



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, "Solving the IMS problem when IMS isn't the cause", and was presented by Jim Martin the United States representative for Fundi Software.

Jim is not only the United States representative for Fundi Software Ltd of Perth, Australia, he's also 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

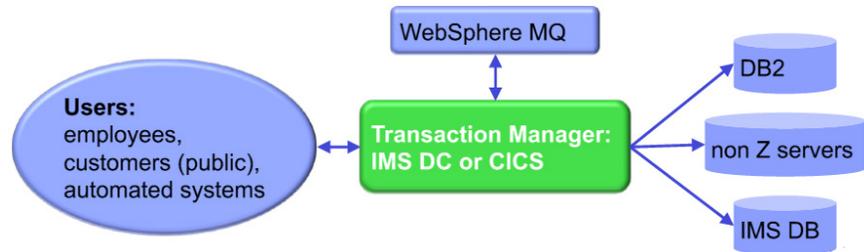


Figure 2: Today users are customers; data is complex, often distributed

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 was later promoted to the role of Corporate Product Architect. Jim worked at

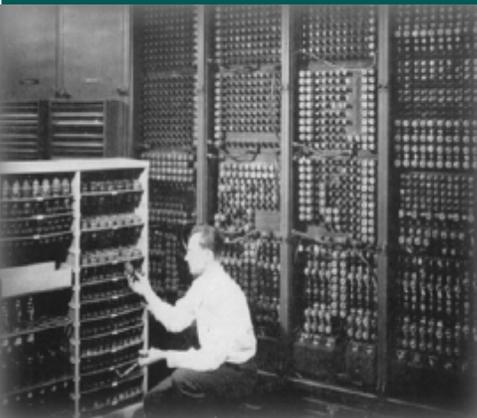
BMC Software for 10 years and was responsible for several products designed to provide IMS customers enhanced IMS solutions. He is the holder of 12 US Patents on IMS and database-related techniques



Figure 1: 1980s working – simple data, single data store

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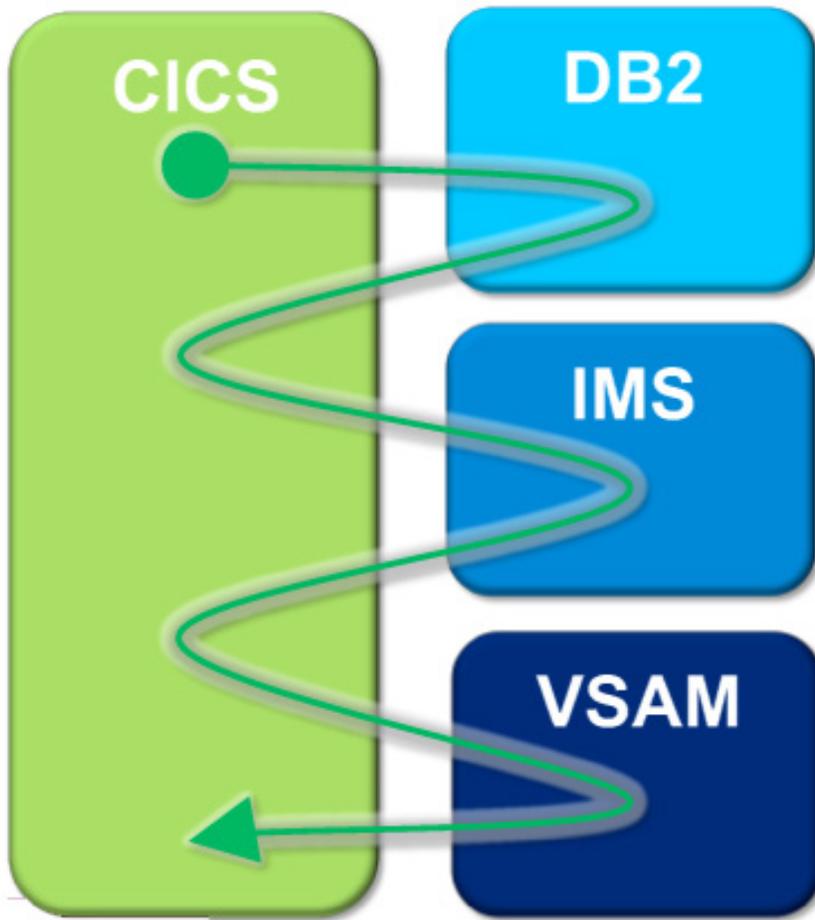


Figure 3: Where did the delay occur?

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. And he is a regular contributor to the quarterly IMS newsletter published by the IMS laboratory.

Jim started his presentation by reminding us how much more complicated life was

today compared to 20 years ago (see Figure 1), saying that data users can often also be customers; also the data is complex, and often distributed (see Figure 2). A transaction can often involve CICS, IMS, DB2, MQ or any combination. It may look like four transactions, but in effect it is only one. This is the problem many users face because they have separate monitoring software for each subsystem. Figure 3 illustrates the difficulty in finding where a delay has come from.

Cross support is key with

fewer staff. Support is difficult because Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) may be in silos, cross training may be difficult, it takes too much time using current tools, and staff can be unable or unwilling to cooperate.

A good cross-platform tool will conserve SMEs' time (a valuable, limited resource), and the transparency of information (everyone using the correct data from the same time period).

And SMEs need to see the big picture and the benefit of collaboration, which leads to reduced time to resolution, more SME time focused on problem resolution, and cross-training of first responders and SMEs.

