

IBM Announces ALCS V2.3

On 11 November 2003 IBM announced a new release of ALCS - ALCS V2.3, which will be available from 12 December 2003. I would like to take this opportunity to make you aware of the new release and would appreciate it, if you would pass the information on to your management and others in your IT organisation.

Why is IBM delivering a new release of ALCS now?

The current release of ALCS (ALCS V2.2) was first delivered in 1997 and Has since been continuously enhanced to meet additional customer requirements. The main reason for the new release is the recent introduction of new processors and new versions of the Operating System, that support 64-bit addressing. To be able to make the new technology available to ALCS systems, we have decided that the best option is to base future developments on a new release.

The new facilities of ALCS V2.3

In addition to the facilities of ALCS V2.2 and the enhancements Delivered to date, ALCS V2.3 will have the following main new facilities:

Real Storage Above 2 GB

The availability of 64-bit addressing allows ALCS to use real memory above 2 GB, thus removing memory constraints and freeing memory for the use by applications and other sub-systems.

Online Communications Table Maintenance (OCTM)

This facility Provides dynamic reconfiguration of the communications network and eliminates communications table consolidations.

System Takeover Facility

The system takeover facility allows for a hot ALCS standby system, which significantly reduces the time required for planned and unplanned switchovers.

E-mail Queue Handler

The E-mail queue handler manages the queueing of outbound messages, while the path to the remote destination is unavailable.

Multiple TCP/IP Listeners

This facility allows the use of multiple ports for the simultaneous reception of transactions by multiple TCP/IP applications.

Virtual IP Addressing (VIPA)

This facility makes TCP/IP applications independent of the physical Internal Protocol (IP) addresses, improving the ease of system management.

Long-term Pool Monitoring Enhancement

This enhancement provides more accurate control over the use of long-term file pools.

New pricing option for ALCS

IBM has also announced Work Load Charging (WLC) for ALCS on z-Series processors. This allows customers to align the cost of ALCS much more closely to the actual ALCS work-load than was possible with other pricing options. This pricing option is available for ALCS V2.2 and ALCS V2.3. Please, contact your local IBM representative for further information.

Migration Considerations

While from 12 December new facilities will become available only with the new release (ALCS V2.3), the current release (ALCS V2.2) will remain fully supported by IBM, until customers have had sufficient time to migrate to ALCS V2.3. At that point IBM will make a formal announcement that support for ALCS V2.2 will be withdrawn at the end of a further 12 months notice period.

The pre-requisite Operating System for ALCS V2.3 is OS/390 V2.10 or z/OS, which many ALCS customers are already using for their current ALCS systems.

ALCS V2.3 will run on any processor supported by OS/390 V2.10 or z/OS. Once OS/390 V2.10 or z/OS is implemented, we believe that the migration from ALCS V2.2 to ALCS V2.3 is straightforward, requiring little work other than the adaptation of any user modifications and exits. The ALCS manuals will be updated for ALCS V2.3 and include information and guidance on the steps required to migrate to the new release. Over the coming weeks we would like to hear from all customers about their plans for ALCS V2.3 so that we can assist in the migration planning and provide implementation support.

ALCS User Group Meeting

The chairman of the ALCS User Group has announced that the next User Group meeting will be held from 3 to 5 February 2004 in Taiwan. That will provide us with an excellent opportunity for an in-depth briefing on ALCS V2.3 and an update on IBM's long-term strategy for ALCS. I hope that your company will take advantage of that by participating in that meeting.

Further Information

For further information on ALCS V2.3, please, contact us via our ALCS Support line: ALCS@UK.IBM.COM. Also, our ALCS Web site will include information on ALCS V2.3; please, access it regularly.

Regards,

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