

2009 WebSphere System z Podcasts - 'Did you say Mainframe?'

TITLE: CICS Explorer - The New Face of CICS

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 CICS Explorer - the new face of CICS.

Our guest today is Nick Garrod from CICS Marketing in Hursley, UK. Nick, it's great to have you here.

SME: It's very nice of you to invite me

HOST: Before we begin, I'd like to mention to our listeners that there is a SupportPac for the CICS Explorer available for download. I'll be giving out more information at the end of this podcast.

HOST [QUESTION 1]: So Nick, CICS has announced something called the New Face of CICS, which is quite a dramatic statement for a well established product like CICS.

SME [ANSWER 1]: CICS has been at the forefront of transaction procession for nearly 40 years helping thousands of our customers to run and grow their businesses. CICS hasn't stood still during this period, but has constantly innovated and transformed itself, supporting new technologies and methodologies like Java and Web applications, Web services, SOA, and BPM. Whatever the technology, CICS has always provided the same qualities of service - performance, availability, integrity, security, and flexibility. Today, CICS customers can easily componentize, extend, and modernize existing application assets. Recent announcements of CICS ATOM and Event Processing support indicate that the innovation has not yet stopped.

HOST [Question 2]: So why the need for a 'New Face of CICS?'

SME [Answer 2]: Over the years, we have introduced a wide range of tools - development, operational, and management - to support CICS, with important contributions from all of the IBM Software Group brands. Whether integrated with CICS Transaction Server, or available at extra charge, these tools have a variety of user interfaces: ISPF, CICS 3270, Web, and Eclipse, so today, users often need to use multiple interfaces to perform a particular task.

For the past year, the CICS development team has been designing and prototyping, developing and testing, to produce a common tooling environment for the future that builds on the strengths of the past. The CICS Explorer is the result of that work. The CICS Explorer will be the focal point of future tooling for CICS, with all key CICS development, operational and management tasks accessible

2009 WebSphere System z Podcasts - 'Did you say Mainframe?' from within a single user interface. At this time, we are part of the way through the development process. We will have more next year and more the year after that. But now, we think that we have developed enough to give you real value, and to help you to start doing things a different way.

We'll be doing things differently too. Instead of waiting two years between deliveries, we intend to provide updates to the CICS Explorer base and the tools plug-ins every few months and will integrate them into current and future versions of CICS TS and many of our other products.

**HOST [Question 3]: So, what is the CICS Explorer?**

**SME [Answer 3]:** It's a lightweight, Eclipse Rich Client Platform (RCP) that loads in seconds. The base provides a framework of navigators and views of CICS systems backed by a rich data model of operational and administrative CICS resources fed by CICSplex System Manager. A series of plug-ins provided by some of IBM CICS Tools each add their own special value. A plug-in for CICS Interdependency Analyzer integrates application analysis into the real-time system view. The CICS Configuration Manager plug-in integrates rich resource editors, dynamic updates, and powerful search and query capabilities. The CICS Performance Analyzer plug-in provides intuitive graphical representation of key performance data.

While CICS is modernizing the operational and management experience, Rational is continuing to make mainframe development much easier. Rational Developer for System z (RDz) now includes an integrated copy of the CICS Explorer, which combined with the RDz Application Deployment Manager (ADM) allows you to query, define, and install needed CICS resources. The combination of CICS Explorer and RDz simplifies the CICS development process by removing or automating several manual steps in the service deployment and testing cycle. The developer no longer has to return to the green screen to define many of the CICS application resources they need for testing.

CICS has also attracted an extensive third-party ecosystem of application providers, independent software vendors, systems integrators, independent consultants, and resellers. They have kept pace with the changing face of CICS, and give CICS customers the applications, tools, and support they need to enable them to benefit quickly from the latest releases of CICS.

