



Virtual IMS user group: Newsletter 82

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.



Figure 1: Ansible Automation Platform

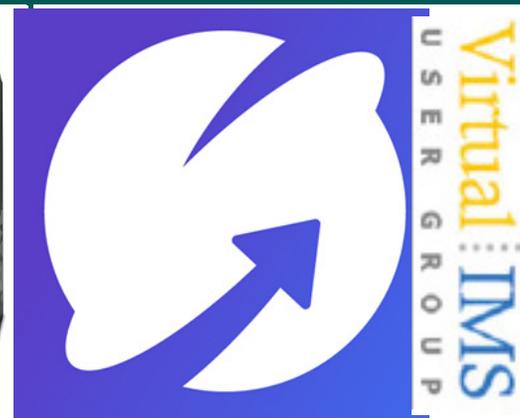
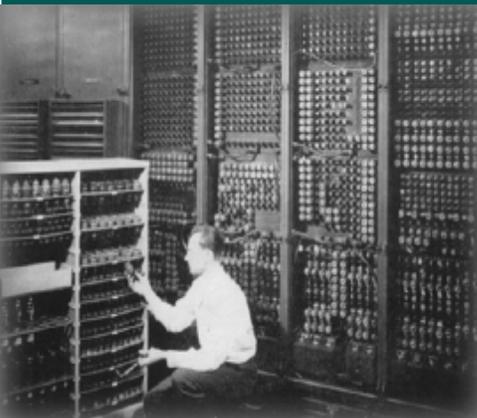
Virtual IMS user group presentation

The latest webinar from the Virtual IMS user group was entitled, “Ansible and IMS: Automate IMS with Red Hat Ansible Certified Content for IBM Z”. It was presented by Haley Fung, IBM Product Manager for IMS and Ansible for Z.

Haley is the IBM Product Manager for IMS and Ansible for Z. She drives product direction in building solutions for enterprise modernization and integration for IMS and automation solutions for Z. Haley is a frequent presenter at global technical conferences. Her deep technical expertise and her passion and dedication for

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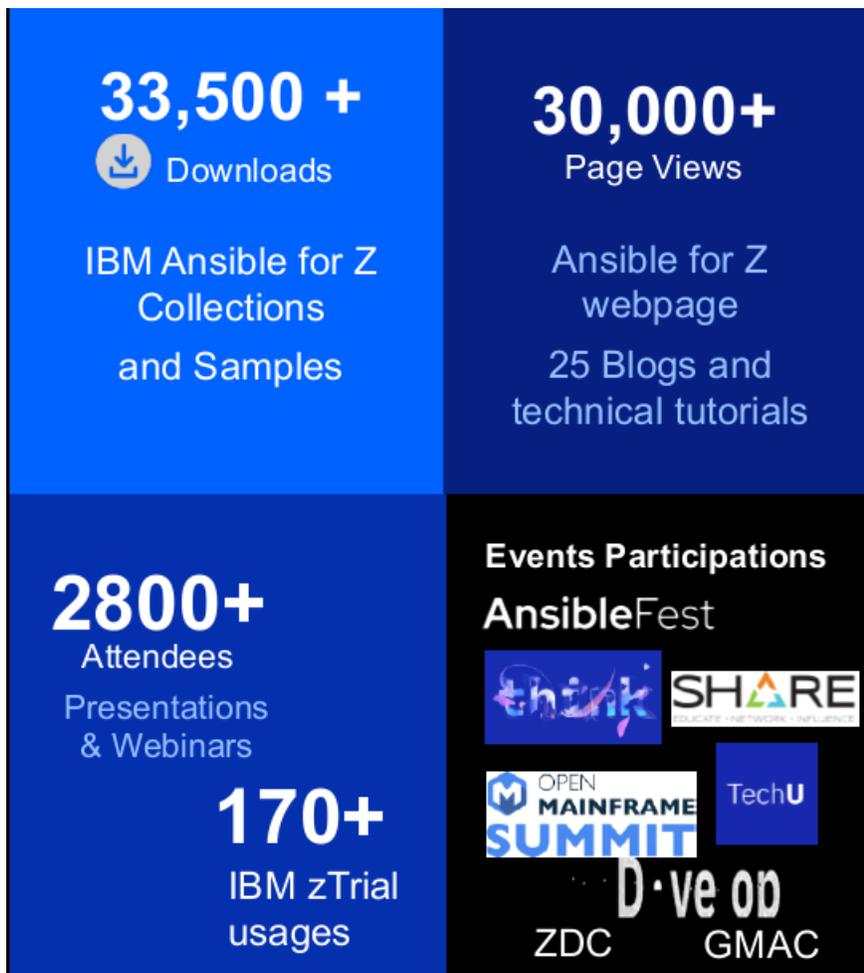


Figure 2: Red Hat Ansible Certified Content for IBM Z

There is plenty of Red Hat Ansible certified content for IBM Z. Certified content collections accelerate the use of Ansible with IBM Z and enable:

- Improved efficiency via the simplification and standardization of complex IT deployments and enterprise automation strategies.
- the visibility of z/OS automation. It's possible to know what's being automated, when, and by whom.
- Increased productivity simply, with certified collections that codify system-specific knowledge and complexity.

Figure 2 shows just how popular the Ansible Certified Content for IBM Z actually is (and these figures are a little out-of-date now).

customers have helped many IMS and Z customers to modernize and enhance their application infrastructures as well as automating their Z resources with Ansible.

Haley started by explaining that modern automation on IBM using Ansible is important because it provides a way to integrate z/OS into an enterprise automation strategy in a consistent way. With Ansible, it's easy to onboard new systems programmers, DBAs, and

developers. And, with Ansible, infrastructure and provisioning changes are all managed as code.

