

Cheryl Watson's

REPRINT

# Tuning Letter



This document is a reprint of an article from *Cheryl Watson's Tuning Letter 2019 No. 3*. It provides valuable information for any JES3 customer about the new Phoenix Software International product (JES3<sup>plus</sup>) that provides an alternative for JES3 customers that don't want to move to JES2, or don't believe that they could complete such a migration quickly enough to stay on current releases of z/OS.

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## JES3 - It's Alive!

There are not many things that surprise me anymore. But I have to hand it to **Ed Jaffe** and his colleagues in Phoenix Software International (PSI) - their [announcement](#) on October 2<sup>nd</sup> that they have licensed the source code for JES3 from IBM really bowled me over. We knew that Ed is a big JES3 fan, but I think this definitely counts as going above and beyond!



**TARGET AUDIENCE:** This article should be of interest to *all* JES3 customers. IBM has announced that the release of z/OS after 2.4 will be the last release to support JES3. If you are a JES3 customer, this announcement by PSI should definitely make you pause and re-assess your plans to migrate to JES2.

So what does this mean to JES3 customers? That is what we asked Ed and his colleague, **Donna Hudi**. This is what they told us.

### What's in a Name?

Given the mainframe community's gift for confusing naming conventions, we were concerned about what PSI were going to call their new offering. If they don't call it JES3, people might not realize that it is an alternative to IBM's JES3. But if they do call it JES3, then differentiating between the two could prove to be very long-winded and confusing. Fortunately, they found a name that address both of these concerns by naming their new offering 'JES3<sup>plus</sup>' - the same, only better! ☺.

We felt that the best way to provide the succinct information that our readers need to plan for the future would be to present this in the form of our questions and PSI's answers to those questions. We are sure that we will all think of other questions as the dust settles on this, but we hope that the following information will be valuable, and will get you started on *your* list of questions.

**Question:** The announcement says that you have "licensed the source code for IBM's z/OS JES3 spooling subsystem." Exactly what does that mean? Will PSI take over effective ownership of the JES3 code and start to change that code to add new functions?

**Answer:** PSI will create our own derivative product using z/OS 2.4 JES3 as a base. We will market it, enhance it, and support it just as we do with our other products. IBM's JES3 has not been enhanced since early 2015, and their plans to sunset that product have been clearly articulated. The z/OS release after 2.4 (perhaps called 2.5?) will be the last to offer IBM JES3.

This means that starting in 2020 there will be *two* JES3 products available in the marketplace for a period of time:

- ◆ IBM's JES3 which has a very specific end of life associated with it.
- ◆ PSI's JES3<sup>plus</sup> with no end of life, and which *will* be enhanced (but at the core is based on IBM's product).

At a clearly defined point in the future, the IBM JES3 product will go away and the only one left on the market will be JES3<sup>plus</sup>. During the period of time where both products are on the market, IBM will provide support for their own product, and PSI will provide support for their derivative version. Phoenix will not provide support of IBM's version.

**Question:** When will this happen? I assume that it will happen on a release boundary?

**Answer:** V1R0 of Phoenix's JES3<sup>plus</sup> is scheduled for general availability in March, 2020. This initial release will be a plug-compatible solution that functions identically to z/OS JES3 V2R4 in virtually every respect. This means:

- ◆ User exits should continue to work unchanged
- ◆ Source modifications (if any) should continue to work unchanged
- ◆ Message automation should continue to work unchanged
- ◆ Operator commands should be unchanged
- ◆ Job, device, and tape high-watermark setup should continue to work unchanged
- ◆ NJE and RJP partner interactions with your systems should be unchanged
- ◆ DevTest and production JCL should continue to work unchanged
- ◆ Production control procedures should continue to work unchanged
- ◆ Output post-processing scripts should continue to work unchanged
- ◆ JES3's often superior performance characteristics should be unchanged

PSI will begin to functionally enhance our offering starting with the 2nd release and, unlike IBM, we plan annual releases just like the rest of our products. We may re-sync to a September release schedule in 2020 or 2021 to ensure we're positioned to offer Day 1 support of new z/OS releases as they are released.

**Question:** Does that mean that in October 2021 PSI will deliver a version of JES3<sup>plus</sup> that is different to IBM z/OS V2R5 JES3?

