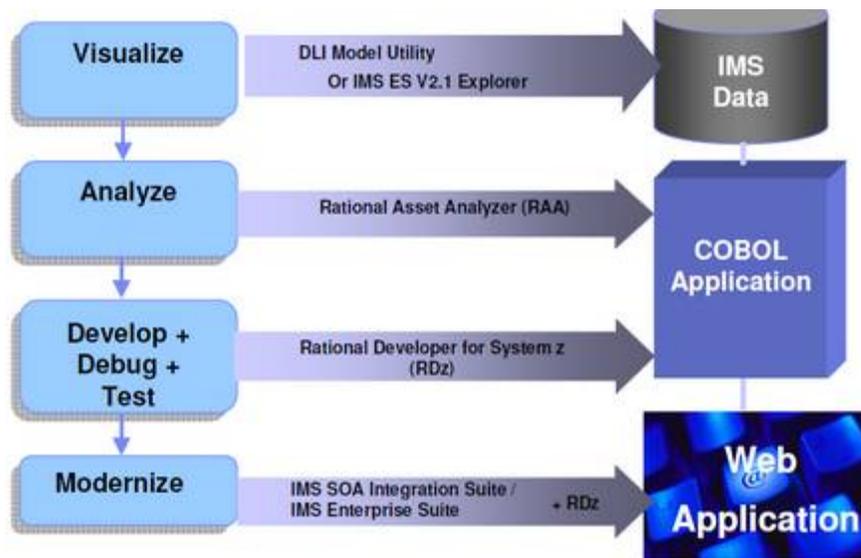Welcome to the Virtual IMS user group newsletter. The Virtual IMS user group at www.fundi.com/virtualims is an independently-operated vendor-neutral site run by and for the IMS user community.

Virtual IMS user group presentation

The latest webinar from the Virtual IMS user group was entitled, "IMS V12", and was presented by Suzie Wendler, Consulting I/T Specialist with the IBM IMS Advanced Technical Skills organization.

Over the past several years, Suzie's major responsibilities have included areas such as customer support, critical situation analyses, IMS On Demand, SOA, and Connectivity projects. She has been involved in several onsite consulting projects including implementations of connectivity designs and Proofs of Concept. Additionally, she has presented at several User Groups, including Share and the IMS regional user groups. She's been involved in IBM-sponsored activities such as technical seminars and the

Figure 1: IMS integration strategy

IOD, and has provided both technical and teaching support for IMS hands-on workshops.
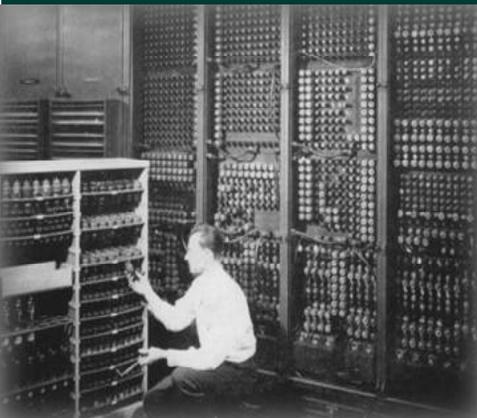
Suzie started her presentation to the user group with a roadmap of IMS, reminding us that there is no longer support for Version 9, and Version 10 support ends in November next year!
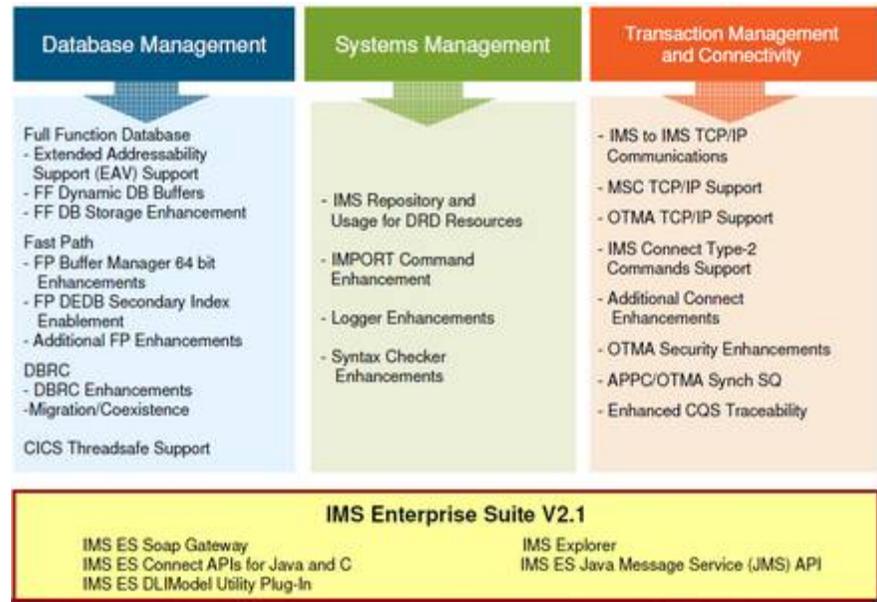
Suzie suggested that there

