This is an IBM Rational podcast. I'm Angelique Matheny. Joining me is Raj Daswani from Rational Software and he is the Product Line Manager for Rational Transformation Workbench. He joins us to talk about what the Rational Transformation Workbench (RTW) provides developers and how it helps to accelerate asset reuse. He will also discuss how customers are already using the tool to enhance their development process.

Raj, Welcome to the podcast.

We've covering a really good topic today so let's get to it.

Raj, Let's start with this - What is Rational Transformation Workbench and what does it do?

At a very high level, IBM Rational Transformation Workbench abstracts business and technical knowledge from existing applications. There are a few components that make up this offering: the base workbench, the Business Rules Extension, the Application Architect Extension, the Reuse Analyzer and the Analyzer for Eclipse.

The base workbench includes the parsers which scan the existing programs in various languages, the analyzer which allows interactive analysis by applying business context to the artifacts, and the profiler which allows non-programmers to access the information through various views in a web browser.
The **Business Rules Extension** is an optional component that accelerates the discovery, organization, and management of the business logic that controls existing applications.
The **Application Architect Extension** is an optional component that can help to renovate and restructure mainframe enterprise applications to increase efficiency and reuse.
The **Reuse Analyzer** for IBM Rational Transformation Workbench is available as a technical preview and can help to quickly assess an application's suitability for reuse in an SOA.
The **Analyzer for Eclipse** can plug into an existing Rational Developer for System z installation, and provide invaluable assistance to developers in understanding the impact of changes they are making as part of their daily development efforts.

OK, now we know what it is and what it does. So that leads to the next question - how does RTW help in accelerating asset reuse?

RTW enables reuse on a couple of levels. Since developers have a better insight into the technical landscape, they can easily identify code for reuse. Secondly, business analysts can assign business names to source objects which can be easily discovered by developers through the glossary in RTW.

And our customers, how are they using RTW?

One of the main uses is documentation. We have many customers who have applications that have been around for years, there is little or no documentation, and new team members have a hard time understanding these applications. RTW helps them get up to speed very quickly.
Another use is to accelerate key initiatives, and reduce risks when making changes. The complexity of applications in existence today make it nearly impossible to manually ensure that a change in one system does not affect another. With RTW's impact analysis capability, they can be sure that all affected applications are also updated to reflect the changes.
Lastly, the visual aides provided by RTW allow architects to identify objects that are candidates for converting services, and to estimate the effort required by investigating the impact

And Raj, talk about what customers are saying about RTW.

We have one customer who commented about the application understanding capabilities: "We are finding things (code constructs) with ATW that may be the cause of some of our *mystery* defects".

Another commented on the business and technical bridge: "We're finding that we can very rapidly go into existing COBOL code and extract the logic around certain business objects."

I am sure the listeners would be interested in hearing about the new enhancements. Can you fill us in on what's new?
•Powerful grouping and documentation capabilities enable business context to be applied to software assets, enhancing understanding of complex systems.

•New diagramming capabilities help you to abstract software entities and their interrelationships to higher levels. Analysts, developers, and other team members can more quickly comprehend and adapt applications.

•Enhancements to business rule discovery, management, and interactive visualizations streamline the process of isolating logic can be decoupled and reused in a service-oriented architecture (SOA).

•A consolidated impact analysis mode helps a developer or analyst to quickly identify how a proposed change will affect the boundaries of the application or subsystem.

Raj, I think a good closing question is that we are very interested to find out some of the future plans for Rational Transformation Workbench. …Can you talk to us about that?

> We are looking to add a few more parsers to expand the number of languages that RTW can scan, and we are looking to add features that will allow customers to gather surveys about applications and provide reports on those as well. Of course, with all the interest in SOA, we are looking into ways to make it even better to identify services and refactor code to aid in the transformation to services across various platforms.

That was Rational's Raj Daswani, Product Line Manager for Rational Transformation Workbench. Raj, thank you again for taking time out to discuss Accelerating asset reuse with Rational Transformation Workbench. We appreciate it.

For more information on this topic, check out the URL ibm.com/rational/modernization. There's also a great webcast titled Application Development Tools for the Mainframe. This has been an IBM Rational podcast. I'm Angelique Matheny. Keep tuning is as Rational Talks to You.