Figure 1 illustrates the Ansible Automation Platform.

The Ansible Engine runs Ansible Playbooks, which are the automation language that can perfectly describe an IT application infrastructure. Ansible Tower allows users to scale IT automation, manage complex deployments, and speed productivity.

Mainframe sites use Ansible to build and provision middleware, to roll out fix packs to thousands of servers, and for self-service provisioning of portals. They also use Ansible for middleware configuration as well as network and security configuration. For security, it can be used for the SSL certification renewal process, password resets, and to create new users. Ansible can integrate

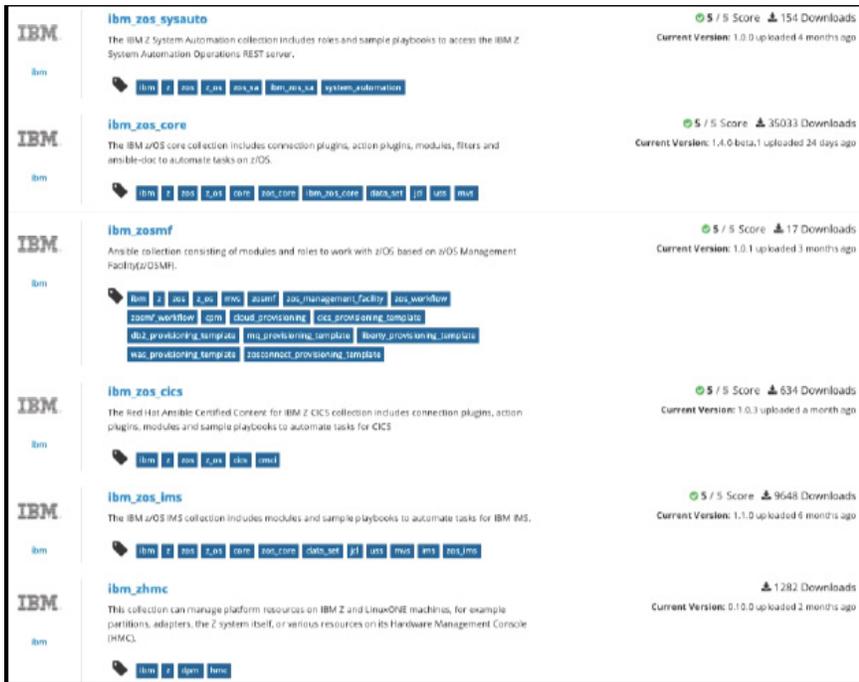


Figure 3: Collections available on Ansible Galaxy

infrastructure provisioning and Z application deployment into a CI/CD pipeline. It can orchestrate and replace existing siloed in-house automation. And it can integrate existing automation into the overall workflow. Lastly, it can collect audit and security configuration details, system status, and health checks.

The collections available for IBM Z are shown in Figure 3. The IMS collection is available from Ansible Galaxy. Simply search for `ibm_zos_ims` to find the IMS collection. There is also plenty of documentation available, including for each of the modules available.

Haley then discussed some Ansible and IMS use cases. She said that a developer can use Ansible to compile and issue IMS commands to refresh an IMS transaction for testing from their preferred development tool, such as VS Code, after they change their COBOL application code.

A second example is that a DevOps engineer can build a playbook to generate a new PSB to update the program view for an application change, and drive the IMS online change in a CI/CD pipeline.

Another example is a system administrator, who can create a reporting tool to query the

status of IMS transactions or programs, and send out notifications to report issues.

A database administrator could issue IMS commands to take an IMS database offline for processing and put it back online when complete. Or a DBA could populate a new catalog. Or, a DBA could orchestrate new automation to update the IMS catalog and integrate existing ACBLIB and Managed ACB directory automation to ensure that they are in sync.

A DBA could use DBRC commands to examine information captured in the RECON datasets, such as image copies that have been captured over the month, to determine which image copy to recover from.

The last example Haley gave was a DBA who might also need to issue a command to register a new database with RECON or run cleanup or maintenance tasks with the RECON datasets from time-to-time.

Haley went on to say that IMS users can try the Ansible IBM Z Trial. This is a free guided virtual demo environment, providing users with the ability to run and review Ansible playbooks automating tasks on z/OS.

They can then request the Ansible Automation Platform free trial. This includes: a single self-supported 60-day subscription for Red Hat Ansible Automation Platform for Red Hat Enterprise Linux; access to Red Hat's customer portal with documentation, videos, discussions, and more; and it can support up to 100 Ansible managed nodes.

Haley went on to describe the prerequisites and the steps needed to install Ansible.

The third step is to use the Ansible for IBM Z sample playbook repository with its many prewritten playbooks. And users can contribute their own playbooks. Haley also mentioned the Ansible for IBM Z hub on the IBM Z and LinuxONE Community website.

A copy of Haley Fung's presentation is available for download from the Virtual IMS user group Web site at itech-ed.com/virtualims/presentations/IMSAnsibleDec21.pdf.

You can see and hear the whole user group meeting at <https://youtu.be/FEr2Ts3uqd4>.

Meeting dates

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

- On 8 February, Dusty Rivers, Director, z Systems at Adaptigent, will be presenting.
- The following meeting will be on 12 April, when Loc Tran, Lead Software Developer at BMC Software, will be discussing, "How to use IMS log records to investigate transaction response time".

IMS articles and blogs

How Does IMS 15.2 Performance Stack Up Compared to IMS 15.1? by Richard Antikoll in the IMS part of the IBM Z and LinuxONE Community (22 November 2021). You can find the article at <https://community.ibm.com/community/user/ibmz-and-linuxone/blogs/richard-antikoll/2021/11/22/ims-v15r2-performance>.

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.