TITLE: Application Foundation on z/OS

HOST: Hi, and welcome to the "Did you say Mainframe?" podcast series. This is where we regularly interview IBM technical experts who can help you to understand important IBM mainframe hardware and software issues. I'm your host Sherrie Abshire.

Today we're going to talk about the Application Foundation on z/OS

Our guest today is Richard Szulewski from WebSphere Infrastructure on System z Product Marketing. Rich, It's great to have you here.

SME: Sherrie, thank you. It is great to be here.

HOST: Before we begin, I'd like to mention to our listeners that there is a series of valuable teleconferences on this subject available to you. I'll be giving out more information at the end of this podcast.

HOST [Question 1]: So Rich, let us start with the term "Application Foundation". Please tell us what that means.

SME [Answer]: The Application Foundation from IBM provides Enterprise Architects, Solution Architects, Application Managers and Developers with a cost effective means of delivering an innovative, performance based application foundation for building, deploying and managing robust, agile and re-usable services and SOA applications of all types. From business critical and key company-wide applications to targeted departmental level applications, the Application Foundation can help you to deliver on business objectives while containing and even reducing cost. Whether those applications are in a mainframe or distributed environment; and across all interaction modes e.g. Web 2.0 or voice.

The Application Foundation from IBM includes several application servers, end user focused Web 2.0 capabilities, and the tools needed to make effective use of these capabilities.

HOST [Question 2]: You used the term "application servers" in plural. Are there more than one for the System z client?

SME [Answer 2]: Yes, there are several of them available to System z users. Application Servers provide the services and facilities to deliver business applications that can focus on the business. Application servers provide the executing environment services, instrumentation and tooling so developers can focus on the business logic. The WebSphere Application Server family offers an Open Source version called Community Edition and a Network Deployment version for the Linux on System z operating environment. For z/OS, there is the WebSphere Application Server for z/OS with its extensive integration with z/OS services and capabilities. In addition, z/OS offers the original application servers in the CICS and IMS products. For the extreme scale transaction environment,

we offer the TPF products, which have long served the Travel and Transportation industry.

HOST [Question 3]: The Application Foundation includes more than just the application servers you mentioned. Why is that?

SME [Answer 3]: The Web 2.0 revolution empowers the end user to take control of their application experience. We offer the capabilities that make it practical to bring together the business assets needed to work effectively. sMash and our Voice products working with the application servers break down the limitations of text based interactions making them key elements of the Application Foundation.

HOST [Question 4]: Many clients feel that the software on z/OS is expensive. What is IBM doing to address this concern?

SME [Answer 4]: Often, we have heard "you get what you pay for". Yes there is a premium for deploying the Application Foundation on z/OS. For that premium, you get unmatched scalability, bullet-proof security and the most extensive failover and business resiliency options. When all the costs are considered, hardware, software, people and the impacts to the environment, z/OS solutions are proving to be the true price performers.

It can be somewhat daunting for those just getting started on projects that, if successful, could really benefit from what the z/OS environment has to offer to get started on z/OS. To that end, in April of 2008, we announced a new pricing option called "Getting Started Sub-capacity Pricing" designed to allow these projects to get started on the right platform. Recently, we have empowered our sales teams with some attractive options that take Getting Started to a whole new level. We think that we have levelled the playing field for the Application Foundation on z/OS.

HOST [Question 5]: Performance and scalability are expected when using z/OS. Is there any new news in these areas for the Application Foundation?

SME [Answer 5]: There is great news here. In September of 2008, we released WebSphere Application Server Version 7. 2008 saw the release of the latest additions to the System z hardware line, the z10 Enterprise Class and the Business Class servers. We measured the Version 7 Application Server on z/OS using the z9 and then z10 Enterprise Class servers. The results were astounding.

Moving from Version 6.1 to Version 7, we measured improvements of up to:

42% faster for legacy apps
47% faster for Web Services
70% faster for Java EE apps
We measured what a client might see moving from Application Server Version 6.1 on a z9 EC to Application Server 7 on a z10 EC. WAS V7 on a z10 outpaced WAS 6.1 on a z9 up to:
103% faster for legacy apps

128% faster for Java EE apps
We know that a key aspect of how a business application performs is determined by how it accesses its data. For WebSphere Application Server and DB2 applications, how the SQL queries are handled can make a huge difference. We measured how our pureQuery product can enhance the performance of a WAS-DB2 application and were thrilled with the results. We are planning a teleconference in early February to explain this in detail. You can sign up for this now.

HOST: Thank you Rich, that was really interesting.

SME: Thanks for giving me the opportunity to talk about the Application Foundation on z/OS.

HOST: Well, that wraps up this podcast discussion. To find out more, we have a number of teleconferences covering the key parts of the Application Foundation on z/OS available to you. Please go to the description for this podcast at: http://www.ibm.com/software/os/systemz/podcasts/websphereonz/

There you will also find the URL for registering for the IBM Impact 2009 event which is being held in Las Vegas in May.

Join us next time as we talk about another important mainframe topic. For now, this is Sherrie Abshire saying "Thanks for listening".