

This presentation will introduce the new features in WebSphere® Application Server V6.1.



This presentation will briefly introduce WebSphere Application Server V6.1, and then cover the major new feature areas, including programming model enhancements, usability enhancements, security enhancements, enterprise-class function enhancements, enhancements to the Application Server Toolkit, and serviceability enhancements.



This section will introduce the main focus areas of WebSphere Application Server V6.1.



WebSphere Application Server V6.1 builds upon and extends the V6.0 product. It utilizes the programming interfaces and system management model that you are used to from V6.0, and extends them in key areas. The enhancements to this version are focused on increasing usability by simplifying administrative tasks, and also on extending the WebSphere Application Server programming model to new application types, such as Portlet applications and Session Initiation Protocol applications. This version is the first WebSphere Application Server release to support Java 5.0 and includes the new IBM Virtual Machine for Java on most platforms. Finally, this release has introduced many new security features and options.



This section will cover enhancements to the WebSphere Application Server foundation and support for new programming models.



WebSphere Application Server V6.1 is the first release of WebSphere Application Server to support the Java 5.0 SDK. This includes support for several new specifications shown here, and new features that make it easier to develop Java applications. These features include generics, which enable type abstraction and reduce casting, auto-boxing of primitive data types, support for enumerations, and annotation support, for embedding metadata in your source code that can be interpreted by the Java compiler. You can learn more about the features of Java 5.0 in the official Java specification.



WebSphere Application Server V6.1 also includes a new version of the IBM Virtual Machine for Java Platforms that has been rewritten from the ground up, with performance and portability in mind. This new Virtual Machine includes improved startup time, a new Just-In-Time compiler, and new garbage collection algorithms. It also contains no Sun intellectual property. This new Virtual Machine is not used on the Solaris and HP-UX platforms, where Sun's Java Virtual Machine (or JVM) is still used.



Modularity is an important focus area of this release. Version 6.1 of WebSphere Application Server leverages the Open Services Gateway Initiative (OSGi) framework, and is produced in a componentized fashion as a set of OSGi bundles. These bundles are loaded by a network of individual OSGi class loaders. These class loading changes are internal and do not affect your applications running on WebSphere Application Server. Also, version 6.1 introduces "restricted visibility mode", an option that can prevent application code from loading internal WebSphere Application Server classes.



This table shows the evolution of Web services support in WebSphere Application Server over the last few releases. Many of the Java Web services standards were finalized around the time WebSphere Application Server V5.0.2 and V5.1 were released, and as such, these were the first versions to support the major Java Web services standards like JAX-RPC. Version 6.0 increased support for Web services by supporting the latest revisions of many specifications, and also supporting the final release of WS-Security 1.0 and new specifications like WS-Atomic Transaction. Version 6.1 continues to provide first-class support for Web services by introducing support for new specifications, including WS-Notification, WS-Business Activity, and the new Basic Security Profile for secure Web services interoperability. Web services performance is also significantly improved in this release.



Portlets are one of the new application types that are supported in V6.1. WebSphere Application Server provides support for running JSR168-compliant Portlet applications. The Portlet container is an extension of the Web container, and provides lifecycle management and runtime services for Portlets. It allows Portlets to be called directly from a Web browser by URI, and also enables Portlet markup to be included in the output of Servlets or Java Server Pages. While WebSphere Application Server provides a Portlet runtime environment, it does not replace the WebSphere Portal product, and does not provide the advanced capabilities of that product, such as portlet aggregation and page layout, personalization and member services, or collaboration features.



Version 6.1 supports Session Initiation Protocol applications, as defined by JSR116. Like the Portlet container, the SIP container is installed automatically and works in concert with the Web container. SIP supports negotiating connections for many new application types, such as voice over IP, instant messaging, and videoconferencing. Support for converged HTTP and SIP Servlet applications open the door for new solutions like "click to call" applications.



SIP support is implemented by a converged Servlet container that supports both HTTP and SIP Servlets, using common code for network transports and for integration with other application server components. This support is provided by proven code that has been used in the IBM Workplace suite of products, and is managed using the same management tools that are used for all other WebSphere Application Server components.



