



Virtual IMS user group: Newsletter 87



Welcome to the Virtual IMS user group newsletter. The Virtual IMS user group at itech-ed.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, "Provision your databases in modern ways". It was presented by Radek Mrvec, Staff Software Engineer | Mainframe at Broadcom Software.

Radek joined CA Technologies (which was acquired by Broadcom in 2018) in 2012 as an Associate Software Engineer and was assigned to the CA ACF2 security product. A year later he was re-assigned to CA Database Management Solutions for IMS for z/OS (IMS Tools). Nowadays, he is still working in the IMS Tools team as a Staff Software Engineer, involved in new development and sustaining work across the whole IMS Tools portfolio.

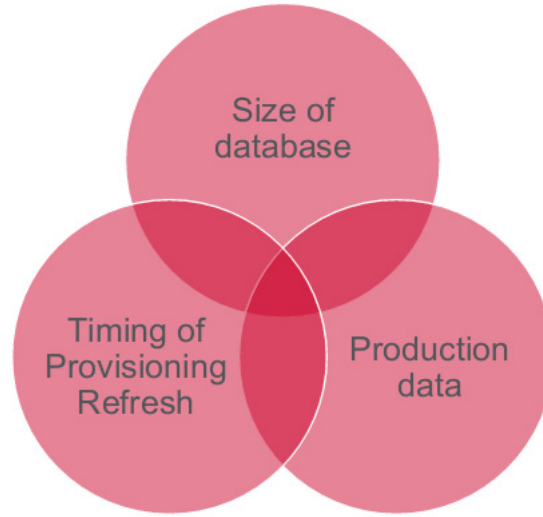
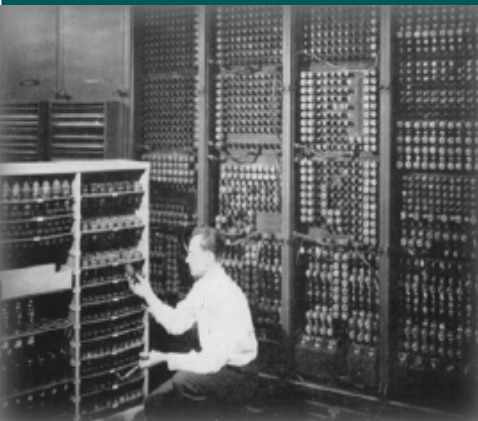


Figure 1: Challenges when provisioning database

Radek started by defining provisioning as "the process of configuring and deploying an information technology (IT) system resource either locally or in the cloud". The definition was taken from technopedia.com.

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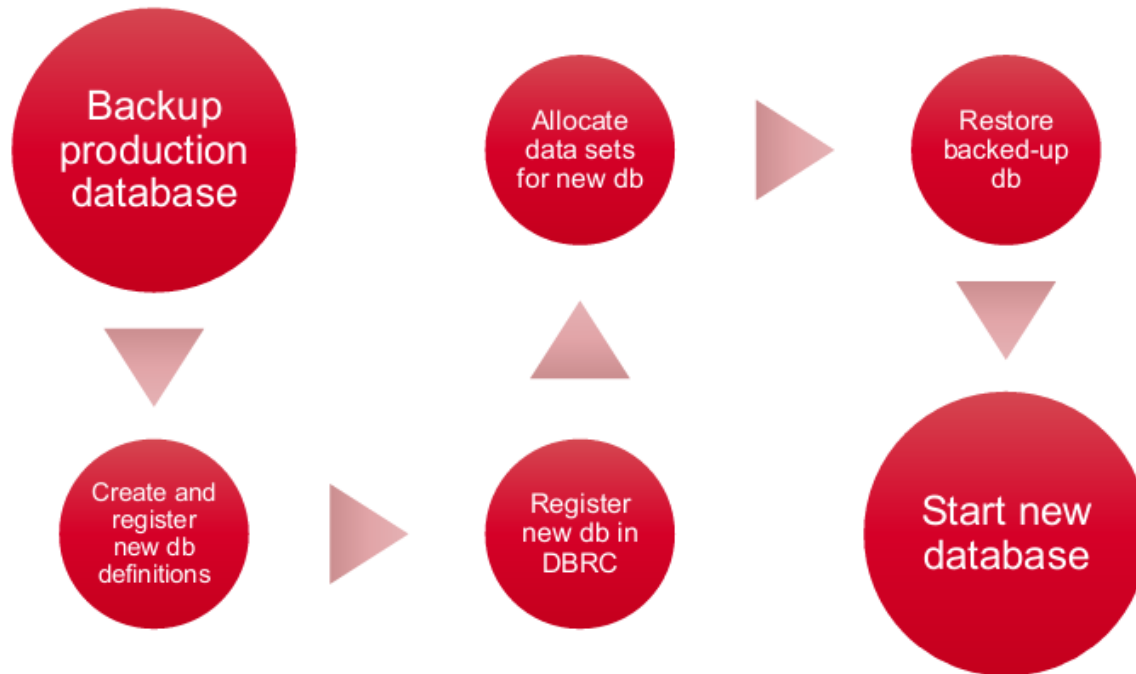


Figure 2: Provisioning IMS HDAM database means...

He then looked at some case studies, saying that developers want to easily set up (or provision) their own versions of the current build of the database to work in isolated environments. Testers need to easily set up (or provision) their own versions of the current build of the database, which can contain different data from the developers' version. And analysts want to easily set up (or provision) a clone of the production database to analyze the same data without touching the production database.

Radek then spoke about the challenges people face when provisioning a database

(see Figure 1). He then suggested that the way to solve the challenges was using automation and good communication between the people involved.

Radek then looked at other databases. SQL Server provisioning involves two steps: back up the database; and restore the database to the target environment. Using PowerShell, this takes just a few lines of code. He suggested that most other databases were equally simple.

