'What's in a name? - A review of WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries

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When customers got their initial shipment of the IBM® WebSphere® Development Studio for iSeries™ V5R1, it included unlimited copies of the workstation tool set called WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries, Version 5.1. When customers ordered the refresh to WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries V5R1, they received unlimited copies of the new workstation tool set called WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries, Version 4.0.

We have heard your comments: "Why does IBM keep changing the name of this product?" and "I never know what I've got or where IBM is headed with all of this stuff." and "How come the product version is counting backwards?"

And there are many other questions. In this article, we attempt to answer as many as we can.

Why did you change the name?

Customers tell us that the renaming of the workstation products just added to the confusion surrounding the repackaging of all of the iSeries application development tools into WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries. And the number of new WebSphere products being introduced makes the situation even more confusing.

The introduction of WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries was the most significant change to application development in the history of the midrange marketplace. Only a year has passed since the introduction of the Development Studio for iSeries. Why would IBM change the name of the workstation tools already? Most customers were just getting to know and understand the old names.

So IBM, why did you do it?

In our first repackaging efforts, we included WebSphere Studio, VisualAge® for Java™, CODE and VisualAge RPG into one workstation product called WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V4R5M1. When WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries V5R1 was first introduced, we added the WebFacing Tool to the other workstation tools and called the workstation package WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries, Version 5.1. We kept the name of the workstation package and just updated the version and release level to match the version and release level of the host package. We used the version and release level of the workstation package to establish the link to the host tools.

By the way, several IBM groups were involved in the product naming exercise. WebSphere branding, the IBM Software Group naming, iSeries AD product development, iSeries AD information development, and iSeries AD market management all contributed their ideas and opinions. WebSphere branding and Software Group naming selected and approved the final names.
The committees and review boards and lawyers had spoken: it appeared that we had a good naming strategy for our new products.

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First chink in the naming strategy

We decided that we wanted to make our new e-business development tools available to customers on all versions of the iSeries operating system. So we released WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries on OS/400® V4R5. WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries V4R5 included unlimited copies of WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5.1. Now, WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries, V5.1 was the workstation tool set for WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries V4R5 and V5R1. Here was the first weak spot in our naming strategy. The link between the version and release level of the workstation tools and the host tools had come unglued.

Since the workstation tools were being updated a couple of times a year, whereas the refresh cycle for the host tools was over one year, it appeared that we were always going to have one set of workstation tools supporting multiple levels of the host product.

Second chink in the naming strategy

In June 2002, we shipped a new version of our workstation tools that were integrated using the new Eclipse integrated development environment (IDE). This was a major enhancement to our iSeries AD tool strategy..

Eclipse can be described as a kind of universal tool platform -- an open, extensible IDE for anything and yet nothing in particular. The real value comes from tool plug-ins that "teach" Eclipse how to work with things -- Java files, Web content, graphics, video -- almost anything you can imagine. Eclipse allows independent tool builders to develop tools that integrate with other people's tools so seamlessly that you can't tell where one tool ends and another starts. It's pretty exciting stuff.

IBM had established a new naming convention for its Eclipse-based offerings. WebSphere and Studio were included in names of all of the workstation products in the family. And all of the other Eclipse-based tools had the same version and release level as the WebSphere Application Server that they supported.

WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5.1 was inconsistent with the rest of the Eclipse tooling. It became obvious that we couldn't change the version and release level of WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries to match the versionand release level of WebSphere Application Server without causing widespread confusion. We'd look ridiculous if we released a first version of our workstation tools called WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5.1 and then refreshed and released a new version of the tools called WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V4.0. How would our customers keep it straight?

We'd have the following workstation tool sets in the market:
-   WebSphere Development Tools for AS/400® V4R5M1
-   WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5.1
-   WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V4.0

On top of this version numbering problem, we'd be the only Eclipsed-based workstation product without "Studio" in the product name.

Naming problems

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We had two problems to solve.

WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5.1 supported WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries V4R5 and V5R1. The version and release association between the host and workstation products had been severed. We needed to reestablish the link between the workstation tools and the host product. This was important because most customers ordered the host product, WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries. This host product entitled customers to unlimited copies of the workstation tools, WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries. Customers ordering WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries V4R5, were confused when they received WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5.1.

Next, there was the problem that our workstation tools, WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries, didn't conform to the IBM product naming strategy for Eclipse-based products.
- The version level of our workstation product wasn't consistent with latest version level of WebSphere Application Server that it supported
- Our workstation offering didn't have "Studio" in its name

The answer (to the most commonly asked question)

To address these two problems, we decided to rename our workstation tool set when we introduced our Eclipse-based version. So our new Eclipsed-based workstation tool set is called the IBM **WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries V4.**

Thus, the link between the host product, WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries, and the workstation tool set, WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries, was established through the renaming.

