



Virtual CICS user group: Newsletter 67

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



Figure 1: I love CICS

Virtual CICS user group presentation

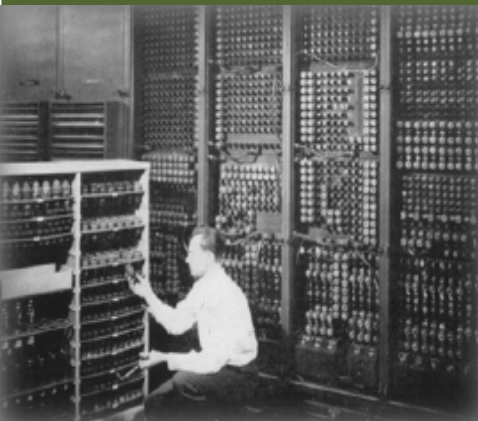
The latest webinar from the Virtual CICS user group was entitled, "How Zowe makes the mainframe open, simple, and familiar". It was presented by Joe

Winchester, IBM Senior Technical Staff Member, and Jeffin Siby, Lead developer on the Zowe Explorer for IBM CICS.

Joe Winchester works at IBM on z/OS tooling, focusing on the Zowe project. And Jeffin

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THE LINUX FOUNDATION

The Linux Foundation and the projects we support form the most ambitious and successful investment in the creation of shared technology



Figure 2: Linux Foundation projects

Siby is the lead developer on the Zowe Explorer for IBM CICS, opening up the world of CICS to Visual Studio Code users.

Joe Winchester started his presentation by saying that he loved CICS (see Figure 1). He then went on to explain that most of the presentation would be demonstrations.

He explained that Zowe isn't an IBM product, it is open-source software. The Linux Foundation manages Zowe, along with Linux and things like Jenkins, the Open Mainframe Project, and much else (see Figure 2). Zowe.org is where to go to find out everything about Zowe, including how to download it

along with its components.

Joe quoted from research published in the [Arcati Mainframe Yearbook](#) saying "Zowe, the open-source way of accessing mainframes, was introduced in 2018. 19 percent of sites said that they are already using this open-source technology, with a massive 50 percent of sites having plans to make use of it in the coming year. Open-source technology is now becoming commonplace on mainframes."

The idea behind Zowe is that it is open source and makes the mainframe available to people who aren't familiar with it (eg using ISPF of C* CICS commands). If they know how to use something

like Jenkins, Bamboo, or Travis, they can use it on the mainframe. And that makes the mainframe familiar and simple.

Joe then went on to demonstrate using Zowe by setting up a command line interface running on a Apple Mac. He showed how he can interact with Git, and said that not many developers use the GUI for Git, preferring to use the command line. By typing in Zowe, all the Zowe commands are displayed. This includes commands for any plugins that are installed.

The command 'zowe jobs' will show all the things that can be done with jobs. Similarly, 'zowe files' allows users to interact with files.

