Information management software
White paper

DB2 Information Management Software

IBM Informix portfolio: executive overview.

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Introduction

Three years after the $1 billion acquisition of Informix® Corporation, IBM's commitment to customers of Informix and the U2 product family remains stronger than ever. IBM continues to incorporate Informix products into its core portfolio of software brands and to enhance Informix solutions as part of our e-business on demand™ strategy. Long-term product roadmaps underscore the dedication to these important solutions.

Today, most customers agree that IBM has lived up to the promises we made in July, 2001. According to a recent study by industry analyst Bloor Research, "All evidence suggests the overwhelming majority of Informix users are happy and have every intention of staying with the product for the foreseeable future." (For the full report, go to **ibm.com**/software/data/informix/pubs/pdfs/ids-bloor-91903.pdf.)

Moving forward, IBM will continue to help Informix customers leverage their existing investments and provide the support they need to grow their businesses. For example, efforts are underway to further increase the interoperability between Informix products and IBM middleware solutions. This will allow Informix customers to create resilient on demand operating environments capable of sensing and responding to changing market conditions.

This paper presents a brief synopsis of the plans for each of the major Informix and U2 product lines.

IBM Informix Dynamic Server

IBM Informix Dynamic Server (IDS) is the flagship product of the Informix family, and IBM has continued the same development pace as Informix had prior to the acquisition. The latest release, IDS Version 9.4, is the fastest, most available, most scalable IDS ever produced and has been very successful in the market. IDS Version 9.50 is currently in beta and there are no end-of-life plans for the IDS 9 product line at this time.

As part of its commitment to IDS, IBM has enabled integration between Version 9.4 and WebSphere®, DB2® and Tivoli® software from IBM. This allows Informix customers to leverage a wide range of IBM solutions to build resilient e-business on demand operating environments that can handle peaks in customer usage without any degradation in performance.

The IBM Informix and WebSphere Bundles advance e-business on demand in global Informix environments. The powerful combination of IDS and WebSphere products provide high performance, reliability, availability and a cost-effective trade-up from IDS Version 7 to IDS Version 9.4 and WebSphere together.

IBM Informix 4GL

IBM Informix 4GL Version 7.32 (4GL) is a rapid application development tool that allows users to take full advantage of IDS V9.4. Many Informix applications are built using 4GL. 4GL 7.32 offers tight integration with IDS V9.4 and supports many new features including the critical IDS V9.4 long ID feature, which allows users to handle modern identifier names up to 128 characters in length. In addition, the new Dynamic Arrays feature of 4GL 7.32 enables highly efficient memory utilization.

IBM recently announced the first release of the modern Informix 4GL solution with the availability of IBM WebSphere Studio Application Developer and IBM WebSphere Studio Site Developer Version 5.1.2. The Informix 4GL - WebSphere Studio integration represents IBM's strategic Informix 4GL modernization strategy. WebSphere Studio 5.1.2 products include important Informix 4GL constructs in a new implementation of IBM's Enterprise Generation Language (EGL), a proven, high-level 4GL language that Informix 4GL developers, unfamiliar with Java™, can use to quickly build data-driven Web applications and business logic. Informix 4GL developers can write and debug their applications in EGL and WebSphere Studio generates the Java code for them. Used in conjunction with JavaServer Faces (JSF), EGL allows Informix 4GL developers to build dynamic Web applications without having to learn the Java language. This new capability opens up Java development to a new class of Informix 4GL developers that can apply their business domain expertise and use their skills as procedural developers to quickly build dynamic Web applications with IBM databases (both Informix and DB2).

The integration of the remaining Informix 4GL constructs will be complete in the WebSphere Studio 6.0 time-frame in Q4 2004. At that time, 4GL-style character user interface functionality, as well as a conversion utility to help achieve significant conversion from Informix 4GL to WebSphere Studio EGL will be made available. Conversion will allow field-tested Informix 4GL business logic to be used in the next generation of EGL applications.

