



Welcome to the Virtual IMS user group newsletter. The Virtual IMS user group at itech-ed.com/virtualims is an independently-operated vendor-neutral site run by and for the IMS user community.

Virtual IMS user group presentation

The latest webinar from the Virtual IMS user group was entitled, "IMS Can't Do That... Or Can It?". It was presented by Dusty Rivers, Director, z Systems Software: IMS & CICS at GT Software.

Dusty has an extensive 40-year background in global mainframe systems integration, and has been recognized as an IBM Champion for Information Management for ten years in a row for his leadership and contributions to the Information Management community, and, this year, became a Lifetime IBM Champion for Z. His expertise focuses on enabling global organizations to extend the use of their



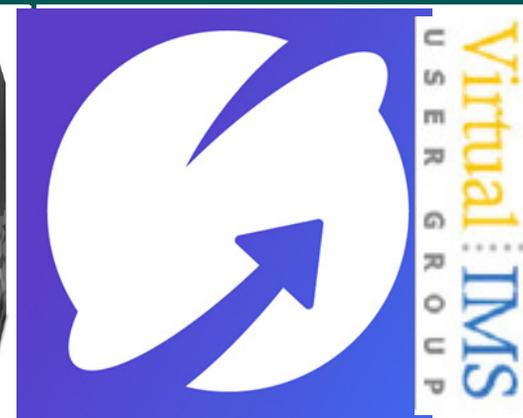
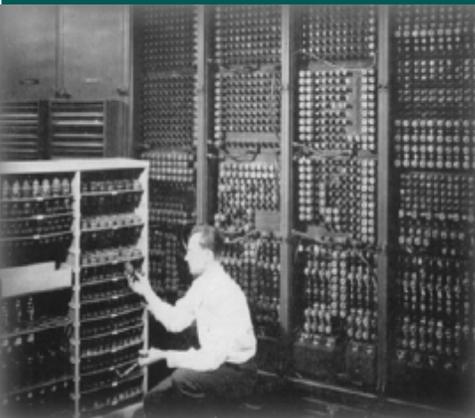
Figure 1: How things get done

mainframe systems into the world of Web services, clouds, and all distributed systems. An engaging speaker, Dusty travels the United States presenting on various topics in leveraging IMS for modern technologies.

Dusty started his presentation by suggesting

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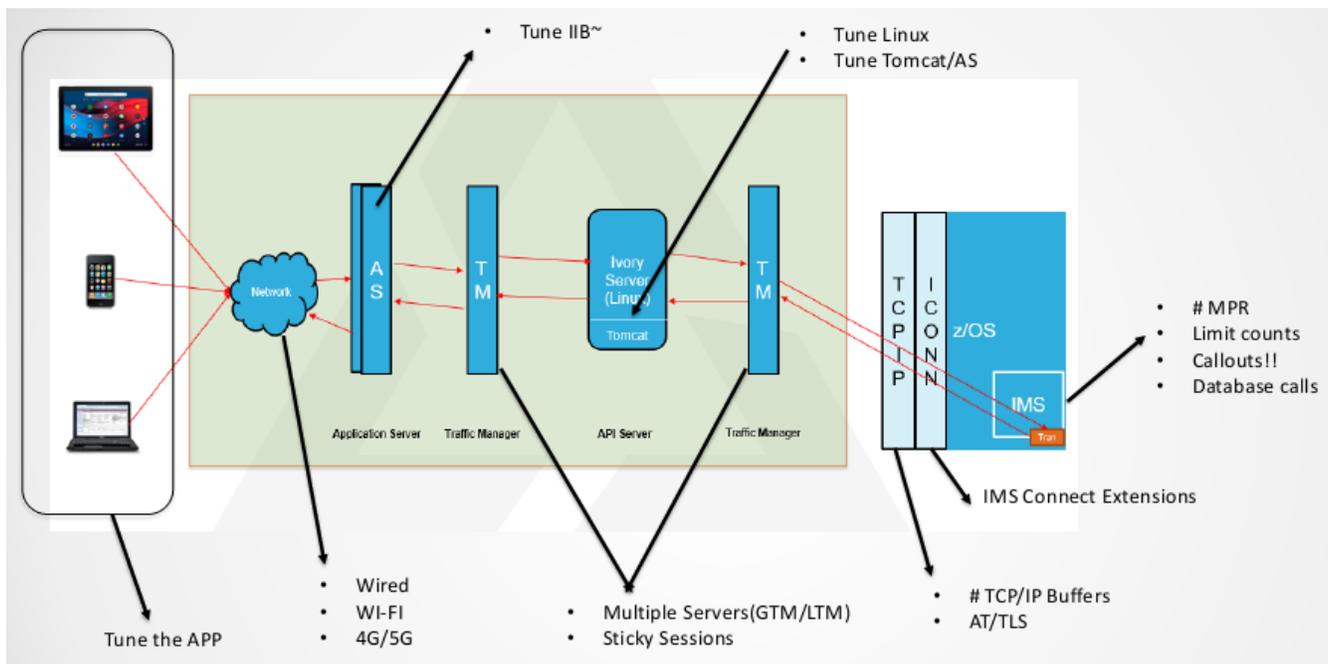