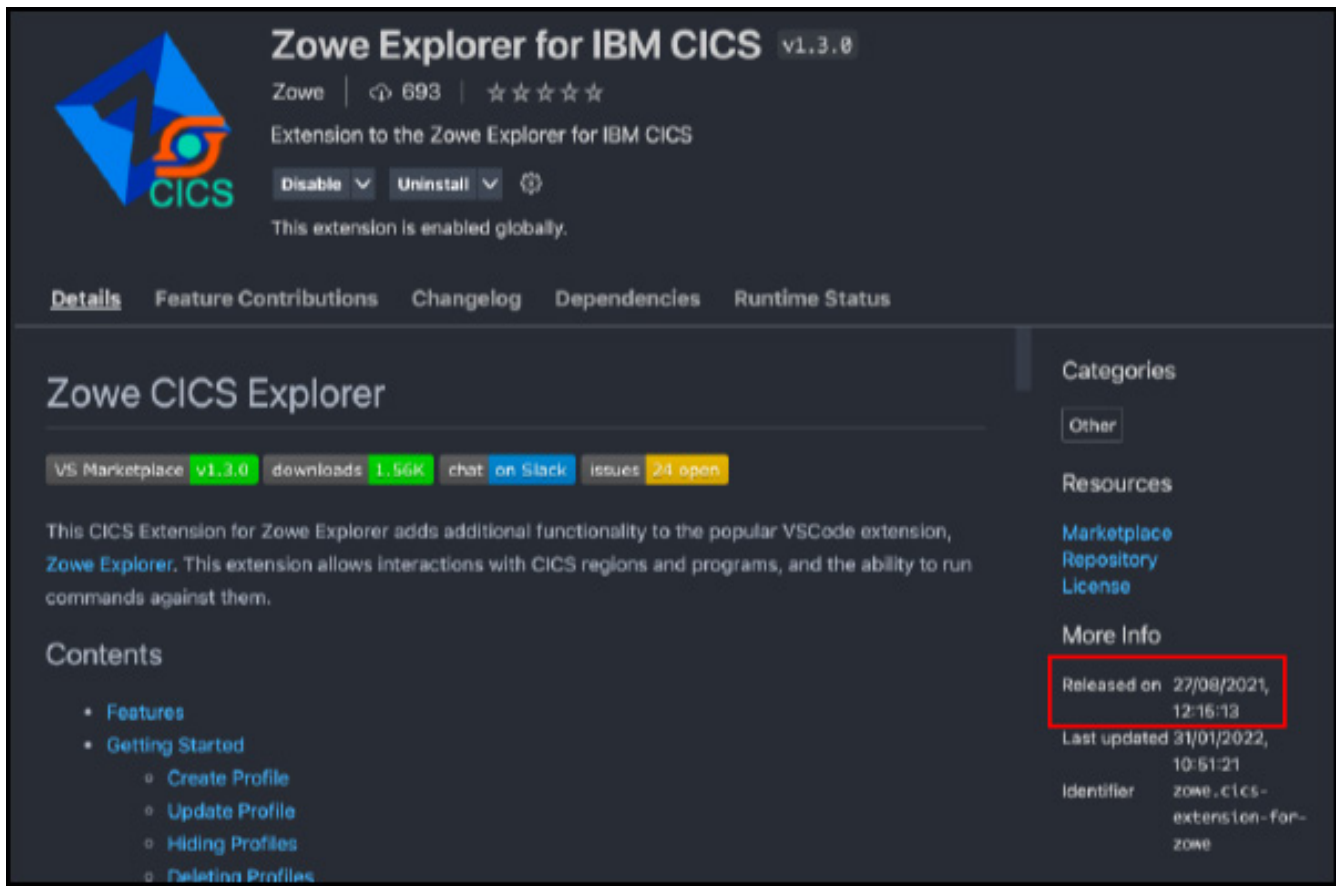


Figure 3: Download Zowe CICS Explorer

If users get stuck, they can type 'zowe --hw', which stands for help Web, and will show all the commands available.

Within Zowe, developers can use script, PHP, Ruby, etc to automate tasks without knowing anything about REXX or other mainframe languages.

Rather than using the command line interface, Zowe users can use Visual Studio Code. That gives access to Zowe Explorer. This also lets users see

files and run jobs. It comes with right-click options to save and delete etc. So, is easy to use. It also allows substitution JCL and REXX to be used.

Joe then moved on to show the user group the Zowe CICS interface, which is a plugin. And, again, it's possible to list files and programs.

Jeffin then started talking about Zowe Explorer for CICS, which is a Visual Studio Code extension. The download page for

it is shown in Figure 3. It allows interactions with CICS resources through VS Code. It allows CICS-specific commands to be used such as 'New Copy'. It allows CICS COBOL developers to perform tasks on Visual Studio Code from start to finish. There's no need to exit VS Code. A simple right-click allow a new profile to be created by filling in a Web form. There's a program list, a transaction list, and a local files list available. Jeffin then demonstrated how 'New Copy' works. He also showed

