



IBM Informix Dynamic Server (IDS)

The IBM Informix Dynamic Server is a product that is widely used for OLTP, CRM, and other mission critical applications. IDS includes support for DataBlades, IBM Informix's powerful extensions for non-traditional data types. These DataBlades form the basis of exciting product offerings for vertical markets such as finance, law enforcement, trading and geographic mapping. IBM intends to continue to enhance, sell and support this product.

IDS Version 9.30

The exciting news for IDS users is that version 9.30 is available since October 1st, 2001. This is in keeping with IBM's stated commitment to continue to enhance, maintain and sell this product. This release contains a number of highlights, including:

A set of features designed to make IDS even easier to administer.

The IBM Informix System Administrator will be upgraded to version 1.4. This release includes a large number of changes to the functionality while maintaining the easy modification and web based thin client architecture that have made it so popular with IDS users.

In addition, a new tool, Server Studio JE (Java Edition), is bundled with the release. This provides web-based tools for table editing and other administrator and developer requirements that previously needed either use of command lines or bulky client/server products to accomplish. The Server Studio JE product is a partner product and a variety of add-ons and extensions are available from our partner, AGS.

The dynamic logs feature lowers administration cost by reducing the need for hands on manipulation of log files and disk space. This has traditionally been a time consuming and troublesome area of administration for DBAs and these new features will lessen the work required to keep a system up and running continuously.

Improved Support for DataBlade modules and development

Changes to SAPI, the API used to develop DataBlades, allow for more rapid and productive development of DataBlades while maintaining compatibility with all existing code. These ease of use enhancements are coupled with support for DataBlades in the enterprise replication feature. User Defined Types, SmartBlobs, and spatial data are all now capable of being replicated between nodes.

Enterprise Replication (ER)

In addition to the DataBlade support described above, the ER feature has been extended to provide enhanced reliability and performance. The culmination of this work is that IDS continues to be an excellent choice for customers needing to have multiple copies of data moved seamlessly between multiple sites and machines.

Spatial Support

IDS is ideal for customers needing to develop and deliver geographically aware applications. Enhanced spatial support in IDS 9.30 includes making the Spatial DataBlade available at no cost with the product, allowing customers to experience the power of IBM Informix technology and develop applications that are spatially aware. The powerful and patented indexing technology in IDS gives it unparalleled geographic data performance.

Ongoing Support for 7.31, and Workgroup versions of IDS

7.31 continues to be a top choice for customers who are not yet ready to take advantage of the advanced features of 9.30, such as the object relational model and self-managing features such as dynamic locks, dynamic logs, shared statement cache, etc.. It remains our policy to provide all fixes to code defects on both 9.30 and 7.31, which ensures that IDS 7 customers have a rock solid product to run their businesses on. IBM intends to continue to sell and support this product.

IBM will continue to release interim versions of IDS 7 on a regular basis. The most current versions of IDS, 9.21UC5 and 7.31UD1, will both be updated with interim releases in 2001 by IBM.

The Workgroup Editions will also continue to be sold, supported and enhanced, and will be kept current with the IDS versions from which they derive.

IDS Futures

Development has begun on the next release of IDS. This release is still in the requirements finalization phase and is targeted to ship in the second half of 2002. Key goals for this release include:

Remove scalability limits in the server

IBM will include better support for very large disk drives, increase the varchar maximum size to 32k, and improve page use when using varchar and lvarchar data types. Much improved support for multi-rep types is also planned for this release.

Simplification of the management of the system

Including improvement in the management of dbspaces and the ability to deal with chunks in a more transparent fashion. Improvements in HDR and SmartBlobs functionality is also planned.

The removal of the 2GB chunk limit for 64bit systems will also simplify management of the system. The intent is to hide the chunk level interface from the DBA if they do not want to manage at this level.

Integrated support for other IBM products

Future versions of IBM IDS will include tighter integration and support for other IBM products, including both the WebSphere and Visual Age family of products. At the same time we remain committed to being an open systems vendor and giving customers a choice of tools and application servers by continuing to test and certify with other vendors products. One key way we will meet this goal is by continuing to enhance the key client side API's including ODBC, OLE-DB and JDBC.

Additional Features

IBM is continuing to evaluate an extensive list of additional features including: new security functions, distributed transactions for UDTs, SQL enhancements, multi-nationalization and others. More information will be available and customer input will be actively solicited at the IBM Informix Conference in October.

IBM Informix Internet Foundation

IBM offers the IBM Informix Internet Foundation product bundle consisting of the IDS Server, support for Java (J/Foundation), the IBM Informix Web DataBlade module, the Excalibur Text Search DataBlade module, IBM Informix Office Connect, and IBM Informix Object Translator.

