IMS Newsletter

Fiducia IT AG: New IMS QPP Customer

Wolfgang Strauch Fiducia IT AG

Fiducia IT AG, headquartered in Karlsruhe, Germany, is a service provider to the cooperative banking sector (*Volksbanken* and *Raiffeisenbanken*) in Germany. Fiducia provides IT outsourcing and computer center services for 770 cooperative banks, 42 private banks, and several central financial institutes. In addition, Fiducia is the developer of one of Germany's leading core banking systems, called agree®. Fiducia is also one of the first IMS customers in Germany and has been an IMS customer for more than 30 years. For IMS™ 10, Fiducia decided to step to the front of the line and become a participating customer in the IMS Quality Partnership Program (QPP).

Our IMS systems

Before we share our QPP experiences, we'd like to describe our current IMS setup. We have IMS DB/DC systems with DL/I (Full-Function and HALDB, but no Fast Path) and DB2®. The main connections are made using IMS Connect and MQSeries®; however, we do have a small amount of old APPC and 3270 connections still in place. All of the main banking systems are in a 2-way data sharing sysplex. One of those banking systems has already migrated to shared message queues (SMQ), and all of the other systems will follow this year. One of the IMS 10 functions, Multiple Systems Coupling – VTAM® Generic Resource (MSC VGR), in fact, was the last piece we needed in making this transition to SMQ complete. We have 8 main banking systems (all of them are 2-way systems), 2 secondary production systems (both are 2-way), and 3 single smaller production systems. For pre-production, we have 2 systems (two 2-way SMQ, with VGR), 9 single test and development systems, and 1 SMQ test system (our sandbox system).

Currently we execute about 50 000 000 transactions on a normal day. At the end of a month or a quarter, which is considered peak time, we run up to 70 000 000 transactions per day.

From IMS requirement to IMS QPP participant

We started our move to shared message queues in 2000. IMS 9 included function that we needed to enable our move. The only missing item was support for MSC-links. Because we were not satisfied with the solutions that were recommended in white papers, we submitted a formal requirement to IMS Development to implement VGR support for MSC links in IMS 10. Their comeback to us was to request that we become formal QPP participants. This appeared to be beneficial to both Fiducia and IMS, and we agreed. QPP Education was started in November of 2006, and we received the initial software shipment at the beginning of 2007, on January 15.

In addition to the early access to the MSC-VGR code that we requested, we recognized that our participation in the QPP would also provide us with very quick access to the resources at Silicon Valley Lab, which in turn would lead to very fast resolutions to any problems encountered. In this we were not disappointed. In fact, for current IMS customers that are considering whether they should become a QPP customer, our response would be "No question! Do it!

The time spent on QPP is a good investment. You will get so much back in return."

As QPP customers, we needed to complete a few system migratory steps before starting. We had to migrate SMU to RACF®, and we had to migrate the exits DFSCMTR0, DFSNPRT0, DFSCMCR0, and DFSCMPR0 to DFSMSCE0. We also upgraded to z/OS® 1.7 and modified our MSPLINK BUFFERSIZE values based on the new range of 1024 – 65 536.

Our experiences as an IMS 10 QPP participant:
Our overall QPP experience was very positive. Specifically:

- The SMP/E installation was problem-free.
- We were able to upgrade the RECON during peak hours, problem-free.
- We experienced minimal downtime during the migration, which can be attributed to the standard movement from backup to original to migrated systems.

Although our focus was on the MSC-VGR function, we tested several other IMS 10 functions during the QPP: Dynamic Resource Definition (DRD), the OM Audit Trail, TSO SPOC batch, enhanced type-2 commands, and the Syntax Checker. DRD, in fact, will replace BMC Deltaplus in our installation this year.

IMS Around the World: look for us this year at:

IMPACT, Las Vegas , April • IDUG, Dallas, May • GSE, Denmark, May • IBM IOD, Netherlands, June • SHARE, San Jose, August

Another Look at IMS IVP

Huan Nguyen IMS IVP Development

IMS IVP (Installation Verification Program) is an ISPF application running on z/OS to verify an IMS system through the use of sample applications.

IMS shows no sign of stopping on its data management journey of four decades. Its longevity in business is proof of a software system that continues to be a model of stability. The IMS IVP facilitates the system definition and configuration process for the correct execution of IMS components and features. The arrival of several IVP enhancements in IMS 10 allows us to take a look at the IVP with new eyes.

Imagine that you have a business and you choose to use a small IMS system to run your critical business applications. You get the IMS software, quickly install it on your mainframe system, and are excited to get started! Then you ask yourself, "Can I use it immediately? How do I know that the IMS applications will run correctly? How do I test IMS?"

If you were giving a car a test drive, you could just jump in, turn on the engine, and go for a picturesque ride. If you were testing some off-the-shelf accounting software, you could start up the program, fill out some spreadsheets, and spend time analyzing the data. In general, these products are ready to go out-of-the-box (or parking lot!).

Testing IMS is different. Let's use an analogy of following a recipe, one that results in a cake. The recipe itself is not the product that you are interested in, like a car or accounting software is. Instead, the recipe is the instructions that you are required to follow to get a cake. Likewise, the IMS IVP is the set of instructions that you follow to get an IMS system. IMS is all about data processing. It is a heavy duty server that manages databases on the back end and processes transaction requests on the front end. In order for IMS to work, it needs your participation, your initial action. It has the recipe to guide you to build a system.

What is required, then, to build an IMS system? Clearly you need to start with the necessary ingredients, which are available to you after the IMS system is installed. The IMS system definition process helps you define the type of IMS system you want by providing macros that define system resources such as databases, application programs, transactions, terminals, and other features you might want to use. You then tune your system by tailoring the execution procedures.

