

BRUNEL: Welcome to another episode of Getting the Most Out of IBM U2. My name is Kenny Brunel, and I'm your host for today's episode. Today we're going to discuss the latest release of UniData version 7.2, and we'll highlight how you can get the most out of it.

With me in the studio today, I have several guests. First of all, [Helen Beylkin]. Helen is the development manager for all of the U2 products and has been with IBM for many years. My next guest is [Jackie Burhans]. Jackie is the portfolio manager for the U2 products, also a long time IBMer. And finally, Dave Peters. Dave is the product manager for the U2 data servers.

And I think first of all, Jackie, I'd like to start with you. And again, I know you've been working with the UniData the product for over 15 years. So would you mind giving us a brief description of the uniqueness of UniData?

BURHANS: Sure, Kenny. As our customers certainly know already, but for anyone who doesn't, UniData is a what we call a multivalued or extended relational database with an integrated development language and a virtual machine.

It's really optimized for creating business solutions that require dynamic data structures. And that indeed is how a lot of our customers use it. We do a lot of work with

partners who develop applications in different vertical markets.

We've really got a great release here with UniData 7.2. And in an exciting roadmap with a lot of future enhancements. But for this podcast, let's go ahead and focus on 7.2.

BRUNEL: Okay. Dave, as the product manager for UniData, can you give us sort of a brief outline of what the focus areas were on this version?

PETERS: Sure, Kenny. We work closely with our customers and software partners to set the direction for what our customers need. And one of the things they've let us know is that they're under increased pressure to deliver their application 24 by 7. So 7.2 has one focus area of increased availability; and we've also focused on interoperability, security as well as tools for developers and administrators.

BRUNEL: Okay. So you mentioned high availability, Dave. What in particular did you do in this area?

PETERS: Well, for one of the things is concurrent resize. If you're running a UNIX or Linux server you can now resize your files online without having to take your application down. This saves a lot of time. You don't have

to wait for maintenance window, you don't impact your user base as you did in the past.

We've also improved replication with adding account level replication capability as well as the new monitoring tool that is part of uniadmin that you can use to check the progress of your replication and look for problems.

BRUNEL: Jackie, another one of the main themes of the UniData 7.2 release is security. Keeping your data secure.

Can you expand a little on what UniData has to offer in this the area?

BURHANS: You bet, Kenny. In each of our releases with the data servers over the last couple of years, we focused on various aspects of security. The area, the real exciting project we did for UniData 7.2 is what we call automatic data encryption, and this is something that a lot of our partners tell us that they need. They're being required to protect sensitive information on disk.

And you've probably seen in the newspaper or heard on the radio stories of companies that have to alert all of their customers that sensitive information has gone missing. And it may have included your credit card information, for example.

So that's why a lot of companies are now requiring that you protect sensitive credit card information. There are government regulations requiring you to protect sensitive personal information and health records. And so that really requires that capability in the database to make that easier for our partners. They could always have done this by leveraging our encrypt function in basic.

But what this capability gives you is the ability to configure that at either the record level or at a given field level, choose an encryption algorithm, optionally add a key and really protect your data while it's at rest.

Now, another area that we've been focusing on for a long time is protecting your data encrypting it while it's in motion -- the opposite of at rest. And so we've added SSL capability to as many of our interfaces as we could over time, and with this release we're adding it now to UniObjects for .NET.

And that's something we actually needed the .NET framework, to add this capability in order to support it. And they've now added something called SSL stream, so that's rolling out with UniObjects for .NET in this release.

BRUNEL: Thank you, Jackie. Helen, interoperability is something else. I've heard it is very important in the

multivalued world. Could you give us some more details on what 7.2 has to offer in that regard?

BEYLKIN: Sure, Kenny. In the area of interoperability, UniData 7.2 has several offerings. First of all, there is a major enhancement to the already existing External Database Access, or EDA.

EDA was first introduced in UniData 7.1. It allows UniData applications to completely transparently store and access data in DB2. That was 7.1. In this release of UniData in 7.2, we added a driver API that allows UniData developers to create drivers to other databases, such as Microsoft SQL server, Oracle and so forth.

And that interoperability feature is the deployment wizard that has been added to the U2 Web services developer tool. This wizard makes it very easy for developers of Web services to configure and deploy the newly created U2 SOAP service to the run-time production machines and subsequently administer and monitor the deployed SOAP service.

With this new feature, U2 Web services can be deployed on any type of a machine, whether it is Windows, UNIX or Linux.

In addition, support for Lightweight Directory Access Protocol -- or, LDAP -- has been added in this release for UNIX and Linux service.

LDAP is frequently used by software companies to provide what's called single sign-on capability where one password for a user is shared between many machines and services. In the UniData 7.2, the LDAP support is implemented by the Pluggable Authentication Module or PAM.

BRUNEL: Earlier in the podcast Dave mentioned that there are tools for administrators and developers. So I'm going to throw this out here. Can somebody give us some more information on what's available?

BURHANS: Sure, I'll volunteer, Kenny. One of the most exciting, the funnest tool that we've come up for this the release is what we call the U2 Basic Developers Toolkit -- or, BDT for short, because we like to shown everything.

And we've put a lot of effort into tools over the last, you know, number of releases of both the data servers and their clients and tools and the tools themselves. But one area that we felt there was a real need was for a world-class development tool for basic programmers. And that's really what this is.

We've leveraged the Eclipse framework as we do for a lot of our tools, which gives us the nice graphical look and feel. It provides a number of features, BDT does. One is a

resource explorer that let's you connect to your servers and look at your accounts and your files and your dictionaries, and of course, your source code.

There's also a code editor that has some great features like syntax coloring, code assist and coding templates that really make your job a lot easier.

