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, "CICS in an API World", and was presented by Glenn Schneck, Senior Solutions Architect at GT Software.

Glenn has 42 years of IT experience and has 34 years of CICS Systems Programming experience in insurance, entertainment/ theme parks, and banking. Glenn has been a speaker at numerous conferences and is currently the Project Manager of the CICS Project at SHARE.

Glenn started his presentation by looking at the history of APIs (see Figure 1) showing how they had become more complicated until we get to the API economy we are
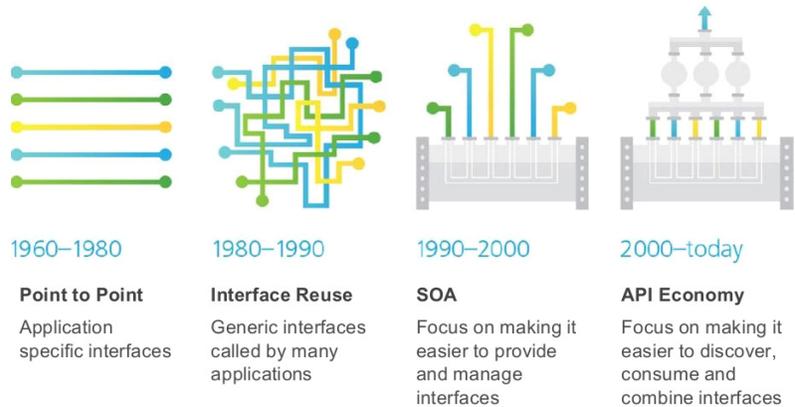

1960–1980	1980–1990	1990–2000	2000–today
Point to Point	**Interface Reuse**	**SOA**	**API Economy**
Application specific interfaces	Generic interfaces called by many applications	Focus on making it easier to provide and manage interfaces	Focus on making it easier to discover, consume and combine interfaces

Figure 1: History of APIs

becoming familiar with today, with the focus on making it easier to discover, consume, and combine interfaces.
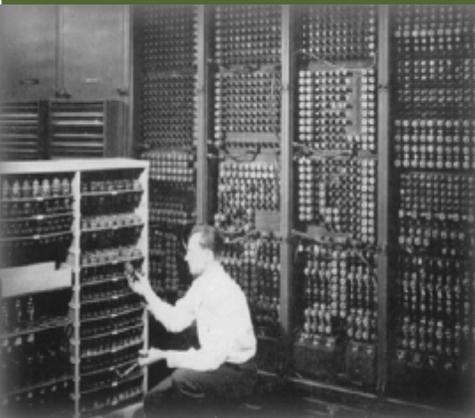
The total number of available APIs reached 1000 in 2008; 18 months later there were 2000; nine months after that there were 3000; and six months later there were 4000. And there are many more today.