The IBM JSF Widget Library is provided as an optional library in V6.1. Based on JavaServer Faces technology, FacesClient Components can simplify the development of interactive Web pages and improve their usability and performance by reducing the number of round-trip interactions with the server. This gives users faster response times and increased freedom to interact with the page. A developer's guide is available on IBM developerWorks.



This section will cover usability enhancements.



Many changes have been made to improve the usability of the installation process. The installer now supports installing WebSphere Application Server as a non-root or non-Administrator user. You also have the option to enable administrative security during installation, so your administrative tools will be secured "out of the box". The new Profile Management Tool replaces the Profile Creation Tool from V6.0, giving you more control over the process of creating a profile. The IBM HTTP Server now includes the ability to install and configure the Web server plug-in while installing the HTTP server, since those two tasks are often carried out at the same time. The Installation Factory tool is also provided with version 6.1, enabling you to build customized installation packages, including product maintenance, enterprise applications, and configuration actions, for improved installation repeatability.



The administrative console has been simplified in this release, providing an improved user experience for many tasks that were previously challenging or confusing. These include an improved scope selection process that simplifies locating resources, a streamlined JDBC data source creation wizard, and an enhanced application installation interface, including a new "fast path" option that prompts you only for information that is required during installation. It is also easier to configure shared libraries for use by multiple applications in this release.



Creating and configuring clusters is also streamlined in this release, including a guided task for configuring a highly available cluster. Configuring security has also been simplified in this release, including a new security configuration wizard and new panels for configuring Service Integration Bus security. Creating repeatable tasks using wsadmin has also been simplified in this release, as the administrative console now has the ability to display the equivalent scripting command for many common tasks.



The systems management architecture in version 6.1 is an extension of the version 6.0 architecture, and supports mixed version cells that contain older V5 and V6 nodes. This release also introduces several new high-level administrative commands and utilities that make command-line administration easier. These new commands give you the ability to perform complex tasks like renaming a node in a simple and supported fashion. V6.1 also includes new "thin administrative client" libraries that allow you to create and run administrative clients that rely only on a JAR file, rather than requiring a full installation of WebSphere Application Server or a WebSphere Application Server Client installation.



Administrative integration with IBM HTTP Server has also been improved in this release. Not only can you start and stop local and remote IBM HTTP Servers directly from the administrative console, but you also have complete control of the IBM HTTP Server configuration by way of a robust configuration interface, including an easy-to-use virtual host creation wizard.



This section will cover security enhancements.



WebSphere Application Server V6.1 provides several security enhancements.

First, there is now the ability to enable administrative security out of the box at the time of installation. Enabling this option at installation time allows the application server administrative system and its data is to be protected automatically with minimal administrative overhead. In the past, securing the application server environment required you to configure the appropriate security settings after the product was installed.

In previous releases of WebSphere Application Server, users granted administrative roles could administer all of the resource instances under the cell. WebSphere Application Server is now more fine-grained, in that access can be granted to each user per resource instance. For example, users can be granted "configurator" access to a specific instance of a resource only (an application, an application server or a node). Users cannot access any other resources outside of the resources assigned to them. This support is only provided for command-line administration, and not in the administrative console.



Another new security feature found in WebSphere Application Server V6.1 is the introduction of the "federated repositories" option. This option is available as part of the integration of WebSphere Virtual Member Manager into the application server. This integration not only provides the ability to federate multiple heterogeneous user repositories for security purposes, it also provides the ability to manage user and groups in the federated repositories through the application server administrative console and command line utilities.

V6.1 provides a trust association interceptor (TAI) that uses the Simple and Protected GSS-API Negotiation Mechanism (SPNEGO) to securely negotiate and authenticate HTTP requests for secured resources in WebSphere Application Server. SPNEGO TAI will enable Single Sign On capability so that end-users login and authenticate once at their Windows 2003 desktop and are silently authenticated with WebSphere Application Server.



