Ask the Experts
Exploring the Explorer

05 December 2013

WebSphere® Support Technical Exchange

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Agenda

- Introduce the panel of experts
- Introduce z/OS Explorer and CICS Explorer Topics
- Answer questions submitted by email (5 questions)
- Open telephone lines for questions
- Summarize highlights

Panel of Experts

Panelist	Role at IBM
Andre Clark	Staff Software Engineer in CICS Level 2
David Nice	CICS Explorer Developer
Stewart Francis	CICS Explorer Strategy & Planning, CICS & z/OS Explorer Technical Lead

Introduction

- We will be covering a number of questions that cover various z/OS Explorer and CICS Explorer Topics :

  - Deployment
  - Bundles
  - Connections
  - Why would I choose z/OS Explorer or CICS Explorer?

Question 1

- How can I deploy the CICS Explorer to my team?

Answer to Question 1

- Unzip on client desktops
- Installation Manager (unattended installation)
- Network drive deployment
- Java Web Start

Question 2

How can I preload the CICS Explorer with connections that I need to have defined?

Answer to Question 2

- Prepare connections file and export
- Manually distribute the file
- Put connections.pref file in the CICS_Explorer directory
- Host a file on a Web server (maybe even CICS!)
  - ▶ developerWorks article: https://ibm.biz/BdR43d
- Host a file on a network drive

Question 3

What are bundle projects and why would I use them?

Answer to Question 3

- A container for a set of related CICS definitions and associated resources.
- A bundle exists outside of CICS so can be independently distributed or versioned.
- Some resources can only exist in bundles (e.g. Event Bindings, OSGi bundles).
- Applications are composed from bundles.

Question 4

How do I manage bundle projects?

Answer to Question 4

- Bundle projects are created in CICS Explorer.
- Exported bundles are in binary form.

  ▶ Some of the data is not reproducible from the binary form!

- Source for bundles can be shared using standard version control systems.

  ▶ Rational Team Concert, GIT, SVN, CVS

- developerWorks article: https://ibm.biz/BdR4QU

Question 5

What is the z/OS Explorer and how does it relate to the CICS Explorer?

Answer to Question 5

- z/OS Explorer allows you to connect to a number of IBM z/OS mainframe systems to create, edit, administer, and delete artifacts including data sets, z/OS Unix Files and z/OS jobs. It is not just limited to one z/OS related product.
- To minimize the number of separate tools and products required to be installed on a user's system, z/OS Explorer acts as an integration platform for installing tools to manage a number of different products like:

    - CICS

    - IBM DB2®

    - IBM WebSphere® MQ

    - IBM IMS

- This is where the z/OS Explorer provides the biggest plus on customers systems and in their organization. It creates the ability to extend it with tools to support your organization's work all in one concise product. You can manage a number of different aspects from one application.

Answer to Question 5 (continued)

- The CICS Explorer is an add on to the z/OS explorer. It is deployed within the z/OS Explorer and it is a simple tool that can be used to manage all of your CICS systems and regions.

- CICS Explorer provides functions to view and manage CICS Transaction Server regions and CICSplexes, and a platform for the integration of CICS Tools (Such as CICS Interdependency Analyzer, Configuration Manager, etc.)

- CICS Explorer also facilitates developing and deploying OSGi applications in a CICS JVM Server.

- The IBM Redpaper "Managing IBM Explorer for z/OS and CICS Explorer Deployments across the Enterprise" (REDP-5054-00) Expounds further on this subject and has information on how the explorer can be deployed, set up and other information.

Open Lines for Questions

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