

TITLE: Manage test data on System z with Optim Move

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 Optim Move.

Our guest today is Marty Shelton, the IBM Problem Determination Tools product line manager. Marty, it's great to have you here.

SME: I'm delighted to be here.

HOST: Before we begin, I'd like to mention to our listeners that there is a white paper about Optim Move that I'll let you know more about at the end of this podcast.

HOST: So Marty, you're going to talk to us about Optim Move. I'm not familiar with this, what is this?

SME: IBM Optim Move for DB2, to give it its full name, is a test data management tool that is part of the IBM Problem Determination Tools portfolio. It was developed by a company called Princeton Softech that IBM acquired very recently and is part of a large suite of Optim products which help customers manage enterprise application data while improving performance, controlling cost, and reducing risk. Optim Move for DB2 is a replacement for a previous IBM product called File Export, which has now been withdrawn from marketing.

HOST: So, what exactly does it do?

SME: Optim Move for DB2 is used to extract data from production databases to create subsets of that data for use in test environments.

HOST: OK, I understand what it does but still not sure why it's necessary.

SME: Today's applications drive revenue and satisfy sophisticated marketplace initiatives and many mission-critical applications have a huge strategic impact. This drives an increasing focus on application reliability to minimize unplanned downtime and to preserve customer loyalty. Application testing is becoming a high priority because resolving problems early in the development stages can significantly reduce costs. Without the appropriate solutions, developers often need to write sophisticated extract programs just to create the test data. It is a challenge to navigate the numerous related database tables, VSAM or flat files, and / or IMS databases to create, manipulate and refresh the desired test data subsets.

HOST: Ah, I see now. One question though - using production data in test environments raises security issues doesn't it?

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Some production data is very sensitive, isn't it?

SME: You are absolutely right, and that's where Optim Move for DB2 adds even more value. It is able to transform data, so that sensitive fields like customer name, social security number, or billing address are masked, while at the same time retaining essential structure and referential integrity. For example, names can be changed, not just to random sets of characters, but optionally to other valid names - changing Shelton to Jones, not to ABQPTZ. Structural features like credit card check digits or telephone area codes can be retained as part of the transformation process. Most importantly, these masking transformations can be made across related files and databases, so that the necessary system linkages or application relationships between files different data sources are retained.

HOST: Does this just work for DB2 data? What about VSAM and IMS?

SME: Good point. Yes, Optim Move supports data in DB2, VSAM, IMS, and z/OS sequential files, and is able to preserve referential integrity across multiple file and database types.

HOST: Anything else before we close?

SME: Optim Move for DB2 is available as part of IBM's Problem Determination Tools family which together provide comprehensive support for application developers across all key System z environments including DB2, IMS, CICS, WebSphere MQ, WebSphere Application Server, and batch. A broader, multi-platform Test Data Management solution from Optim is available as part of the DB2 Tools portfolio.

HOST: Thanks Marty, that was interesting.

SME: Thank you, for giving me the opportunity to talk about Optim Move.

HOST: Well, that wraps up this podcast discussion. To find out more about the white paper 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".