Figure 2: What's running slow?

that the only way to make progress was to try things. And, yes, the first couple of attempts may well end with failure, but eventually this will lead to success (see Figure 1).

People say, Dusty continued, that IMS can't be part of a large distributed system because it won't scale. He then showed that while there are 7812 tweets in a second, or 15,650 Facebook posts, or even 71,381 YouTube views, there are 3 million IMS transactions per second. So, clearly it scales well.

He then gave an example of a site that was using mobile devices to access IMS, and, because of the

slow response, assumed that IMS was running slowly. A thorough investigation showed all the other points of failure in the transaction (see Figure 2). The problem didn't lie with IMS.

Dusty told the user group that most IMS online applications were designed to interact with 3270 terminals (end user dialog). And warned that changing IMS legacy code to work better as an API introduces more complexity and code to manage.

He went on to say that fine grain APIs (microservices) may be easier to build, but put more work onto the consumer. The more intelligent the API, the

less effort for the API consumer processing logic. He suggested that IMS mainframe apps are like a box of chocolates, it is hard to see what's inside.

Dusty Rivers next suggested that people say IMS is hard to include in an API economy because you can't really see what goes on inside. He then showed an example of a tool that displayed what happens in a transaction. Similarly, some people think that you can't put an API on a conversational transaction. Figure 3 shows an example of such a transaction and Dusty explained how it could be done.

