
Market Roundup

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From zIIPs to zAPPs, IBM's Latest for the z9

By Clay Ryder

IBM has announced a new mainframe specialty engine that is designed to help optimize the execution of BI, ERP, and CRM as well as other eligible workloads on the System z9 mainframe.

The System z9 Integrated Information Processor (zIIP) will be a specialty engine that will run portions of eligible database workloads to help free up general computing capacity on the mainframe. The mainframe operating system, z/OS, will direct the work between the general processor and the zIIP, which is designed to have all or a portion of an application's workload dispatched to the zIIP based upon the application's interaction with z/OS. The zIIP is latest in a series of mainframe specialty engines including the IFL for Linux and the zAAP. IBM DB2 for z/OS V8 will be the first software able to redirect a portion of eligible DB2 workloads to the zIIP, including BI, ERP, or CRM network-connected application such as SAP; BI applications that tap DB2 star-schema parallel queries; and DB2 utility functions that support index maintenance structures. IBM stated it intends to ship the zIIP and its requisite software during 2006. Installation requirements include an IBM System z9 109, z/OS 1.6 or later (with web downloads), and DB2 for z/OS V8 (with enabling PTFs). There are no IBM software charges for the zIIP; customers will be able to reduce the capacity required on their standard processors, and leverage the new zIIP for the eligible work. The hardware price for the zIIP will be \$125,000. The number of zIIPs per z9-109 can not exceed the number of general purpose processors and IBM plans to provide further details regarding eligible workloads executing in Service Request Block mode that can be directed to the zIIP.

Acronyms – the world can't seem to get enough of them, so Big Blue is always happy to oblige. While zIIP may seem be easy to say, slightly harder to spell, and probably next to impossible to remember what it stands for, what makes up this acronym is interesting indeed, with potentially notably impact for certain classes of mainframe customers. The specialty processors for the z are more than just additional hardware to bolt on to the venerable system, but represent a change in the cost of computing on the mainframe, and as such may act as a magnet to encourage the relocation of certain workloads onto the z platform. By not enforcing a software charge for the use of the zIIP, zAAP, or IFL, workloads brought to the mainframe need not incur license charge increases, and may in fact result in a net decrease as the general workload charge can reduce commensurate with the amount workload shifted to the specialty engines.

OK, so what does this really mean? It is actually pretty simple, setting aside all of the technical brilliance and implementation. For a customer with a sizable amount of BI, CRM, or ERP applications and data, the zIIP is a way to enhance the overall application performance while reducing the ongoing software license charges for the diverted workload. More efficient, and quite possibly less expensive. Combine this with the IFL or other engines, and we see a systematic improvement in the mainframe application ROI. Customers get better performance, and the carrot to move/consolidate additional workloads on the mainframe; IBM gets greater use of the mainframe and importantly more mindshare to bolster the improved cost-effectiveness of the zSeries as the focus and perhaps even fulcrum of the data center. Granted the z9 is not for everyone; nevertheless, it is no longer targeted solely at transaction processing. Rather, it is morphing into an interesting consolidation platform for a variety of application workloads, be they legacy in nature, customer facing, business analytics, or leading edge if not slightly wacky Java or Linux Web-based solutions. With this in mind, it is not surprising that in Q4 2005 over 60% of IBM's mainframe revenue was driven by new workloads. Overall, while the latest acronyms may be little more

than an expression of fun-seeking marketers, the capabilities and potential upside represented by the acronyms are a clear indicator that the mainframe itself is far from becoming an anachronism.

IBM Purchases CIMS Lab Inc.

By Joyce Tompsett Becknell

IBM has purchased CIMS Lab, a company with software used to track computer resource usage across virtualized environments. According to IBM, this includes servers, storage, email, networks, databases, applications, and operating systems. The software gathers data about various resources and converts it from purely technical information for the IT department into financial information that the business people can also use regarding how technology resources are consumed across a virtualized infrastructure. IBM believes companies can also use CIMS Lab when deploying a Services Oriented Architecture (SOA) to track and charge for IT usage when services travel across the infrastructure. CIMS Lab is a suite of products including Resource Accounting, Chargeback, and Capacity Planning software products used by corporate financial and reporting systems. With this acquisition, IBM will integrate CIMS Lab's operations with Tivoli. The product will ship with IBM Director for xSeries and pSeries, and will also be integrated into Tivoli software as part of the accounting and chargeback offering.

