Welcome to This Week on developerWorks. I'm your host, Calvin Powers. This week we're going to talk about virtualizing AIX server so you can get the most bang for the buck from your Integrated Virtualization Manager. But first, let's look at some of the other new items this week on developerWorks.

Pietro Marella and Torsten Schlegel have published an extensive guide to managing test assets in a cloud environment. The guide is called Using Rational Quality to manage lab assets in virtual environments, and is based on a pilot project at the IBM Tivoli Lab in Rome.

This guide shows how to extend the IBM Rational Test Lab Manager component of IBM Rational Quality Manager to import up to date definitions of virtual images and machines that are available for use in testing from IBM Tivoli Service Automation Manager. The techniques outlined in this guide can help test teams speed up their test cycles and manage complex test environments.

Mark Connell and Shili Yang have demonstrated how to integrate IBM Business Process Manager with an external LDAP user directory. Their work is documented in a new article they have recently published on developerWorks called Securely integrate an LDAP user registry with IBM Business Process Manager. This article will show you how to replace the product's default security provider and instead use your enterprise directory for authentication and authorization in Business Process Manager.

Rajalakshmi Srinivasaraghavan has published an article on developerWorks that explores the format and features of the DWARF debug file structure. This standard for including source level debug information in object files is widely used by many compilers and tool chains. This article explores the details of this file format so that you can make the best use of your debugging tools and reduce the amount of time you spend tracking down bugs.

Don't forget, you can get links to all of those items at the show's homepage at ibm.com/developerWorks/thisweek.

My guest this week on developerWorks is John Ohle. He is a Software Engineer and Systems Administrator for IBM working in the IBM Connections team. He has just published a tutorial on how to use the IBM Integrated Virtualization Manager to manage multiple AIX servers at once. John, welcome to This Week on developerWorks. First, tell us a little bit about the IBM product and what it can do for customers.

Sure, so the article was written from the point of view of the systems administrator of a customer essentially to start their install of IVM on the base BLADE server. It's intended for the system administrator that knows what he wants to do with our products but needs to know how are we going to do this.

And of course, we have our InfoCenter a lot of high level documentation that we support all our products but sometimes it's nice just to have a [separate set] of guidance helping you walk through these things and describe each step. So it's visual aids which always helps of course in my experience with the process.

So the article is essentially set up into three parts. The first part is they sign up their server petition on the Integrated Virtualization Manager. So within that essentially that's separated from the step two which is installing the operating system which in this case is AIX 7.1. And part three is for extra additional information and further reading that the reader may choose to read on about. that I deem quite important to know about anyway such as if they want to stop or change any aspect of their system.
POWERS: Yes, it sounds like a great money saver, John. Tell us what people are going to learn from your article.

OHLE: So, the story is broken into three parts essentially. The first part is the set up with the system administrator to set up the server partition with them in the Integrated Virtualization Manager. So the second part then is installing the operating system on the partition. The third part is some extra steps such as if they want to change anything after the fact and some additional further reading and links to the IBM Info Center and that sort of things.

So the first part set up, it gears towards the two aspects. Some customers may have older firmware version, existing customers. Some want to buy new hardware and get the newest firmware. There's a few extra options. They seem to have more options when they go through this process themselves. So it covers both aspects in both customers based on whatever level they have there in this virtualization manager at the time.

So they through and once they set the resources, they apply them to the partition, they set up the partition the way they want. Obviously every use case will be different. So they have to choose and decide in advance what their requirements will be. Once they've decided that at that stage, the administrator sets up and then installs the operating system in the partition.

On the operating system, they can use any one essentially that they choose. So if it is whoever I chose AIX, I use it myself personally, because I find it very stable, very, very reliable in terms of server aspects. Now this can be very useful for many products such as SameTime, IBM Connections, we use that internally in many products. So it's a good basis to use, as it is UNIX based and obviously fantastic. But it's not your choice for everyone to use a UNIX based operating system like AIX.

And so the third section of the article is mainly for systems administrators, configuring their blade centers and their Blades. There are videos for them to watch, help them watch. As we do documentation it's very, very detailed and very, very good. But obviously sometimes it's just easier to have visual aids and a few simple steps on how to get this set up, help the customers get set up in an efficient and quick manner, as quick as possible.

POWERS: John, what's the most common mistake when you see people installing AIX in this IBM environment? What's the thing you'd like to warn people about the most?

OHLE: The most common issue I see is proper planning. When you set the server, it's best to think long term what resource you'll need, what you aim to have your blade doing, how many partitions you're going to want to have, what products will be running on the blades and so forth.

I find that some administrators may set it up without having properly thought through what they aim to have their blades do for them in the long term. So of course you can come back later on with IVM and you can change the [ram] allocations, your disk space size, your CPUs.

And if you wish to after the fact, the only thing with that though is it does require you to shut down your operating system of your partition. Which means, of course, if you're running any server critical process on that, the partition will have to be stopped. So just in terms of less down time in the future and it's a more stable run time for you if you just best to think long term when you set these things up.