Virtual CICS user group: Newsletter 7

Welcome to the Virtual CICS user group newsletter. The Virtual CICS user group at www.fundi.com/virtualcics is an independently-operated vendor-neutral site run by and for the CICS user community.

Virtual CICS user group presentation

The latest webinar from the Virtual CICS user group was entitled, "Analyzing CICS function shipping applications using Transaction Analysis Workbench", and was presented by Jim Martin the United States representative for Fundi Software.

Jim has worked with IMS since the early 1970s. He started with IBM in 1967 and worked as a Program Support Representative, Systems Engineer, and member of the IMS Critical situation team. He left IBM to join BMC Software as a product author and became Corporate Product Architect. In his ten years at BMC Software Jim was responsible for several products designed to provide IMS customer's with enhanced IMS solutions. He's the holder of 11 US patents on IMS and database-related techniques. He's also had several articles published in industry magazines, such as *ESJ*, *Technical Support* magazine, and *DM Review*.

Jim started his presentation by reminding us how much more complicated life was today compared to 20 years

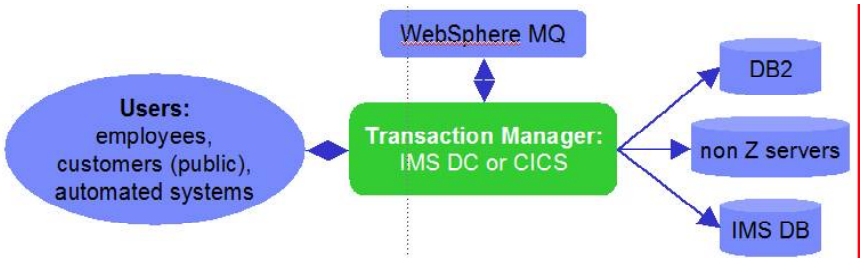

Figure 2: 2011 users are customers; data is complex, often distributed

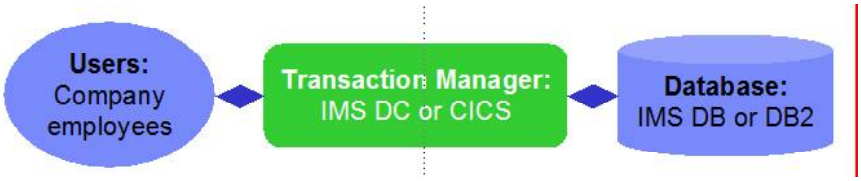

Figure 1: 1980s working - in-house users only; simple data, single data store

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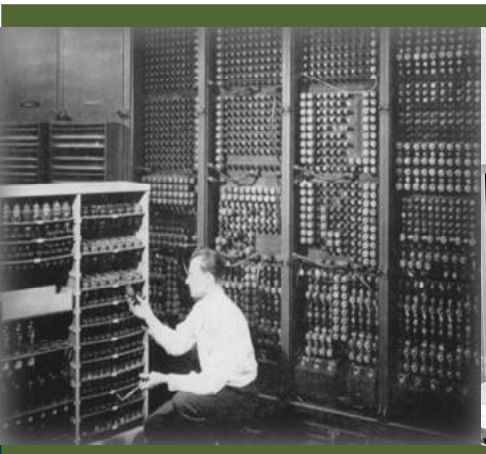

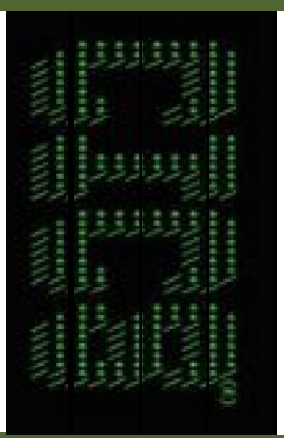

or more ago (Figure 1), saying that data users can often also be customers; also the data is complex, and often distributed (see Figure 2). A transaction can often involve CICS, IMS, DB2 MQ or any combination. It may look like four transactions, but in effect it is only one. This is the problem many users face because they have separate monitoring software for each subsystem.