**Answer:** Yes, that is the plan.

**Question:** What is going to happen about fixes to the IBM version of JES3 after you take your snapshot of the JES3 source?

**Answer:** PSI is, and will remain, an IBM JES3 customer until its end of life. This will allow us to be aware of any fixes implemented by IBM, and will allow us to assess whether or not a similar fix is necessary for our product.

**Question:** What happens if IBM make any enhancements to JES3 after your copy is cut?

**Answer:** IBM has not made any enhancements to their JES3 since 2015, and has clearly communicated that they have no plans to do so.

**Question:** What about JESXCF? I think that *that* is used by both JES2 and JES3. Will IBM enhance that for JES3<sup>plus</sup> in the future?

**Answer:** JESXCF is indeed used by both JESes. If it is enhanced with new capabilities, it's likely we would want to leverage them. If PSI, or any other ISV, wants enhancements made to JESXCF, or other operating system components, there is a requirements process to make those desires known to IBM.

**Question:** As you point out in your press release, JES3 really is very integrated into the heart of MVS, exploiting many APIs. I can see how that would work when all the code is owned by one company, but how will it work with the two sets of code being 'owned' (from a development perspective) by different companies?

**Answer:** Because our offering is a derivative work based on the licensed IBM source code, nothing will change. Our offering will continue to use the same APIs that JES3 uses today. PSI will continue to be part of the Early Test Program (ETP) with IBM and Partner World members, which will allow us to stay in step with IBM and the changes that they may make to z/OS.

**Question:** Who will sell JES3<sup>plus</sup>? IBM? PSI?

**Answer:** Phoenix's JES3<sup>plus</sup> will be sold exclusively by Phoenix Software International directly, and through its international distributors. IBM will not be selling our product, nor will we be selling theirs. However, their sales teams, partners, service providers, etc. have all been made aware of the PSI offering as a solution that they can inform their JES3 customers about, and send them to us for further discussions.

**Question:** I assume that JES3<sup>plus</sup> and IBM JES3 will co-exist in the same sysplex/JESplex to allow customers to move seamlessly to JES3<sup>plus</sup>?

**Answer:** That is our goal, making the migration from IBM JES3 to JES3<sup>plus</sup> a trivial migration.

**Question:** Will IBM offer a JES-free z/OS with a corresponding price adjustment?

**Answer:** Since inception, JES3 has been an optionally-priced feature of the operating system while JES2 has been a 'free' component. (This price differential is one of the reasons why many customers chose JES2 over JES3 when they brought up their first MVS systems decades ago.) What price adjustment could one expect for the removal of a free component? We can't speak for IBM, but it's hard to imagine a scenario in which they would deliver a z/OS without JES2.

**Question:** Have you thought about whether a customer would be able to have JES3 and JES3<sup>plus</sup> installed on the same system, for testing purposes?

**Answer:** Installed? Yes. Executing at the same time? No. It has never been possible for two JES3-based systems to coexist on the same image at the same time. We don't expect to lift that restriction.

**Question:** Your press release referred to "a road map for enhancements" - we don't suppose you would like to release that road map yet?

**Answer:** Enhancements we're considering for future releases include:

- ◆ Email notification
- ◆ Spool encryption
- ◆ zHPF I/O (borrowing technology from our proprietary STARTIO driver - used with (E)JES and other PSI products - that has been supporting zHPF for over eight years).

**Question:** Do you foresee a large flood of JES2 customers that want to ~~migrate~~ upgrade to JES3<sup>plus</sup>? ☺

**Answer:** To quote from our friends in IBM, "It is not our policy to comment on possible future business plans". ☺

## Summary

Wow. This is really a game changer for any JES3 customer. Despite his boyish good looks, Ed has been a huge fan of JES3 for as long as I can remember. He is also one of the most dedicated supporters of this platform that we know (maybe just behind Cheryl ☺), so we are confident that JES3<sup>plus</sup> customers can look forward to a very dynamic future.

In particular, we want to thank Donna and Ed for their open and honest answers to our questions. We didn't have any questions that they couldn't or wouldn't answer. We want to thank them for coming to the rescue of JES3 customers, and for their commitment to this platform, and we wish them the best of luck with this new venture.