IBM Informix Client Software Developer's Kit

The IBM Informix Client Software Developer's Kit (CSDK) provides broad language support for constructing applications that communicate with all Informix databases through structured query language (SQL). In addition, the latest release, Version 2.80, includes Unicode enhancements in the Open Database Connectivity (ODBC) and Object Linking and Embedding Database (OLE DB) drivers, as well as support for new features in IDS V9.4. This CSDK is available for a wide variety of application development languages and environments, including C, C++, Java and Microsoft .NET. IBM is committed to supporting the leading application development environments and our Microsoft .Net support is very important for developers working with Microsoft development tools. Each release of CSDK will enhance our .Net support.

Compatibility with DB2

IBM remains committed to integrating key relational database technologies into future versions of both DB2 Universal Database™ and IDS. DB2 Universal Database benefits from Informix technology such as performance enhancements and high availability data replication. IDS has benefited from the Unicode technology in DB2, which was incorporated into IDS V9.4, and autonomic enhancements, which will be seen in IDS V9.5. Microsoft .Net support was added into both products simultaneously.

Over the years, IBM has continued focusing on increasing Informix compatibility with DB2 Universal Database so that our data management customer base will have a cohesive, market leading relational database family upon which to build their businesses. In addition to Informix compatibility, IBM is also making a substantial investment in the areas of information integration, XML, Web services and autonomic computing.

IBM Informix Standard Engine (SE)

IBM Informix SE is valued by the IBM Business Partner community for its ease-of-use and silent install, and is embedded in thousands of partner applications throughout the world. This traditional database server has earned a reputation for solid reliability, simplicity and ease-of-use. IBM will continue to offer support for SE to existing customers and IBM Business Partners. IBM plans to do this by not disturbing the fundamental stability that makes SE so attractive, and will be primarily focused on porting SE to new and updated operating systems as they become available.

IBM Informix OnLine Server

IBM Informix OnLine Server continues to be a popular choice for serving the SQL database needs of small to medium-sized businesses with fewer than 100 simultaneous users. Version 5.20, OnLine Extended Edition, includes enhancements that enable the use of larger disks and built-in support for distributed database access. It also supports the latest Informix 4GL versions. Although no further enhancement releases are planned at this time, IBM will continue to support Informix OnLine Server for many years to come.

IBM C-ISAM

IBM C-ISAM (indexed sequential access method), a C-language library of data-access application programming interfaces (APIs), provides the underlying software infrastructure for thousands of applications worldwide. It served as the original reference for the X-Open standard and continues to be used by developers who need a robust record management library. IBM will support the latest versions of C-ISAM's current platforms for many more years, but will not be issuing new releases.

In addition, C-ISAM also includes the DataBlade™ module, a library of C-language functions that efficiently manages ISAM files. It was developed specifically to help customers and software vendors who are interested in adding RDBMS features to their C-ISAM environment or are working toward migrating C-ISAM applications to a relational database management system (RDBMS) environment.

IBM Informix U2 products

The core components in the U2 product family, IBM UniData® and IBM UniVerse®, provide high performance, scalable information management environments for embedding in vertical applications. These products are key components of IBM's extended-relational database management system (DBMS) strategy, and IBM will continue to support them.

IBM UniVerse

IBM UniVerse supports both direct record I/O languages as well as standard SQL, and provides interfaces for Microsoft ActiveX, ODBC, OLE DB, JDBC and Java technology. IBM intends to offer enhancements and support UniVerse customers and partners. The latest version, UniVerse Version 10.1, includes enhanced support for secure sockets layer (SSL) technology and other extended security options, and also offers enterprise application integration options through IBM WebSphere MQ.

IBM UniData

IBM UniData is an extended-relational, ODBC-compliant database that supports repeating groups, hierarchies and arrays. UniData offers both best-of-breed native interfaces, with ActiveX, Java technology and C interfaces, as well as industry-standard interfaces, such as ODBC, OLE DB and HTTP. IBM intends to offer ongoing enhancements and support to UniData customers and partners. In fact, IBM is already evaluating improvements for new versions of UniData, such as XML compatibility, additional support for Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP), and tightly bound XML and SQL-based interfaces to expand data storage options to DB2 and other relational databases.

IBM U2 and DB2

The unique characteristics of UniVerse and UniData do not lend themselves to native integration into DB2. To best leverage the combination of U2 and DB2, the U2 databases are evolving to support tightly bound XML- and SQL-based interfaces to enable U2 applications to access, store and retrieve data directly from DB2.

