



JUNE 2021

# **RENDEZ-VOUS AUTOUR DE VMS**

# REPORT

**O**n June 24, we held a new zoom meeting "Rendez-vous autour de VMS" devoted to the Open Source and development themes on our favorite OS.

## VMS COMPILATION TOOLCHAINS

**G**érard Calliet and Jean-Claude Parel presented the tools of the gcc stream and Gnat ADA which uses it, in particular for applications in the domain of rail and urban transport. Unmanned vehicles are their favorite field. In addition to determinism and security, the particularity of these applications is the association with infrastructures and large equipments installed for the long term. The autonomy of the code production chain is a guarantee of stability and durability for the apps.

Gérard Calliet and Jean-Claude Parel spoke about the convergence of their work on code production streams for Alpha platforms and Itanium, sometimes with the help of Linux. Application portability when upgrading VMS to the LLVM based compiler chain on x86 will be supported by these efforts.

## OPEN SOURCE OFFER AT VSI

**M**ichel Archenault presented us with a summary of all Open Source tools proposed and validated by VSI, with their prerequisites, release dates and pointers to reference documents in a [table](#) maintenu sur le site de l'association.

## INTEGRATION TOOLS (DEVOPS APPROACH)

**W**e then had illustrations of the integration of VMS in modern configuration management tools and development platforms such as Mercurial and Heptapod by Georges Racinet from Octobus, used by some VMS customers to support their DevOps approach.

We also focused with Jean-François Pieronne on the importance of the Open Source aspect in tools like Zabbix or Python which allow to integrate VMS into a modern and efficient IT production environment at a large number of customers, going as far as application supervision in addition to systems and networks management.

In this period of transition for VMS with few application vendors committed, Open source tools are a guarantee of portability and stability for users.

## ZABBIX DEMO ON EMULATORS

**A**lexandre Souf from Stromasys presented a use of Zabbix in a production environment for specific needs related to deployment of servers running through emulators to maintain various historical OS such as Tru64, OpenVMS or Solaris together with modern servers.

Monitoring of the host server (Windows or Linux based) and supervision of the emulator can be complemented by monitoring metrics with the Zabbix operational agent specific to the historical OS being supervised. Zabbix agent availability does not yet cover all versions of OpenVMS for all platforms but work is underway in this direction. The ability of the monitoring tool Zabbix to adapt to specific situations is an illustration of the value of the Open Source approach over traditional solutions.

## NEW LICENSING MODE

The next topic covered the discussions with VSI on marketing of VMS and the new licensing mode. After the March 2021 Rendez-Vous event we started a dialogue with VSI aiming to express user feedback on the reservations and blockages introduced by the new VMS licensing mode since May 2020.

This subscription-based license mode, which combines the right to use and support, is based on a time-limited PAK that must be renewed with VSI, otherwise the system will stop working.

The new risks introduced by this model (the need for VSI to still be in business to renew the subscription, and the lack of visibility on the prices that will be charged at renewal) are considered unacceptable by a majority of users. The publisher's takeover of the future of applications is a profound imbalance to the sole benefit of VSI.

VSI ended up informing us that for certain critical market segments an exception would be possible, with perpetual PAKs. But we learned that this was limited through a contract which forces the customer to renew his subscription with VSI and otherwise to stop his systems. This "exception" does not change the imbalance introduced by VSI and application control.

Our action has been visible on **comp.os.vms**, where several contributors have proposed other licensing methods that would be more acceptable and would encourage investment in VMS. We consolidated these proposals in a message to VSI, asking them for each proposal whether these options had been evaluated and why they had not been selected.

Indeed, many participants in the round table debate confirmed that the current licensing mode is widely rejected, to the point of triggering VMS exit projects. All those who spoke pointed to the difficulty under the current conditions introduced by VSI to pass a positive message to their management in order to obtain necessary investments in VMS.



## TO FINISH

In order to better understand the profile of members, their applications and their expectations, the VMSgenerations association will launch a survey on the use of VMS. This should allow the association's positions to be adjusted on important subjects and in particular in exchanges with others players in the VMS ecosystem, and first with VSI. An email will be sent soon inviting people to answer to this survey. This questionnaire will arrive in your mailbox or via a link to our site and will allow everyone to take their time to answer. After analyzing those results we will publish a report.

Coming soon : VMSgenerations will restart the "Rendezvous autour de VMS" sessions with a subject on platforms, system and storage hardware and compatibilities.

