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Contents

Editorial

CICS Transaction Server V4.2

As the Development Director for the CICS Family of products, it gives me great pride to tell you that, after two years in development, my team is once again about to deliver another release of CICS Transaction Server for z/OS. 42 years on from when CICS started, CICS TS V4.2, announced today, will be packed full of technical innovation to enable your enterprise to reap real business value. Major enhancements in Events, Java, and Connectivity will help you to do more with CICS, and improvements to Management and Scalability will simplify and improve the performance of your CICS environment.

I believe that there is something for every customer and stakeholder in this release of CICS TS and I encourage you to read the short piece below and the announcement letter to learn how CICS TS V4.2 can help you to help your business. Take a look at our CICS website, YouTube channels, and Facebook pages, which will be featuring more information, demos, and videos about CICS TS V4.2 over the next few weeks. Please also take the opportunity to register for the open beta, which will give you an opportunity to try out some of the new technology for yourself, free of charge.

In the light of change in the price of CICS V3, announced in January, its price is now pretty close to the price of V4, so whether you are using or were planning to upgrade to V3, there's no reason why you can't move forward and exploit the capabilities we've produced in 4.2, at roughly the same cost as if you would pay for V3. However, if you do wish to stay with V3, we said, in the same announcement, that V3.1 and V3.2 would both remain in service until at least September 2013.

WebSphere eXtended Transaction Runtime V1.0

While CICS TS V4.2 is strengthening its Java environment on z/OS, WebSphere Application Server V8, via WebSphere eXtended Transaction Runtime V1.0, also announced today, offers customers who have invested much time and effort in the development of business logic in CICS style COBOL applications the ability to unlock the value of those applications and extend them using Java EE. By establishing WXTR as a core component of an enterprise IT architecture, in conjunction with WebSphere Application Server and AIX, you can have a highly responsive, tightly integrated, composite application serving infrastructure for modern COBOL and Java workloads.

WXTR lets you effectively optimize and modernize your COBOL assets while capitalizing on enterprise-wide skills to consolidate IT infrastructure around WebSphere Application Server as the core hosting server in a distributed environment. In a statement of direction (see the announcement letter), we state our intent to deliver our IBM Migration Aid for Tuxedo, currently available with TXSeries on WXTR, which will enable you to integrate and modernize an even wider range of applications.

Dave Andrews, CICS Director

Product highlights

Announcement: CICS Transaction Server for z/OS V4.2

I'm really excited to be able to tell you that today, CICS Transaction Server for z/OS V4.2 is announced, with planned general availability of June 24, 2011. The new version builds upon the new and enhanced capabilities delivered in Version 4.1, to enable customers to compete in the marketplace, comply with standards and regulations, and control their IT processes.

CICS TS V4.2 delivers technical innovation and significant business value in the following five main focus areas:

- **Event** processing is extended with new system events that give you real-time feedback of potential problems, and new life-cycle support to make events easier to manage

- **Java** improvements include a new 64bit multi-threaded JVM server environment built on the OSGi model for higher scalability and easier application management, and a new Axis2-based Java web services stack enabling zAAP offload

- **Connectivity** using IPIC is extended to cover function shipping of File Control, Temporary Storage, and Transient Data requests to take you a step closer to an IP-only environment, and HTTP improvements can help to improve performance

- **Management** improvements include a new transaction tracking capability to speed problem determination, new CICSPlex SM workload management algorithms to give more control over workload distribution, new support for password phrases up to 100 characters, along with many CICS Explorer enhancements

- **Scalability** of CICS is enhanced with new threadsafe support for IMS-DB and function shipping mirrors when using IPIC, plus new 64-bit exploitation by Trace and Temporary Storage, helping to improve throughput and performance

This release also delivers a series of architectural enhancements to enable CICS system and application programs to use and exploit System z 64-bit architecture, where customers could benefit. In addition, the new release satisfies in excess of fifty customer and user group enhancement requests. The result is a powerful new release with a huge amount of value for all stakeholders - delivering a smarter transaction processing experience for CICS users and their customers in turn.

