Top 10 editor's picks for IBM WebSphere Application Server

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Here are 10 of the most practical, helpful, and just plain interesting recently published resources on IBM® WebSphere® Application Server. Because there is a variety of WebSphere Application Server editions available, ranging from the Liberty profile to WebSphere Application Server Network Deployment and beyond, not every item listed here will apply to all editions. However, chances are good that something here will be of use to you, for the edition of WebSphere Application Server you're using, and for whatever it is you are trying to achieve with it.

About IBM WebSphere Application Server

IBM WebSphere Application Server is a fast, flexible, reliable, resilient, and advanced application server runtime environment for building and running Java™ applications, including applications for cloud and mobile. WebSphere Application Server is available in several editions, and it's also the core of many strategic WebSphere middleware products, which means that WebSphere Application Server is in use across a broad range of applications and industries, as well as in all sizes of organizations.

A lot of reference material is available for WebSphere Application Server, from how to select the best edition for your environment, to best practices, and more. The items that appear in this list do not make up an absolute top-ten list of things you need to read in order to be successful with WebSphere Application Server. Although there are some critical pieces here (for example, those on WebSphere Application Server security), the bulk of titles selected for this list are recently published, and are of note for being either timely (for example, using the Liberty profile), practical (for example, speeding up application deployment), or just plain interesting (for example, driving a remote controlled car through wifi and a web browser). For variety, there is information here from IBM developerWorks, IBM Redbooks®, the WASdev developer center, and more.

Browse through this list, find something interesting, and spend some time getting to know WebSphere Application Server a little better. You're sure to learn something new that you'll be able to apply to your own projects, as well as things that you'll want to share with your team.
Top 10 picks for WebSphere Application Server

The items listed here are presented in no particular order.

• **Advanced security hardening in WebSphere Application Server V7, V8 and V8.5**
  by Martin Lansche and Keys Botzum
  This is an important, comprehensive [two-part article](#) that really should be required reading for anyone involved in managing the security of a WebSphere Application Server environment. Originally published in 2012, this reference guide has been updated and republished (and featured on developerWorks) several times since, and is currently inclusive of WebSphere Application Server versions 7 through 8.5.x. As you probably know, security consists of more than just some firewalls at the edge of your network protecting you from the outside. It is a difficult and complex set of actions and procedures that strive to strengthen your systems as much as is appropriate. This very detailed reference discusses many aspects of security in general, including the WebSphere Application Server security architecture, and especially how to harden a WebSphere Application Server environment. Part textbook and part quick reference guide, both the [Part 1](#) overview of security hardening and [Part 2](#) on advanced security considerations are articles that you would be wise to either bookmark or print and keep at hand.

• **The WebSphere Contrarian: Options for accelerating application deployment**
  by Tom Alcott
  This set of brief tips comes from the [IBM WebSphere Developer Technical Journal](#) and goes in the "practical" column. If you're looking for ways to speed up application deployment in WebSphere Application Server, this installment of [The WebSphere Contrarian](#) first describes how applications are deployed and then offers options for accelerating the deployment process. A quick read that could get you quick results.

• **Making the move to the Liberty profile**
  by Sherif Ali, Jagdish Komakula, Isa Torres, David Van de Pol and Donald Vines
  This [pair of articles](#) addresses a recent trend among many IT organizations to move their existing Java EE applications from "full platform" Java EE servers, such as WebLogic Server, Oracle Application Server, and JBoss Application Server to more lightweight, scalable, and reliable servers, such as the WebSphere Application Server Liberty profile. If this is something your organization is contemplating, then these articles will paint a good picture of what is required to do so. Covering the major task groups involved, [Part 1](#) of this series explains how you should evaluate your existing Java EE applications to determine their migration suitability to the Liberty profile, and [Part 2](#) shows you how to quickly migrate the Java EE resources that are required for running those applications on the Liberty profile.

• **Build the Liberty Car**
  by Tom Banks
  This three-parter comes from the [WASdev Developer Center](#), and it's listed here because it's a really fun application of the WebSphere Application Server Liberty profile. At IBM Impact 2013, the Liberty Car was introduced, in which the radio receiver in a radio controlled car was replaced with a Raspberry Pi. Then, with the help of the Liberty profile, hardware and software was added to make it possible to drive the car from any device with WiFi and a web...
browser. **Part 1** describes how the hardware was built, **Part 2** describes the software, and **Part 3** discusses administration and troubleshooting.

