

A guide to sources of information for IBM mainframers

Newsletters, magazines, user groups, and social networking information resources

for the z/OS environment

Although there are now relatively few publications focusing specifically on the mainframe, there are plenty of ways to gather information and comment on large systems. Apart from traditional magazines, there are numerous e-zines, blogs, discussion groups, and other online resources, and this guide offers a personal selection for readers to sample. A list of the main mainframe user groups is also included, which are one of the best sources of information available. Please feel free to suggest other sites/titles for inclusion in the next edition of the Yearbook (email mainframe@arcati.com).

Enterprise Tech Journal

Whereas its predecessor, *zJournal*, was purely mainframe focused, this journal describes itself as being for IT technicians in the world's largest multi-platform enterprises. The associated Web site at enterprisesystemsmedia.com contains articles, news, jobs, events, and a store.

enterprisesystemsmedia.com/magazines/enterprise-tech-journal/



Enterprise Executive

Formerly *Mainframe Executive*, this is the sister publication to *Enterprise Tech Journal*, and is aimed at IT managers in the world's largest multi-platform enterprises. It is a less technical, but no less informative, than *ETJ*, and both are available as flipbooks..

enterprisesystemsmedia.com/magazines/enterprise-executive/



Enterprise Systems

Based on the once-celebrated Enterprise Systems Journal, the Enterprise Systems Web site and newsletter did provide some very interesting articles and discussions on mainframes and other platforms. It claims to provide high-end datacenter and server solutions. It has a regular newsletter, and there are white papers available too.

www.esj.com

IBM Systems Magazine, Mainframe Edition

IBM Systems Magazine also comes in AIX, IBM i, Power, and Linux on Power versions. The content is online with regular e-mail newsletters.

www.ibmssystemsmag.com/mainframe/

IBM Data Magazine & Analytics Hub

In the spring of 2015, IBM Data magazine was consolidated into the IBM Big Data & Analytics Hub. There are headings for Use Cases, Industries, Analytics, Technology, Events, Around the Web, and For Developers.

www.ibmbigdatahub.com/technology/all

Mainframe Market Information Service (MMIS)

Through Arcati's MMIS subscription service, Barry Graham keeps users up to date with mainframe hardware and software pricing trends and helps them to negotiate the best deals. The full MMIS service includes the detailed quarterly Mainframe Market Monitor as well as phone/e-mail support. The monthly e-mail Mainframe Market Bulletin is also available separately.

www.arcati.com/mmis



SearchDataCenter

TechTarget publishes a range of Web-based newsletters, and under the 'Topic' drop-down menu, you can find a number of datacenter topics, but nothing specifically for mainframes any more.

searchdatacenter.techtarget.com/

SHARE's Five Minute Briefing: Data Center

Database Trends and Applications publishes a number of Five Minute Briefing newsletters, but the Data Center title should appeal directly to mainframers. Published in conjunction with user group SHARE, the newsletter provides an excellent weekly round-up of relevant announcements.

www.dbta.com

**IBM Publishing**

IBM's publishing arm covers the company's

diverse products and services, architectures, and business solutions. Titles help users: prepare for IBM certifications; master implementation; and support IBM products and solutions; and educate and inform.

<http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/ibmpress/>

IBM Redbooks

IBM Redbooks publications provide a wealth of real-world installation, configuration and usage insights into myriad technologies with a multitude of titles.

<http://www.redbooks.ibm.com/>

Mainframe social media

In addition to the ever-growing number of blogs focusing on mainframe-related topics, it's now possible to interact with mainframe-minded people on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and other social media.

IBM has its IBM Mainframe Insights blog at mainframeinsights.com. There are CICS blogs at developer.ibm.com/cics/. And there are IMS blogs at developer.ibm.com/zsystems/connect/

IBM Destination z hosts a variety of bloggers, who write on different topics each week. It also hosts a variety of articles. You can find the blog at destinationz.org/Community/Evangelizing-Mainframe.aspx.

Planet Mainframe publishes blogs each week. It describes itself as, "The world's premiere resource for leading-edge mainframe technology". You can find the blogs at: planetmainframe.com/blog/.

There's the Millennial Mainframer blog, which they describe as a fresh look at all things mainframe. It's primarily aimed at college students and early mainframe professionals interested in

IBM mainframe technologies. That's at www.millennialmainframer.com.

