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User Views

By David Buelke and Stuart Litel

Making the World Go 'Round

Reliable access to integrated data helps businesses meet demand.
By David Beulke

Integration is a basic requirement for corporations around the world. But technology integration means many things to different people, and it can be carried out at countless levels, including operating system, application process, and database or element. So, it's no surprise that integration is anything but simple. Combining any of these components can lead to long discussions regarding the source, context, impact, and resolution of ownership.

But data and application integration is crucial to providing information on demand. Integration plays a key role in increasingly popular service-oriented architectures, where the best, cheapest, or fastest application or Web service quickly performs the business transaction request.

Integration means tighter connections with other businesses or with consumers. These connections make all types of transactions faster. Businesses continue to trim inventory, time, and expenses from their business models through more effective and efficient integrated systems.

To simplify integration, IBM provides an architecture built on open standards. DB2 provides integration to many platforms, other DBMSs, and file structures through its federation capabilities. DB2 can store XML structures and data in a single column or can split it up in a variety of configurations. Relational and XML data in DB2 is searchable through SQL or XQuery.

Many companies leverage DB2's federation and XML capabilities to consolidate legacy database systems into "centralized" data deployments. By eliminating multiple applications within the same business process, integration saves time and money. When not required to perform the same function twice or check multiple duplicate data sources, businesses processes get information fast enough to satisfy an on-demand world.

David Beulke is a DB2 consultant, author, and lecturer and a former president of the International DB2 Users Group (IDUG).

For the Users, by the Users

Experts headline a new Informix track at IDUG North America.
By Stuart Litel

When I became president of the International Informix User Group (IIUG), I wanted to make sure I wasn't taking the helm of a sinking ship. One year later, I'm happy to say that the board of directors has pulled off one of the most significant changes in IIUG history.

Working with David Beulke and Sandy Smith — former and current IDUG presidents, respectively — the IIUG board formed a partnership to bring Informix content to the IDUG North America Conference in Denver this May. (Special thanks go to the IDUG Conference Planning Committee and its chair, Bernie O'Connor, for their guidance.) From its origins as a seven-member grassroots effort, the IIUG is now a full conference partner with IDUG and works closely with the IBM Information Management organization.

The IIUG will launch its own track at the IDUG conference featuring technical Informix content. The conference will feature more than 50 user-developed Informix sessions over three and a half days. Presentations will cover Informix Dynamic Server (IDS) and Standard Engine (SE), plus application development, intermediate and advanced SQL, database optimization, and much more.

Four half-day sessions feature quite possibly the best speakers in the Informix world: Jonathan Leffler on security; Kevin Fennimore of UCI Consulting on advanced SQL tips; Art Kagel of Bloomberg on advanced IDS; and IBM Informix's Mark Scranton on the new technical features in the next version of IDS.

If you can only attend one event, make it to Denver in May. Where else can you see the best Informix speakers, IIUG Director Award winners, and top Informix vendors under one roof? For information about the conference or to join the IIUG, go to www.iiug.org/conf.

Stuart Litel is CTO of Kazer Inc. and president of the IIUG.

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