctly. "*

*"Where men and women work on technology projects together, you tend to get a far better, more balanced result,"*

# Why Did I Say That?

**EXPERIENCE =**

**USABILITY/ANALYTIC + DESIGN/CREATIVE**

## Left-Brain Functions

Analytic thought

Logic

Language

Science and  
math

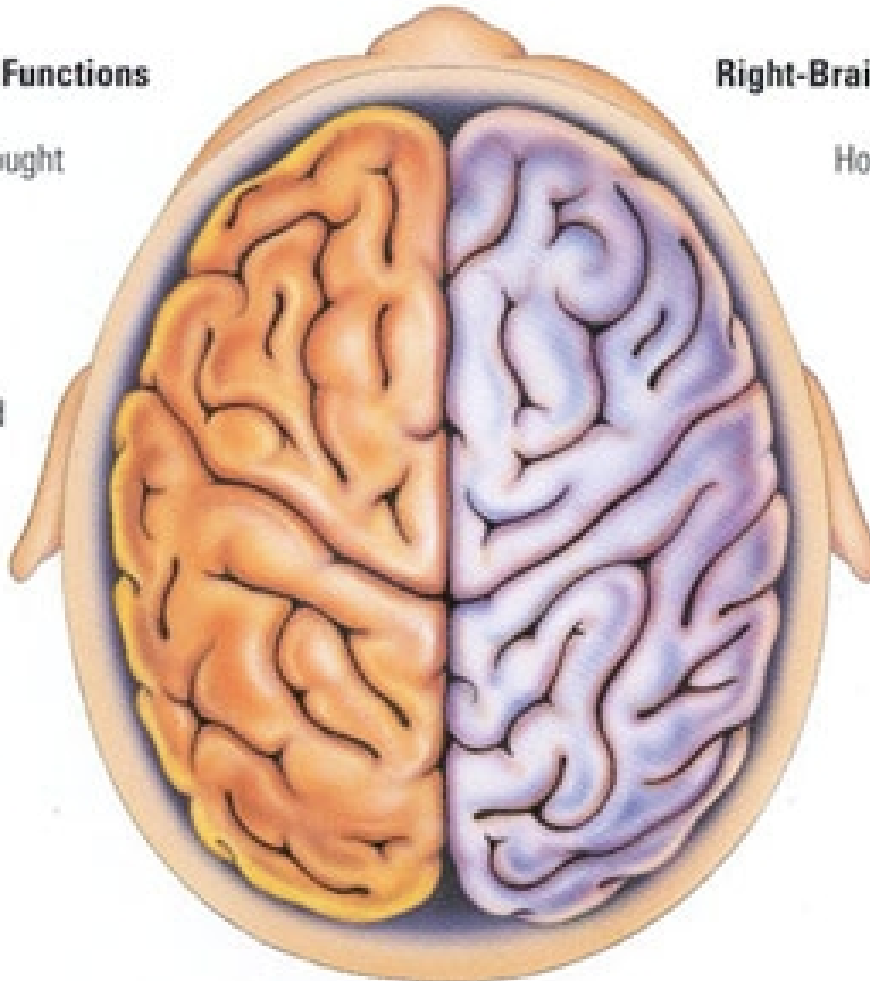
## Right-Brain Functions

Holistic thought

Intuition

Creativity

Art and  
music



# How did I get away with it?

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## Cost-cutting buoys Sprint Nextel

By Andrew Edgecliffe-Johnson and Alan Rappeport  
Published: February 19 2009 14:11 | Last updated: February 19 2009 19:39

White collar job cuts on Wall Street contributed to rising subscriber losses at **Sprint Nextel** in the fourth quarter as corporate customers of the third-largest US mobile network operator closed accounts for smartphones such as the BlackBerry Curve.

Shares in the Kansas-based company rallied as it reported that cost-cutting had pared its losses in the fourth quarter in spite of a continued struggle to stem subscriber defections.

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June 6, 2008, 6:00 am

## Men Write Code from Mars, Women Write More Helpful Code from Venus

We all know men hate to ask for directions. Apparently they loathe putting directions in computer code, too.



Emma McGrattan, the senior vice-president of engineering for computer-database company Ingres—and one of Silicon Valley's highest-ranking female programmers—insists that men and women write code differently. Women are more touchy-feely and considerate of those who will use the code later, she says. They'll intersperse their code—those strings of instructions that result in nifty applications and programs—with helpful comments and directions, explaining why they wrote the lines the way they did and exactly how they did it.