In version 6.1, the SSL key management functionality that used to be provided in the IBM Key Management Tool (or "ikeyman") is now implemented in the administrative console. You can create SSL certificates directly from the administrative console, and you can easily propagate those keys to managed Web servers, speeding up a task that could be quite time consuming in previous releases.

The V6.1 administrative console also provides an interface for managing trusted hosts and certificate signers. The "default" or "dummy" key ring is no longer provided with WebSphere Application Server. This file, which was intended to enable testing a WebSphere Application Server environment with security enabled, has been replaced by a unique self-signed certificate that is created during profile creation for each node.



The primary purpose of the federated repositories feature is to allow the management of user identities, profiles, and relationships. These management features are available through the administrative console, command line utilities, and public APIs.

User management capabilities are integrated into WebSphere Application Server security in several important ways. First, the federated repositories option enables you to integrate multiple user repositories into a single security domain. It also provides the appropriate JAAS and JACC framework to allow for application security using federated repositories.



This section will cover enhancements to some of WebSphere Application Server's enterprise-class features.



Version 6.1 includes several enhancements to the built-in Java messaging infrastructure. You now have the option to use a file-based data store, which offers improved performance and requires less configuration that a JDBC database. It is also much easier to secure your messaging resources in this release, using a new "bus security" interface in the administrative console and equivalent wsadmin scripting commands. Additionally, a new server type, called a "WebSphere MQ Server" enables you to take advantage of the qualities of service of queues hosted by WebSphere MQ queue sharing groups on z/OS. J2EE applications can use these destinations just as they would use destinations hosted by WebSphere Application Server.



There have also been enhancements to the Java proxy server in version 6.1. It now includes more robust support for dynamically caching content, and new dynamic routing rules that give you more control over how incoming traffic is routed to your application servers.



This section will cover the Application Server Toolkit.



Version 6.1 of the Application Server Toolkit includes much more functionality than previous releases. It inherits much of this functionality from the open source Web Tools Platform, including full-fledged J2EE and Web services development tools, XML tools, and relational database tools. It also includes WebSphere Application Server specific functionality, such as graphical tools for editing IBM extended deployment descriptors, wsadmin script development tools, and integrated support for deploying and testing applications with WebSphere Application Server.



This section covers serviceability enhancements.



Version 6.1 now includes the IBM Support Assistant, a local serviceability tool that makes it easier and faster to resolve your software product challenges. It is available for free download on the IBM Software Support Web site, but it is now also distributed with the WebSphere Application Server product on the Installation Tools CD. It is a software support enabler for several IBM software products, not just WebSphere Application Server. It provides a number of features to aid you in problem determination and resolution, including federated search, data collection, problem submission, and diagnostic tools. Version 6.1 also includes support for Diagnostic Providers, which enable individual server components to generate more useful diagnostic data.



The Diagnostic Provider framework is a new feature in WebSphere Application Server V6.1. Diagnostic Providers are JMX MBeans that provide diagnostic data for individual components within WebSphere Application Server processes. They enable you to ask a selected component to dump its configuration data, current state data, or to run a self-diagnostic test routine. Components that are instrumented with Diagnostic Providers can log their Diagnostic Provider ID, which is a JMX ObjectName to log files when they write error messages. This allows you to directly query the component that generated the error message. You can also query a component at any time by selecting it from a tree view.



In summary, WebSphere Application Server V6.1 builds upon and extends the proven V6.0 code base. It utilizes the programming interfaces and system management model that you are used to from V6.0, and extends them in key areas. The enhancements to this version are focused on increasing usability by simplifying administrative tasks, and also on extending the WebSphere Application Server programming model to new application types, such as Portlet applications and Session Initiation Protocol applications. This version is the first WebSphere Application Server release to support Java 5.0 and includes the new IBM Virtual Machine for Java on most platforms. Finally, this release has introduced many new security and serviceability features. IBM Education Assistant contains many more presentations and demonstrations that will explain these new features in more depth.

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