

Migrating Zend Server 5 for IBM i with Easycom to a new IBM i and a new version of Zend Server

Issue

The customer is preparing to install a new IBM i, or upgrade to a newer version of the IBM i operating system, and is currently running Version 5 of Zend Server for IBM i, and using the Easycom extension to access native IBM i programs and objects. Zend no longer supports Zend Server 5, and no longer provides Easycom licensing. This article provides some high level considerations for how to move to the new IBM i and upgrade to the latest version of Zend Server for IBM i. Some of the information in this article will also be of interest to customers simply wanting to migrate from Zend Server for IBM i version 5 to the latest version, and who run applications using the Easycom extension.

Environment

Currently running Zend Server 5 for IBM i on any supported version of IBM i, preparing to move to a new IBM i machine.

Resolution

Note: Zend Server for IBM i version 5 was never tested or supported on IBM i 7.2.

We do not recommend attempting to run version 5 on 7.2.
If the new IBM i will be running 7.2, then please migrate to the latest version of Zend Server for IBM i before moving to the new IBM i.

We discontinued distributing Easycom some time ago, in favor of the free, open source, XML Toolkit:

<http://forums.zend.com/viewtopic.php?f=113&t=41648>

Unfortunately, we have had reports that the perpetual Easycom license will often stop working when migrating to a new machine, or even just upgrading the OS on the same machine, so this is a consideration for you when moving to the new IBM i.

The fastest and easiest way for you to address the issue with Easycom migration is to simply continue using Easycom. This would involve purchasing an Easycom license from Aura Equipements. We no longer have a business relationship with them, but they can be reached via their web site:

<http://www.easycom-aura.com/>

You could, for example, buy a license for a year, and then you would be able to continue to use Easycom while you develop new versions of your applications to use the free XML Toolkit. Or, you could simply continue to use Easycom. As far as we know, they have versions of Easycom that will work with even the latest versions of Zend Server. If you do plan on continuing with Easycom, then you will benefit from having the latest upgrades and fixes by keeping your Easycom license current.

If you have some time to make the conversion, you can go ahead and modify your existing applications to use the XML Toolkit. If you are not using data access functions (like `i5_query()` or `i5_update_record()`), then you can probably convert rather quickly, using the Compatibility Wrapper. There is no data access in XML Toolkit, so if you have any of that in your Easycom scripts, you would need to convert those functions to use the `ibm_db2` extension functions. That could take a little longer.

Because the upgrade from Zend Server 5 to the latest version of Zend Server is a migration, this provides a great opportunity to create and test your new XML Toolkit scripts before switching over to the new version of Zend Server. However, you would need to do that on your old machine (or buy an Easycom license), so how much time you have before you need to move to the new machine becomes a factor.

So, how and when you choose to migrate to the latest version of Zend Server becomes a factor in deciding what to do about Easycom. Here is some helpful information that can help in understanding the migration process:

<https://support.zend.com/hc/en-us/articles/204754108>

Basically, you keep Zend Server 5 up and running, and install the latest version of Zend Server as a new installation. They can both be running at the same time. You then copy your applications over to the latest version of Zend Server. You keep running Zend Server 5 as your production version while you test your applications running in the latest version of Zend Server. When you are done testing, you stop using Zend Server 5, and start using the latest version of Zend Server for production.

You have two additional considerations in the implementation of that plan. First, you need to do something about Easycom. Second, you need to consider the timing of how soon you plan to move to the new machine.

Here are some possible scenarios:

Scenario 1:

- Install the latest version of Zend Server on your old machine.
- Continue using version 5 for production.
- Copy your applications over to the new version of Zend Server.
- In the new version of Zend Server, convert your scripts that use Easycom to instead use XML Toolkit and ibm_db2.
- Test your scripts running in the new version. Make any needed changes, until testing is successful.
- After testing, stop using Zend Server 5 and use the new version for production.
- Set up the new machine. Only bring over the new version of Zend Server.

Scenario 2:

- Install the latest version of Zend Server on your old machine.
- Continue using version 5 for production.
- Copy your applications over to the new version of Zend Server.
- Buy an Easycom license and install Easycom into the new version of Zend Server
- Test your scripts running in the new version. Make any needed changes, until testing is successful.
- After testing, stop using Zend Server 5 and use the new version for production.
- Set up the new machine. Only bring over the new version of Zend Server.
- If desired, convert your existing Easycom scripts to use XML Toolkit and ibm_db2. When this is complete, you can discontinue purchasing Easycom licensing.

Scenario 3 (not available if the new machine is at IBM i 7.2):

- Set up the new machine. Bring Zend Server 5 over to the new machine.
- Purchase an Easycom license and install the license in version 5.
- Continue using version 5 for production.
- Install the latest version of Zend Server on your new machine.
- Copy your applications over to the new version of Zend Server.
- In the new version of Zend Server, convert your scripts that use Easycom to instead use XML Toolkit and ibm_db2.
- Test your scripts running in the new version. Make any needed changes, until testing is successful.
- After testing, stop using Zend Server 5 and use the new version for production.

Scenario 4 (not available if the new machine is at IBM i 7.2):

- Set up the new machine. Bring Zend Server 5 over to the new machine.
- Purchase an Easycom license and install the license in version 5.
- Continue using version 5 for production.
- Install the latest version of Zend Server on your new machine.
- Copy your applications over to the new version of Zend Server.
- Install Easycom into the new version of Zend Server
- Test your scripts running in the new version. Make any needed changes, until testing is successful.
- After testing, stop using Zend Server 5 and use the new version for production.
- If desired, convert your existing Easycom scripts to use XML Toolkit and ibm_db2. When this is complete, you can discontinue purchasing Easycom licensing.