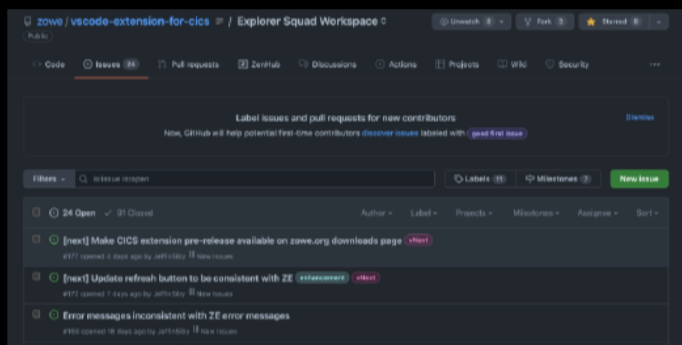
Stay in touch



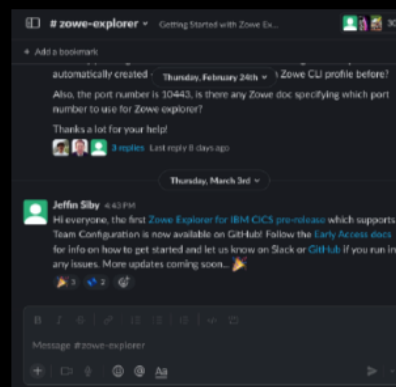
[zowe/vscode-extension-for-cics](https://github.com/zowe/vscode-extension-for-cics/issues) issues on GitHub



[#zowe-explorer](https://openmainframeproject.slack.com/archives/CUVE37Z5F) slack channel on OMP workspace



<https://github.com/zowe/vscode-extension-for-cics/issues>



<https://openmainframeproject.slack.com/archives/CUVE37Z5F>

Figure 4: Ways to contact the Zowe team

how easy it was to phase in, enable, or disable a program.

Zowe is still being developed with V2 coming soon. They are hoping to add Web services, Db2 transactions, and other resources. They are also thinking of making it more Java-developer friendly.

Anyone with feedback can get in contact with the Zowe team on GitHub at [zowe/vscode-extension-for-cics](https://github.com/zowe/vscode-extension-for-cics), Alternatively, they can use the OMP workspace on Slack, [#zowe-explorer](https://openmainframeproject.slack.com/archives/CUVE37Z5F) Slack channel (see Figure 4).

The Zowe Desktop provides

a useful 3270 emulator for people who need to use it.

A copy of Joe Winchester and Jeffin Siby's presentation is available for download from the Virtual CICS user group website at virtualcics.hostbridge.com/presentations/CICSZoweMar22.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting at <https://youtu.be/f19sAhoCBQk>.

Meeting dates

The following meeting dates have been arranged for the

Virtual CICS user group:

- On 10 May we have Robert Barnes, CEO Jazz Software, who will be discussing, "CICS Web services – bridging two worlds".
- The following meeting is on 12 July, when Stewart Francis, Lead Software Engineer at IBM, will be discussing "Developing and modernizing CICS applications with Ansible".

We are using Zoom for the user group meetings.

CICS news

For sites using CICS APIs, Adaptigent has launched its Intelligent Caching engine, which is a distributed, in-memory, data cache designed to reduce mainframe integration load and costs, while reducing API response times by up to 50 times for mission-critical data and transaction calls.

The technology can pre-load highly cacheable data during periods when mainframe demand is relatively low, allowing customers to offload mainframe processing when demand is high. The Intelligent Caching engine also supports partial caching, in which a single API request has cacheable and non-cacheable data elements to it. The engine can pull data from the cache and combine it with live data to fulfil the API request.

The caching engine uses workflows, allowing users to set caching policies for individual mainframe transactions. This adds a layer of intelligence to the caching approach.

More information can be found at: <https://www.adaptigent.com/products/intelligent-caching-engine/>

CICS articles and blogs

A new way to raise requirements on Z Software products by John Tilling in the CICS part of the IBM Z and LinuxONE Community (25 March 2022), You can find the article at: <https://community.ibm.com/community/user/ibmz-and-linuxone/blogs/john-tilling1/2022/03/25/a-new-way-to-raise-requirements>

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 virtualcics.hostbridge.com 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.

