



DB2 Information Management Software

IBM Informix portfolio: executive overview



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Executive summary

The IBM Information Management division continues to enhance, support and sell IBM Informix® and UniVerse/UniData™ (U2) products and services as part of its overall strategy to provide the world's leading software infrastructure for e-business on demand™. In the past 18 months, customers and partners have demonstrated strong loyalty with continued investment in Informix and U2 technology. Long-term product roadmaps and attractive terms and conditions provided by IBM have helped to solidify this loyalty. Informix and U2 customers and partners have experienced our commitment to excellence in caring for our customers.

The message that we wish to convey with this summary is that we plan to continue investing in quality and feature enhancements in the key Informix and U2 products for as long as customers require. In parallel, we are combining the unique Informix benefits with those of IBM DB2® information management software to produce a DB2 that provides even broader market leadership. Will we force Informix customers to migrate to DB2? Absolutely not! We are confident in our strategy and our ability to achieve it, and trust that the result will attract Informix upgrades on its own merits if and when customers desire.

The following is a quick synopsis of the plans for each of the major Informix and U2 product lines. For more details, read the "Informix Product Portfolio Roadmap, version 4" available at ibm.com/informix, or contact your IBM representative.



Highlights

Results of internal benchmarks show IDS 9.4 to be 8 to 15 percent faster than the fastest previous release.

IBM Informix database servers

IBM has continued the same development pace for the Informix database servers—Informix Dynamic Server (IDS), Extended Parallel Server (XPS) and Red Brick® Warehouse Server (Red Brick)—that Informix intended prior to the company's acquisition in July 2001. Roadmaps have been published illustrating new releases approximately every 18 months.

IBM Informix Dynamic Server (IDS)

IDS continues to support the most demanding e-business applications with minimal administrative requirements and highly efficient use of available computing and storage resources.

Released in March of 2003, the latest release of IDS, version 9.40, has successfully passed rigorous customer testing by an equal number of IDS 7 and IDS 9 users. IBM is confident that all IDS workloads and environments will benefit from the improvements in performance, scalability and ease-of-use that version 9.40 provides. In internal benchmarks, IDS 9.4 is 8 to 15 percent faster than our fastest previous release. Features for IDS 9.50 are already being designed, with expected delivery projected for late 2004. Future releases of IDS 9.x are expected approximately every 18 months.

IDS 7.31, the latest in the IDS 7 product line, will be supported through April of 2006. Customers still on IDS 7 are encouraged to upgrade to IDS 9.40.



Highlights

Many of the world's largest financial institutions continue to run their critical enterprise data warehouses on Extended Parallel Server.

Red Brick Version 6.20, released in October 2002, provides many feature enhancements, including OLAP functions and integrated backup/restore.

IBM Extended Parallel Server (XPS)

XPS continues to serve the most critical enterprise data warehouses of many of the largest financial institutions, travel service providers and retailers in the world, among other industries.

Version 8.40 of XPS shipped in October 2002, with significant enhancements in performance and distributed database support. The next release, XPS 8.50, is in development and is targeted for release in the second half of 2004. It will contain further distributed database support, flexible backup/restore options that will dramatically improve availability and table recovery, ease-of-use features such as dynamic logs, and improved fragment elimination when using date/time columns.

IBM Red Brick Warehouse Server

Designed specifically for data warehousing, Red Brick continues to serve the most challenging data warehouses and data marts, particularly among leading retailers and marketing agencies, for a very low operational and administrative cost.

Version 6.20 shipped in October 2002 and provides many new features, including advanced online analytic processing (OLAP) functions, integrated backup/restore, data load and export using Extensible Markup Language (XML). Many analytical application vendors prefer Red Brick due to its high performance and the ease with which they can embed it invisibly under their tools. Red Brick Warehouse Server Version 6.30 is in the development phase and will include major performance improvements to STARjoin, TARGETjoin and STARindex. It will also include usability improvements such as additional Structured Query Language (SQL) OLAP functions and additional expression support, and will allow 3GB address space for the Microsoft® Windows® platform and platform support for Hewlett-Packard's Itanium Platform Family (IPF). This release is targeted for the first half of 2004.



Highlights

Informix OnLine Server continues to be a popular choice for serving the SQL database needs of small to medium-sized businesses with fewer than 100 users.

Thousands of applications worldwide have C-ISAM as their underlying software infrastructure.

IBM Informix OnLine Server

Many independent software vendors and end users continue to prefer OnLine for a low-touch, high-performance SQL database engine to serve small to medium businesses that have fewer than 100 simultaneous users.

Version 5.20, OnLine Extended Edition, shipped in December 2002, with enhancements that enable the use of larger disks, connectivity for the latest Informix 4GL (fourth-generation language) versions and built-in support for distributed database access. No further enhancement releases are planned at this time; however, support for the latest versions of OnLine's current platforms can be expected for many more years.

IBM Informix Standard Engine (SE)

SE still ships embedded under hundreds of applications, reliably serving the data access requirements of small- to medium-business back offices around the world.

Support for the latest versions of SE's current platforms can be expected for many more years; however, no enhancement releases are planned at this time.

