Virtual IMS user group: Newsletter 68

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, “What’s new in IMS Connect Extensions V3.1”. It was presented by James Martin, Senior Solutions Advisor for Rocket Software.

James is a Senior Solutions Advisor for Rocket Software, and an IBM Preferred Development Business Partner. He’s been working with the IBM IMS Performance Tools for 13 years. His work history includes: 3 years with IBM working as a Client Technical Professional in the IMS Tools space and 10 years at Fundi Software working in a Technical Sales/Support and Software testing role. As an IBM CTP for North America, he travelled to various customer locations supporting and promoting IBM IMS tools and spoke at a wide variety of conferences and user groups. He is an ASTQB Certified Tester and has held various testing roles including a 2-year stint as the Test Lead for IMS Problem Investigator product. In his current role as

Figure 1: IMS Connect Extensions

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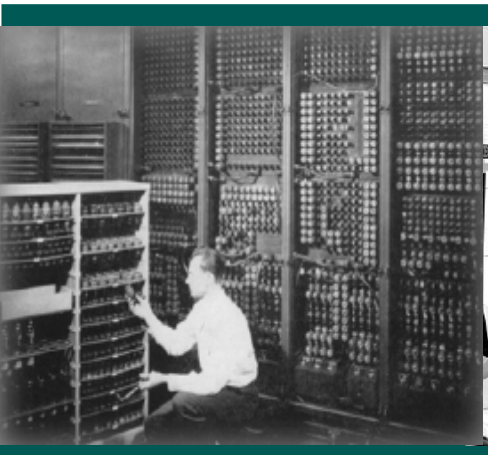

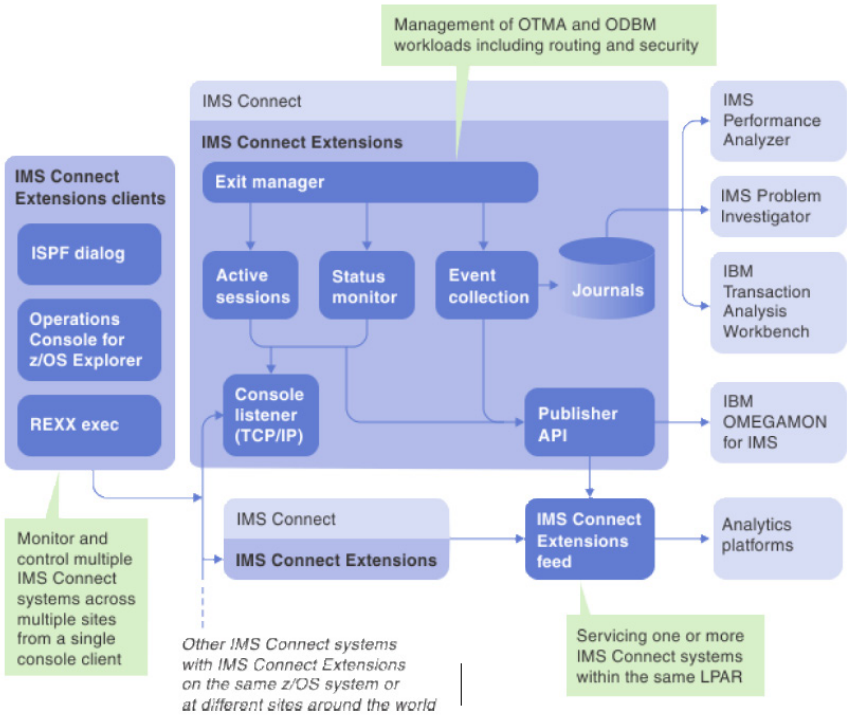

Figure 2: IBM IMS Connect Extensions for z/OS

a Senior Solutions Advisor, James travels to various conferences and customers in North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia for speaking engagements and Product Technical Support. James is also one of the IMS Project Managers for the SHARE Technology Conference.

James Martin informed the user group that IMS Connect needs a lot of customization if you want to do anything other than pass messages and requests. However, customizing IMS Connect, while possible, is very difficult – IMS Connect protocols are complex. IMS Connect Extensions offers "out-of-the box" tried and tested workload management solution that are well documented and fully supported by a team of experts (see Figure 1).

