Virtual IMS user group: Newsletter 31

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 Configuration Manager: streamlining the transition to dynamic resource definition", and was presented by Fundi Software's James Martin.

James has more than 8 years of IMS experience. For 1.5 years he was Test Lead for IMS Problem Investigator. He's an ASTQB Certified Tester. And he's a SHARE IMS Project Manager.

James Martin started by asking how IMS users can:

- Reduce the risk of changing settings that have not been altered in years?
- Identify differences across systems and LPARs?

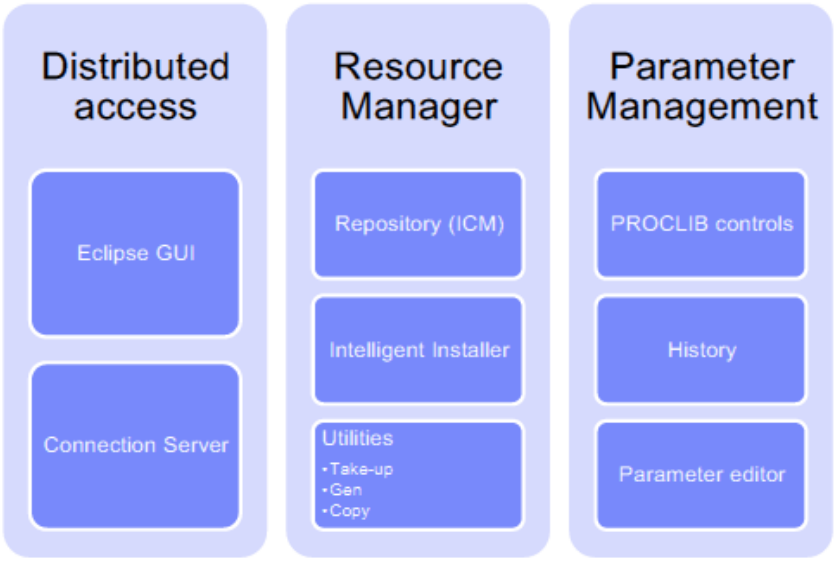

Figure 1: Components of IMS Configuration Manager

- Learn about and apply new settings and parameters?
- Ensure a high-level of operational integrity with less experienced staff?

James informed the user group that IMS Configuration Manager (see Figure 1)

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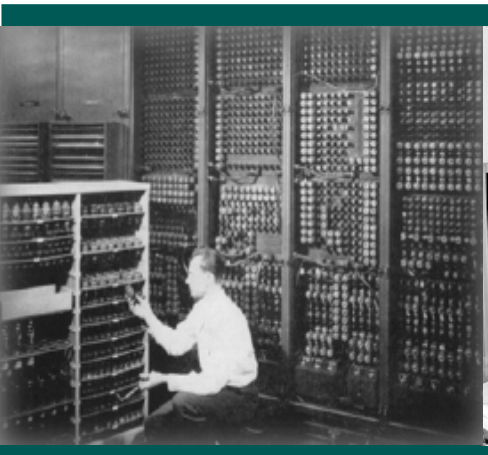

Virtual IMS USER GROUP

can help to control, audit, and validate the parameter definition process.

Parameter management comes with:

- Enhanced parameter listing and search:
  - Semantic search: finds parameters and members based on keywords; identifies missing parameters and members
  - Listing of PROCLIB members that are active on a given system
  - Edit history for all members
- Enhanced ISPF edit session that provides:
  - Checking of parameter syntax
  - Ability to insert parameters from a model
  - Context sensitive help for all parameters
  - Retains many ISPF edit functions
  - Does not alter or modify the member in anyway (unless you explicitly add or modify parameters)
  - Allows you to back up members before saving them
  - In the future may be extended to perform checking of entire PROCLIBs.

An example of parameter semantic search is shown in Figure 2.

