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, "A simpler solution for issuing outgoing Web services calls from IMS applications", and was presented by Patrick Fournier, Virtel Product Specialist and Solution Architect for USA and Canada with SysperTec Communication, and John Bachiochi, Virtel Product Specialist with SysperTec Communication.

Patrick has 40 years mainframe IT experience, mostly legacy mainframe application modernization, and, for the past five years, Web-enablement of legacy mainframe applications.

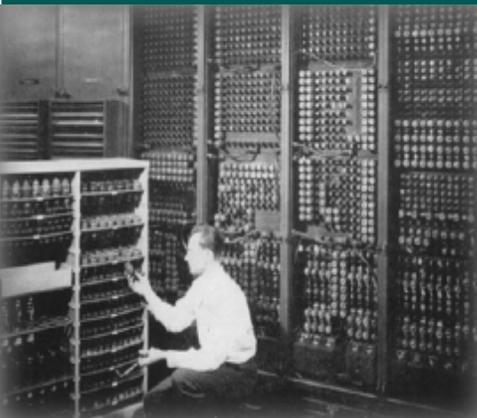John has worked for 38 years in the mainframe industry as an application and systems developer, both in the private and public sector. His current focus is the Web-enablement of legacy mainframe applications, more specifically the integration of legacy systems with Web
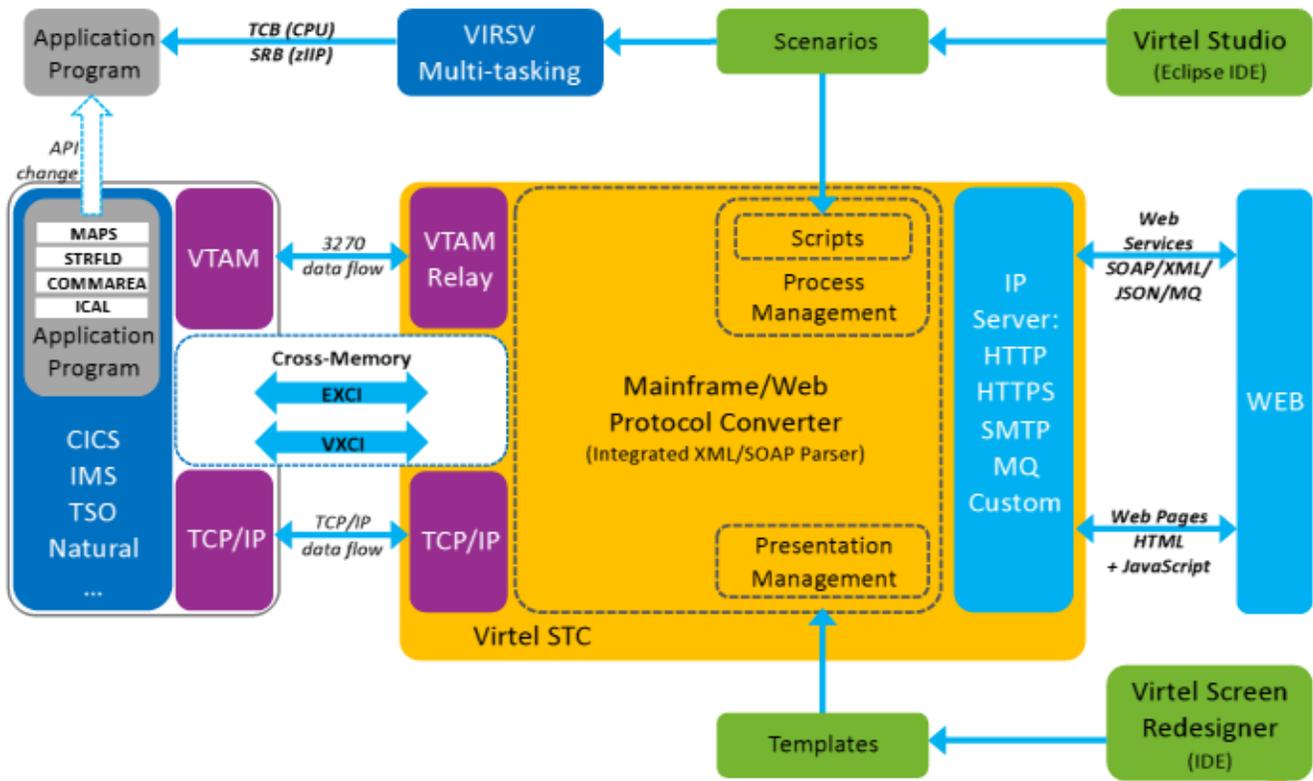
Figure 1: mainframe applications no longer run in isolation

Figure 2: Virtel product architecture

and other non-mainframe systems.

Patrick started the presentation by saying that the challenge faced by some of their customers was that calling remote Web services from IMS application programs is cumbersome: IMS COBOL programmers must deal with XML/SOAP data formats and the HTTP communication protocol that they are not familiar with (see Figure 1). Modern data processing combines heterogeneous application components that communicate through Web connections.