IBM IMS Connect Extensions for z/OS:

- Provides a single point of control and monitoring through ISPF, the Operations Console for z/OS Explorer, and REXX execs (automation!).
- Delivers IMS Connect insights into: IMS Performance Analyzer (reporting); IMS Problem Investigator (journal browsing); IBM Transaction Analysis Workbench (journal browsing and analytics); IBM OMEGAMON for IMS (reporting); and Analytics platforms (eg Splunk).
- Builds on IMS Connect with: workload routing and balancing; additional security features; and IP address rules.

This is illustrated in Figure 2.

In the past, you had to install the Operations Console manually after transferring it off the mainframe. Now you can easily select it from within z/OS Explorer or go directly to the Web site for updates.

You can now view statistics from multiple IMS Connect systems on a single screen. You can suppress switching if the journal has been recently switched or is about to be switched (CEXRXC03). You can identify and optionally respond to the scenario where an IMS Connect system is approaching MAXSOC (CEXRX81).

IMS Connect Extensions now offers centralized management of trust based on IP address, and it can take the user ID from the client's digital certificate (AT-TLS) (see Figure 3).

James told the user group that there have been major documentation updates for IMS Connect workload management, and he illustrated the step-by-step procedures for creating

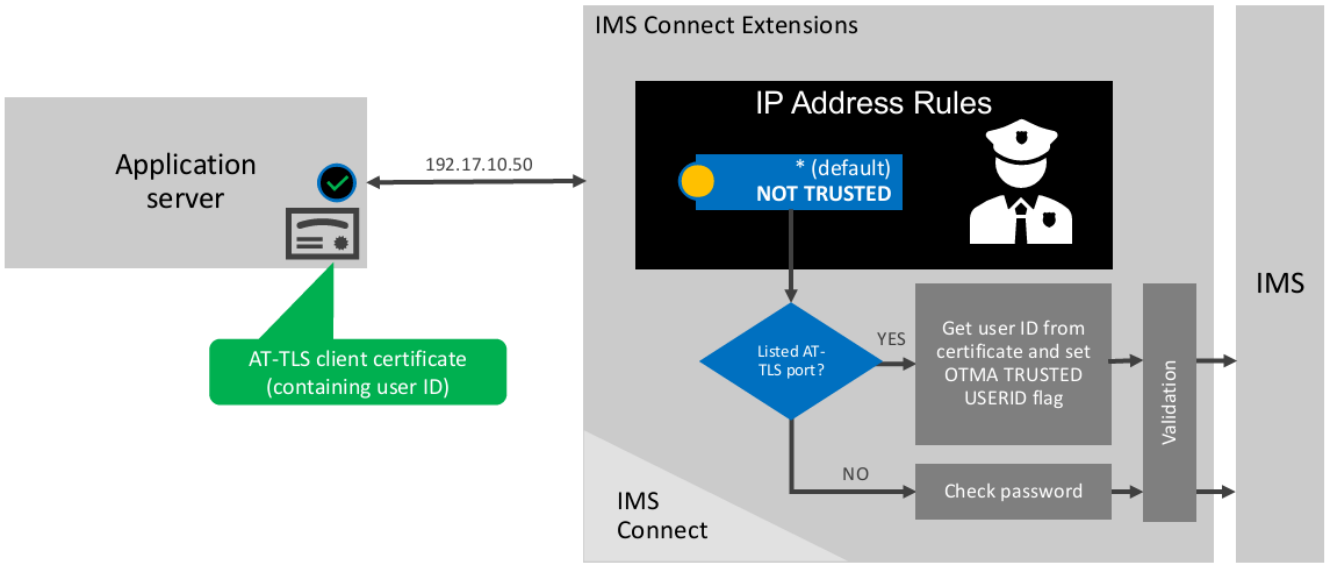

Figure 3: Security: take the user ID from the client's digital certificate (AT-TLS)

OTMA (Open Transaction Manager Access) and ODBM (Open Database Manager) workload rules.

