

A media guide for IBM mainframers

Newsletters, magazines, user groups and 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 media guide offers a personal selection for readers to sample. A list of the main mainframe user groups is also included, which, though not exactly 'media', 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).

Data Center Management (DCM)

AFCOM's excellent bi-monthly magazine focuses on a broad range of issues of interest to data center managers, and the organization has a strong mainframe background. The monthly Communique e-newsletter contains AFCOM news and highlights.

<http://www.afcom.com>



Enterprise Systems

Based on the once-celebrated Enterprise Systems Journal, the Enterprise Systems website and newsletter provide some very interesting articles and discussions on mainframe themes.

<http://www.esj.com>

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.

<http://bama.ua.edu/archives/ibm-main.html>

IBM Systems Magazine, Mainframe Edition

IBM Systems Magazine (formerly eServer Magazine) also comes in AIX and IBM i versions.

The content is now online with a monthly e-mail newsletter.

<http://www.ibmssystemsmag.com>

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.

<http://www.arcati.com/mmisw>



SearchDataCenter

TechTarget publishes a range of Web-based newsletters, and its data center title provides plenty of interesting and relevant mainframe coverage.

<http://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.

<http://www.dbta.com>

Wikipedia

Wikipedia is a great on-line 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/>

zJournal

Thomas Communications' *zJournal* is the leading independent journal for z/OS and OS/390 users. It provides detailed coverage of developments on the IBM mainframe platform, and its e-mail companion zFlash contains regular updates and product news as well as highlights from the magazine.

<http://www.zjournal.com>



Mainframe Executive

Thomas Communications' *Mainframe Executive* is aimed at CIOs and IT managers in enterprises with IBM mainframe systems. This is a less technical, but no less informative, stable mate of *zJournal*.

<http://www.mainframe-exec.com>



Mainframe blogs

There are now so many blogs that I suspect there are more people writing them than reading them! A growing number now focus on mainframe-related topics.

IBM set up the Mainframe Blog as part of the zNextGen initiative (<http://mainframe.typepad.com>). This has a number of short videos as well – I particularly like the chicken video about food distribution.

Another good blog is James Governor's Monkchips site (<http://www.redmonk.com/jgovernor>), which contains links to Stephen O'Grady and Michael Coté's blogs.

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

And don't miss the Mainframe Update blog at <http://mainframeupdate.blogspot.com>, written by Arcati associate Trevor Eddolls.

There's a humorous blog by CA's Reg Harbeck at <http://community.ca.com/blogs/execio/default.aspx>. I still like his entry, "How to Talk Like a Mainframer".

Bob Thomas, who owns zJournal, is blogging at <http://www.mainframezone.com/bobthomas/>.

Willie Favero's DB2 for z/OS blog is at <http://it.toolbox.com/blogs/db2zos>.

There's an interesting blog at The Raised Floor by Jeffrey M Birnbaum, Mike Desens, Tom Gross, Rich Lechner, Chris Mines, Jerry Murphy, John Patrick, Neil Rasmussen, Will Runyon, and Steve Sams, which is at <http://theraisedfloor.typepad.com/>.

There's a group of techie/creative people working in and around IBM's Hursley Park Lab in the UK. They produce an interesting blog is at <http://eightbar.co.uk/>

There are a number of very insightful blogs at IBM's My developerWorks. You can click on the links from https://www.ibm.com/developerworks/mydeveloperworks/blogs/?lang=en_us

Always up-to-date is Mark Fontecchio's blog at Mainframe Propeller Head. He's been a reporter for TechTarget since 2006. The URL is <http://itknowledgeexchange.techtarget.com/mainframe-blog/>

An occasional blogger is Steve Baugh, styling himself The CICS Guy. His blog is at <http://thecicsguy.wordpress.com/>

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>
- 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>
- WAVV – World Alliance of VSE, VM (and now Linux apparently).

<http://www.wavv.org>

- TPFUG – TPF User Group (yes, it's still out there, handling 5000 transactions per second).
<http://www.tpfug.org>
- WUG – the WebSphere User Group.
<http://websphere.org>
- International zSeries Oracle SIG.
<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.com>)

Apart from the Virtual IMS Connection user group (www.virtualims.com), regional IMS user groups include the long-established Dallas/Fort Worth group and newer ones in Ohio, Chicago, Jacksonville, Kansas City, LA, Minneapolis, New York, Omaha, Phoenix, San Ramon, Seattle, SE Michigan, Springfield, Tampa, Toronto, Victoria, and Washington DC.