IBM C-ISAM

C-ISAM, a C-language library of data-access application programming interfaces (APIs), provides the underlying software infrastructure for thousands of applications worldwide. It served as the original reference for the X-Open standard Indexed Sequential Access Method and continues to be used by developers who need a robust record management library.



Highlights

No further enhancement releases are planned at this time; however, support for the latest versions of C-ISAM's current platforms can be expected for many more years.

Cloudscape

IBM intends to enhance, maintain and support the IBM Cloudscape™ database product for business partners and existing customers and for use by a growing number of IBM products, including IBM WebSphere® Application Server v5. While IBM is not actively marketing Cloudscape at this time, IBM will respond to interested inquiries on a case-by-case basis. The latest Cloudscape release (v5.1) includes a number of significant enhancements for maintaining Java™ Database Connectivity (JDBC) standards compliance and responding to partner requirements.

U2 product family (UniVerse/UniData)*IBM UniVerse*

UniVerse enhancements and support will be offered to customers and partners for as long as they require.

UniVerse is an extended-relational database management system (DBMS) that supports both direct record I/O as well as standard SQL, and offers Microsoft ActiveX®, Open Database Connectivity (ODBC), OLE DB, JDBC and Java interfaces. IBM intends to offer enhancements and support UniVerse customers and partners for as long as they require. UniVerse 10.1, targeted for release in the second half of 2003, will include enhanced support for secure sockets layer (SSL) and extended security options, and will offer enterprise application integration options through IBM WebSphere MQ, as well as other features.



Highlights

Providing support for repeating groups, hierarchies and arrays, UniData offers both native interfaces and industry-standard interfaces.

The Dynamic Arrays feature of 4GL 7.32 provides highly efficient memory utilization.

IBM UniData

UniData is an extended-relational, ODBC-compliant database that supports repeating groups, hierarchies and arrays. UniData offers both best-of-breed native interfaces, with ActiveX, Java and C interfaces, as well as industry-standard interfaces, such as ODBC, OLE DB and HTTP. IBM intends to offer enhancements and support UniData customers and partners for as long as they require. Enhancements under consideration for UniData beyond the recently released Version 6 include enhancements to XML, additional support for the Simple Object Access Protocol (SOAP), and tightly bound XML and SQL-based interfaces to expand data storage options to DB2 and other relational databases.

IBM Informix tools and connectivity

IBM Informix 4GL

As a rapid application development tool, 4GL continues to be used by tens of thousands of developers. Applications built with 4GL serve the needs of data-entry operators, point-of-sale clerks and reservation attendants all over the world.

Following the IDS 9.4 release, IBM also launched 4GL and ISQL 7.32 in March 2003. These products will allow users currently on IDS 7.x databases to take full advantage of the latest function-rich IDS 9.4 server release.

4GL 7.32 offers superior IDS 9.x server compatibility with features that support new SQL data types: INT8, BIGINT, SERIAL8, and NCHAR/NVARCHAR. This release also supports the important IDS 9.x Long ID feature, which allows the handling of identifier names up to 128 characters in length. Another advantage is the highly efficient memory utilization provided by the new Dynamic Arrays feature of 4GL 7.32.



Highlights

The Informix CSDK provides broad language support for constructing applications that use SQL to communicate with Informix databases.

Office Connect Version 4.0 is expected to provide LDAP security support and OLAP visualization capabilities.

IBM is also announcing its intent to integrate 4GL with WebSphere Studio and Enterprise Generation Language (EGL) to offer data-driven Web development capabilities and DB2 connectivity. Roadmap and feature details can be found in the white paper, "Informix Product Portfolio Roadmap, version 4" available at ibm.com/informix, or you can contact your IBM representative for more information.

IBM Informix Client Software Developer's Kit

The Informix Client Software Developer's Kit (CSDK) provides broad language support for constructing applications that communicate with all Informix databases through the SQL language. This developer's kit is available for a wide variety of application development languages and environments including C, C++, Java and .NET.

Version 2.80 shipped in the summer of 2002, with Unicode enhancements in the ODBC and OLE DB drivers. Version 2.81 shipped in March of 2003 and includes support for new features in IDS 9.4.

IBM Office Connect

Office Connect provides an innovative way to visualize database data through the variety of charts and graphs supported by Microsoft Excel. Cells can be associated with fields in a table or a view of tables. Updates can be made in Excel and the changes reflected back to the database automatically.

Version 3.0 shipped in early 2002, with a Web Edition, for posting reports to a corporate intranet, as well as Personal and Professional Editions. Version 4.0 is scheduled for release in the first half of 2003 and will feature Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP) security support and OLAP visualization capabilities.



Highlights

Informix customers will be able to continue to rely on support for joint IBM Informix/ISV solutions.

ISV support for the IBM Informix product line**SAP**

The SAP strategy for Informix customers is to continue to provide investment protection and support for existing SAP customers running on IDS. For the currently released “mySAP” products on IDS, all SAP/Informix customers can depend on SAP to include IDS support for all new enhancements with two exceptions. Modules or enhancements using the Java database API will not be ported to IDS, and the Unicode option for SAP applications will not be ported to IDS. All other enhancements will support IDS through at least 2004, and the standard five-year maintenance and support policy for all products protects SAP/Informix customers through at least 2009.