were four parts to IBM's IMS strategy, and these were:

Contents:

- Do more with less!
  - Reduce CPU utilization
  - Work in memory (above the bar)
  - Remove expired workloads.
- Infrastructure improvements for the future!
  - Performance is NOT an option!
  - Capacity – supporting workload consolidation
  - And also availability, serviceability, security.
- Simplify IMS utilization (management of IMS systems as well as IMS application development) – Figure 1 illustrates part of this
  - More intuitive UIs and interfaces to talk to IMS
  - More autonomic IMS Tools
  - Address the changing skills profiles in customers.
- Enhance and simplify integration of IMS assets with SOA and other Web solutions
  - Support of SOA standards
  - Support of Web 2.0 for lightweight integration.

Figure 2: IMS 12 highlights

IBM's Suzie Wendler highlighted the main features in IMS 12, and these can be seen in Figure 2. She explained that IMS Enterprise Suite V2.1 worked alongside the database management, system management, and transaction management features.

Suzie discussed database enhancements such as such as EAV (Extended Address Volume) support for OSAM and non-VSAM system data sets, and how dynamic changes to an OSAM or VSAM buffer pool can be made without recycling the IMS systems to pick up the change.

Suzie noted that CICS 4.2 added support for threadsafe IMS database calls with IMS

12. This eliminates TCB switches for IMS database calls. This is illustrated in Figure 3.

There is now support for MSC (Multiple System Coupling) communications over TCP/IP. Also, Type-2 Commands can be used with IMS Connect. So IMS and IMS Connect can be controlled from a single point of control.

Enhanced APPC/OTMA synchronous shared queues provide the option to use MVS Cross Coupling Facility (XCF) for communication instead of RRS (Resource Recovery Services) between shared queues front-end and back-end systems.

Management of Dynamic Resource Definition (DRD)
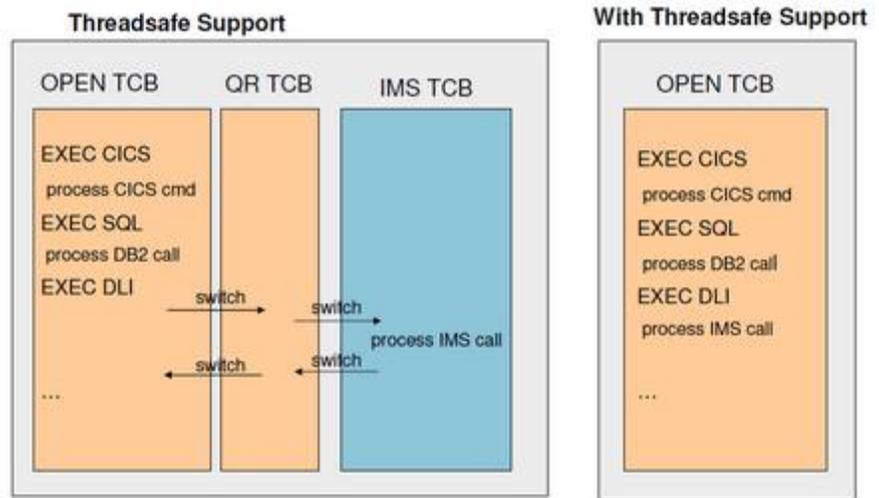
resource definitions has been simplified.