A beta version of CICS TS V4.2 is available free of charge from today, subject to acceptance by users of associated licensing and other terms and conditions. The beta can be used until July 31, 2011. For more information, visit : http://www.ibm.com/software/htp/cics/tserver/v42/openbeta

IBM CICS Tools and Problem Determination Tools that will support CICS TS 4.2 (at June GA):

- Application Performance Analyzer for z/OS, V11.1 with the PTF for APAR PM34080

- CICS BAC V1.1.1, PTFs for APAR PK84665 and APAR PM34067

- CICS CM V2.1, PTF for APAR PM32874

- CICS DA V1.1, PTF for APAR PM34068

- CICS IA V3.1, PTF for APAR PM34054

- CICS PA V3.2, PTF for APAR PM30692

- CICS OTTO V1.2, PTF for APAR PK89259

- CICS VR V4.2 and CICS VR V4.3, PTF for APAR PM34799

- Debug Tool for z/OS, V11.1

- File Manager for z/OS, V11.1

You can find more information about CICS TS V4.2 using these links:

Announcement Letter – http://www.ibm.com/common/ssi/cgi-bin/ssialias?infotype=an&subtype=ca&supplier=897&appname=IBMLinkRedirect&letternum=ENUS211-080

Web page - http://ibm.com/cics/tserver/v42

Announcement: WebSphere eXtended Transaction Runtime V1.0

In another announcement today, WebSphere eXtended Transaction Runtime V1.0 (WXTR) delivers a tightly integrated environment for hosting modern COBOL applications using CICS transactional services within IBM WebSphere Application Server. This new offering provides a path forward for customers with COBOL business applications on distributed platforms to extend their applications into a Java Enterprise Edition (Java EE) environment and realize the benefits of a tightly integrated, managed environment.

WXTR provides an increased deployment choice for customers wishing to progressively modernize their COBOL, while standardizing infrastructure around WebSphere Application Server. This approach complements IBM's premier offering for modern application hosting on z/OS through products such as CICS Transaction Server (CICS TS) V4 and WebSphere Application Server for z/OS, with WXTR providing a subset of capabilities to those found on System z.

General availability is planned for June 17, 2011.

You can find more information about WebSphere eXtended Transaction Runtime V1.0 using these links:

Announcement Letter http://www.ibm.com/common/ssi/cgi-
bin/ssialias?infotype=an&subtype=ca&supplier=897&appname=IBMLinkRedirect&letternum=ENUS211-144

Web page http://www-01.ibm.com/software/webservers/appserv/extended-transaction-
runtime/index.html

Available: File Manager Plug-in for Eclipse V11 - SupportPac CN0M

The File Manager Plug-in for Eclipse V11, when integrated with File Manager
for z/OS and CICS Explorer, provides a set of tools for manipulating and
browsing data stored in various z/OS resources including data sets, UNIX
System Services files, and IBM WebSphere MQ queues.

The File Manager GUI Plug-in is available now as a fully-supported, Cat 3,
SupportPac - CN0M at:
http://www.ibm.com/support/docview.wss?rs=1083&uid=swg24029358

The plug-in for File Manager complements the plug-ins shipped in 2010 for
Debug Tool, Application Performance Analyzer, and Fault Analyzer. For more
details on all of the PD Tools plug-ins for CICS Explorer, visit: http://www-
01.ibm.com/software/awdtools/deployment/pdtplugins/.

Events

GSE Working group CICS/TS - May 4th - 6th, Dortmund, Germany

The focus of the working group is to exchange CICS experience with colleagues. The active participants of the working group meet twice a year, for numerous presentations by IBM and other vendors on CICS TS and discussions of future trends. Manufacturer's lectures are supplemented by installation-reports and reviews of user installations.

Hear about new CICS TS V4.2 capability as well as a new presentation "20 ways to reduce your costs on the mainframe" from Innes Read.

For more details about this event taking place visit: http://tinyurl.com/gsedecics59

z Technical Summit (including a CICS track) — North American cities

The series of one day System z Technical Events that we ran in North America in the first quarter of 2011 proved to be so successful that we are running a couple more in the second quarter. They feature a full track with six CICS sessions, so if you live nearby, please take the opportunity to attend. We will update the presentations to reflect the new content and value in CICS TS V4.2, so these sessions will give you an early opportunity to learn more about this important new release.

The planned dates and cities for the 2nd quarter are (subject to change):

- Chicago, IL — May 25, 2011

- Columbus, OH — June 8, 2011

Further details and registration is available here: http://www-01.ibm.com/software/os/systemz/summit/index.html

IBM CICS Transaction Server News Tour 2011 — May/June - Germany

In order to bring our German customers up to date, we will be running our CICS News Tour 2011 in six German cities in late May / early June. Spend a day with us to hear exciting news and see live demonstrations featuring the latest CICS TS V4.2 release, with topics on events, Java support, connectivity, management, scalability, and the tools that support the latest version.