This is where IBM's Transactional Analysis Workbench for System z comes in. It's a tool for problems in the big picture for "first responders" and subject-matter experts and for SMEs in different areas. It provides a life-cycle view of transaction activity across subsystems and changes the way problem resolution is performed by ensuring everyone is looking at the same transactional data. It goes in-depth. It uses SMF, trace, and log records to follow transaction flow. And it allows for the better assignment of problems to the correct group. So you

have improved confidence that problems are assigned to the appropriate experts.

Jim informed the user group that Workbench merges logs from multiple subsystems to present a consolidated, cross-subsystem view of a transaction's life cycle. The interactive ISPF dialog log browser provides a consistent interface to all log types from all subsystems (finding, navigating, filtering, formatting – when you know how to work with one log type, you know how to work with them all). It provides automated file selection for IMS logs, DB2 logs, and (soon) SMF. There's specific additional support for combined CICS-DBCTL reporting (other combinations coming soon: CICS-DB2, IMS-DB2). And there are various SMF record-type specific batch reports (aimed at transaction analysis).

Transaction Analysis Workbench for System z can help application development teams in many ways. Because application releases must work and perform when deployed, application teams can perform validation testing during roll-out. The evaluation can occur at the transaction level, but what is the cost of performance validation testing? And, what is the cost of a failed roll-out due to poor performance? And does system

programming have time to help?

The Application Team may not know how to obtain the performance data and sometimes access to the data is not allowed. They may also have limited or no knowledge of tools that use instrumentation data.

Workbench helps by automating the collection of instrumentation data – the application development teams do not have to acquire those skills. It performs automated reporting of validation testing, and includes reporting through CICS PA and/or IMS PA, in addition to its own reports.

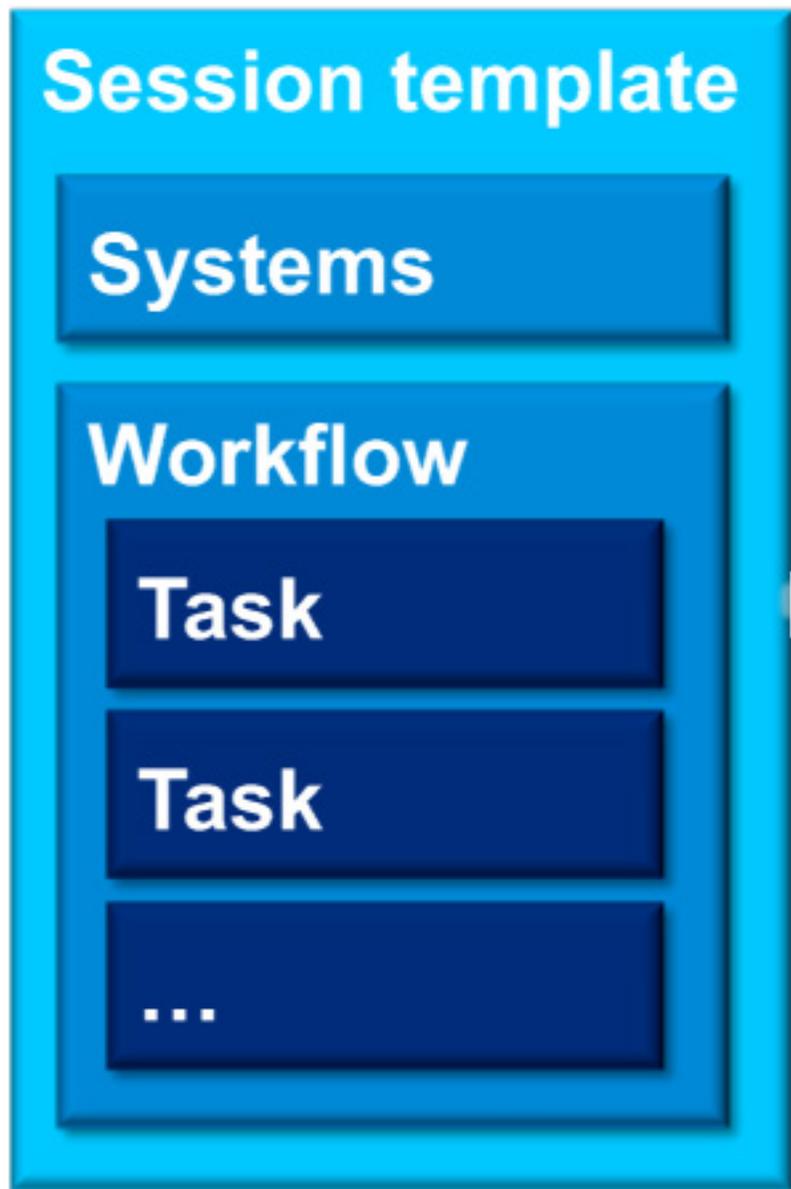


Figure 4: session templates

It analyses instrumentation data for performance exceptions, and provides easy recognition of validation testing against expected results. It provides transaction life-cycle views of transaction exceptions, identify what part of the transaction is causing problems. It saves the results of each validation testing run, and facilitates collaboration with system programmers and/or DBAs for help with transaction exception diagnosis.

SMEs can use session templates to populate new sessions with the tasks needed to prepare the problem for evaluation (see Figure 4).

A copy of Jim's presentation is available for download

from the Virtual IMS user group Web site at www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/TAWApr14.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting by downloading the WMV file from www.fundi.com/virtualims/presentations/2014-04-08meeting.wmv.

Meeting dates

- 10 June 2014, Syspertec's Patrick Fournier will describe a simpler solution for issuing outgoing Web service calls from IMS.
- On 5 August 2014, we have Betty Paterson, IMS Chief Architect, IBM, presenting.



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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.