The code becomes a type of "roadmap" for others who might want to alter it or add to it later, says McGrattan, a native of Ireland who has been with Ingres since 1992.

Men, on the other hand, have no such pretenses. Often, "they try to show how clever they are by writing very cryptic code," she tells the Business Technology Blog. "They try to obfuscate things in the code," and don't leave clear directions for people using it later. McGrattan boasts that 70% to 80% of

She would have been one heck of a coder

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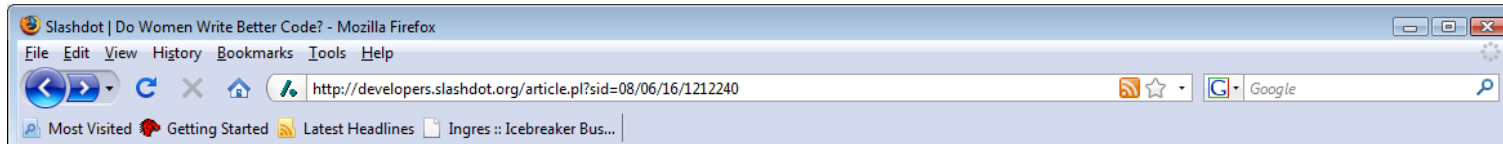
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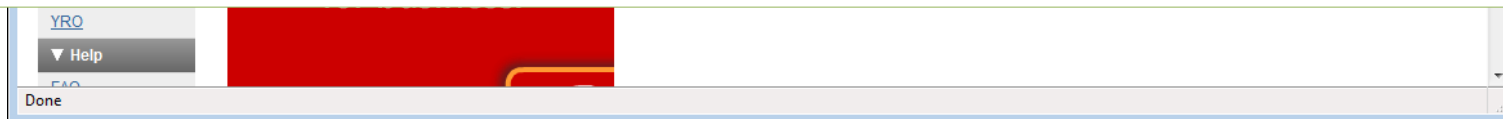
### Will sitting in cash hurt your long-term investing goals?

If you have a \$500,000 portfolio, you should download the latest report by *Forbes* columnist Ken Fisher. In it he tells you where he thinks the stock market is

# Which got reported on Slashdot as...



*"The senior vice-president of engineering for computer-database company Ingres-and one of Silicon Valley's highest-ranking female programmers-insists that men and women write code differently. **Women are more touchy-feely and considerate of those who will use the code later**, she says. They'll intersperse their code ... with helpful comments and directions, explaining why they wrote the lines the way they did and exactly how they did it. The code becomes a type of 'roadmap' for others who might want to alter it or add to it later, says McGrattan, a native of Ireland who has been with Ingres since 1992. **Men, on the other hand, have no such pretenses. Often, they try to show how clever they are by writing very cryptic code. They try to obfuscate things in the code"***





# The fallout...

## § ~1000 flames on Slashdot

- Most pointed out the idiocy of stereotypes
- ..and then went on to state that women are poor coders

## § 100s of comments posted to my blog

- Most were personal attacks
- Some were fit to publish

## § 10s of emails sent directly to me

- One of which was a death threat and one a suggestion that I kill myself

## § Petition to have me fired

# Results of a Gartner Study on this topic

- § **Based on extensive biological, psychological and behavioral research**
- § **Found that a small subset of general characteristics of men versus women have been demonstrated so often that they have become de facto**



# Results of a Gartner Study on this topic

- § **Women demonstrate better bilateral brain involvement in listening – in combining left-brain thinking (logic, analysis and a concern for accuracy) with right-brain thinking (aesthetics, feeling and creativity) simultaneously. Women are generally held to be better at language skills, such as verbal fluency, giving them an advantage in human discourse and writing activities. They also score better on social skills and understanding other people’s viewpoints, valuable in team building and negotiation.**
- § **Men score higher at complex mental visualization and pattern-spotting tasks, which has important implications for certain aspects of engineering. They are also inclined to be more aggressive and risk-taking, which can contribute to innovation and competitiveness in a dynamic industry.**

# What I've learned since then...

- § **ACM conducted a “scientific” survey which proved my original assertion invalid**
- § **Stay as far away from generalizations as you possibly can**
- § **There is such a thing as bad publicity**
- § **It is OK not to have an opinion on something**

Who has the first question?



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