At the time of the release of IDS 9.30 the existing bundle will be updated with the most recent versions of each of these products. A second generation of this bundle will also be offered with an even more comprehensive suite of web productivity tools. Details of this product, Internet Foundation2 for Web Deployment, will be made at the IBM Informix Conference in October.

New Foundation Bundles

Finance Foundation for Capital Markets

The recently announced and well-received Finance Foundation for Capital Markets bundle will continue to be actively developed. This unique product is designed to help securities traders store and analyze market data in real-time. The bundle incorporates the benefits of the TimeSeries DataBlade, TimeSeries Real-Time Loader, NAG DataBlade, and the IBM Informix Dynamic Server into a targeted solution that is ideal for finance professionals. Finance Foundation will be updated to include the latest versions of IBM Informix products, with the many new features and advantages they include.

Law Enforcement Foundation

IBM has recently launched this new product designed to help in the critical and exacting field of law enforcement and police science. This product bundle uses the IBM Informix DataBlade technology to extend the IDS database to include the ability to handle voice, iris, facial and fingerprint recognition. The unique ability to extend the access methods (index types) of the database allows these unorthodox data types to be handled with ease and speed by the system. This provides huge productivity gains for organizations that adopt it. While only recently launched, this product has already been selected by law enforcement agencies on four continents. IBM is enthusiastic about the new market opportunities that this product provides and its ability to demonstrate excellent customer value and technological innovation.

Other Foundation Bundles

IBM intends to offer other industry specific Foundation bundles for various customer segments throughout the remainder of 2001 and into the future. Stay tuned to the IBM Data Management web site for continuing announcements of these products. As with the Internet Foundation bundle, IBM intends to continue to sell and support the underlying products that comprise these offerings and to integrate key technologies from them into DB2.

DataBlades

DataBlades are business logic modules that reside in the database. DataBlades allow IDS to integrate new data types, operations that process the data, and access methods that index the data. The server provides the same level of support for these new data types, operations, and access methods that it provides for built-in data types. DataBlade modules add greater capability to the database server and enable you to easily manage any kind of information to meet the needs of your specific business domain. Today, IBM offers the following DataBlade modules:

- **IBM Informix Spatial DataBlade** module enables users to manage geo-spatial data and features a specialized R-tree index which provides extremely high-performance SQL access to spatial data.
- **Excalibur Image DataBlade** module provides for image retrieval and feature management.
- **IBM Informix Image Foundation DataBlade** module provides for image translation, retrieval of image metadata, and image format conversion.
- **Excalibur Text Search DataBlade** module supports full-text searching of documents stored in IDS.
- **IBM Informix C-ISAM DataBlade** module provides for SQL access and database management support of C-ISAM files.
- **IBM Informix Geodetic DataBlade** module stores and manipulates four-dimensional objects; it is particularly useful for managing spatial-temporal data.
- **IBM Informix NAG DataBlade** module provides numerical analysis functions and formulas.
- **IBM Informix TimeSeries DataBlade** module supports management and analysis of time series data.
- **IBM Informix Video Foundation DataBlade** module provides an open architecture for video-enabling technologies.
- **IBM Informix Web DataBlade** module eases the development and management of Web-based DBMS applications.

IBM intends to continue to sell and support the DataBlade products listed above and to integrate key technologies from selected DataBlade modules into future releases of DB2. We will continue to enhance DataBlades by adding new features as they are needed by users. Currently the NAG, TimeSeries and Spatial blades are preparing for new releases.

Integration of Technology into DB2

IBM and Informix share a common vision of the emerging market requirements and opportunities for leveraging all forms of information. We also agree that the way to address these opportunities and requirements is by bringing leading technology to market, as both companies have done historically. The result of the acquisition is an overall acceleration in the ability to deliver a comprehensive database product portfolio that will meet the future requirements and objectives of our customers. Informix had previously been working on the "Arrowhead" project to fulfill these requirements, while IBM was working to bring leading edge technology to market via the DB2 Data Management portfolio. In joining these two efforts together the result will be the earlier delivery of leading next generation data management products.

As DB2 absorbs selected Informix technologies, IBM Informix users who chose to move to DB2 will find it straightforward to do so. In addition to the comprehensive migration tools that exist today for customers wishing to move to DB2, key SQL features will be implemented to make it easier to migrate applications, as well as further tools to migrate applications, data, and schemas to DB2.

Further information on the future of DB2 and the options and advantages that it offers to IBM Informix users will be made available to users and partners over the coming months.

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