Key dates and locations for your diary are: May 30 Münster, May 31 Hamburg, June 1 Düsseldorf, June 7 Frankfurt/Main, June 8 München, June 9 Ehningen.

Further details and registration can be found here: http://www-05.ibm.com/de/events/cics/index.html

Nordic Guide June 7th - 9th – Stockholm, Sweden

The GSE Nordic Region Working Groups are groups of information technology specialists, focusing on IBM software, who meet regularly. The main objective of the groups is to give their members an opportunity to meet, to exchange ideas and experiences, to deepen their knowledge and to broaden their perspective, and in co-operation with IBM to participate in influencing the future of data processing in general and particularly in the IBM software areas covered by the groups.

Four of these groups are cooperating to arrange the yearly Region Conference: The CICS, DB2, IMS, and Mainframe Infrastructure Groups.

http://www.gse-nordic.org/Working%20Groups/GNRC/Conferences/2011/

Innovate 5th June

Innovate 2011 is the event that recognizes, celebrates and enables software and systems innovation. It is the conference totally focused on helping you dramatically improve software economics. And more than ever, Innovate 2011 is built around your needs and interests.

Come and see CICS TS V4.2 and the latest CICS Tools at the CICS booth in the Expo and learn how to help simplify your CICS development process.

To learn more about and register for Innovate, visit:

http://www-01.ibm.com/software/rational/innovate/

CICS Resources

Look out for new CICS TS V4.2 demos, videos and podcasts on our YouTube channels and CICS websites in the coming weeks.

Webcasts

Implementing Security with IBM Session Manager for z/OS

Peter Siddell - the Hursley lab technical specialist for Session Manager - will be presenting a webcast in the WebSphere Technical Exchange series on. This presentation looks at the methods for implementing security with a session manager product, including Certificate Express Logon, Pass Tickets and Pass Phrases and what is required to support them.

This webcast is of particular relevance, given the announcement of passphrase support in CICS TS V4.2, so if you are interested in security for CICS, listen to the replay, available here:
http://www-01.ibm.com/support/docview.wss?uid=swg27020899

Redbooks

Introduction to CICS Dynamic Scripting

In this IBM Redbooks® publication, we introduce the Dynamic Scripting Feature Pack, show how to install and customize it, and provide examples for using it.

The Dynamic Scripting Feature Pack is currently only available for use with CICS TS V4.1, but, according to the Statement of Direction in today's announcement letter, IBM intends in the future to deliver a Dynamic Scripting Feature Pack for use with CICS TS V4.2.

http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/abstracts/SG247924.html?Open

Business Partner news

Solution: Rocket Software's LegaSuite supports CICS TS V4.2

Rocket Software has been an active participant in the CICS 4.2 beta program. Their LegaSuite technology is used by financial, utility, retail, insurance, and public sector customers to leverage and extend their CICS applications with BPM and SOA initiatives.

With the release of CICS TS 4.2, LegaSuite will offer a unique Java-based CICS service flow runtime engine that offloads SOA processing to an IBM System z Application Assist Processor (zAAP). This new Java-based runtime engine in CICS leverages the latest multithreaded 64-bit JVM server in CICS TS 4.2 and can bring significant savings for SOA deployments and reduce the cost of ownership of an SOA infrastructure. And with the enhanced events functionality in combination with the LegaSuite Insight BI module, CICS TS 4.2 customers can identify significant business and system events and act upon those events in a timely fashion.

Solution Highlight: LegaSuite is a rapid and non-invasive way to create SOA interfaces from existing CICS applications.
http://www.rocketsoftware.com/seagull/products/integration

Case Study: Learn how EVERTEC, a leading provider of transaction and financial application processing, uses LegaSuite to automate development of web services from CICS banking applications.
http://www.rocketsoftware.com/seagull/resources/case-studies/evertec.pdf

Note: All statements and claims in this section represent the views of the named business partners and should not be viewed as validation or recommendation by IBM. Business partners may submit copy, with direct relevance to CICS, for publication in future CICS eNewsLetters by emailing the editor at Knutson@uk.ibm.com.

Customer Corner

This section of CICS eNews is dedicated to contributions from CICS customers, with the third in a series of articles written by Harry Van Irsel, IT Architect at Rabobank in Holland. If you would like to contribute an article to describe the use of CICS in your enterprise, please write in the first instance to the editor at Knutson@uk.ibm.com. Opinions expressed in this section are those of the author, and may not reflect those of IBM or the editor.