The CICS Explorer is not just for IBM's use. We believe that it can enable the CICS ecosystem to provide even better support for and exploitation of CICS, by integrating their solutions into this strategic CICS interface. To support this belief, we are today making available a Software Development Kit, or SDK, that will enable them to develop and deploy their own plug-ins using and extending the perspectives, views, rich data, and methods provided by the

2009 WebSphere System z Podcasts - 'Did you say Mainframe?' CICS Explorer. A thread has been created on the CICS Explorer forum to enable announcement and discussion of such plug-ins.

The CICS Explorer is being made available initially as a series of SupportPacs. Just visit our home page at [ibm.com/cics/explorer](http://ibm.com/cics/explorer) and follow the links that you'll find there.

**HOST [Question 4]: So what are the objectives you are trying to achieve with the CICS Explorer?**

SME [Answer 4]: With the CICS Explorer you'll be able to create task-oriented views to provide integrated access to broad range of data and control capabilities. With the CICS Explorer, your experts will be more productive and those new to CICS will be more immediately effective.

Feedback from customers, business partners, and analysts who have seen early versions has been very positive. Now, you can try it for yourself, because today we are announcing the immediate availability of the CICS Explorer. Details of how you can get it will be given later in the webcast.

I encourage you to download the CICS Explorer. Try it, with CICS TS or with one or more of the CICS Tools, or both. If you are not currently using them, you can download a trial version of CICS IA, CICS PA, or CICS CM, and try them out with the CICS Explorer. We'd like share your feedback with us and with other users on our new CICS Explorer Forum - tell us what you like and what you don't. We'd also like to hear what you'd like us to do next. And, if you have problems, you can ask for help.

**HOST [Question 5]: So when and how can I get the CICS Explorer?**

SME [Answer 5]: Well firstly I would encourage you to register and listen to the webcast that has been recorded for replay which includes a comprehensive demo of the CICS explorer with some CICS Tools (CICS Interdependency analyser, Performance Analyser and Configuration Manager) integrated in the CICS Explorer framework. This shows you how you can drill down to whatever level you need without continually having to leave your environment and start up another window, or session. Then there are four SupportPacs for you to chose from. CS1J and CS1O are platform dependent (Windows or Linux), then there is the Software Development Kit, or SDK that allows customers of Business Partners to integrate in-house, ISV, and SI tools with the CICS Explorer, in SupportPac CS1R, and finally, the three CICS Tools, CICS IA, CICS PA, and Config Manager in SupportPac CS1N. All these SupportPacs are available from the CICS Explorer web site which will be given out at the end of this podcast. To help educate and share experiences of this new Face of CICS we have attempted to create a community around the CICS explorer, not just with a web page but with the CICS Explorer Forum, which has FAQs, Links and resources,

2009 WebSphere System z Podcasts - 'Did you say Mainframe?' ISV Contributions, Ask questions, suggest improvements, report problems, dialogue, Twitter which has CICS Explorer news flashes on the IBM\_System\_z channel, a Blog where you can give comments and opinions at TheMasterTerminal.com As CICS continues to deliver enhancements via the service channel and SupportPacs a valuable resource for keeping up to date with what has been delivered is the CICS Newsletter which comes out around every month. You can find out about what events are coming soon, latest development news from the CICS Director as well as details of how to obtain the latest technology drops we have made from CICS. To register please go to [www.ibm.com/cics/enews/register](http://www.ibm.com/cics/enews/register). To get full and detailed information about CICS TS and the CICS Tools and connectors you can also request a CICS on demand Seminar from your local account representative or send an email to [CICSEM@uk.ibm.com](mailto:CICSEM@uk.ibm.com) this seminar is an all day customised agenda of CICS technical content delivered by CICS technical specialist at your company location.

HOST: Thank you Nick, that was really interesting.

SME: Thanks for giving me the opportunity to talk about The new face of CICS, The CICS Explorer.

HOST: Well, that wraps up this podcast discussion. To find out more about the SupportPac for the CICS Explorer I mentioned earlier, please go to the description for this podcast at:  
<http://www.ibm.com/software/os/systemz/podcasts/websphereonz>

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