This is where IVP comes into the picture. IVP provides all of the ingredients for you. IVP has sample system definition procedures and programs that you can use interactively to build a sample IMS system from scratch and run many sample applications in a repeatable tutorial environment.

IVP can be used as the first level test system. After you run the IVP, you gain confidence knowing that you have verified the newly installed IMS system. You can run IVP at any time because it is an offline tool. IVP acts as an IMS user in that it exercises IMS code. IVP offers many use case scenarios for you to select from to test the many facets of IMS.

A typical customer can use IVP:

- On a test system during a test period.
- For a new IMS installation.
- When migrating to new version of IMS.

Many IVP samples can be used as a model or reference at any time in the production. IVP also provides an excellent sandbox environment in which to learn IMS. Although IVP exercises a large number of IMS functions, it does not attempt to test everything. IVP verifies the basics of various IMS functions by building a series of executable jobs.

IVP continues to expand its collection of sample applications. Let's look first at the IMS 10 enhancements:

Sample Dynamic Resource Definition (DRD) application

The sample shows that system resources that were never defined in the MODBLKS system generation can be dynamically made available to an IMS execution using ACBGEN and new online commands. IVP prepares the following resources for the DRD sample:

- IVPDRD1: The phone book database.
- DFSIVPD2: The MPP program that accesses the phone book database.
- DFSIVPD3: The BMP program that accesses the phone book database.
- IVTND: The transaction that is associated with the program DFSIVPD2.

Sample Dynamic Resource Definition user interface (DRD UI) demonstration

The DRD UI is a user-friendly front-end interface for users to manage their resources dynamically during an IMS execution. IVP provides the instructions to start up and navigate through a series of ISPF panels in the DRD UI. The demonstration is combined with the sample DRD application to illustrate the operation of both DRD and DRD UI functions.

Sample Operations Manager (OM) audit trail application

IVP provides instructions to activate the OM audit trail function and shows users how to navigate through the TSO SPOC to display the OM audit trail information. The TSO SPOC formats the OM audit trail logs, including command input log records, command output, or system messages.

Sample Parallel RECON Access (PRA) configuration

IVP provides instructions to set up and configure PRA. However, because IVP is a test environment, it does not attempt to run a large number of batch DL/I or utilities that access RECONs in parallel to create a contention situation. IVP performs the preparation steps for prospective PRA users. The list RECON job is used to obtain the RECON status and verify the PRA configuration.

IMS 10 Quality Partnership Program

Rose Levin IMS Customer Introduction Program **Alison Coughtrie** EMEA IMS Quality Partnership Program Manager

For most new releases of IBM software, an "early support" or "beta" program is run, where Customers world-wide are invited to test the new code, giving valuable feedback to Development on the new capabilities. For IMS, this program is known as our Quality Partnership Program (QPP), the key differentiator being that the customers progress the code to their production environments prior to the General Availability (GA). This allows IMS to be stress-tested in many varied and unique environments.

What makes the IMS QPP different from a beta?

- IMS involves its QPP Customers from the beginning of the planning and design processes for a new version. IMS Customers are active participants throughout the Development process, providing feedback about the new functionality, well before the product is even available for testing during the QPP.
- The initial QPP code is provided in SMP/E installable format.
- Service maintenance is provided at regular intervals (usually weekly), again in SMP/E installable format.
- Full support for problem management reporting is provided through the normal Software Support channels.
- Independent Software Vendors (ISVs), providing tools for use with IMS (including IBM), are invited to participate in an Early Test Program (ETP), which starts ahead of, and then runs in parallel with, the QPP. This enables the ISVs to get their tools ready to tolerate the new IMS release at QPP start.
- The code can be taken into production.
- No "re-installs" are necessary when the code becomes GA.
- At the close of the QPP, Customers are invited to preview and provide feedback on the forthcoming releases.

We asked the IMS 10 QPP Customers what benefits they got from being a QPP participant:

"It is a question of maintaining our connections to the whole IMS team, keeping up-to-date with new developments in IMS and having a chance to influence the direction of any new development."

"It gives us the chance to test out new features and provide input into the future releases of IMS. In addition it gives us the ability to request the enhancements be made to IMS such as the DIRCA above the 16MB."

"Education, access and future direction are 3 major benefits we receive. Increased communication and interaction with key IBM personnel is a big plus. From a marketing perspective, it shows our Customers that we are on the leading edge of technology."

"We were able to learn about IMS V10 with very good IBM support."

"...achieved our goals of being ready to deploy IMS V10 across (our company)."

"…being close to IBM has given us a greater understanding of IMS… able to test new features prior to GA and prior to implementing in production, giving more time to get familiarized with them…able to influence direction/changes to software…gives more time to develop training ahead of production implementation … sharing experience with other shops gives us greater insight to IMS."

How does IBM benefit from the QPP?

- Technical issues with new functions and the base product can be identified early.
- The code can be tested in additional Customer environments, with various combinations of functionality, load, and products.
- Vendor product readiness at GA driven by the QPP cycle. (Refer to the IMS Information Management Tools and IMS for z/OS V10.1 Compatibility web site).
- Defects can be removed and documentation improved.
- Customers agree to be Reference Accounts for IBM Marketing (including FIDUCIA IT AG, our customer profile in this edition, who are an official IMS 10 reference account)
- Customers develop interest in migrating to the new release.
- Validation of GA readiness. A few month's prior to the planned GA, all Customers are asked to complete a survey rating the product, and giving their opinion as to whether it is ready to be made Generally Available.

For the IMS 10 QPP, we had 13 Customer participants world-wide, and 3 internal IBM sites that installed the code. Customers migrated from IMS 8 as well as IMS 9 and included environments using HALDBs, Fast Path, Shared Message Queues, MSC, DBCTL, XRF and data sharing.

