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, "Automation for IMS Connect", and was presented by Jim Martin, US Representative for Fundi Software.

Jim is the United States representative for Fundi Software Ltd of Perth, Australia, and the Chief Architect for IMS Connect Extensions. Jim has been working with IMS since, about, 1971. He started his career with IBM in 1967 and worked as a Program Support Representative, Systems Engineer, and member of the IMS Critical situation team at the systems center in Dallas, Texas. He left IBM to join BMC Software of Houston, Texas as a product author and
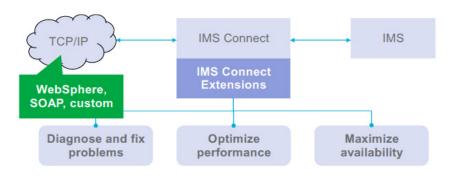

Figure 1: IMS Connect Extensions at a glance

was later promoted to the role of Corporate Product Architect. Jim worked at BMC Software for 10 years and was responsible for several products designed to provide IMS customer's enhanced IMS solutions. He is the holder of 12 US Patents on IMS and database-related techniques and has had several articles published in industry magazines – Enterprise System Journal, Technical Support, and DM Review. Jim is a regular presenter

at Share, Information on Demand conferences, and other industry conferences. He also participates in the IBM webcast program supporting IBM Tools. He is also a regular contributor to
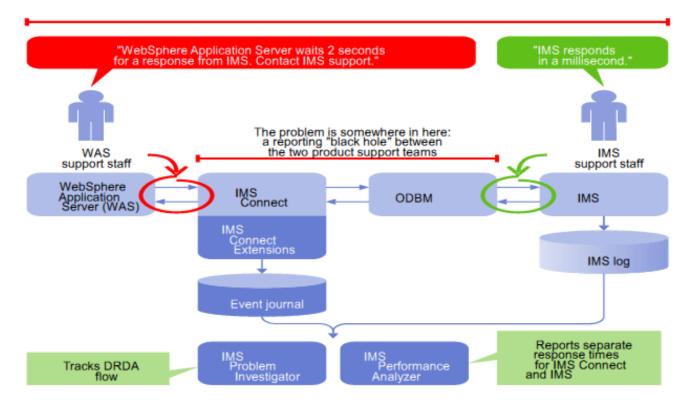
Contents:

Figure 2: Response time over two seconds

the quarterly IMS newsletter published by the IMS laboratory.

Jim started his presentation with a quick look at IMS Connect Extensions (see Figure 1). He went on to look at IMS Connect Extensions with IMS PA and IMS PI used with OTMA workloads and Open Database (ODbL) workloads. He then moved on to show how IMS Connect Extensions can be used to identify poor response times that seem to occur in the area between IMS support staff's area and, say, the WAS support staff (see Figure 2).

Jim listed some of things that are new in IMS Connect

Extensions V2.4. These include:

- Operations Console eclipse plugin for IBM Explorer for z/OS® (or other shells).

- IMS Connect Extensions host command environment for REXX

- Routing Plans

- Support for qualifying rules-based routing by transaction code

- Support for routing by alternate transaction code

- Pre-routing user exit for rules-based routing

- Datastore Drain/Resume feature

- Session drain command

- New Session Message Limit option enables Automatic Session Rebalancing in-session distribution environments

- Update commands

- OTMA Global Flood Warning support

- Support for IMS V13

- Support for dynamically added IMS Connect ports

- Support for dynamically added IMS Connect datastores

- zIIP offload support.

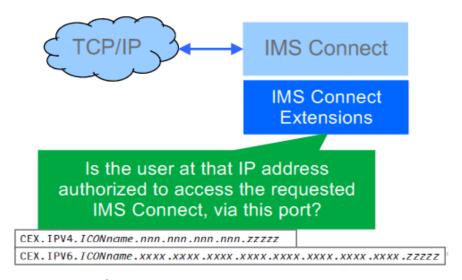You don't need to use VIEWHWS or Recorder

CEX.IPV4.*ICONname.nnn.nnn.nnn.nnn.zzzzz*
CEX.IPV6.*ICONname.xxxx.xxxx.xxxx.xxxx.xxxx.xxxx.xxxx.xxxx.zzzzz*

Figure 3: Security and validation

Trace, you can now use IMS Connect Extensions instead.