This is where IBM's Transactional Analysis Workbench comes in. It's a transaction analysis framework for System z. It's not transaction manager specific, rather it leverages current IBM tools for transaction analysis. It isn't IMS or CICS specific, but the first release provides more synergy with the existing tools for those transaction managers

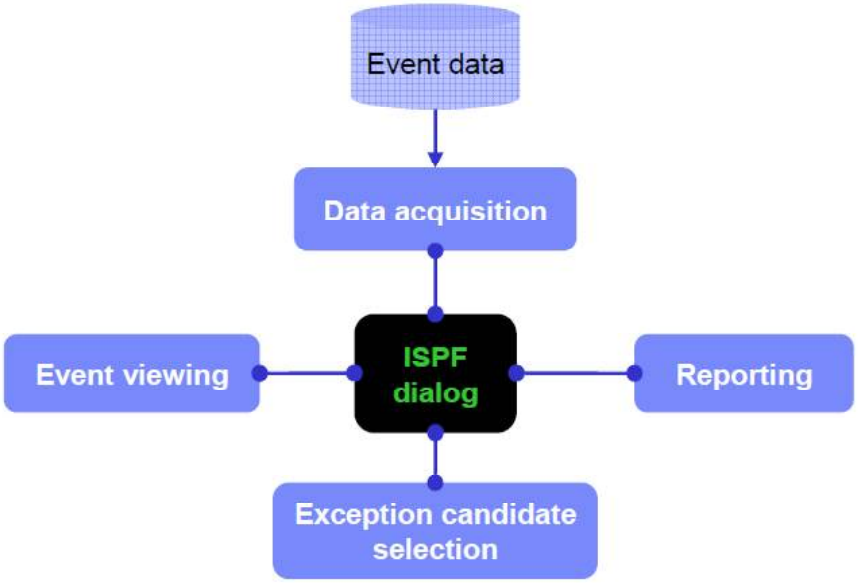

Figure 4: Functions

The product automates the collection of the data needed for problem analysis (see Figure 3). It provides a session manager to manage problem analysis through its life-cycle.

Jim informed the user group that the goals of Transaction Analysis Workbench are:

- Enable higher productivity by lower skilled staff.
- Automate trivial tasks commonly needed for problem determination, such as getting the data needed for problem analysis, basic reporting without tool specific knowledge, and automated transaction analysis
- Allows the "first responder" to determine the most likely source of the problem.
- Allow for "deep dive" problem determination via synergy with other IBM tools to create a "common" approach to transaction problem resolution and increase the degree and ease of

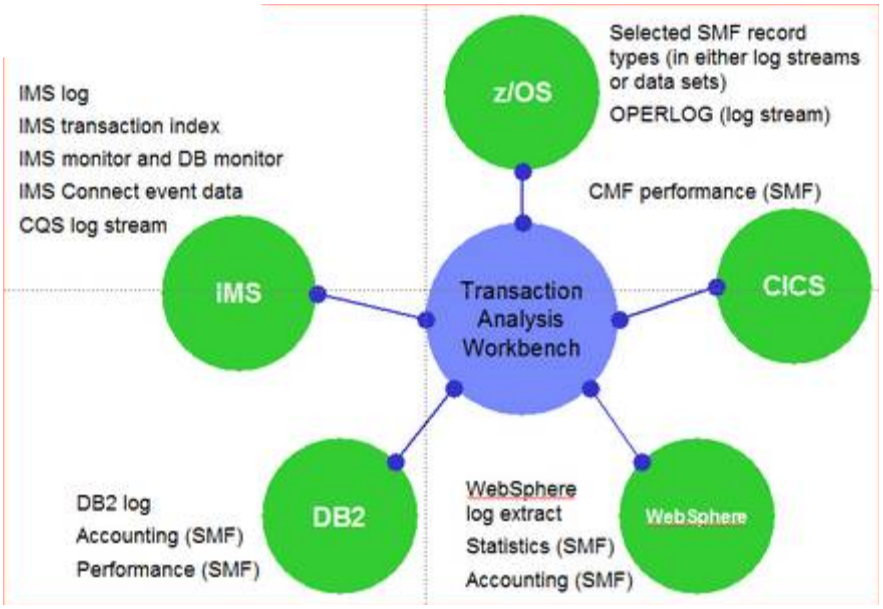

Figure 3: Supported logs

collaboration in problem resolution.

Figure 4 illustrates the functions of Transaction Analysis Workbench.

For the rest of the presentation, Jim gave some real-life examples for a scenario in which there was a CICS MRO problem. he suggested that the analysis would be divided into two parts:

1 The first responder registers the problem in the Workbench session manager, collects the log files, and then runs some preliminary batch reports to attempt to identify the cause of the problem.

2 The specialist performs a “deep dive” on the problem: reviewing the reports, and using interactive analysis to identify the specific log records for the cause of the problem.