In future, IMS Development at Silicon Valley will be looking at using the "iterative" or Agile development process for some stages of the development cycle for certain line-items to complement the QPP process. Interested in finding out more? Contact Rose Levin (levinr@us.ibm.com) or Alison Coughtrie (alison_coughtrie@uk.ibm.com) for more information. IBM

IMS: A Continuing Focus on Resiliency

Gregory Vance IMS Development

Resiliency can be defined as the ability to recover from adversity. In the programming world, it is software's ability to recover from unexpected errors or failures, and to detect potential errors before they happen and automatically correct them. In an ideal world, this detection and correction would occur so as to prevent any noticeable effect to the program's end user. In the programming world, a loss of service can mean a significant cost to the customer.

With IMS, the types of unexpected errors that could be encountered include application errors, device errors, and system failures. Each IMS user might have different requirements for the level of resiliency they need from their system. Higher resiliency requires more investment in the infrastructure. A user with a relatively low resiliency requirements can be satisfied with a single non-data sharing IMS. Other users might require all of the Parallel Sysplex® technologies, such as shared message queues, Fast Database Recovery (FDBR), and other z/OS components and features such as Geographically Dispersed Parallel Sysplex (GDPS) to meet their resiliency requirements.

This article highlights a few of the functions and capabilities that IMS has implemented throughout the years to improve its resiliency.

Database access resiliency

IMS provides many ways to reduce the impact of different errors associated with database access:

- I/O toleration allows the applications to continue even if a database I/O error occurs.
- Data sharing can improve availability by providing continuous access to your databases in the event of a system failure or a failure of a sharing partner.
- IMS High Availability Large Database (HALDB) support:
  » Provides a method to surpass the database size limitations of 4G and 8G.
  » Allows you to partition your database into up to 1001 separate 4G partitions while allowing the application to treat all partitions as one database.

This support prevents potential application error due to a database full condition. In addition, partitioning also allows individual partitions to be treated independently, allowing the user to reorganize or recover single partitions while others remain available. If any part of the database fails, making it unusable until recovered, an error can occur on a single partition and the rest of the database's partitions remain available for processing while the other partition is recovered.
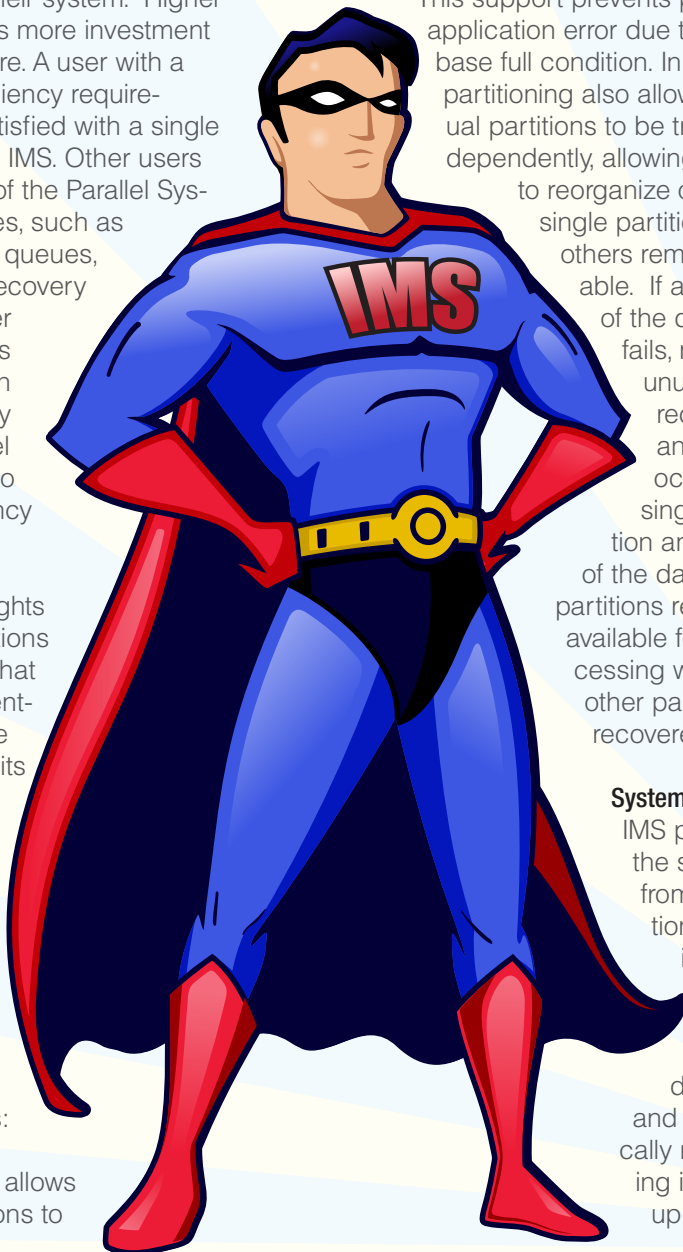
System resiliency

IMS protects the system from application errors by isolating the failure to the dependent region and automatically resolving in-flight updates, thus limiting the impact of the failure. IMS can also limit the impact of system failures such as an IMS failure or a z/OS image failure. For example, the Extended Recovery Facility (XRF) of IMS allows a backup system to rapidly take over the work of a failed system. Shared message queues and FDBR provide similar capabilities to limit the impact of a single system failure. For site failures, IMS's Remote Site Recovery (RSR) feature allows a backup site to shadow an active site system, enabling a remote system to resume service in less than one hour in the event of a significant active site outage.