PeopleSoft

Informix customers can continue to rely on the existing PeopleSoft and Informix product lines, and on the continued IBM and PeopleSoft support of our joint solution. PeopleSoft has formally committed support for IDS through PeopleSoft Version 8.x for Human Capital Management, Human Resources Management, Financial Management Solutions, Enterprise Service Automation, Supply Chain Management and Distribution product suites. IBM expects PeopleSoft to announce its decision regarding support for Informix in future application versions at PeopleSoft’s user conference in the summer of 2003.

Baan

Baan and IBM are both committed to the support of our joint solution, and Informix customers can continue to rely on the existing certified Informix and Baan product lines. IDS 9.4 certification with Baan iBaan ERP 5.0c is nearing completion.



Highlights

A variety of support options are available to help Informix customers maximize systems availability and optimize staff productivity.

Others

The list of independent software vendors (ISVs) with applications that operate on Informix database servers is very long. Most of these ISVs have seen continued strong demand for their applications on Informix and have expressed satisfaction with the long-term commitment and convergence plan explained by IBM.

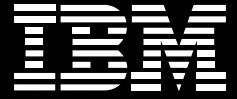
IBM support and services

Customer support

Our IBM/Informix support centers around the world continue to focus on delivering timely, responsive, high-quality assistance to customers. The combination of the strong Informix support model and the added advantages of the breadth and depth of the IBM leadership in customer support is proving to be a winning one. Our customers continue to be supported by knowledgeable Informix support engineers while benefiting from the advantages of IBM Passport Advantage maintenance including voice and Web support, 24x7, worldwide. For customers in complex, cutting-edge environments with support needs reaching beyond those of basic maintenance, our premier services programs help to maximize systems availability and optimize staff productivity.

Customer and developer education/professional services

Our professional services and education teams also continue to provide offerings across both the Informix and DB2 product sets. We have extended the reach of these offerings via strong partnerships with IBM Global Services and the recently announced Education Centers for IBM Software. The IBM Information Management services and education team—over 500-strong worldwide—is available to ensure that customers and partners have access to the skills they need to deploy and effectively leverage the technologies and solutions we build.



Highlights

IBM is committed to integrating the best of IDS, XPS, Red Brick and DB2 into a single database to solve the next-generation challenges of e-business on demand.

Each successive release of DB2 provides even more application portability.

Convergence with DB2

From the day of its decision to acquire Informix Software, IBM has stated that the best technology from the Informix servers would be converged with DB2. IBM remains committed to broadening the Informix “Arrowhead” vision and integrating the best of IDS, XPS, Red Brick and DB2 into a single database to solve the next-generation challenges of e-business on demand. DB2 is the base for this functionality convergence because IBM has already completed the merging of the technology needed for online transaction processing (OLTP), extensibility and data warehousing into a single product—DB2 Universal Database™ (UDB). (Informix still confronted the task of combining these capabilities from three different code bases into one.)

Accomplishing the broadened Arrowhead vision will be a multiyear effort, and the emphasis over these years will be on much more than Informix compatibility. A substantial investment is being made on the fronts of information integration, XML, Web services and autonomic computing. Beyond this, each release of DB2 will contain features that make it more familiar and appealing to Informix users. There will come a time in the future when most Informix users will choose DB2 as their next database upgrade—not because IBM has offered no alternative, but because the product demonstrates a number of benefits and an easy upgrade path to the Informix user.

The first step has recently been achieved with the general availability announcement of DB2 UDB version 8.1. This is the most significant release of DB2 since it was introduced in 1997, with over 400 features providing significant advancements in ease-of-use, performance and business intelligence functionality. A number of features that make DB2 more compatible with Informix appear in version 8.1, and development of features for even more Informix application portability in version 8.2 is well underway.



Highlights

Informix customers and partners around the world continue to appreciate the IBM commitment to enhancing and maintaining Informix technology.

The unique characteristics of the IBM U2 extended relational database family do not lend themselves to native integration into DB2. To best leverage the combination of U2 and DB2, the U2 databases are evolving to support tightly bound XML- and SQL-based interfaces to enable U2 applications to access, store and retrieve data directly from DB2.

Conclusion

Informix customers around the world have expressed great satisfaction with the commitment that IBM has made to continuing to sell Informix products and to enhance, support and maintain Informix technology—as well as excitement over the direction of the convergence with DB2. They have noted that in specific instances, Informix technology still solves business problems that no other database can, that they have experienced improved coexistence with other IBM software products, and that they appreciate having a single software infrastructure vendor.

IBM Business Partners appreciate the IBM Software Group's commitment to leave the vertical and horizontal application development to them while we concentrate on offering the best software infrastructure at the lowest total cost of ownership.

IBM invites you to visit ibm.com/informix and ibm.com/software/data/u2 frequently for the latest information regarding Informix and U2 products, education, services and IBM Business Partner offerings designed to help you meet the information management demands of your business. Full-length, detailed versions of the Informix and U2 product roadmaps can be found at these sites.



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