The solution customers came up with was to let Virtel handle XML/SOAP data format conversion and the HTTP communication protocol behind the scene. Patrick said that Virtel IMS Extender provides a simple IMS COBOL solution to call remote Web services from IMS applications.
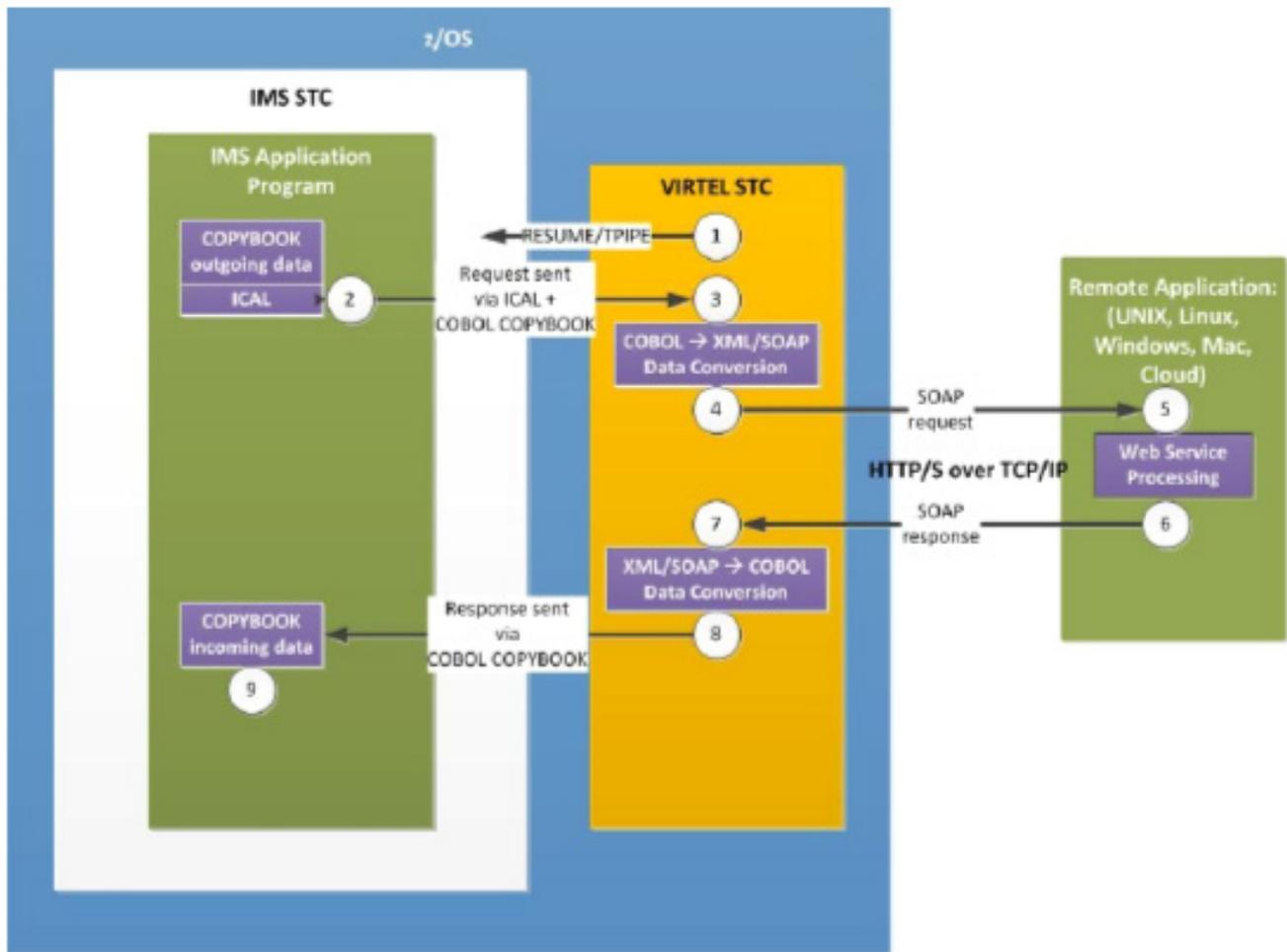
The Virtel product architecture is shown in Figure 2.

The steps taken when using the product are illustrated in Figure 3. They are:

1 Initiate connection and

dialog between Virtel and IMS

2 Set service call parameters in the outgoing copybook and issue ICAL

3 Convert service call parameters to XML/SOAP format

4 Send a Web service request to the appropriate URL

5 Process the Web service request

6 Send a Web service response back to the host

7 Convert the service

Figure 3: Steps in the process

response from XML/SOAP to copybook format

8 Send a Web service response back to the IMS application program

9 Process the service response and continue with normal processing.

John took over the presentation to look at installation and tailoring, and to give some examples of the code generated.

Installation involves uploading Virtel libraries to the z/OS system, which takes around 2 hours.

The tailoring involves the Web service path definition between IMS and Virtel, and Virtel and the Web. You need to define: a URL to call remote Web services; and name correspondence between the Web service, the scenario, and the IMS transaction.

A copy of Patrick and John's presentation is available for download from the Virtual IMS user group Web site at www.fundi.com/ virtualims/presentations/ WebcallsJun14.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from www.fundi. com/virtualims/ presentations/2014-06- 10meeting.wmv.

Meeting dates

- On 5 August 2014, we have Betty Patterson, IMS Chief Architect, IBM, presenting "Reducing planned outages".

- On 7 October 2014, it's SQData's Scott Quillicy.

- On 2 December 2014, we have Rocket Software's Bill Morton.

IMS news

IBM has announced a new version of IMS Transaction Manager Value Unit Edition (TM VUE) that delivers an alternative and attractive pricing option to access IMS assets from qualified Java, mobile, analytics, and big data workloads. IBM is offering one-time-charge (OTC) pricing for newly-qualified IMS workloads on IBM System z New Application License Charges (zNALC) Logical Partitions (LPARs). IMS TM VUE terms limit its use to support of Eligible Workloads (net new applications or workloads). More information can be found at `www-01.ibm.com/common/ssi/cgi-bin/ssialias?subtype=ca&infotype=an&supplier=897&letternum=ENUS213-192` .

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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.