IMS in an on demand world

In the on demand IT world, new resiliency issues have emerged. IMS must be able to tolerate misbehaving clients. Components that connect to IMS must be able to tolerate problems such as failures and slowdowns with IMS. IMS Open Transaction Manager Access (OTMA) is IMS's primary interface from clients such as IMS Connect and WebSphere® MQ. OTMA allows IMS transactions to be invoked from clients, distributed or host, outside of IMS. OTMA has several resiliency capabilities that can prevent unexpected outages for IMS:

- OTMA provides a timeout option that can force the backout of transactions that require a response message acknowledgment when one has not been received within a user-specified time. This can free up the dependent region to processes subsequent transactions.
- OTMA can limit the number of outstanding transactions sent to IMS to prevent IMS from reaching storage limits required to hold the transactions in a queue.
- Storage representing an idle OTMA client and IMS connection can be reclaimed, resulting in fewer problems related to storage constraints.
- IMS Connect, which enables TCP/IP or local z/OS clients to exchange messages through OTMA, also provides resilient capabilities. IMS Connect can assist with workload distribution and take advantage of OTMA's transaction timeout and message flood support.

IMS in a Parallel Sysplex

When operating in a Parallel Sysplex environment, IMS can improve the resiliency of the IMS system in many ways. In relation to database access from applications, IMS allows up to 255 regions on up to 32 z/OS images to concurrently share data in databases. When multiple regions can access the same databases, re-distribution of applications is possible if one of the IMS regions fails. Batch Message Processing (BMP) regions can run on any IMS in a predefined IMSGROUP without JCL modification. Workload distribution is easier, and in the event of an IMS failure, applications can easily be moved to an active IMS, reducing outage time.

Fast Database Recovery (FDBR) can also reduce the impact of an IMS or LPAR failure. FDBR backs out in-flight updates and releases the IRLM locks held by the failed IMS. If FDBR is not being used, the IRLM locks are not released until IMS is emergency restarted. While the locks are retained, applications on other IMS regions cannot access the locked data, which can cause delays or loss of service.

IMS Transaction Manager takes advantage of the Parallel Sysplex environment to improve resiliency by workload routing and distribution. For example, VTAM Generic Resources can use z/OS Workload Manager (WLM) information to allow it to dynamically route logons for SNA-based terminals. If an IMS fails, a user can quickly re-logon to an available IMS. Similar function also exists for TCP/IP connections. IMS Connect can run in a z/OS Sysplex Distributor environment, allowing incoming messages to be distributed among multiple IMS Connect instances.

With IMS Shared Message queue support, a transaction that enters the system through one IMS can be processed by any other IMS that is using the same shared queues and is capable of processing the transaction. With the transaction in a shared queue, if several IMSs can process the transaction, it can be processed by an available IMS even if the IMS through which it was entered fails.

The z/OS Automatic Restart Manager (ARM) fully supports IMS, including CQS, and the Common Service Layer's Structured Call Interface (SCI), Operations Manger (OM) and Resource Manger (RM) regions, allowing these regions to be automatically restarted in the event of a failure. This reduces the time to complete recovery by reducing the amount of manual intervention required to restore operations.

The future includes resiliency

As technology continues to evolve, so will IMS's resiliency characteristics. Simplifying operations is a constant focus item for us:

- By reducing operation-required intervention.
- By improving the user's ability to control several IMS images from a single point of control.
- Through automation, so that failure recovery time can be reduced.
- Through improved autonomic handling, allowing IMS to mask failures, recover from failures, or both without a noticeable loss of service.
- Increasing IMS's use of 64-bit architecture, which will reduce storage constraint issues that can cause performance ("sick but not dead") problems, or unnecessary planned or unplanned outages.

A significant goal of IBM and IMS is to provide solutions that allow our customers to provide 24 by 7 availability to their end users. Because unexpected errors are inevitable, IMS must continue to take advantage of new resilient technologies as they emerge and make sure IMS is supported by other z/OS components that provide improved resiliency. This in turn will allow our customers to invest in the technologies and features that can help them meet their service commitments. IBM

Sample purchase order database for IMS support for XQuery application

IVP provides instructions to allocate and load the sample Purchase Order database named IPODB. IVP helps to make the database available for an execution of an IMS support for XQuery application that a user may choose to explore.

Sample IMS Connect application

To illustrate a scenario in which IMS Connect handles the TCP/IP client requests to IMS for data processing, IVP provides a sample application named DFSIVA9. DFSIVA9 sends a query request to the IMS control region via IMS Connect to get information about an engineering part. The response sent back to the application includes the part description as requested through the IMS Connect communication.

Sample IMS Java Database Connection (JDBC) application

IVP provides instructions for and a sample application of a Java application, DFSIVP37, which runs on a Java message processing region. The application makes query and update requests to the phone book database based on how the transaction IVTCM is scheduled. This application ensures that the Java Dependent Regions have been correctly installed and set up.

In summary

IVP has been around since IMS Version 3 and continues to offer practical business value. The IVP sample applications that demonstrate the use of major IMS features and functions and verify that the IMS installation is operational are valuable tools. New users to IMS can also find IVP a useful tool to explore IMS functions or learn about their IMS system. IVP commits to grow with IMS by adding new samples of key features and functions for each release, and its usability is a key focus area for future releases. IBM

IMS SOAP Gateway - A clean way to get to IMS

Himakar Chennapragada IMS SOAP Gateway Developer **Yee-Rong Lai** IMS SOAP Gateway User Technology

Today, more than ever, enterprises are looking to expand and protect their investment. In an ever-changing world, with so many heterogeneous systems, how can systems interact and exchange information with one another? How can an SAP billing system get customer information from an IMS system? How can a loan processing system in IMS interact with a credit reporting application running in a Microsoft .NET environment? These challenges become more prevalent with mergers and acquisitions. Fortunately, there is help to solve this interoperability complexity. This is where standards come into play.

Standards, please!

Standards are the key to solving the interoperability puzzle. If an application expects and provides information in a standard way, it is immediately open to participation in a broader playground. The use of standards also minimizes the need for application developers to have specific knowledge of the backend data and systems. IBM IMS SOAP Gateway is one such product that is built on industry standards such as XML, SOAP, and HTTP/HTTPS. Because of its strict adherence to standards, IMS SOAP Gateway allows your existing IMS assets to participate in a Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA) environment.