In summary, Transaction Analysis Workbench is a:

- Companion to the popular IMS and CICS Performance Analyzer tools, allowing systems programmers to look outside of IMS and CICS for the source of problems.
- Exploits the wealth of system performance and activity information available in SMF, OPERLOG, and event traces.
- Allows medium-skilled analysts to perform expert analysis of their enterprise.

Anyone interested in more information can find out more at the IBM DB2 and IMS Tools Web site: www.ibm.com/software/data/db2imstools/, or at the IBM Transaction Analysis Workbench for z/OS Web site: www.ibm.com/software/data/db2imstools/imstools/transanalysis/. Alternatively, you can e-mail Fundi Software’s US representative, Jim Martin at jim_martin@fundi.com.au.

A copy of Jim’s presentation is available for download from the Virtual CICS user group Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualcics/presentations/Transaction_Analysis_WorkbenchMarch12.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/2012-03-06meeting.wmv.

Meeting dates

The following meeting date has been arranged for the Virtual CICS user group:

- 8 May 2012 – Stephen Mitchell, Managing Director of Matter of Fact Software Ltd, will be discussing "Utlizing the Dojo Toolkit for Web browser-driven applications from CICS". To register for this meeting you need to go to https://www1.gotomeeting.com/register/624487633.

Other meeting dates for the year are:

- 10 July
- 11 September
- 13 November

We will be using Citrix GoToMeeting for the user group meetings.

All meetings start at 10:30am Central Time (4:30pm GMT in the winter and 3:30pm GMT during daylight saving time).

Recordings of meetings are available for download from our Web site for people who were unable to attend the meeting.

Recent CICS articles

Java in CICS: The Inevitable Future by Ivan Hargreaves in *z/Journal* (March/April 2012).*CICS Transaction Server.* You can find the article at www.mainframezone.com/it-management/java-in-cics-the-inevitable-future.

CICS news

Matter of Fact Software has announced Version 1 Release 0 of CICS JS/Server, which allows the Dojo Javascript toolkit (which enables the development of browser-based user interface functions) to be installed and controlled on mainframe PDS datasets. CICS JS/Server was devised to provide control over the serving of the Dojo Javascript Toolkit as it is used by their other product, PlexSpy Application Status Monitor.

Full details can be found at www.plexspy.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/Press-Release-5-March-2012.pdf.

★ ★ ★

IBM has announced CICS TS Developer Trial V4.2, which is free of charge and for evaluation (non-production) use only, and offers a full set of features but with restricted performance and limited operational lifespan. It will be updated, periodically, to include the latest service fixes, and to provide an evaluation period of at least 90 days.

IBM has also launched CICSdev, an online community for CICS users to discuss, share, and learn.

Full details can be found at www-01.ibm.com/software/htp/cics/cicsdt/index.html.

★ ★ ★

Compuware has announced Strobe 4.3. This mainframe application performance management solution, now includes the ability to automatically measure batch jobs that exceed dynamically calculated thresholds. Other new capabilities include: integration with existing monitoring tools; improved CICS transaction reporting; and new views of DB2 accounting statistics.

Full details can be found at www.compuware.com/about/release/643555/compuwares-latest-innovations-enable-enterprises-to-successfully-navigate-the-new-normal-of-mainframe.

★ ★ ★

Viaserv has announced Version 4.5 of ViaSQL, which is now able to provide CICS 4.2 support. ViaSQL connections now support use of SSL/TLS protocols. The Viaserv TCP/IP Secure Tunnel Processor is distributed with Access Server to support its use and of multiple TCP/IP resource managers in the same CICS region. ViaSQL V4.5 is available immediately for both the z/OS and z/VSE platforms. ViaSQL provides access to VSAM, sequential, DB2, IMS, DL/I, Datacom, Adabas, and other z/OS and z/VSE data stores, and to mainframe applications and stored procedures.

Full details can be found at www.viaserv.com/viaserv/pdf/Viaserv45PressRelease.pdf.

About the Virtual CICS user group

The Virtual CICS user group was established as a way for individuals using IBM's CICS TS systems to exchange information, learn new techniques, and advance their skills with the product.

The Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualcics provides a central point for coordinating periodic meetings (which contain technically-oriented topics presented in a webinar format), and provides articles, discussions, links, and other resources of interest to IBM CICS practitioners. Anyone with an interest in CICS is welcome to join the Virtual CICS user group and share in the knowledge exchange.

To share ideas, and for further information, contact trevor@itech-ed.com.

The Virtual CICS user group is free to its members.