Also worth a look is Marc Wambeke's Mainframe Watch Belgium at mainframe-watch-belgium.blogspot.com.

And don't miss the Mainframe World blog at it.toolbox.com/blogs/mainframe-world/, written by Arcati associate Trevor Eddolls.

There's always something interesting in the CA Technologies blog at <http://blogs.ca.com/>. They seem to cover quite a wide range of topics.

Willie Favero's Getting the Most from DB2 for z/OS and System z blog is at it.toolbox.com/blogs/db2zos. Other DB2-related blogs are: DB2utor by Troy Coleman at ibmsystemsmag.com/Blogs/DB2utor/; and An Expert's Guide to DB2 Technology by Chris Eaton at it.toolbox.com/blogs/db2luw/. And, not to be missed, Craig Mullins' DB2 Portal blog at db2portal.blogspot.co.uk/.

Alan Radding describes himself as a 20-year IT industry analyst and journalist covering mainframe, midrange, PC, web, and cloud computing. His DancingDinosaur blog – Mainframe computing in

the 21st century – can be found at dancingdinosaur.wordpress.com.

There are a number of very insightful blogs at IBM's developerWorks. Have a look at developer.ibm.com/dwblog/.

Other interesting blogs are: Drunken Data, a blog about storage and data management at www.drunkendata.com/; Jeff Jonas by Jeff Jonas at jeffjonas.typepad.com/; and Irving Wladawsky-Berger by Irving Wladawsky-Berger at blog.irvingwb.com/blog/. Another interesting blog is James Governor's Monkchips site (www.redmonk.com/jgovernor).

For the latest data center news and trends, there's the IT Knowledge Exchange at itknowledgeexchange.techtarget.com/data-center/.

IBM pages can be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/IBMSystemz for just IBM mainframes; at www.facebook.com/DB2community for DB2; at www.facebook.com/IMSFans for IMS; and www.facebook.com/IBMCICS for CICS.

The Virtual CICS user group is on Facebook at www.facebook.com/VirtualCICS. And the Virtual IMS user group is at www.facebook.com/VirtualIMS.

There are mainframe-related discussions on LinkedIn. For example, there's the IBM MAINFRAME - Unofficial Group at www.linkedin.com/groups/670987; Mainframe (COBOL, JCL, DB2, CICS, VSAM, MVS, Adabas/Natural) Experts at www.linkedin.com/groups/910927; Mainframe Experts Network at www.linkedin.com/groups/55779; and System z Advocates at www.linkedin.com/groups/155723; for mainframers.

If you're interested in DB2 there's DB2 Professionals at www.linkedin.com/groups/45375; IDUG: International DB2 Users Group at www.linkedin.com/groups/46747; DB2 for z/OS at www.linkedin.com/groups/1171547; and DB2 for z/OS DBAs

at www.linkedin.com/groups/2008475; amongst many others.

There's the CICS Special Interest Group at www.linkedin.com/groups/1534227; IBM CICS at www.linkedin.com/groups/4304249; and the Virtual CICS user group at www.linkedin.com/groups/3847862.

For IMS there's IBM IMS at www.linkedin.com/groups/1949922; and the Virtual IMS user group at www.linkedin.com/groups/379256.

In future, LinkedIn might consider using vanity names like Facebook does.

On Tumblr there's Mainframe Tumblr at <http://mainframe50.tumblr.com/>. They say that the Mainframe Tumblr is your hub for exploring IBM mainframe-enabled innovation. Follow us for stories, insights, videos, and datagrams that celebrate a different System z theme each week and show how the mainframe is empowering big opportunities in both new and familiar areas.

If you go to YouTube (www.youtube.com) there are numerous short videos about mainframes and mainframe-related topics.