Thus, we were consistent with the rest of the Eclipse-based offerings.
- The version level of our workstation tools was consistent with the latest level of WebSphere Application Server that we supported. WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries V4, supported WebSphere Application Server, V4.
- The "Studio" name was included in our Eclipse-based workstation tools.

And, of course, everyone participated in the renaming process. And everyone had an opinion. It is easier to get consensus on the content of a product than on its name.

The rest of the questions:

Now that we have addressed the most common questions that were raised, we'll provide at least short answers to some of the other questions that were asked by our customers.

Q: "In WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5.1, I got WebSphere Studio, Standard Edition, and VisualAge for Java, Professional Edition. I also received iSeries enhancements for both tools. Why don't I get these tools any longer?"

A: WebSphere Studio, Standard Edition and VisualAge for Java, Professional Edition were merged into a new product called WebSphere Studio Site Developer. The merging of these two tools recognized that

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Web development and Java development were the two key components of e-business development and that the tools needed to work together in a seamless fashion. Merging the two products and integrating them to the new IDE was the fastest, most efficient way to make this happen.

Q: "Aren't you afraid that you have created more confusion than clarity by changing the product names?"

A: Actually, we were trying to remove some of the confusion in the marketplace. However, whenever you change a name, you can create churn and confusion. We won't know if we've made the right choices until later…say 8-12 months.

Q: "I ordered WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries, V5R1. I received a set of workstation CDs called WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries V4. I installed the product from these CDs on my workstation and now I have WebSphere Studio Site Developer, Advanced on my workstation. What happened? What did I do wrong?"

A: You did nothing wrong. WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries V4 became available on June 28, 2002. As of July 5, 2002, customers ordering WebSphere Development Studio for iSeries V5R1 (5722-WDS) receive the new WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries V4.
The workstation tools included in WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries V4 are:

- WebSphere Studio Site Developer Advanced V4
    - Unique iSeries plug-ins for Java development
    - Unique iSeries plug-ins for Web development
    - IBM WebFacing Tool plug-in
- CODE
- VisualAge RPG
- IBM Debug Tool

Q: "Why do you change the names of your products every release?"

A: We were the first to market with an integrated, consolidated suite of development tools with Eclipse as a base component. The WebFacing Tool shipped a prerelease version of the E clipse IDE when it first shipped in WebSphere Development Tools for iSeries V5. When we first shipped, the E clipse naming conventions had not been established. The Eclipse integrated development environment is an extremely important and popular advancement in IBM application development. As a result, an abundance of IBM tools are integrating to the Eclipse IDE and being named WebSphere Studio xx. Because of the rapid increase in the number of WebSphere products on the market, naming standards had to be developed and enforced. Unfortunately, our product names were impacted by these new standards. It is the price we pay for being one of the first products to market.

Q: "What is WebSphere?"

A: WebSphere is a family of e-business products. The centerpiece of this family is the WebSphere Application Server. The application server is an execution environment to run Java-based e-business applications. WebSphere Application Server will run on most of the strategic servers in the current market including all of the IBM eServers. There is a family of WebSphere Application Servers to address the

range of requirements from the most basic e-business applications to the most sophisticated, high-transaction rate, multi-platform environments.

There is also a family of Web and Java development tools to create applications for the family of WebSphere Application Servers. These development tools are integrated to the Eclipse IDE and carry the WebSphere Studio brand name. Here is a list of the key members in this rapidly expanding family:

WebSphere Studio Site Developer:
- WebSphere Studio Site Developer merges the key capabilities of WebSphere Studio, Standard Edition, with VisualAge for Java, Professional Edition. Web services development tools, XML development tools and database tools have been added to address the e-business development needs of the business-to-business marketplace.

WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries
- iSeries plug-ins were added to WebSphere Studio Site Developer for Web and Java development, for Web services development and for the IBM WebFacing Tool. CODE and VisualAge RPG are also part of this iSeries specific tool set.

WebSphere Studio Application Developer
- Enterprise JavaBean development tools, problem determination and analysis tools were added to the base function provided by WebSphere Studio Site Developer.

WebSphere Studio Enterprise Developer
- Java Connector Architecture development tools were added to the base capabilities of WebSphere Studio Application Developer, along with a new e-business rapid application development tool. This enterprise tool suite is designed to address the sophisticated, high-transaction rate, e-business development needs of high-end customers.

Note that each product builds on the base of another product. This architecture allows IBM to rapidly leverage its tool investments to address the needs of multiple markets. It also demonstrates the capabilities of the Eclipse IDE to integrate multiple tools into a single environment.

As the World Turns (Upside Down)

What does this all mean to you? Will we ever stop changing things?

While we evolve our tool set into a single integrated offering, built on an open-source platform, we will continue to try to keep things consistent and simple. In the short term, this will mean further changes as we continue to align our host and workstation products with the family of IBM WebSphere Studio products.

For those loyal customers who are with us on the journey, this may sometimes seem like a bumpy ride through the turbulence of naming and versioning. But the improvements to the tools and the ease with which any particular tool can be used in conjunction with so many others -- well, we hope that is the payoff along the way.

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