Gateway to innovation

With IMS SOAP Gateway, IMS applications can interoperate outside of the IMS environment through SOAP to provide and request services independent of platform, environment, application language, or programming model. It lets you enable your IMS applications as Web service providers or Web service consumers. Different types of client applications, such as Microsoft .NET, Java, and third-party applications, can submit SOAP requests into IMS to drive the business logic of the IMS applications. Likewise, your IMS applications can submit SOAP requests to Web service providers to take advantage of the services offered by other Web service providers. IMS SOAP Gateway can assist an organization in the areas of enterprise modernization, application development, business-to-business (B2B) integration, and SOA implementation.

Clean, lean, and mean

IMS SOAP Gateway provides support for end-to-end integration between IMS applications and Web services. IMS SOAP Gateway is a light-weight server solution; therefore, it does not require a separate Web application server, such as WebSphere Application Server (WAS). Even though it does not provide all the quality of service (QoS) capabilities that a full-blown Java EE (previously know as J2EE) server does, IMS SOAP Gateway offers the most critical and essential capabilities that you need to modernize your enterprise and extend the values of your IMS assets.

IMS SOAP Gateway is both a SOAP endpoint and a client to IMS Connect. It provides Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) support between its communications with IMS Connect. This security is in addition to the Resource Access Control Facility (RACF) authentication that is based on user ID and password.

IMS SOAP Gateway also comes with excellent tooling support. You can generate the artifacts that are needed to enable an IMS application as a Web service provider or consumer by using IBM Rational Developer™ for System z™ (RDz, previously known as WebSphere Developer for System z). It also has a deployment utility that helps the administration and deployment of the various artifacts that are needed by IMS SOAP Gateway at run time.

Support for end-to-end integration

To develop and deploy an IMS SOAP Gateway Web service application, a description of the IMS transaction's input and output messages is required to create the artifacts used by the Web service. First, a Web service application developer downloads the COBOL input and output message descriptions from IMS to the RDz development environment. RDz generates application-specific COBOL XML converters to be used in IMS Connect to convert between XML messages and COBOL byte arrays for the IMS application.
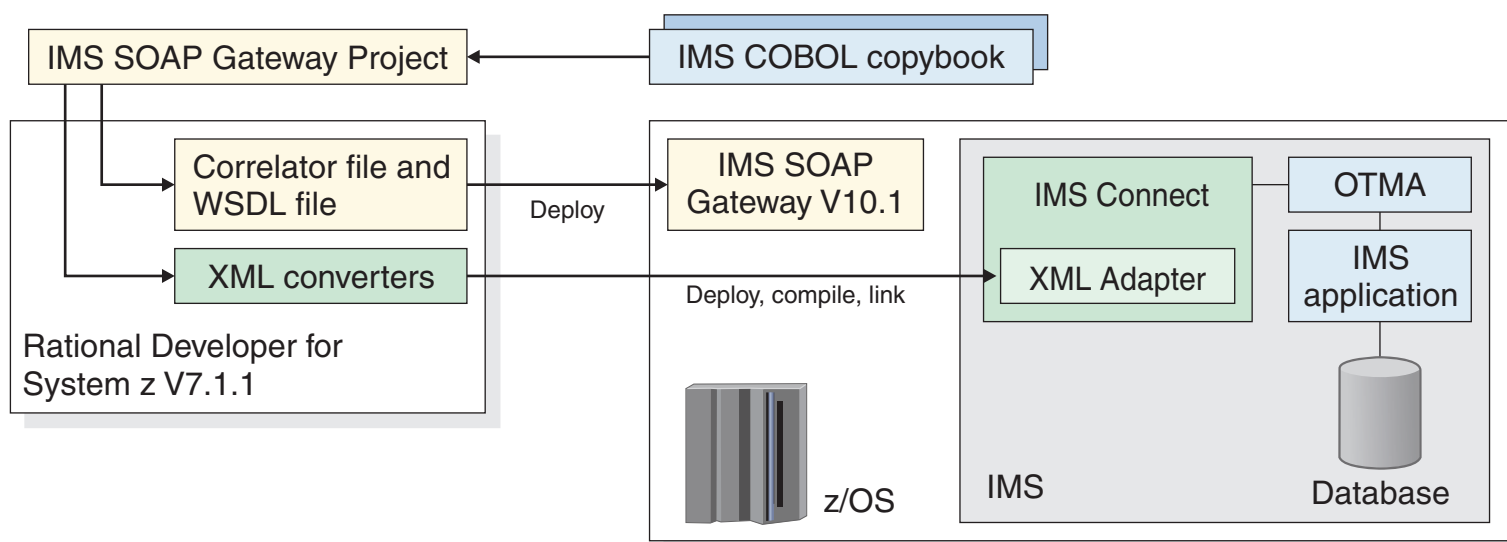