And there's also integrated debugging. And so this is really a world-class tool that basic programmers can use to have a lot of fun programming. And that is good for both existing programmers who want to use the best tools that other people get to use in other environments.

It's also good when you're hiring new programmers out of school. You don't want to have to sit them down in front of a very old-fashioned looking green screen editor. This is a tool that's going to get everybody excited -- even gets me excited about putting in basic again.

BEYLKIN: Well, Jackie, you're right, BDT is a truly exciting new cool tool offering in UniData 7.2, yet we have another exciting tool, Extensible Administration Tool which we abbreviate to XAdmin. It is a member of the growing community of UniData Eclipse based tools and brings with it:

- configurable I/O and performance monitor views
- a new license wizard

- a table and tree view based user interface for the configuration editor
- filters for the server account and file views
- bubble help, and
- the a whole array of other ease of use features.

But possibly the most innovative property of XAdmin that is actually planned for its next release is its extensibility where users will be able to add new features by either contributing menus and administration tasks to XAdmin or including XAdmin views at the administration tasks in their own Eclipse based tools.

BURHANS: It does sound cool.

BRUNEL: So UniData has a large base of loyal customers that have been using the product for many years. What is it about UniData that keeps bringing people back year after year, and also there's new customers adopting UniData? What's the big attraction?

PETERS: Kenny, IBM has demonstrated commitment to UniData, and evidence of that is the UniData 7.2 release. We've added a lot of great enhancements in this release and we've already got plans going on for the next version of UniData. So this product is going to get better and better.

Second of all, if you're interested in software as a service, we've improved our Web services, particularly in the deployment area, and made it even easier to deploy your software service using UniData.

We've got a lot of exciting new tools besides the ones that Jackie and Helen just mentioned. We've added two .NET interfaces: one an ADO .NET provider as well as multivalued specific .NET provider, U2.NET. So there's not only enhancements in the database but the tools that go along with it.

BRUNEL: So all of these new features and tools and so on sound very exciting, and I'm sure our users are going to want to know how they can make the most out of all this new stuff. So, Helen, how would you suggest our users get the most out of the UniData 7.2?

BEYLKIN: Well, the first thing that I would suggest is to look into the new features of UniData using UniData documentation. In this release, we have improved our documentation. The documentation is available on the CD and online in the library section of the U2 Web pages. And as I said specifically, you could learn what's new in this release from the new features manual.

Those of you who look for specific fixes and improvements

using readme or patch notes will definitely like the new browser based interface with its easy to use navigation and search capabilities.

For more indepth information, be sure to follow the developerWorks U2 link in the resources session of the U2 page where you will find such articles as, use external database access with U2, and U2 security motion and securing U2 Web services by members of the development team and the technical support teams.

While some new features such as external database access and automatic data encryption require deep skills and a thorough planning, I would suggest that you might want to consider contacting U2 lab services for assistance when you begin seriously planning your projects in these areas.

BRUNEL: Jackie, I'm sure you've got some points you'd like to make here.

BURHANS: Well, yes. I highly recommend that you take advantage of all of the educational opportunities that we offer. As we're recording this, we're in the midst of our U2 University series of events here for 2008. We have one upcoming in October will be in Atlanta, Georgia, and for our customers and partners in the UK, we'll be there in October as well.

And there's a lot of great sessions there that dive pretty deeply into these new technologies and what's happening with UniData 7.2. There's also a lot of great sessions on our other tools, and of course, on UniVerse as well.

The other thing you'll want to take advantage of if you're a partner certainly you have access to the transfer of information or TOI recordings that having made and we're making recordings for each of the major features of the new release here. And you can access those at U2 tech connect online.

And then finally, do take advantage of the courseware that we have available to you. I've been pretty involved with it this year, and we're doing some really interesting things.

We have the traditional instructor led training where you go to a classroom and you have a teacher talking to you. And we have labs; we also now offer instructor led online training and that let's you attend via a Web cast and access e-labs online.

And we're in the process of recording those to make those available so that you can run them on your own time. And we've got a lot of neat new ideas on doing even shorter seminars and what we like to call snack and learns,

hour-long sessions where you have interactive teaching by a customer. So that's coming on. Look for all of that and take advantage of it definitely.

BRUNEL: Dave, how about you?

PETERS: I feel the best way to really get to know UniData is to try it yourself. So you might want to go to the ibm.com Web site and look for demos and trials and download the personal edition of UniData. It's a great way to kick the tires and try it out for yourself.

Also, some people might want to take advantage of our new support offering. We're offering now premium support for U2 products. And this can give you extra support help when you need it if you're running a critical application. It also opens up worlds of best practices, how to's, advanced troubleshooting techniques to you.

And so you can contact us at U2 to get information about that support offering. And also, in general, you could go to the www.ibm.com Web site and search for UniData and find a lot of good information there about the 7.2 release.

BRUNEL: Okay. Before we wrap up today's broadcast, are there any final points that any of you'd like to make?

PETERS: We're very excited about this release, and we think it delivers an awful lot of functionality and power to our customers. We're already thinking about our next release, though, so we're not resting on our laurels. This is only the beginning.

BURHANS: Yes, it is a really great release. And as Dave said, you can count on IBM's continued commitment to the improvement of UniData and all of the U2 products.

BRUNEL: I'd like to thank each of my guests for joining me today. Dave, Helen, and Jackie, thank you. I'd like to let our listeners know that transcripts of today's podcast, which include all of the relevant links, are available on our Web site by following the U2 podcast link from the main page.

If you have any questions or feedback or any comments and suggestions for future episodes, please e-mail us at u2askus@us.ibm.com. And be sure to tune in next time and learn how to get the most out of IBM U2.

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