In a corporation, new technologies make their way very slowly into the development organizations. Object-oriented technology is not an exception. Quite the contrary! It is a paradigm shifting technology, viewed by some as the real "silver bullet" and by others as another fad.

This panel will address issues related to organizing and accelerating the transfer of the object-oriented technology into the development organizations of large corporations.

The general model for technology transfer is shown in figure 1. Research centers are the sources of the new software technology, in particular of object-oriented technology. Typical research centers in the area of object-oriented technology are Universities (e.g., Brown U., Carnegie Mellon, University of Illinois at Urbana), research institutes (e.g., Kestrel Institute), consortia (e.g., MCC) and research laboratories within large companies (e.g., Xerox Parc, HP Labs). In recent years, mechanisms for a formal transfer from the producers to the receptors of technology were put in place, mostly with the use of liaison personnel.

Once the technology is ready to be transferred, and certain formal mechanisms for 'pushing' the technology are in place, the companies have to be prepared for 'pulling' these results. The deliverable to be received are usually in the form of technical reports, workshops and prototypes. From the technology receptor side, an organized and formal structure for continuing the transfer into the line organizations should also be in place.

The formal pipeline starts with organizations at the corporate offices, and there are two levels of organizations: A front-end, research-oriented organization that analyzes, evaluates, transforms and consults on the object-oriented software technology; and a training organization whose function is to establish the mechanism for formally introducing object-oriented methods and the tools that support this methodology to the line organizations.

Finally, there are the line organizations. There are mainly two kinds of users of object-oriented technology within the line organizations: the early adopters and the rest. Groups or projects that start to use the technology before the whole formal transfer process is in place are the strongest allies of the corporate organizations. These organizations take the risk of trying an immature, but promising technology. These organizations usually establish informal channels for technology transfer with the centers producing the technology.

Figure 1