"My future runs on system Z" - Part 1 - Yammer

This article isn't really an article but started as a discussion on Yammer named "My future runs on system Z". Yammer is a simple real-time communication tool for organizations used also by the Rabobank (for more information see http://www.yammer.com).

This discussion resulted in a lot of positive reactions which contained no sentimental feelings about "the good old days", but very well motivated reasons to put the mainframe back in the spotlights again. In fact moving away from the mainframe could be the biggest mistake companies can make in the near future when it comes to reducing costs, improving efficiency and all the other things CEO's have nightmares about .

This discussion woke me up. There are still people left like me in our organization. I suddenly don't feel myself alone anymore and that's a great feeling that gets you motivated again! So it looks like a good idea to start a series of articles dedicated to the possibilities of the system Z environment. Since the Yammer discussion was the cause of all this it was translated into English and published here as part of a series of articles with "My future runs on system Z" as their main title.

What follows is the main part of the discussion. For privacy reasons all the names of the participants in the discussion are replaced by "participant".

Harry van Irsel: "My future runs on system z". With its automated, scalable and highly virtualized dynamic infrastructure, System z (or the IBM mainframe) is the ideal platform for cloud computing. IBM delivers free BPM tooling in the public cloud and Cognos in the analytical cloud.

Advanced support for Web 2.0 technology makes it easy to generate ATOM feeds and business events and to develop mashups. All of this in every environment and used program language: Cobol, Java, C, Assembler, PHP, PL1 … it doesn't matter on System z.

Old and new technologies running side-by-side. Linux on System z makes it possible to run hundreds of virtual servers in 1 box with support for DB2 and Oracle.

System z will continue to reduce costs and improve flexibility, security, compliance and access to information.

Service reuse, Master Data Management, Business Rules Externalization, no problem.

The extension of System z with Blade servers delivers a broad support of processor technologies and operating systems whih makes it possible to run a great diversity of workloads in just one architecture.

So: My future runs on system z, also the future of the Rabobank?

Participant: It is likely that because our past ran on z/OS, so will our future. ;-)

Harry van Irsel: Probably has something to do with it, but I always try to stay objective and even then the maturity of System z is great! From an old, dusty, dinosaur, the evolution of System z to a modern, fresh and not to ignore platform if you want to do serious business is impressive.

Participant: Just to be ahead of a lot op people: Can you connect an iPhone to System z? :-)

Harry van Irsel: Surface events in a secure way to mobile devices, Mobile application showing Atom feeds. Smartphone and mainframe, via web browser and client application. Only thing with iPhone apps: you will have to go via the Apple store....

Participant: Noticable to me is that it is often said: "We must get rid of the mainframe" under the guise of phasing out legacy.

Harry van Irsel: what is legacy? To me this has nothing to do with mainframe or cobol. Legacy has to do with maintainable code. Of course in practice there is more non-maintainable code in older systems than in the newer ones, but is a good maintainable old Cobol program legacy and a bad maintainable new Java program not? Or is a Java application when running on the mainframe called legacy and when the same application runs on another platform it isn't? Perhaps some food for starting another discussion...

Fact is that still the greatest part of our core business runs on the mainframe. And it is very unrealistic to think it is possible to get rid of this in the near future.

So it is nice to observe the evolution of the mainframe to a fully fledged, very modern and 'to be taken very seriously' platform. A platform you can't ignore concerning future developments and choices made by the Rabobank.

Participant: And what to think about Virtualization? With 35 years of experience - THE example for all distributed platforms and still miles in front of them! With just a fraction of the energy consumption of distributed servers, Greener than green!

Lots of Capacity-on-Demand models for dynamically adding more capacity than the Rabobank will ever need.

Cell-processors, crypto processors for the highest levels of security.

The zEnterprise is a "launchpad for a new generation of cross-platform processors running all operating systems and applications within a single footprint"

Participant: Linux now runs for 10 years on System z, even Windows emulation. Need I say more?

Participant: What are the costs of a System z Linux platform compared to an Intel Linux platform..?

Participant: THE big advantage in costs of the mainframe platform compared to the distributed platforms is that mainframe costs are not linear. Here the economy of scale principle is far much stronger compared to other environments. In other words every growth of the environment will reduce the (delta) costs.