When it comes to OTMA workload shaping in IMS Connect Extensions, users can shift the work around (and use REXX to update it dynamically). There are also new routing scenarios and procedures for ODBM workloads.

James Martin was most excited about the IMS Connect Extensions feed for operations analytics (see Figure 4). He said it's a near real time data feed of IMS Connect transaction activity in summary form. The feed uses the IMS Connect Extensions Publisher API. And it processes event records from the IMS Connect Extensions Publisher API using the same process that is found in IMS Performance Analyzer to produce IMS Connect transaction index records (also known as CA20 records).

The things you can do with it include:

- Chart the data in analytics platforms. There's a Splunk sample application at splunkbase.splunk.com/app/4320/. It can forward as JSON Lines, or use SMF (Common Data Provider)
- Use the IMS Connect transaction index with IMS Performance Analyzer, IMS Problem Investigator, or IBM Transaction Analysis Workbench.

James then showed some slides illustrating what sort of information could be seen and how it could be drilled down into to gain more information. Users could see, from the dashboard, information like who's sending (IP address), and what IMS Connect systems, DATASTORES, and IMS systems were processing the most (and the path taken by transactions). It's possible to see workload mapping (and the OTMA routing rules in-effect).

There is an IMS Connect transaction analysis sample app. Users can download it and install into Splunk from Splunkbase. It will:

- Monitor transaction performance

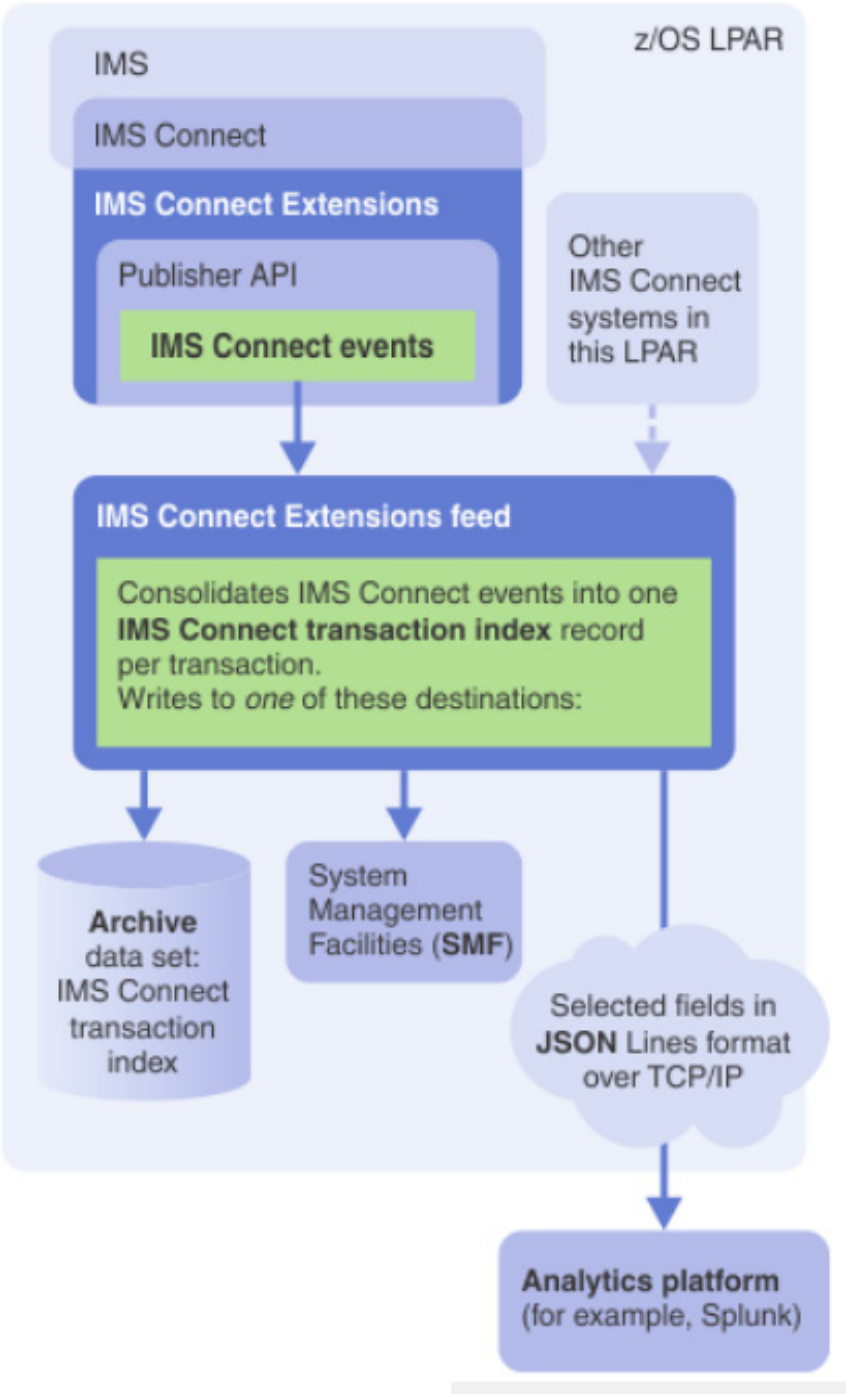

Figure 4: IMS Connect Extensions feed

- Show the effect of IMS Connect Extensions OTMA workload routing rules
- Configure easily, so users can create their own charts in Splunk.

A copy of James Martin's presentation is available for download from the Virtual IMS user group Web site at fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/IMSConnectExtensionsV310Jun19.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting at https://youtu.be/HF1SfJU__D0.

Meeting dates

- On 13 August 2019, Dusty Rivers, Director, z Systems Software: IMS & CICS at GT Software, will be discussing "IMS APIs... You Don't Know, What you Don't Know".
- The following meeting will be on 8 October when James Wilson, Product Developer at BMC Software, will be speaking.

IMS news

Dynatrace has announced that it has extended Dynatrace, its AI-powered platform, to include IBM Z support for IMS, CICS, and middleware. This gives customers precise information about the performance of digital services across hybrid environments; from modern cloud applications to the mainframe. Dynatrace provides software intelligence

to simplify enterprise cloud complexity and accelerate digital transformation. It provides end-to-end visibility by automatically discovering and mapping every transaction with a single AI-powered solution. This real time visibility, from cloud to the mainframe, gives enterprises a competitive advantage – they can eliminate inefficiencies and consequently, innovate at a faster rate. More information can be found at https://www.dynatrace.com/news/press-release/dynatrace-extends-ai-powered-software-intelligence-platform-to-hybrid-mainframe-environments/

Recent IMS articles

IMS Connect workload monitoring and off-host analytics with IMS Connect Extensions and Splunk by Tracy Dean on z Systems Developer Community (18 June 2019). You can find the article at https://developer.ibm.com/zsystems/2019/06/18/ims-connect-workload-monitoring-and-off-host-analytics-with-ims-connect-extensions-and-splunk/

How to provision an IMS DB/TM system with the IBM z/OS Provisioning Toolkit by Eric Su on z Systems Developer Community (20 May 2019). You can find the article at https://developer.ibm.com/mainframe/2019/05/20/how-to-provision-an-ims-db-tm-system-with-the-ibm-z-os-provisioning-toolkit/

How does IMS 15 stack up against IMS 14 and IMS 13? by Justin Soe on z Systems Developer Community (7 May 2019). You can find the article at https://developer.ibm.com/zsystems/2019/05/07/how-does-ims-15-stack-up-against-ims-14-and-ims-13/

Sponsorship opportunity

Are you missing a great opportunity to advertise your IMS software?

The Virtual IMS user group is now offering software vendors the opportunity to advertise their products in a number of ways. You could have an advert on the home page of the Web site (at www.fundi.com/virtualims), you could advertise in the newsletter, and/or you could advertise in the monthly e-mails sent to members of the user group.

E-mail trevor@itech-ed.com for full information about marketing opportunities with the Virtual IMS user group.

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.