On Twitter, here's a fairly random assortment of good tweeters to follow:

@IBMzSystems, @IBM_CICS, @IBM_DB2, @IBM_Infomix, @IBM_InfoSphere, @IBMdatamag, @IBMDB2, @IBMSTG, @_PeUR, @ARCserve_Europe, @MariaWinans, @WarrenWhitlock, @ajzander, @Attachmate, @BarrySchrager1, @Bcrusso, @bethflood, @BigData_paulz, @BMCMainframe, @BMCSsoftware, @BobThomas_ESM, @bosnews, @BrillTechnology, @BTRG_MikeMartin, @CAmainframe, @CAUKI, @CenSoft, @craigmullins, @cristianmolaro, @crshnburn, @DaniSchererBMC, @dianegjohnson, @DTurnerBlogs, @GlobalKnowledge, @GreerJP, @herbpayne, @IDUGDB2, @iixpeering, @ironarchitect, @Isaac_Yassin,

@jodiraquel, @jondbray, @KCandLoveData, @kennethfogarty, @Macro_4, @Maintec_Inc, @martinpacker, @MattBullamore, @MichaelDag, @microfocus, @mitzihunter, @MSFTBusinessUK, @mwambeke, @myzcommunity, @pablocabra, @PlexSpy, @rochanet2, @russellbonner, @Sheena_Seguin, @simonbu, @susvis, @Syncsort, @sysprog101, @t_eddolls, @Tanglewould, @TeamARIN, @termalabs, @ThFalissard, @ToolboxforIT, @tweet2thousif,

@vidierre, @VirtualCICS, @VirtualIMS, @wcfink, @wfavero, and @zOShelpForums.

It may not be a definitive list, but it's a good place to start!

In addition, there are lots of mainframers on Google plus, and there are now mainframers using Instagram (eg @ibm, @ibmsports, @ibminterconnect, @t_eddolls).

Other online information

Wikipedia

Although not a newsletter or journal, Wikipedia is a great online encyclopaedia that is written and maintained by its readers. The editors work hard to make sure that valuable content is not vandalized, and the site contains a surprisingly up-to-date range of mainframe-related definitions.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/>

IBM-MAIN listserv

The IBM Mainframe discussion list has been maintained for many years by the University of Alabama, and continues to be well supported. Unlike the high-level blogs, this is the place for very specific technical discussions. Subscribers can sign up to receive useful summaries of message threads.

listserv.ua.edu/archives/ibm-main.html

RACF-L

A discussion group that focuses on RACF.

listserv.uga.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A0=RACF-L

Assembler-List

A discussion group that focuses on Assembler.

www.lsoft.com/scripts/wl.exe?SL1=ASSEMBLER-LIST&H=LISTSERV.UGA.EDU

IMS

A discussion group that focuses on IMS.

<http://imslistserv.bmc.com/scripts/wa-BMC.exe?A0=IMS-L>

CICS

A discussion group that focuses on CICS.

<https://listserv.uga.edu/cgi-bin/wa?A0=CICS-L>

Mainframe user groups

The IBM mainframe world has attracted numerous user organizations and special interest groups (SIGs). Most hold regular meetings and conferences, often with satellite groups and chapters throughout the world. Here are a few of them:

- SHARE. The oldest (1955) and probably most influential IBM user organization with SIGs focusing on various aspects of IBM software, hardware and security. Known as GUIDE/SHARE in Europe and Interaction in Australia. <http://www.share.org>
<http://www.gse.org>
<http://www.interaction.com.au>

- zNextGen is part of SHARE, and invites people who are new to enterprise computing, in a new role with z Systems servers, or working as new z Systems professionals, to participate.
<http://www.share.org/page/meet-the-znextgen>
- CMG. The Computer Measurement Group is widely supported and specializes in capacity planning and performance issues (mainframe and increasingly distributed). There is a large network of CMG organizations worldwide.
<http://www.cmg.org>
- IDUG – International DB2 User Group.
<http://www.idug.org>
- TPFUG – TPF User Group (yes, it’s still out there, handling 5000 transactions per second).
<http://www.tpfug.org>
- Global WebSphere Community.
<http://www.websphereusergroup.org/>

- International zSeries Oracle SIG for companies licensed for Oracle on z/Linux and/or z/OS.
<http://www.zseriesoraclesig.org>

There are also two large user organizations for data center managers with a focus on infrastructure (including mainframe):

- AFCOM (<http://www.afcom.com>)
- 7x24 Exchange (<http://www.7x24exchange.org>)

Apart from the Virtual IMS user group (www.fundi.com/virtualims), regional IMS user groups include the long-established Dallas/Fort Worth group and a number of newer ones.

Canada has CIPS, Canada’s Association of IT Professionals, which has been in existence since 1958 and can be found at <http://www.cips.ca/>.

