Grand *Open*ing

COMMENTARY

Last month we witnessed the unveiling of AIX® 4.1—in the form of Version 4.1. By now you've probably browsed through the press releases and noted the important new features. You're planning ways to use the new kernel threads support and the expanded filesystem size, or you may be thinking about changing to the new common desktop from Common Open Software Environment (COSE). You also may have noticed the movement to adopt XPG4, giving new meaning to the term, "Grand Opening." This month, we'll clarify issues such as these about AIX 4.1 and provide some insights into its design. We'll also cover other areas of interest for AIX 3.2.5 and AIX/ESA™.

Two articles set the scope for this issue. "Overview of AIX 4.1" summarizes important improvements in the new version of AIX, while the interview with Mike Day presents AIX from the viewpoint of a system architect, which makes very interesting reading.

Providing a more in-depth look at the new operating system, an article on the Journaled File System (JFS) explains the filesystem enhancements, such as data compression, striping, and a larger maximum filesystem size. If you have already been writing programs to the DCE threads available in AIX 3.2.5, check out the article on required changes for making those programs run with the new kernel-based threads. For other portability information, read the XPG4 article to understand current AIX conformance to standards and plans for future conformance. Completing the coverage of AIX 4.1 is an article about the Common Desktop Environment (CDE) and two articles describing the design and features of the Visual System Management (VSM) software.

Interested in tools? The article on fdpr describes a tool that uses program reordering to make AIX programs run faster (up to 73%). Or read the article on performance management tools in a distributed environment to learn about enhancements to an already excellent set of tools in the Performance Toolbox (PTX).

In the hardware corner, you will find performance implications of the new POWER2 Architecture™ machines that were introduced in May, and how those machines compare when running standard performance benchmarks. For those interested in I/O, this issue also contains articles about the AIX terminal server and the new network terminal accelerator adapter.

Rounding out this issue is an article for system administrators that explains the accounting checkpoint concepts in the latest release of AIX/ESA.

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