However, provisioning an IMS HDAM database is much more complicated (see Figure 2). He went on to

discuss the steps involved, including the different steps that were necessary if using a managed ACBs environment or an ACBLIB environment.

In order to make this process simpler, users can try automation. They could use the familiar JCL. Or they could try Zowe. Or they could use Ansible.

Ansible uses Python to help with the automation. Figure 3 illustrates Ansible architecture. Ansible and Python are both sets of libraries and can be installed on a laptop. Python does need to be available on the mainframe. Playbooks use

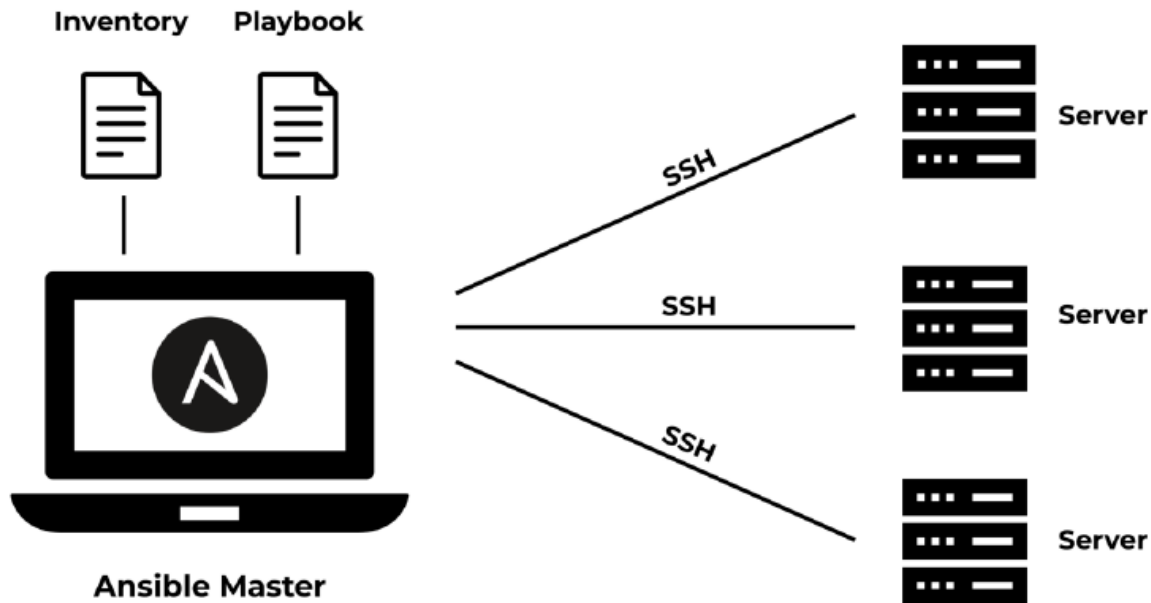


Figure 3: Ansible architecture

YAML. The user creates Python payloads, which are then sent to a server or LPAR to run.

There will be mainframe variables, security variables, IMS variables, and local variables. These can be added dynamically to the code. The code can call external tools. And this can perform the steps necessary to provision a database in IMS and register it in DBRC.

Why use Ansible? Radek suggested that:

- There were plenty of modules
- There's a growing z/OS module collection

- It's easy to install and maintain
- It has great scalability
- It is widely accepted and used in IT automation.

A copy of Radek Mrvec's presentation is available for download from the Virtual IMS user group website at <https://itech-ed.com/virtualims/presentations/IMSDBAnsibleOct22.pdf>.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting at <https://youtu.be/t0PZFqs12hU>.

Meeting dates

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

- On 13 December Joseph Leamon, IMS Software Engineer (UDB) at IBM and Mahmood Abuzaina, Software Engineer at IBM, will be discussing "Distributed access to IMS via Java".
- The following meeting will be on 7 February, when Scott Quillicy, Senior Director, Sales Engineering at Precisely, will be discussing "Lessons Learned – IMS Application Modernization to Cloud".

Sponsorship opportunity

Our user group has been in existence since 2007 and is well-respected among users of IMS. Currently, co-sponsorship is available for the user group. Please contact me (trevor@itech-ed.com).

The Arcati Mainframe Yearbook 2023

How do you know what's really going on at other mainframe sites?

As a member of the Virtual IMS user group, I thought you would be interested in the Arcati Mainframe Yearbook. Each year, it publishes a mainframe users' survey. And you can be part of that survey to tell us your opinion.

If you're prepared to give up 10 minutes of your time to complete a survey form, we will send you a free copy of the survey results when they are published in January. Your identity and company information will be treated in confidence and will not be divulged to third parties.

The annual mainframe user survey form can be found at <https://itech-ed.com/AMY23/usersurvey23/>. Tell us what it's like where you work.

If the company you work for

is also a vendor, consultant, or service provider, then please ensure their information is included in the Yearbook by completing the vendor information form at <https://itech-ed.com/AMY23/vendorsentry/>.

The Arcati Mainframe Yearbook is always free to mainframe users to download (vendor sponsorship pays for it). Each year it contains this 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 mainframe evolution section. And each year the Yearbook is downloaded by over 21,000 mainframe professionals. The current edition is still available at <https://itech-ed.com/arcati/>.

Virtual Db2 user group

Introducing the brand new Virtual Db2 user group. If you use Db2 or have colleagues who do, go to itech-ed.com/virtualdb2 and sign up. The first meeting is on 17 January when Craig S Mullins, President & Principal Consultant at Mullins Consulting, will be discussing, "Understanding Your Rolling 4 Hour Average to Tune Db2 and Lower Mainframe Costs".

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 <https://itech-ed.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.