Furthermore (like for any other platform) it depends on what you are running on the platform. For a simple file server print it will be different than for SAP.

Participant: For a business case I once calculated that the bigger the server, the cheaper the vms (? Ed.). Called with IBM then. They have a very good service but a difficult to understand price quota.

Participant: Lots of possibilities make a platform sexy, but not necessarily better. Everything has its price. Perhaps we prefer a cheaper machine with less options?

Harry van Irsel: Whether a platform is sexy or not has nothing to do with it. What counts is that people must get aware of the possibilities of System z. Only then an objective and well motivated platform choice can be made for each specific type of application.

At this moment I'm under the impression that the majority of our decision makers is not aware of the possibilities of the mainframe. They still see it as an old, cumbersome monster and this (wrong) belief leads to the fact that the mainframe is not even taken into account when it comes to a choice for a specific platform.

IBM has very interesting price strategies and nowadays it isn't so that consolidation on System z always is more expensive. On the contrary.....

Participant: I thought the emphasis was not on 'sexy' but on technological lead and reducing costs.

Rather a cheap machine? That's possible. But in my view we don't have one cheap machine but hundreds. All of them tied together.

Harry van Irsel: In my view this last remark is correct. To make it more concrete a link to an example of a company that consolidated distributed platforms (including SAP) to System z.
http://www.mainframezone.com/it-management/gruppo-api-consolidates-distributed-platforms-to-system-z10/P1

A few core lines from this article "*SAP BI in the z10 environment cut processing time by 35 percent compared to its prior performance on a distributed UNIX platform.*" and "*Energy consumption went down by 35 percent, floor occupancy has been reduced by 15 percent, and cooling is now only 35 percent of what it previously was*," says Scebba. "*The workload time of our IT staff hasn't changed significantly, but where we do see future benefit is in the cost of product licenses. The new System z10 is much more powerful than our UNIX servers. This will allow us to avoid the upgrades to processor capacity that trigger additional licensing costs.*"

Ending the discussion for now. Enough "food for thought" to publish some subsequent articles in the near future.

To be continued….

Harry van Irsel - IT Architect

Harry van Irsel has worked in IT since 1985 in a wide variety of roles, always with a focus on high available, high performance, high volumes and robust online applications running on the IBM mainframe environments. He operates as 'the glue' between many different divisions (in and outside the company) at all kind of levels involving multiple hardware platforms and application development-, test and production environments. Able to foresee, pinpoint and solve issues in a service oriented infrastructure. Consultant and instructor of Websphere MQSeries, CICS and DB2 subjects. Sometimes acts as a guest speaker at (international) technical forums and user groups. As Certified S.O.A. Architect and expert in design and development on zSeries (service integration, web services, web2.0 technology, CICS, DB2, Websphere MQSeries) he works on positioning and making the IBM mainframe a very strong S.O.A. platform within the Rabobank Group.

The Rabobank Group is an international financial services provider operating on the basis of cooperative principles. It offers retail banking, wholesale banking, asset management, leasing and real estate services. Focus is on all-finance services in the Netherlands and on food and agribusiness internationally. Rabobank Group is comprised of independent local Rabobanks plus Rabobank Nederland, their umbrella organization, and a number of specialist subsidiaries. The group entities maintain strong mutual ties. Rabobank Group's total employee base numbers about 59,000 FTEs, who serve about 9.5 million clients in 48 countries.

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Feedback

Survey

The CICS business and strategy teams have launched a major survey to gather and analyze customer requirements. This is a really good opportunity to help raise the profile of any CICS TS requirements you may have (although there are no guarantees, of course). As you will be able to see from the three main questions below, the aim of the survey is to discover how CICS TS can do more to making our customers lives easier:

1. If IBM were designing the next CICS TS specifically for your organisation, what content (features and functions) would you like it to contain?
2. Are there any custom written CICS capabilities/utilities (Exits, URM's, Scripts, etc.) that you would rather IBM implemented natively in CICS TS?
3. Are there any other no-charge custom CICS capabilities/utilities (IBM SupportPacs, etc.) that augment your CICS TS environment with?

The survey also contains three additional open questions, so you can tell us anything else you would like us to know. You will find more information here http://masterterminal.wordpress.com/2011/01/11/cicsreqs2011/ and the full survey can be taken from here:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CICSReqs2011

eNews

To provide feedback and comments on CICS Portfolio eNews, please email the editor at Knutson@uk.ibm.com.