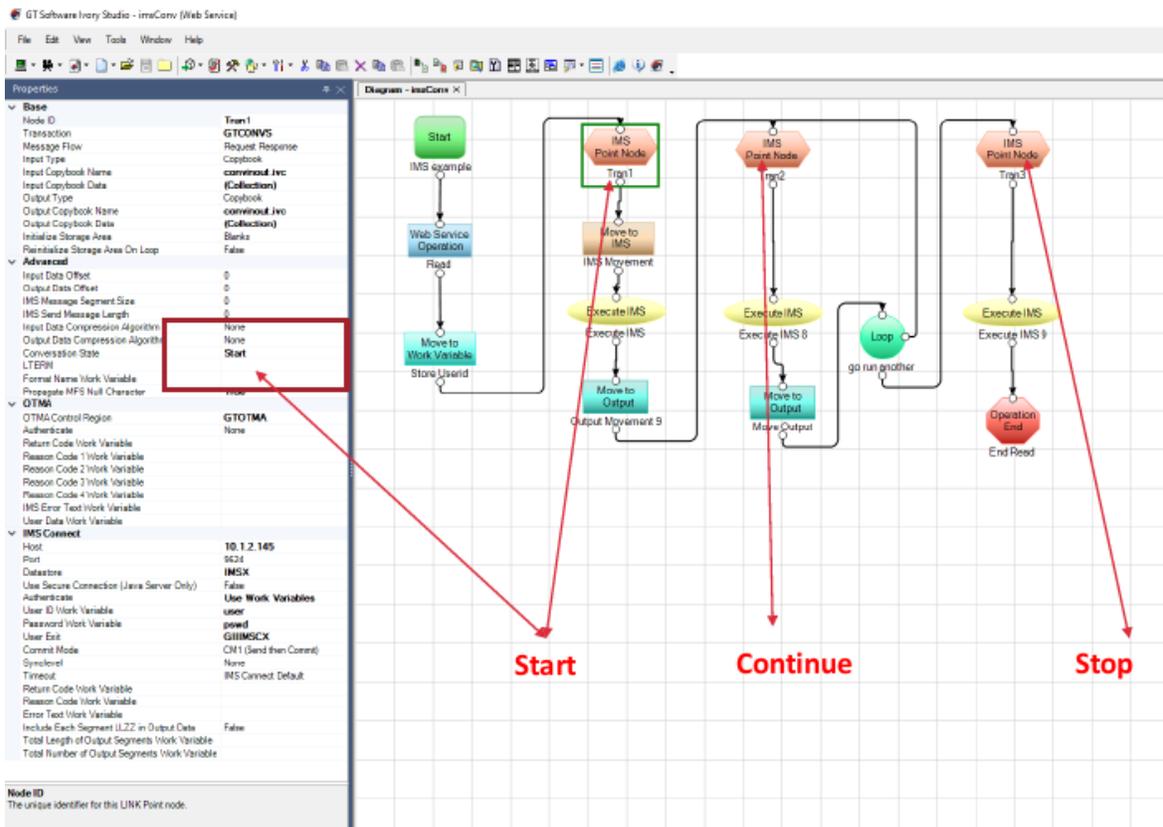


Figure 3: APIs and conversational transactions

You hear the same thing with 3270 MFS (Message Format Service) transactions – people say they can't be part of the API economy. Dusty showed how Mid/Mods could be converted to copybooks and everything would work.

Similarly, he showed how APIs could handle complex transactions (with multiple outputs), as well as communicate with other systems.

Dusty Rivers went on to say that people don't think IMS can participate in DevOps. Again, he showed that's not true and said IMS, through

intermediary software, could work with Github (source version control), Jenkins (automation), .NET, Java, Node.js, COBOL, Linux (redhat) JBoss, Tomcat, MoogSoft, dynatrace, urbancode, etc.

In terms of modernization, IBM intends to make it possible for IMS to run in a container using Kubernetes and OCI (Open Container Initiative) compliant z/OS containers.

Dusty then turned to some case studies that illustrated what IMS can do.

There was a large multi-national French bank that was struggling with how their legacy mainframe systems could be used in tandem with modern third-party applications to process payments, detect fraud, and comply with KYC (know your customer) guidelines – all in real time. Still using IMS, everything works now.

Or there was the case study of large airline, which, as a result of a merger with another airline and the resulting regulatory requirements, needed to rapidly unify multiple

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aircraft maintenance and parts inventory systems into a seamless solution for their maintenance and procurement teams. Making use of IMS, it all worked.

His third example was a large Swiss bank that needed to rapidly implement the ability to verify the status of a new customer (ie terrorist or known criminal) against the World Check system with a uniform set of API calls that could be initiated from a PL/I program in their mainframe-based core banking system. Again, IMS was part of the solution.

So, all of these modernization issues could be solved. And Dusty's conclusion was that IMS can do whatever you need it to do.

A copy of Dusty Rivers' presentation is available for download from the Virtual

IMS user group Web site at itech-ed.com/virtualims/presentations/IMScanOct20.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting at <https://youtu.be/CJp57HxfE0o>.

Meeting dates

The following meeting dates have been arranged for the Virtual IMS user group:

- On 8 December, James Martin, Senior Solution Advisor at Rocket Software will be discussing "Performance and IMS".
- The following meeting will be on 9 February next year, when Nick R Griffin, WorldWide IMS Specialist at BMC Software will be discussing "Reached the IMS Database 4/8gig line, Now What?".

About the Virtual IMS user group

The Virtual IMS user group was established as a way for individuals using IBM's IMS hierarchical database and transaction processing systems to exchange information, learn new techniques, and advance their skills with the product

The Web site at <https://itech-ed.com/virtualims> provides a central point for coordinating periodic meetings (which contain technically-oriented topics presented in a webinar format), and provides articles, discussions, links, and other resources of interest to IBM IMS practitioners. Anyone with an interest in IMS is welcome to join the Virtual IMS user group and share in the knowledge exchange.

To share ideas, and for further information, contact trevor@itech-ed.com.

The Virtual IMS user group is free to its members.