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, “From Legacy to Leading Edge – Creating CICS APIs Easily Without Coding”, and was presented by Glenn Schneck, Principal Technical Architect at GT Software.

Glenn has 43 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 is currently a Principal Technical Architect at GT Software.

Glenn Schneck started

Figure 1: The ‘connected’ mainframe
the session by explaining what was meant by an API (Application Programming Interface). According to Wikipedia: an Application Programming Interface (API) is a set of subroutine definitions, protocols, and tools for building application software. It is a set of clearly defined methods of communication between various software components.

Glenn illustrated this by looking at a car hire company that needs information about potential customers from banks, insurance companies, auto traders, map providers, etc, and it can get this information through APIs. Figure 1 shows how this information can get off the mainframe, for example: z/OS Connect Enterprise Edition; CICS Transaction Gateway (CTG); CICS Web Services (CWS), IMS CONNECT, HostBridge; TN3270; and SQL to Data.

These mainframe connectors can talk to business services at two levels. It could be using single transaction APIs (which can be dangerous coding at such a low level), or using composite APIs. This is illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 3 looks at what needs to be done and compares it to what can be found in reality when people try to do this – classify bad examples (the bad) and very bad examples (the ugly).

Glenn Schneck then went on to show how the difficulties could be solved using GT Ivory API Orchestration. He also spent some time demonstrating how the software could be used. And finally, Glenn gave some examples of satisfied customers who had used the product.


You can see and hear the whole user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from [www.fundi.com/virtualcics/presentations/2018-07-10meeting.wmv](http://www.fundi.com/virtualcics/presentations/2018-07-10meeting.wmv).

### Meeting dates

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

- Keith Banham, Manager, Research
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REALITY / NEED</th>
<th>THE BAD</th>
<th>THE UGLY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All data structures supported</td>
<td>Some structures don’t map well</td>
<td>Comp-3, binary, OCCURS DEPENDING ON, REDEFINES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copybook fields exposed as service inputs/outputs</td>
<td>Names in COBOL may be cryptic and need to be renamed</td>
<td>Blank When Zero, Program control fields with no external value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expose existing programs without changes</td>
<td>BMS map macros that set input message field values</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>REALITY / NEED</th>
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<tr>
<td>Existing transactions exposed as REST or SOAP</td>
<td>A transaction may be too fine grained</td>
<td>Multiple transaction dependencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs that return multiple output formats designed for terminals</td>
<td>Data may be too convoluted to use in a service</td>
<td>Volume of data may be too large to return to a distributed client</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFKEY = TRANCODE</td>
<td>Maybe need multiple transactions in sequence</td>
<td></td>
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<th>REALITY / NEED</th>
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<tr>
<td>Combine transactions in one service</td>
<td>May not work well with others</td>
<td>API’s that run for minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conversational transactions</td>
<td>Long running conversations may be long running API’s</td>
<td>No understanding of conversational impact, rollback</td>
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Figure 3: Mainframe API challenges
and Development at Macro 4, a division of UNICOM Global, will be presenting, “Multi-factor authentication for z/OS and CICS: what, why and how – part of your GDPR compliance strategy”.

• The following meeting is on 13 November 2018, when Jason Brosius, Senior Software Engineer at CA Technologies, will be presenting.

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

Recent CICS articles

Enhanced support for Policy System rules – now available in CICS TS 5.4 with APAR PI92806 and CICS Explorer 5.4.0.11 by Andrew Wharmby on CICS DevCenter (23 July 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/07/23/enhanced-support-policy-system-rules-now-available-cics-ts-5-4-apar-pi92806-cics-explorer-5-4-0-11/

OSGi Demystified: 2.4 – Boot Compatibility by Ivan Hargreaves on CICS DevCenter (12 July 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/07/12/osgi-demystified-2-4-boot-compatibility/

OSGi Demystified: 2.3 – OSGi resolution by Ivan Hargreaves on CICS DevCenter (12 July 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/07/12/osgi-demystified-2-3-osgi-resolution/


Enterprise Architects: an introduction to Node.js in CICS by Mark Cocker on CICS DevCenter (3 July 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/07/03/enterprise-architects-introduction-node-js-cics/

Node.js Developers: an introduction to Node.js in CICS by Mark Cocker on CICS DevCenter (3 July 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/07/03/node-js-developers-introduction-node-js-cics/

System Programmers: An introduction to Node.js in CICS by Mark Cocker on CICS DevCenter (3 July 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/07/03/system-programmers-introduction-node-js-cics/

CICSpexus name detector by Jon Collett on CICS DevCenter (27 June 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/06/27/cicspexus-name-detector/


OSGi Demystified: 1.5 – JRE class visibility, bootdelegation & system.packages.extra by Ivan Hargreaves on CICS
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.

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.

OSGi Demystified: 1.4 – OSGi Services by Ivan Hargreaves on CICS DevCenter (14 June 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/06/14/osgi-demystified-1-4-osgi-services/

OSGi Demystified: 1.3 – Bundles continued by Ivan Hargreaves on CICS DevCenter (14 June 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/06/14/osgi-demystified-1-3-bundles-continued/

OSGi Demystified: 1.2 – Bundles in Liberty by Ivan Hargreaves on CICS DevCenter (14 June 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/06/14/osgi-demystified-1-2-bundles-liberty/

OSGi Demystified: 1.1 – Bundles of Fun by Ivan Hargreaves on CICS DevCenter (14 June 2018). You can find the article at: https://developer.ibm.com/cics/2018/06/14/osgi-demystified-part-1-bundles-fun/