

BigFix Master Class 2024

Technical Session Catalog

Please note this catalog does not include non-technical business presentations such as keynote, roadmap, or welcome sessions. Session catalog subject to further additions and modifications.

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Server Automation with APIs: Streamline Your BigFix Workflows

Presented by: *Swapnil Rakhade, BigFix Professional Services*

Session Description:

Learn how to deploy, manage, and modify Server Automation plans using APIs. This session will guide you through creating, tracking, and adjusting automation plans with Python and PowerShell scripts. By the end of the session, you'll have the skills to efficiently automate server management tasks and integrate these processes with monitoring and IT service management (ITSM) tools.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

"This session offers a hands-on walkthrough of the Server Automation API, empowering you to automate and manage complex automation plans. Attendees will leave with the knowledge to simplify and enhance their BigFix operations through API-driven automation."

What Makes this Session Unique:

Discover how to leverage the Server Automation API to automate tier-based patching and seamlessly integrate with monitoring and ITSM tools. This session demonstrates how to create

a fully automated server management workflow, reducing manual effort and increasing efficiency.

Effortless Custom Report Writing with BigFix: Tools and Techniques for Success

Presented by: Jason Cordell, BigFix Technical Advisor, North America and US Federal

Session Description:

Empower yourself to create visually appealing and highly functional custom Web Reports with minimal technical expertise. Building on the popular session from BigFix Days May 2023, this hands-on lab will guide you through using powerful tools to meet your unique reporting needs effortlessly. Learn to solve various reporting challenges with ease, turning BigFix data into actionable insights tailored to your environment.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

Gain the ability to craft custom reports that perfectly align with your organization's requirements, all without needing deep technical skills. This session will equip you with the knowledge and tools to unlock new reporting possibilities, making your BigFix experience more dynamic and personalized.

What Makes this Session Unique:

Custom report writing resources are scarce, but this session provides you with the tools and techniques to easily create reports that go beyond standard offerings. Learn to leverage existing tools to do the heavy lifting, making report creation accessible to everyone.

Linux Forensics and Hardening with HCL BigFix: A Comprehensive Lab-Driven Approach

Presented by: Ken Vender, BigFix Technical Advisor, North America

Session Description:

Delve into the power of HCL BigFix for auditing, forensics, and hardening of Linux systems. This session offers a step-by-step exploration of how BigFix can enhance your Linux security posture through practical labs covering user auditing, process management, file system integrity, network monitoring, and kernel protection. Learn to leverage BigFix's advanced features to not only secure but also optimize Linux systems in your enterprise.

What Makes this Session Unique:

This session goes beyond traditional patching to showcase BigFix's capabilities in auditing, forensic analysis, and system hardening. Attendees will gain hands-on experience in applying BigFix to critical Linux security tasks, making it an indispensable part of their cybersecurity strategy.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

Attendees will walk away with the confidence and skills to utilize BigFix as a comprehensive tool for Linux system security, expanding its use beyond patch management to include advanced forensics and hardening techniques. This session is tailored to elevate BigFix's role in securing enterprise Linux environments.

Unlocking BigFix Efficiency: Advanced Data Queries with Tuple and Join Techniques

Presented by: John Talbert, Director of BigFix Professional Services

Session Description:

Discover how to leverage tuples and the 'whose()' function to streamline data extraction and reporting in BigFix. Learn to think of session relevance as a powerful tool for performing complex data joins and queries, similar to database operations, but optimized for BigFix's unique environment.

What Makes this Session Unique:

Elevate your BigFix querying skills with advanced techniques that offer a new way to think about data management and extraction. This session introduces a fresh perspective on using session relevance for handling complex information joins, ideal for large-scale deployments.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

Enhance your ability to query and report on BigFix data with precision and efficiency. Attendees will gain practical knowledge that will directly improve their data handling capabilities within the BigFix platform.

BigFix Health: Proactive Strategies for Optimal Performance

Presented by: Duncan McCalla, BigFix Advisory Architect

Session Description:

Unlock expert insights and proven techniques for maintaining peak BigFix performance. This session delves into best practices for analyzing and resolving platform issues, equipping you with the knowledge to prevent problems before they arise.

What makes this session unique:

Gain access to invaluable expertise built on years of hands-on experience across diverse BigFix environments. Learn strategies and insights that go beyond the basics, directly from those who have seen it all.

How this session will improve attendee's experience and skills:

Develop a deeper, more nuanced understanding of BigFix's inner workings. By applying advanced troubleshooting techniques, attendees will enhance the reliability and efficiency of their BigFix deployments, leading to smoother operations and fewer disruptions.