Logger enhancements take the form of Extended Format support for OLDS and SLDS.

Suzie told us that there were new IBM Solution Packs. In general, IBM will support the latest stand-alone version of every tool as well as their Solution Pack counterpart if one exists. The latest versions of TOSI, Generic Exits, IMS Tools Knowledge Base, and HD Compression Extended are only supported in the IMS Tools Base for z/OS. Fast Path Secondary Index creation tool is included in FP Solution Pack.

Although not strictly part of the IMS 12 announcements, Rational Developer for z (RDz) provides a common development environment for COBOL, PL/I, C/C++, and Java. There are a number of IMS-specific RDz capabilities, eg for IMS code snippets. There are six categories for adding IMS COBOL code to zLPEX Editor.

IMS Enterprise Suite V2.1 is a set of components that support open integration technologies. For example:

- IMS Enterprise Suite Connect APIs for C/C++ and Java – simplifies application development for stand-alone, user-written IMS Connect clients

Figure 3: Threadsafe support

- IMS Enterprise Suite SOAP Gateway – provides a solution for integrating IMS assets in an SOA environment that supports:

  - Exposing an IMS application as a Web service

  - Calling out to a Web service from an IMS application

  - Emitting business event data to an event processing engine.

- IMS Enterprise Suite Java Message Service (JMS) API – supports synchronous callout request to external services from within an IMS Java message processing (JMP) or Java batch processing (JBP) application

- IMS Enterprise Suite DLIModel utility plug-in

(eclipse-based) – translates IMS source files into reliable, application-independent metadata that can be used for Java application development

- IMS Enterprise Suite Explorer for Development – a new capability that enhances the functionality previously provided only in the DLIModel utility plug-in.

- IMS Explorer, which was previously available only as a technical preview. It's an Eclipse-based graphical tool that simplifies IMS application development tasks such as updating DBD and PSB source.

A copy of Suzie's presentation is available for download from the Virtual IMS user group Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/IMSV12Dec11.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/2011-12-06meeting.wmv.

Meeting dates

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

- 7 February 2012 – Neil Price, TNT Express, will be talking about "Memoirs of a HALDBA".

- 3 April – tbc.

Recent IMS articles

Understanding and using IMS SOAP Web services by Robert Crawford on SearchDataCenter. You can find the article at http://searchdatacenter.techtarget.com/tip/Understanding-and-using-IMS-SOAP-Web-services.

Don't forget that you can stay up-to-date with all that's happening in the IMS world and with what's happening with the Virtual IMS user group by following us on Twitter or finding us on Facebook or joining our group on LinkedIn.

IMS 12 Fit for the future by Sandy Sherrill in *IBM Systems Magazine* (November/December 2011). You can find the article at www.ibmsystemsmagmainframedigital.com/nxtbooks/ibmsystemsmag/mainframe_20111112/#/18.

The Arcati Mainframe Yearbook 2012

The Arcati Mainframe Yearbook has been the *de facto* reference work for IT professionals working with z/OS systems since 2005. It includes an annual user survey, an up-to-date directory of vendors and consultants, a media guide, a strategy section with papers on mainframe trends and directions, a glossary of terminology, and a technical specification section.

And what's more, it's available free, in PDF format, from www.arcati.com/newyearbook12.

IMS news

As usual, announcements tail off towards the end of the year. The 'big one' since our last newsletter is that IMS 12 GA'd on 28 October.

Happy New Year

About the Virtual IMS user group

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

The Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualims 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 IMS practitioners. Anyone with an interest in IMS is welcome to join the Virtual IMS user group and share in the knowledge exchange.

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

The Virtual IMS user group is free to its members.