IBM Red Brick Warehouse Server

IBM Red Brick™ Warehouse Server continues to serve the needs of the most demanding data warehouses and data marts. Red Brick Warehouse Server Version 6.30, was released in April 2004 and includes major performance improvements to STARjoin, TARGETjoin and STARindex functionality. It also includes usability improvements such as additional SQL OLAP functions and expression support. In addition, this release introduces support for using three gigabytes of address space for the Microsoft® Windows® platform to improve scalability and performance. It also includes platform support for Hewlett-Packard's HP-UX 11i operating system running on the Intel 64-bit Itanium platform and support for Microsoft Windows Server 2003 (32-bit platform).

IBM Informix Extended Parallel Server

Many of the world's largest financial institutions, travel service providers and retailers continue to run their critical enterprise data warehouses on IBM Informix Extended Parallel Server (XPS). Version 8.40 includes significant enhancements in performance and distributed database support. The next release, XPS Version 8.50, is in development and is scheduled for release in late 2004. It will contain flexible backup/restore options to improve availability and table recovery, and ease-of-use features such as dynamic logs.

ISV support for the IBM Informix product line

SAP

IBM will continue to provide investment protection and support for customers who are powering their SAP solutions with IDS. SAP, in turn, will include IDS support for all of its new enhancements. However, mySAP applications or enhancements using the Java database API as well as the Unicode option for mySAP applications will not be ported to IDS. SAP has recently finished the IDS 9.40 certification and plans to certify SAP NetWeaver '05 with IDS 9.50 for 2005. The standard five-year maintenance and support policy for all SAP products protects SAP/Informix customers through at least 2009.

PeopleSoft

Customers can continue to rely on the existing Informix product offerings to support their PeopleSoft implementations. And PeopleSoft has formally committed to support IDS through PeopleSoft Version 8.x for the Human Capital Management, Human Resources Management, Financial Management Solutions, Enterprise Service Automation, Supply Chain Management and Distribution product suites.

Baan
Baan and IBM are both committed to supporting their joint solution, and Informix customers can continue to rely on the existing certified Informix and Baan product lines. IDS V9.4 certification with iBaan ERP 5.0c is nearing completion.

Other ISVs
The list of ISVs with applications that operate on Informix database servers is extensive. Most of these ISVs have seen continued strong demand for their applications on Informix and have expressed satisfaction with IBM's long-term commitment and compatibility plan for Informix customers.

Maximizing system availability

Customer support
A variety of support options are available to help Informix customers maximize systems availability and optimize staff productivity. Our knowledgeable Informix support engineers will continue to assist Informix users with all of their IT needs, providing telephone and Web support 24x7. IBM Passport Advantage maintenance services also are available. For customers in complex, cutting-edge environments with support needs reaching beyond basic maintenance, IBM also offers premier services programs to improve systems availability and staff productivity.

Education and professional services for customers and developers
Our professional services and education teams will continue to provide offerings across both the Informix and DB2 product lines. We have extended the reach of these offerings via strong partnerships with IBM Global Services and the recently announced Education Centers for IBM Software. The IBM Information Management services and education team — over 500-strong worldwide — is available around the clock, providing customers and partners with access to the skills they need to effectively leverage Informix and DB2 solutions.

Conclusion

Informix customers and partners around the world continue to appreciate IBM's commitment to enhancing and maintaining Informix technology as well as the continued integration with other IBM software products. Combined with the benefits of having a single software infrastructure vendor, this will allow Informix customers to build the best e-business on demand infrastructure available at the lowest total cost of ownership.

Moving forward, IBM invites Informix users to visit the following Web sites for the latest information regarding Informix and U2 products, education, services and IBM Business Partner offerings — including detailed versions of the Informix and U2 product roadmaps.

- **ibm.com**/informix
- **ibm.com**/software/data/u2

Informix products still solve business problems that no other technology family can. Purchasing Informix solutions in 2004 is a sound business decision that will continue to provide strong benefits for years to come.

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Silicon Valley Laboratory
555 Bailey Avenue
San Jose, CA 95141
U.S.A.

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