As Figure 2 illustrates, one

application may well need to get information from a number of sources, and,
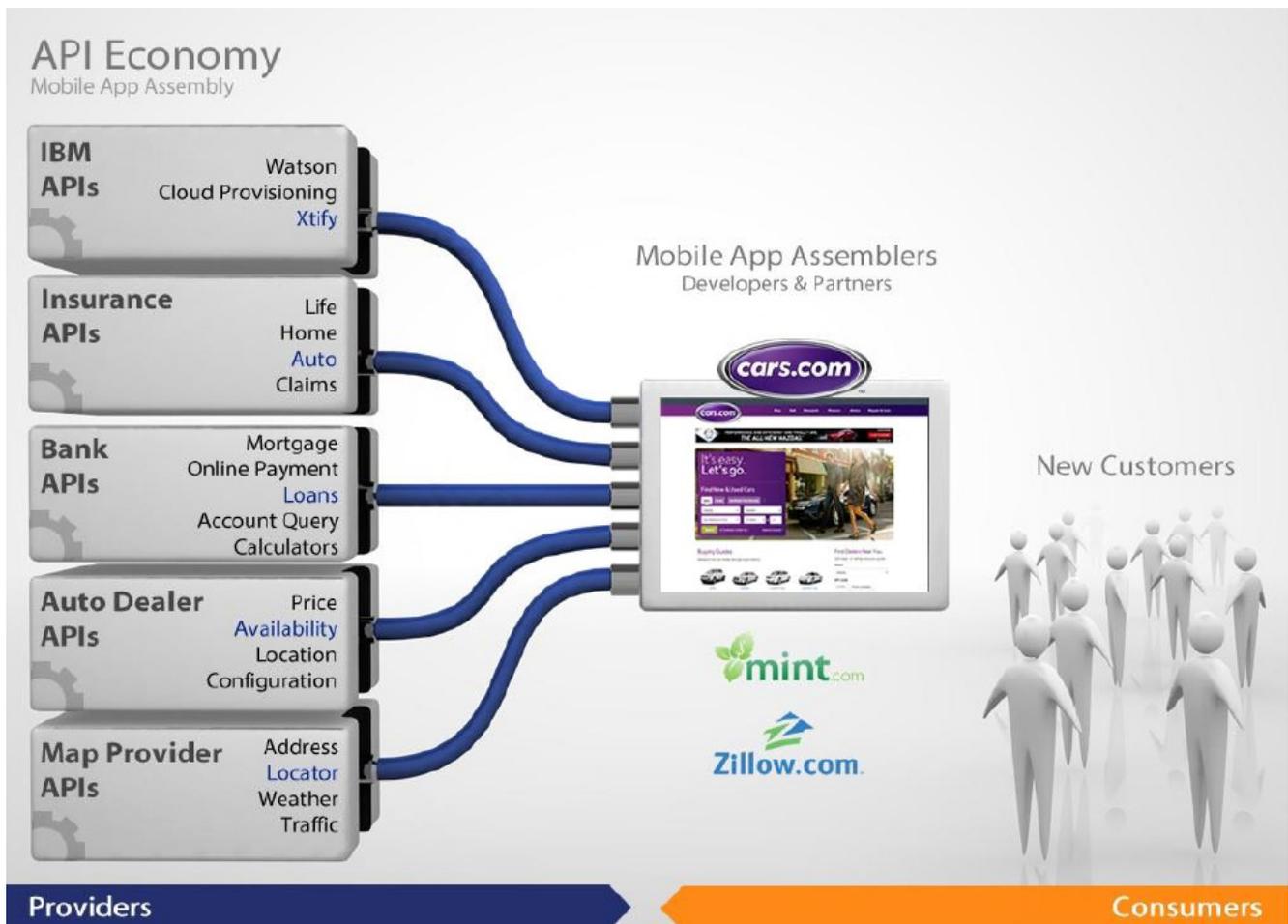
Figure 2: The emerging API economy for digital enterprises

as such, needs to connect to different APIs in order to work.

Mainframes come with ways of connecting to the outside world. These connectors include: z/OS Connect Enterprise Edition, CICS Transaction Gateway (CTG), CICS Web Services (CWS), Hostbridge, IMS Connect, TN3270, and SQL to data.

Simple atomic APIs can be used, like GetSavng{}, GetChkng{}, GetCredit{}, GetMortg{}, for different industries, but these are very basic and complicated to use. What's needed are composite APIs (see Figure 3), such as GetCust{}, which will itself use the appropriate atomic APIs to retrieve the required data. That makes the use of APIs more easily understood by individual users.

The mainframe connectors can now connect to understandable business services using business APIs and orchestrated workflows.

Glenn Schneck then went on to illustrate how this can be achieved using GT Software's Ivory Orchestration Workflow.

As an example of what such a product could do, Glenn said that a service can be created as SOAP/XML or REST/JSON, and it can have an orchestration exposed as both a SOAP and REST service.

Glenn concluded his presentation by giving the user group real life examples of customers who had made use of the APIs with their CICS system.
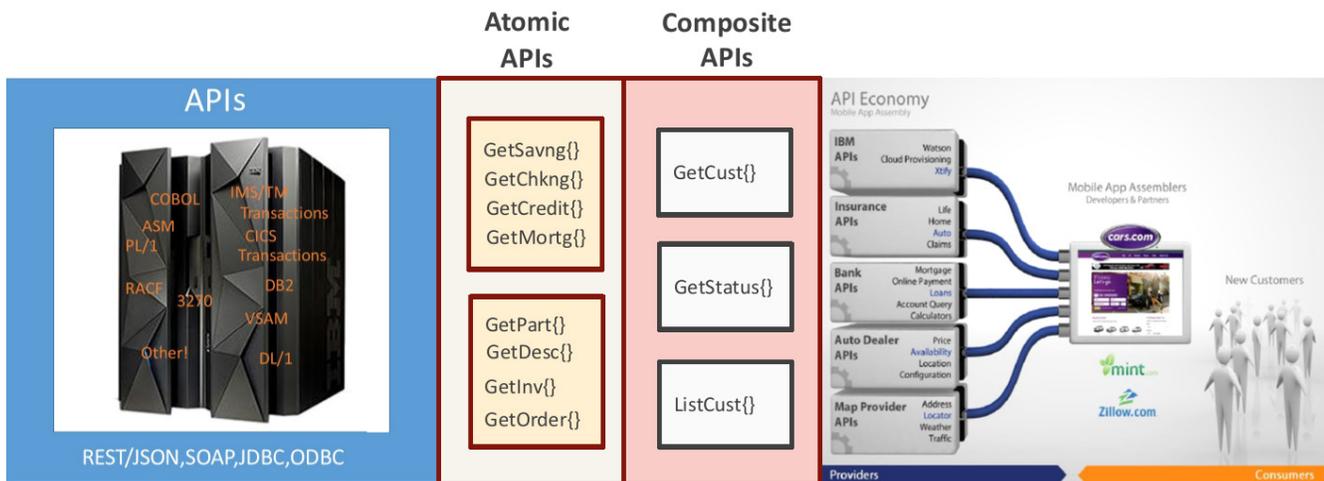
Figure 3: How to make everything work together