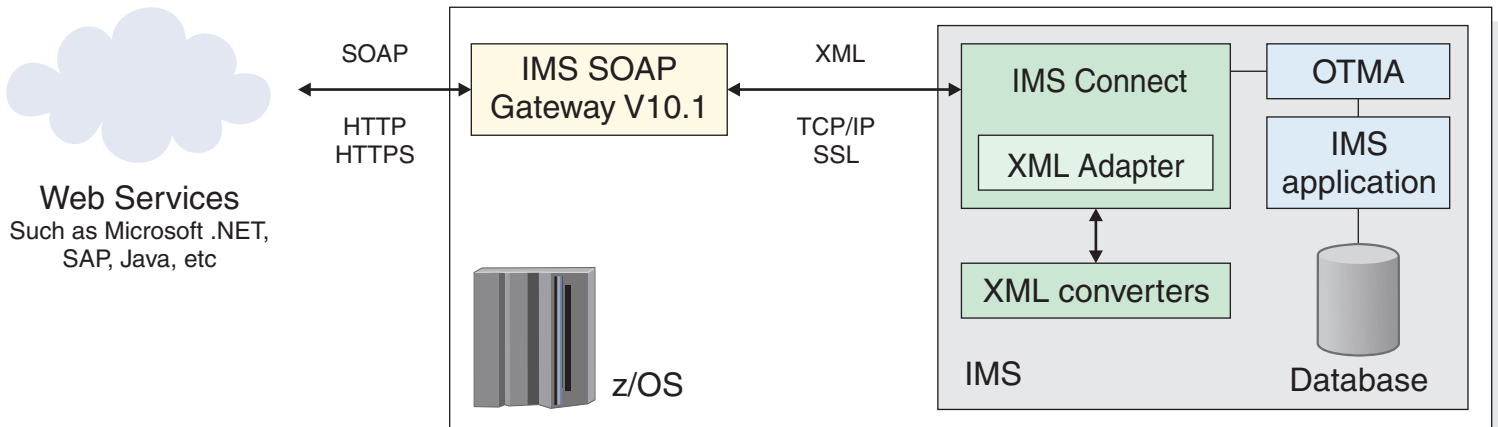*Figure 1. Development and deployment process for IMS SOAP Gateway*

Figure 2. Runtime process for IMS applications as Web service providers

IMS applications as Web service providers

When an IMS application is enabled as a Web service provider, RDz also generates the correlator and Web Services Descriptor Language (WSDL) files to be deployed to IMS SOAP Gateway. The correlator XML file defines the metadata that is used for runtime deployment, and to map an incoming SOAP request to the appropriate IMS transaction. One correlator file is generated for each Web service to be deployed to IMS SOAP Gateway. The WSDL file serves as the Web service interface for the IMS application.

At run time, IMS SOAP Gateway processes the SOAP envelope from the Web service message and passes the XML request on to IMS Connect.

IMS Connect receives the message and, by using its XML Adapter function and the appropriate XML converters based on the target IMS application's input and output message structures, converts the XML data to an EBCDIC byte array. It passes this EBCDIC byte array on to OTMA, which in turn makes the byte array available to the IMS application. The IMS application retrieves the input message, does the processing that is required, and typically returns a reply message intended for the original client. IMS Connect retrieves the reply message from OTMA and constructs the XML tags for the output data based on the message definitions contained in the XML converters. IMS Connect then returns the

XML reply to IMS SOAP Gateway, which wraps the message in a SOAP envelope and returns the response to the originating client application.

If you are not using the XML Adapter function for data transformation, you will need to modify your IMS application so that the client and the IMS application send and receive messages in XML that match the XML schema in the WSDL file.
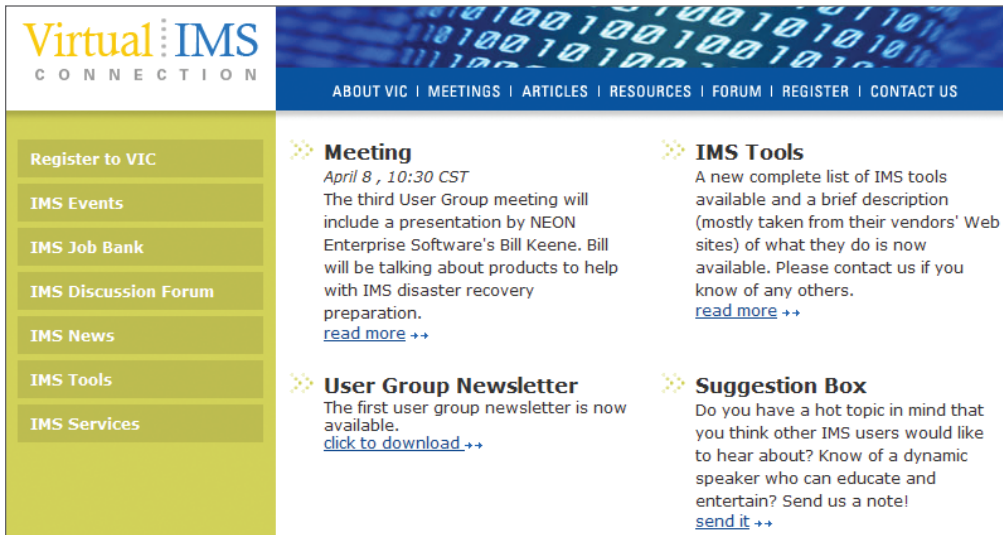
IMS applications as Web service consumers

The latest version of IMS SOAP Gateway, Version 10.1, supports IMS as a Web service consumer by allowing an IMS application to make a callout request to a Web service and asynchronously receive the response. The runtime process requires that you modify the IMS application to specify an ISRT ALTPCB call. This either places the callout request on the OTMA asynchronous hold queue, or sends the request to an IMS Connect destination that is defined in an OTMA destination routing descriptor. IMS SOAP Gateway then retrieves the callout request from the OTMA asynchronous hold queue and invokes the specified Web service. If there is a response from the Web service, it is returned to the IMS application by invoking a new IMS transaction asynchronously. For asynchronous callout, it is up to the callout initiating IMS application to do any sort of correlation of the callout message with its response message.