Getting Started with REST API: Python and VS Code Essentials for BigFix Automation

Presented by: Jason Walker, BigFix Architect

Session Description:

Dive into the fundamentals of using REST APIs with Python in VS Code. This session will cover the basics of connecting, authenticating, and retrieving data from BigFix's REST API using Python's 'requests' library. You'll learn how to use VS Code's powerful debugger features to pause script execution, examine variables, and modify values. Through a hands-on lab, participants will modify a provided script to filter relevant fixlets by computer group and save the results to a CSV file.

Prerequisites:

Please ensure Python, Microsoft VS Code, and the 'requests' and 'csv' Python modules are installed prior to the session. Installation instructions will be provided in advance.

What Makes this Session Unique:

This session offers hands-on experience with REST APIs, focusing on practical use cases like retrieving and storing reportable data in CSV format. You'll gain valuable insights into how Python and VS Code can be used for automating BigFix tasks and integrating with other reporting tools.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

Attendees will acquire foundational skills in REST API usage, essential for automating BigFix operations and integrating with third-party tools. This session provides a practical overview of Python and development tools in real-world BigFix scenarios, setting the stage for more advanced automation projects.

Advanced REST API with Python: XML Handling and POST Operations

Presented by: Jason Walker, BigFix Architect

Session Description:

Expand your REST API expertise by learning how to manipulate XML data using Python's ElementTree module. In this session, we build on the knowledge from the first session to automate the creation of Baselines in BigFix. You'll learn how to retrieve a list of applicable fixlets, manipulate their XML content, and POST a new Baseline back to a Custom Site—all within Python. This hands-on lab focuses on reducing manual text editing by leveraging XML search and manipulation techniques, enabling more efficient automation of common tasks.

What Makes this Session Unique:

While there are REST API examples available online, this session goes beyond the basics by demonstrating how to manipulate XML data as higher-level objects within Python. You'll learn how to automate the creation of Baselines—a critical and common task in BigFix—using advanced REST API techniques.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

This session provides valuable skills for automating Baseline creation, a frequent task for BigFix operators. Additionally, mastering XML manipulation opens up the full range of REST API capabilities, enabling attendees to explore and automate more complex BigFix tasks like creating Sites, Computer Groups, Fixlets, and Actions.

Baselines for Seamless Automated Deployments with BigFix

Presented by: Andrew Laurence, Senior System Administrator and End User Computing Architect, University of California Irvine

Session Description:

Automated deployments can often feel like an uphill battle, but with the right strategies, you can achieve a smooth, user-ready machine every time. This session demonstrates how to leverage

BigFix's powerful tools—like `clientsettings.cfg`, baselines, policy actions, and action relevance—to automate and streamline your deployment process. We'll explore how to configure key/value pairs in `clientsettings.cfg` to control baseline relevance and policy actions, ensuring that each deployment step is executed precisely when needed. This hands-on lab will equip you with the skills to efficiently manage complex deployment sequences, regardless of the platform or network environment.

What Makes this Session Unique:

This session offers a deep dive into the intricacies of using BigFix for automated deployments, focusing on practical, real-world scenarios. Unlike typical deployment guides, this session emphasizes dynamic relevance management and policy actions, providing a flexible and powerful approach to handling deployment tasks. The use of custom `clientsettings.cfg` configurations to control deployment sequences is a particularly unique and innovative method that participants can apply across various environments.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

Attendees will gain valuable insights into automating deployment processes with BigFix, learning how to manage complex, multi-step deployment scenarios with precision and efficiency. This session will enhance their ability to configure and execute automated deployments, reducing manual effort and minimizing errors. The skills learned here will be directly applicable to any deployment platform, making attendees more versatile and effective in their roles.

Mastering the BigFix Console: Architecture, Performance, and Diagnostics

Presented by: Marco De Meco, BigFix Software Engineer - Rome Team, and Mark Leitch, BigFix Principal Architect

Session Description:

The BigFix Console is the cornerstone of every BigFix deployment, making it essential for administrators to fully understand its architecture and performance management. This session provides a comprehensive overview of the Console's architecture, followed by actionable guidance on optimizing performance, including both current and upcoming improvements. In the hands-on lab, participants will explore new console diagnostic tools and techniques, allowing them to better understand and manage the Console's behavior in their specific environments.

What Makes this Session Unique:

This session goes beyond basic Console usage by delving into the architectural underpinnings and advanced performance management strategies. It uniquely combines theoretical knowledge

with practical, hands-on experience, empowering participants to diagnose and optimize the Console for their specific BigFix deployments.

How this Session will Improve Attendee's Experience and Skills:

Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the BigFix Console, including how to effectively manage its performance. The hands-on lab will equip them with the skills to diagnose and troubleshoot Console issues, leading to more efficient and stable BigFix operations. This knowledge is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of any BigFix deployment.