Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) is a remarkably useful and flexible tool for modeling the flow of many different kinds of things. While developed to model aero- and hydro-dynamics, it has subsequently been used to represent everything from changes in weather to traffic jams. This paper will examine the historical development of computational tools to perform fluid dynamic analyses and will look at the ways different engineering communities have shared techniques, tools, and computer code itself. The conclusions drawn analyze the way engineering communities have different social arrangements for sharing “how-to” knowledge and what the effects of these different ad-hoc social structures are. One provocative question that emerges from this study is whether the movement of ideas like CFD can be modeled using CFD.

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