According to Martin, users can streamline resource management with Dynamic Resource Definition (DRD). DRD offers the promise of a modern approach to application development. It reduces the need for performing an IMSGEN. And it's more flexible and immediate than an online change

IMS Configuration Manager adds structure to the DRD

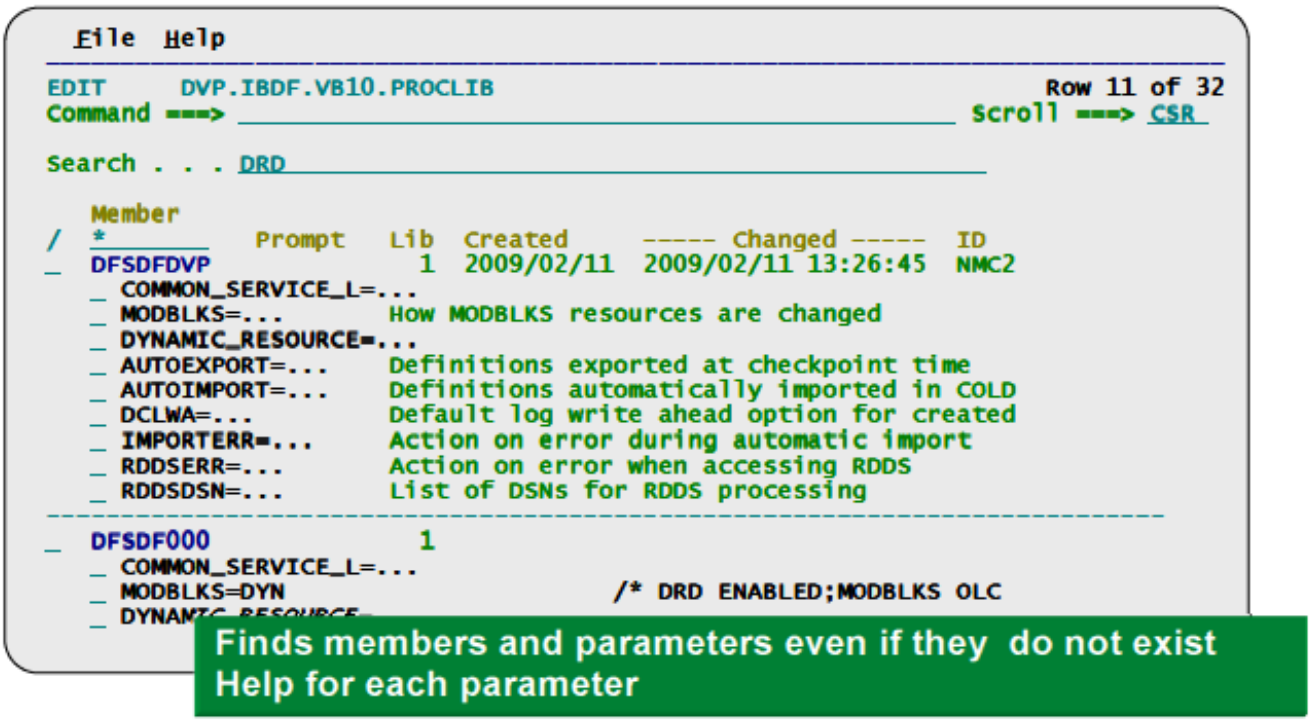

Figure 2: Parameter semantic search

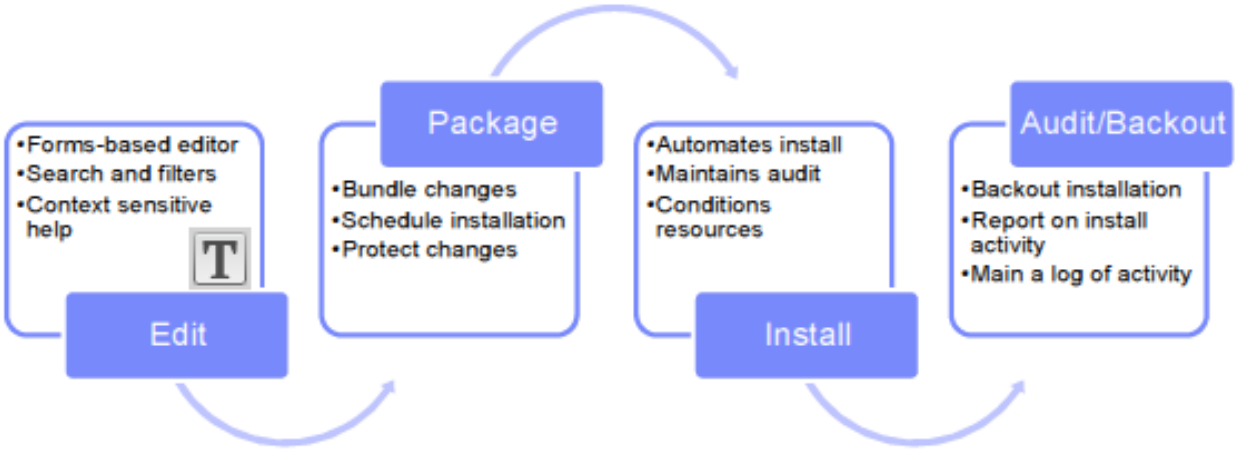

Figure 3: Updating resources using DRD

process. Users can:

- Maintain their processes but gain the benefits of DRD
- Add a layer of audit and control that allows them to open up the process to developers
- Use automation and reversibility of the change process.

Updating resources using DRD is illustrated in Figure 3.

James Martin told us that the IMS Configuration Manager resource installer provides enhanced services on top of the IMS type-2 command interface. It automatically determines whether an install or update is required, provides a rollback option, has full-logging of install activity, and builds and records the system image.

The installer conditions resources for online installation:

- Automated resource installation using documented best practices
- Identifies resources that are in use
- Can stop new activity to the resource and wait for a specified duration
- Then retries updating the resources (number of retries configurable)
- After resource is updated, reactivates the resources.

IMS Configuration Manager resource installer – BACKOUT:

- Each change that is made is tracked in the repository
- A BACKOUT command can be used to reverse the changes
- Backout allows you to ensure changes you make are reversible.

The IMS Configuration Manager GUI:

- Controls and manages IMS systems
- Learns and discovers the type II commands that are essential to managing the IMS resources
- Lists and views resources in the IMS Configuration Manager repository
- Uses powerful compare features to highlight differences between environments.

System Access Control:

- Enables better devolvement of responsibilities

- Protects developers from making inadvertent modifications to resources not under their control