A copy of Glenn Scheck's presentation is available for download from the Virtual CICS user group Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualcics/presentations/CICSinanAPIWorld17.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from www.fundi.com/virtualcics/presentations/2017-07-11meeting.wmv.

Meeting dates

The following meeting dates have been arranged for the Virtual CICS user group:

• 12 September 2017, when Colin Pearce will be discussing, "Understanding Storage Violations".

• The following meeting is on 14 November 2017,

when Mary Abdill will be presenting.

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

Recent CICS articles

Scripting with z/OS Provisioning Toolkit: Removing Old Containers by Chris Poole on CICS DevCenter (21 July 2017). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2017/07/21/scripting-zos-provisioning-toolkit-removing-old-containers/

IBM SDK for Node.js – z/OS – CICS samples now available by Mark Hollands on CICS DevCenter (17 July 2017). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2017/07/17/ibm-sdk-node-js-zos-cics-samples-now-available/

Using CICS policy system rules to monitor system health by Andy D Wharmby on CICS DevCenter (4 July 2017). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2017/07/04/using-cics-policy-system-rules-monitor-system-health/

Get Started With CICS Performance and Tuning by Jim Schesvold in *IBM Systems Magazine (July 2017)*. You can find the article at: http://www.ibmsystemsmag.com/mainframe/tipstechniques/System-Tuning/performance-getting-started/

CICS support for Java EE 7 by Mark Cocker on CICS DevCenter (30 June 2017). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2017/06/30/cics-support-for-java-enterprise-edition-7/

CICS TG V9.2 GA and Fix pack details by Janaki

Sundar on CICS DevCenter (27 June 2017). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2017/06/27/cics-tg-v9-2-ga-fix-pack-details/

What's new in CICS Explorer 5.4 by Ledina on CICS DevCenter (15 June 2017). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2017/06/15/whats-new-cics-explorer-5-4/

CICS Continues to Innovate With Transaction Server V5.4 by Amy Reeve and Nick Garrod in *IBM Systems Magazine* (June 2017). You can find the article at: http://ibmsystemsmag.com/mainframe/administrator/cics/innovate-transaction-server/

CICS TS Performance and Tuning: A Rich Tradition by Jim Schesvold in *IBM Systems Magazine* (June 2017). You can find the article at: http://ibmsystemsmag.com/mainframe/administrator/cics/innovate-transaction-server/

CICS news

IBM has announced CICS Transaction Server for z/OS V5.4, which adds support for a programming concepts that are critical to a mixed language application hosting environment, and includes:

• Support for applications written to the Java™ EE 7 Full platform specification

• A powerful and new asynchronous API to extend programming language capabilities

• Dynamic policy-based management of applications that span multiple languages

• Enhanced security and resiliency of applications across all languages

• API extensions that enable improved interoperability with batch applications

• Enhanced management capabilities for applications that utilize IBM MQ for z/OS

• Numerous enhancements to simplify or automate common workflows.

More information can be found at: https://www-01.ibm.com/common/ssi/cgi-bin/alias?infotype=an&subtype=ca&supplier=897&letternum=ENUS21

Sponsorship opportunity

Are you missing a great opportunity to advertise your CICS software?

The Virtual CICS user group is now offering software vendors the opportunity to advertise their products in a number of ways. You could have an advert on the home page of the Web site (at www.fundi.com/virtualcics), you could advertise in the newsletter, and/or you could advertise in the monthly e-mails sent to members of the user group.

E-mail trevor@itech-ed.com for full information about marketing opportunities with the Virtual CICS user group.

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.