Summary

IMS SOAP Gateway enables you to get to IMS and extend the reach of your IMS assets by building on industry standards for maximum interoperability. It provides a light-weight server with excellent tooling support for end-to-end integration, from development and deployment to administration. With IMS SOAP Gateway, IMS applications can participate in an SOA environment as either Web Service providers or consumers. **IBM**

Virtual IMS Connection: A new online IMS user community

Trevor Eddolls CEO, iTech-Ed Ltd

Virtual IMS CONNECTION

ABOUT VIC | MEETINGS | ARTICLES | RESOURCES | FORUM | REGISTER | CONTACT US

- Register to VIC
- IMS Events
- IMS Job Bank
- IMS Discussion Forum
- IMS News
- IMS Tools
- IMS Services

Meeting
April 8 , 10:30 CST
The third User Group meeting will include a presentation by NEON Enterprise Software's Bill Keene. Bill will be talking about products to help with IMS disaster recovery preparation.
read more ▸▸

IMS Tools
A new complete list of IMS tools available and a brief description (mostly taken from their vendors' Web sites) of what they do is now available. Please contact us if you know of any others.
read more ▸▸

User Group Newsletter
The first user group newsletter is now available.
click to download ▸▸

Suggestion Box
Do you have a hot topic in mind that you think other IMS users would like to hear about? Know of a dynamic speaker who can educate and entertain? Send us a note!
send it ▸▸

Why launch a new Web site for IMS professionals? Would anyone be interested in hearing people speak about IMS? Those were the kinds of question that people asked me when I launched Virtual IMS Connection last November.

With IMS playing such an important role in so many organizations, you might have thought that IMS user groups were thriving all over the world. But I could not find many at all apart from the Dallas/Fort Worth IMS Users Group. This was the gap that the Virtual IMS Connection Web site was designed to fill. The idea of virtual meetings – requiring nothing more than a computer and telephone – meant that everyone could attend without leaving their offices.

My company, iTech-Ed Ltd, and NEON Enterprise Software were working together on NEON's TITAN Archive and Guardium for Mainframes products when the conversation turned to IMS user groups. NEON has a number of IMS-related products and contributed to the early development and running of the Web site. NEON helped publicize the virtual user group and provided the first two speakers. This support helped ensure that the Virtual IMS Connection Web site and user group got off to a successful start!

The Virtual IMS Connection Web site is full of useful information for IMS professionals. The Tools page lists most of the IMS software tools that are available. There is a newsletter that can be accessed via the Web site. The Articles page lists all of the recent articles about IMS that are available online. The Resource page lists many useful IMS-related resources such as those at IBM – including the newsletter you are currently reading – user communities, magazines, and blogs. There's a job bank where people can advertise IMS jobs and IMS professionals can leave their resumes (CVs). Lastly, there is a forum where people can ask other IMS professionals questions, or provide answers based on their own expertise.

The virtual user group meeting takes place every other month. Kristine Harper gave the first IMS-based presentation in December, and Bill Keene presented in February and will do so again in April. The dates of the meetings and the topics of the presentations can be found on the Web site.

Virtual IMS CONNECTION is an independently operated vendor-neutral site run by and for the IMS user community and can be found at www.virtualims.com. Membership is free and meetings are free! IBM

Trevor Eddolls is CEO of iTech-Ed Ltd (www.itech-ed.com), a mainframe consultancy and writing company. Read his blog each week at mainframeupdate. blogspot.com.

Virtual IMS CONNECTION

As QPP "testers" we identified a number of problems that were resolved in a timely way, including:

- A problem with external software
- An 0C4 in DFSYFD00 in the control region, which was attributed to BMC
- An AC6 in the control region with a subsequent user abend 2480 that was attributed to an incorrect DF-SMDA definition and corrected
- Minor small problems

Overall, we feel that IMS 10 is a good and stable version. The support we received during the QPP itself was, in a word, "perfect." The IMS documentation team has created a new structure for the IMS information. The structure is OK, but will require some time to find one's way. Problems that were encountered within production systems were solved promptly. Finally, we have found that the CPU usage differential between IMS 9 and IMS 10 is non-existent. By the time we reconvened at IBM Silicon Valley Lab in January of 2008 for the QPP exit review, all of our systems were migrated to IMS 10! IBM

IMS Profiles

IMS Advanced Technical Support Team

In this edition, we'd like to profile a team that has over 200 years of collective IMS experience, and whose goal can be summed up in six words: **Make our customers successful with IMS**.

As we ship IMS Version 10, we felt it would be appropriate to profile the dedicated members of the IMS Advanced Technical Support (ATS) team!

The ATS team provides technical sales support for IMS in the Americas, but their influence reaches far beyond that:

- The ATS team presents workshops and sessions at the Information On Demand conference, at SHARE, and at IDUG. If there is a conference in the Americas and it includes IMS, they will be there!
- Perhaps you have worked with them personally at your site, teaming together to develop solutions that resolve your business problems.
- The ATS team literally takes their show on the road, conducting a variety of seminars and roadshows (you can see the schedule at www.ibm.com/ims). They are currently on the road with IMS 10 Enhancements and Migration Planning.
- White papers and Redbooks® – do you want to learn more about HALDBs, IMS Connectivity, Disaster Recovery, performance and tuning, Shared Queues, and more? The ATS team regularly publishes white papers and authors Redbooks in support of IMS.
- In between all of those activities, the ATS team develops and teaches classes about IMS, either over the Web or at your location! Their current courses can be seen at www.ibm.com/software/data/ims/education.html.