- Enables application group to control their development systems
- Protects production systems from accidental change
- Implemented using SAF interface with new security class for profiles.

James Martin concluded by saying that IMS Configuration Manager simplifies the management of IMS resources and parameters (using DRD or traditional SYSGEN processes). It provides the same level of controls users had in a SYSGEN environment. The resource installation process is streamlined, making it easy to synchronize offline source with online systems. The availability of rollback helps customers introduce changes as a unified set. Backout provides auditors with peace of mind. IMS Configuration Manager provides a foundation from which an end-to-end IMS administration and management system can evolve.

A copy of this presentation is available for download from the Virtual IMS user group Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/ICMApr13.pdf.

You can see and hear the brief user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/2013-04-09meeting.wmv.

Meeting dates

- 11 June 2013, Betty Patterson, IMS Chief Architect at IBM, will be previewing IMS 13.
- 6 August 2013, Wayne Morton, Rocket Software.

IMS news

BMC Software has announced BMC Application Accelerator for IMS. The product dynamically tunes DL/I batch applications, which reduces both the CPU usage and elapsed time of IMS batch jobs. BMC Application Accelerator for IMS automatically monitors DL/I batch jobs during execution. If it determines that it can improve the performance, on subsequent execution of the analysed jobs, it dynamically changes job parameters so that the job will run more efficiently and consequently faster. More information can be found at www.bmc.com/products/product-listing/application-accelerator-for-ims.html.

Recent IMS articles

Using IMS 13 OTMA Client Descriptor for Message Flood Control by David Hanson, Dave Cameron, and Jack Yuan in *IBM Systems Magazine* (April 2013). You can find the article at http://ibmsystemsmag.com/mainframe/administrator/ims/ims_otma/.

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.