Virtualization has been touted as the IT complexity panacea for the last few years, and in theory it could well be. Technical complexity is caused when there are multiple systems with multiple variables making it difficult for managers to control. If a company has tens of servers with several applications and the accompanying storage, then the ability to manage all those devices automatically—which is what virtualization does in essence—would greatly reduce IT complexity, not to mention improve IT effectiveness. This has been the argument that has driven adoption of virtualization technology so far. The problem with this is that as virtualization adoption has spread, it has not addressed the attendant business problems. With virtualization, IT managers can create one large infrastructure, but who pays for it? Who is using these resources, and how much? Are the parts of the business that pay for the infrastructure or service the ones who receive the benefit? And are the services offered priced appropriately? The decision to implement new services is far easier to make if the business metrics are available to answer these types of questions, regardless of the vintage and provenance of the technology deployed. With CIMS Labs, IT managers and business people are able to start putting the framework in place to collect the data needed to make these decisions. Simplification is an ongoing issue for complex IT departments, and business issues must be solved in tandem with technical ones to provide truly effective solutions.

IBM is implementing these services for its xSeries and pSeries customers, as well as for Tivoli customers who are managing heterogeneous environments. Open systems are much more complicated environments because, unlike mainframes, they were not designed with metering and chargeback systems from product launch. However, as they are a significant portion of the infrastructure and complexity in IT environments, then they must be retrofitted or enclosed within systems that can track and monitor their usage. Current IBM xSeries and pSeries customers should consider implementing this technology with their next upgrades or immediately if they are involved in virtualization projects, particularly in the server space. Finally, the one point IBM has not articulated is its integration plans for the capacity planning capabilities of the CIMS Lab product. We expect that will appear in the next round of announcements from the company.

Stop Badware Coalition... Third Coalition's the Charm?

By Susan Dietz

There is a new game in town: the Stop Badware Coalition. Top names in the Coalition include Google, Lenovo, Sun Microsystems, Consumer Reports' WebWatch project, the Berkman Center for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School, and the Oxford Internet Institute in England. The coalition claims to be a complement to other existing anti-malware coalitions by publishing the names of companies that spread what they have termed "badware" and showing how those companies have made money off of their victims rather than focusing on tracking down the suspects. Stopbadware.org is envisioned as a clearinghouse of stories from Internet users detailing their experiences dealing with badware, plus a resource to check whether proposed downloads contain any known malicious software such as spyware and adware.

We think anything that could potentially drive people away from the Internet, such as malware, should be at least severely curtailed if not eliminated altogether. Previously, we wrote about the virtues of the [Anti-Spyware Coalition](#) and still believe that people who are profiting from the Internet should be the very ones to keep the environment as safe and hassle-free as possible. However, it does cause us to ponder why, in the era of great open-source collaboration, Internet should require two discrete anti malware/badware coalitions? With so much at risk, why aren't these two coalitions seeking to work as one?

One city does not have two different police agencies, both claiming to be the only one to fight the same crime in the best possible manner: that picture is just silly. We have all seen how different agencies very seldom work well together, as the recent debacle of Hurricane Katrina has highlighted. Despite the best of intentions, interagency rivalries do develop and people get caught up in the Us v. Them game, forgetting that "Them" are supposed to be the criminals rather than other competitive good guys. It does not escape our attention that this could again be an example of a Sun-supported vs. Microsoft-supported initiative squabble. But malware is more than a fight over the "better" operating system or platform; it is a threat to the usability of the Internet itself. To us, the threat of malware is simply a much more important issue than traditional corporate rivalries and demands that all work together for the common good. The best way to stop rivalries is to prevent them in the first place: keep people on the same side to remind them that they do have a common enemy and a common goal. With a united front, the general populace of Internet users can be more effectively deputized in this fight as well. So while we applaud any and all efforts to rid the world of malware, we hope that the players in this space will have enough customer-focused fortitude to rise above rivalry and work together to help stamp out malware in our lifetimes.