Because IMS customers use other IBM products, the IMS ATS team maintains close relationships with other ATS teams that support IBM hardware and software solutions such as CICS®, DB2, WebSphere, and Tivoli®. Partnering together, ATS teams develop recommendations and guidance on how you can use IMS with other products. This collaboration is especially important in today's complex

Dallas Systems Center? That might be where ATS originated, but today's ATS team is a bit more geographically dispersed. Left to right:

Angie Greenhaw - Silicon Valley, California
Online change, Dynamic Resource Definition, and security
Nancy Stein - Cincinnati, Ohio
Data Sharing, Shared Queues, DB Control, and HALDB
Suzie Wendler - Dallas, Texas
Transaction Manager, IMS Connect, SOA, Java. and security
Glenn Galler - Ann Arbor, Michigan
Disaster Recovery
Ken Blackman - Silicon Valley, California
IMS Connect, APPC,OTMA, ODBA, RRS,IMS Integration Suite, SOA, and Java
Diane Goff - Seattle, Washington
Common Service Layer, Shared Queues, and Fast Path
Hayden Maxwell - Miami, Florida
Helping his team help IMS customers
Rich Lewis - Dallas, Texas
Database, data sharing, HALDB, Fast Path, Performance, Availability, and DBRC

multi-platform environments supporting On Demand and SOA. The IMS ATS team also partners closely with IMS Development at the Silicon Valley Lab, advising IMS Development on customer needs and the usability of potential enhancements to IMS. ATS also reviews the plans for future releases. Together, IMS Development and the ATS team support our customer partners in the IMS Quality Partnership Program. The IMS ATS team teaches the new releases to QPP customers before they implement them in them in their installations.

The ATS team is very focused on their goal of helping IMS customers succeed; what makes it easy, they confess, are the strong relationships that they have built with their customers. Many of these relationships stretch back for years! If you have questions about the ATS team or want to learn how you can benefit from their services, send an email to Don Streicher, ibmdds@us.ibm.com.

IMS at IBM Information On Demand 2008 in Las Vegas

Amiet Goldman IMS Marketing Manager

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- Executive Meeting Center/Client Briefings
- Client Reference Lounge
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- Business Partner Development Day
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Provide valuable IMS feedback

David Tu IMS User Experience

Dear valued IMS customers,

On behalf of IMS User Experience, I would like to thank you for making IMS your trusted platform. We are continuously enhancing IMS to provide more business value to you, from availability to consumability—making software products easier to use. As such, I would like to invite you to fill out the Consumability Software Experience Survey on behalf of IMS. Your feedback will help us to identify which areas of consumability we should emphasize.

You can access the survey here: www-950.ibm.com/survey/oid/wsb.dll/studies/consumabilitywebform.htm?renderlang=eng&icode=

We estimate that you will be able to complete it in 30 minutes. On the first page, you do not need to enter any optional invitation code. On the next page, identify the brand as Other and specify IMS in the box provided.

Thank you for your feedback! IBM

IMS user groups

Maria Querales IMS Test

IMS user groups: coming soon to a city near you!

Initial meetings will be scheduled in the following cities:

- Los Angeles
- Detroit
- Toronto
- Phoenix
- Columbus

Dates to be announced. For more information, contact Maria Querales at querales@us.ibm.com.

IMS
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IMS Impact 2008 Conference
ibm.com/software/websphere/events/impact2008/

IDUG North America 2008 Conference
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aspx?alias=conferences.idug.org/na

Guide Share Europe - Denmark 2008
www.gse-nordic.org/Working%20Groups/GNRC/
Conferences/2008/

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share.org/events/SanJose/index.cfm

IMS Information Management Tools and IMS for z/OS V10.1 Compatibility
ibm.com/support/docview.wss?rs=434&context=SSZ
JXP&uid=swg21249278

IBM Consumability Software Experience Survey
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Editorial
Sandy Sherrill y Maria Querales

In this edition of the award-winning IMS newsletter, we are very excited to share with you the many activities that have taken place and will take place to support the release of IMS 10! Since it became generally available in October 2007, we have devoted our energies to sharing the good news with you, our customers. Some of you we spent time with at our lab in San Jose for the IMS Quality Partnership Program (QPP). Others we met up with at Share, the Information on Demand (IOD) conference, Guide Share Europe (GSE) and even in your hometowns as we brought our very popular SOA Workshop directly to you! This year looks to be no different. We are inviting Share attendees to the home of IMS in August. You've also asked us for more SOA workshops, which we will conduct in locations in the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia. We are also planning to establish new IMS User Groups in Columbus, Detroit, Los Angeles, Phoenix, and Toronto! A new online IMS community is under way as well, details of which are on page 8. The variety of activities is truly exciting, mostly because we are developing them based on your interests. We want to hear more! Do you want to see an SOA seminar in your city? Do you want help establishing an IMS User Group in your city? Share your particular IMS experience with us and become one of our customer references? Let us know! Send your IMS wish list to us at imsmkt@us.ibm.com!

En esta edición de la revista de IMS, estamos muy felices de compartir con ustedes las diferentes actividades que han ocurrido y ocurrirán para apoyar el nuevo IMS 10! Desde Octubre 2007, fecha desde la cual IMS 10 ha estado universalmente disponible, hemos dedicado todas nuestras energías en compartir la buena nueva con ustedes, nuestros clientes. Algunos de ustedes estuvieron en nuestro laboratorio para el "IMS Quality Partnership Program" o QPP. A otros los hemos visto en SHARE, la Information on Demand (IOD) conferencia, Guide Share Europe (GSE) e incluso es sus ciudades al traer nuestros populares SOA talleres directamente a ustedes! Este año no va a ser diferente. Invitaremos a los participantes de SHARE al hogar de IMS en Agosto. Ustedes también han pedido mas talleres de SOA, por esta razón tendremos talleres en lugares como Los Estados Unidos, Canada, Europa y Australia. También estamos planeando establecer nuevos Grupos de Usuarios en Columbus, Detroit, Los Ángeles, Phoenix, y Toronto! Una nueva comunidad virtual de IMS esta en camino también, detalles en pagina 8. Todas estas actividades son muy satisfactorias especialmente porque lo hacemos basados en su interés. Queremos oír mas! Quieren un SOA seminario en tu ciudad? Quieres establecer un grupo de usuarios de IMS? Compartir tu experiencia con IMS con nosotros? Escríbenos! Envíanos tus ideas a imsmkt@us.ibm.com!