Jim advised that Rules-based routing is the simplest way to gain the benefits of IMS Connect Extensions' routing. You create rules that, for a given DESTID, determine a primary and fallback collection of candidate datastores. IMS Connect Extensions will balance workloads between the datastores in the primary collection. If none of the datastores in the primary collection are available or if all datastores in that collection are in flood, then IMS Connect Extensions spreads the workload between the fallback collection. It works for transactional messages, Send Only, Resume TPIPE, Synchronous callout, and Asynchronous callout. The rule must match the IMS Configuration capabilities.

Routing plans provide the ability to logically group routing rules and to dynamically swap between different plans. The benefits include: improved performance, redundancy, and better capacity management.

When it comes to security and validation, IMS Connect Extensions extend IMS Connect authentication and authorization to improve flexibility, performance, and security. They also authorize users based on:

- The IMS Connect system they are connecting through

- The IP address they are connecting from – where a white list will allow only certain IP addresses access through IMS Connect, and a black list will reject access from

certain IP addresses or address ranges

- The ports that users are connecting to

- Routing itself ensures enhanced security by allowing you to reject messages that don't have certain basic characteristics

- ACEE cacheing for all supported versions of IMS Connect.

This is illustrated in Figure 3.

New in Version 2.4 is the IMS Connect Extensions host command environment for REXX. This includes most IMS Connect Extensions commands. It improves the options available for automated solutions, and allows flexible and tightly integrated automation. The key benefits are:

- Flexibility of REXX language

- Single REXX able to communicate with multiple IMS Connect systems

- Scripts can also address other host environments, eg IMS SPOC, SDSF, MVS Console, and ISPF.

The IMS Connect Extensions Operations Console is an Eclipse plug-in that's installed under the IBM Explorer for z/OS shell. It can be installed
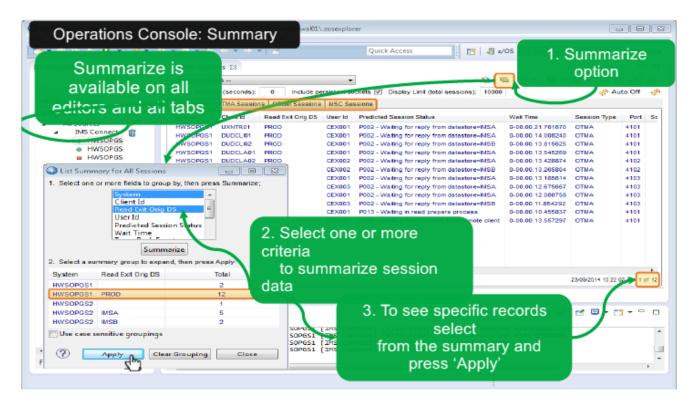
Figure 4: Operations console summary

in other Eclipse shells, and integrates with other tools (eg IMS Configuration Manager and Transaction Analysis Workbench). The import/export facility simplifies GUI set up by exporting a 'Standard' configuration file

It has IMS Commands Support:

- Issues IMS Type-1 commands

- Issues new IMS Connect commands

- IMS Configuration Manager V2.1 provides 'auto-discovery' and OM commands.

Improvements in V2.4 include:

- Improved connection and credential management

- Tabbed status monitor and tabbed active sessions displays

- Improved filters and filter management

- Improved list layout management

- Summarize/Group options

- Numerous navigation and usability improvements

- Saved displays and Comparator wizard.

A copy of Jim Martin's presentation is available for download from the Virtual IMS user group Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/AutoIMSConnectJun15.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/2015-06-09meeting.wmv.

Meeting dates

- On 11 August 2015, we have SQData's Scott Quillicy. He will be discussing "Replicating IMS Data to IDAA and PureData Analytics".

- On 6 October 2015, we have BMC's Glenn Witt speaking.

IMS news

IBM has announced Rocket's Mainframe Data Access Service on Bluemix. It provides clients with a simple, seamless, and secure connection to data on the IBM z Systems mainframe for development of new mobile and hybrid cloud apps through Bluemix. Clients can access a no-charge trial of the service, which provides universal access to the data – regardless of location, interface, or format – including IMS, VSAM, ADABAS, CICS, and DB2, SMF, Tape, and Sys Logs, and allows access to that data through methods developers prefer, including MongoDB APIs, JDBC, Web services, SQL and the REST protocol via z/OS Connect. More information can be found at https://www-03.ibm.com/press/us/en/pressrelease/46810.wss.

Recent IMS articles

Tips for Developing IMS Mobile Applications with Fewer IMS System Resources by Mei Xiu Li and Jack Yuan in *IBM Systems Magazine* (May 2015). You can find the article at http://www.ibmsystemsmag.com/mainframe/administrator/ims/mobile-application-resources/.

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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.