- **Comment lines: The development project balancing act**
  by Kareem Weller
  Not specifically about WebSphere Application Server, but certainly applicable to many large projects involving WebSphere software, this column from the IBM WebSphere Developer Technical Journal discusses four actions related to project management for maintaining productivity, improving quality, and meeting deadlines -- while trying to keep all concerned parties happy at the same time. Because managing a lengthy, expansive development project is neither easy nor straightforward, this article presents some valuable lessons learned from a production support team tasked with maintaining a large web application for a commercial business. Specifically, you'll learn about several challenges related to how releases were managed, and the changes that were introduced to enhance productivity and quality.

- **Increasing Resiliency for IBM WebSphere Application Server Deployments**
  by IBM WebSphere Application Server SWAT Team
  From the IBM Redbooks team comes this useful IBM Redpaper™ that describes IT practices -- actually observed in the field by the IBM WebSphere Application Server SWAT Team -- that can interfere with WebSphere Application Server deployments. The examples provided here can give a better understanding of how and why these issues can occur and present possible solutions. Understanding these practices can help provide critical increased resiliency for WebSphere Application Server deployments.

- **WebSphere and CICS Support Blog**
  by Steve Webb and Kelley Anders
  Although this isn't technically an article, tutorial, or a book, it's still something you should know about and bookmark for future reference. This is a blog presented by the IBM support team responsible for WebSphere and CICS® product support (so they know what they're talking about), and although no specific blog post is referenced here, it would be a good idea to check here regularly for new information you can use. The link provided here filters only WebSphere Application Server related content, but feel free to change the search criteria on the blog page to broaden or narrow your results further.

- **Building a large scale WebSphere Application Server Liberty collective topology**
  by Brian Hanczaryk, W. David Chuang and Ming-Chieh Yu
  A Liberty collective is a set of WebSphere Application Server Liberty profile servers that are configured to be part of the same administrative domain. Utilizing a collective creates an administrative control point for performing server management, cluster management, file transfer, and access to operations. Being able to perform many operations from a single point of administration saves time, reduces complexity, and enhances system integrity. This article describes how you can build and manage a large scale Liberty collective topology with WebSphere Application Server Network Deployment V8.5.5, focusing on the procedures and techniques for building a replica set, building up collective members, and managing the collective.

- **An introduction to service mapping: Integrating evolving web services in WebSphere Application Server V8.5.5**
  by Andrew Borley
Service mapping is a feature that enables you to remove the dependence of the service client on both the location and interface of the service provider via the interception, routing, and transformation of requests and responses between service clients and service providers. It's a feature introduced in IBM WebSphere Application Server V8.5.5 and IBM Rational Application Developer V9.0 to reduce or eliminate the development effort needed to update web service clients when service providers issue new versions of web services (or brand new web services) that need to be integrated with existing clients. This article explains the concepts of service mapping and provides a working example that shows how multiple versions of a service provider can be called by the original service client via the development and use of service mapping technologies.

- **Q & A: Frequently asked questions about WebSphere Application Server security** by Keys Botzum and Bill O'Donnell
  The title of this article says it all. Consistently popular since it was first published in 2010, this list of important questions and critical answers has been updated regularly and remains a reference staple for application server security. When the integrity of your processing environment is at stake, speed is of the essence when it comes to security, and so here are quick, direct answers to some of the most frequently asked questions regarding WebSphere Application Server security from version 6.1 on.
Resources

- IBM WebSphere Application Server product family
- IBM WebSphere application foundation resources
- WASdev Developer Center
- IBM WebSphere Application Server Knowledge Center
- IBM WebSphere Redbooks
- IBM WebSphere Developer Technical Journal
- IBM developerWorks WebSphere
About the author

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Scott Shekerow has an academic background in computer science and linguistics, and a professional background in software development, consulting, and information development. In addition to his current role as Senior Content Editor in IBM developerWorks, he is the managing editor of the IBM WebSphere Developer Technical Journal, web lead and media producer for IBM Software Services and Support, and is the creator and administrator of the IBM developerWorks Author Achievement Recognition Program.

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