



DIRECTIONS  
**E M E A**

THE HAGUE | THE NETHERLANDS

## REAL LIFE SCENARIOS AND BEST PRACTICES FOR BC ON DOCKER

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Directions EMEA  
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## Agenda

- ▶ Quick intro to Docker and the overall scenario
- ▶ Self-service container environments
- ▶ Multi-container environments
- ▶ Automated extension 2.0 builds with multi-stage containers
- ▶ Bonus topic: Using Azure Container Instances

# INTRODUCTION TO DOCKER

## IF YOU ARE NOT SURE YET WHAT THIS IS

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- ▶ What is **Docker**? Leading cross platform **software container** environment
- ▶ What is a **Docker container** and a **Docker image**?
  - An image is a template with the **minimum amount of os, libraries and application binaries** needed
  - A container is an **instance of an image** with an immutable base and it's changes on top
  - A container is **NOT a VM**, you especially don't have a GUI and nothing you can connect to with RDP!
- ▶ What is a **Docker host**? The (physical or virtual) machine where the **containers are running**
- ▶ What is a **Docker registry**? A place where you and others can **upload (push) and download (pull) images**
- ▶ Why Docker?
  - **Easy way** to create deployments / configuration in a **very stable and reliable way** (no "works here", helps a lot to avoid gaps between dev and ops)
  - **Better resource usage** than in vms, especially because there is no guest os as the host kernel is **directly used**
  - Big ecosystem of readily available images, primarily on Docker Hub

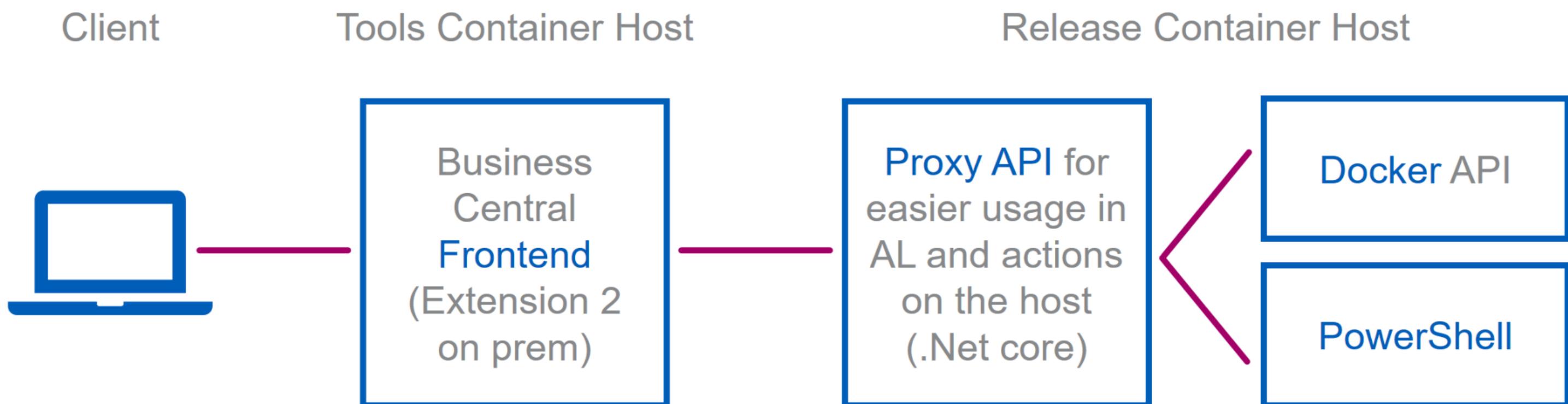
- ▶ Axians Infoma is an ISV for > 1.200 customers with > 100 employees directly working on the product newsystem (program managers, developers, back office etc.)
- ▶ Technical infrastructure must be useable as quick and easy as possible: standardize, minimize friction, don't expect infrastructure knowledge (and don't create a need for it)
  - A lot of employees with infrastructure knowledge, but main strength and therefore focus is working on the product itself
  - Time spent on local dev infrastructure is very likely time spent on something that won't improve the product or customer satisfaction
- ▶ Central team provides all infrastructure:
  - Standard images for laptops, central vms for development
  - Central SQL Servers / NST / IIS for dev and test
  - Local NST installs for some cases but more because of how NAV currently works than because we like it: debugging, need to restart, cmdlets that work only locally, development of server-side dlls

- ▶ Consequence of our scenario: **Central Docker containers** provided by our Release Management & Tooling team
- ▶ We can stay away from Docker on Win 10 / Docker Community Edition (side note : Win 10 since very recently allows process isolation, which means we'll take another look)
- ▶ Main reason why we are not using **navcontainerhelper** a lot, as it mostly assumes **local Docker installs** (and our ops professionals already have advanced Docker knowledge)
- ▶ If your only goal is to have **local containers** for development and you don't have Docker knowhow already, then a lot of the content won't have **direct relevance** for you as navcontainerhelper then would be your easiest route
  - Technology and concepts should still be interesting

## ► Why? Easy access to releases

- 1-3 major releases, 4-6 bugfix releases for each country solution per year → up to **20 Infoma newsystem releases per year**
- Business central / NAV **cumulative updates, releases and previews**
- All of those should be readily available for **quick tests**

## ► How?



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# **DEMO 1.1: CREATE A CONTAINER**

- ▶ **Client:** Extension v2 in a Business Central Container
  - Available images maintained in a [table](#), pulled nightly
  - Containers valid for [max. 3 days](#), deleted nightly
  - Calls proxy API through a [REST interface](#) to create or delete containers, get status and logs
- ▶ **Proxy API:** Custom .Net Core application
  - Creates [gMSA](#) (for win auth), if newsystem container then [downloads DLLs](#) from TFS and [gets backup](#)
  - Constructs and executes [docker run](#) command
  - Gets running containers and logs from the [Docker API](#)
- ▶ **Container:** Standard NAV / BC image from Microsoft with a couple of additional scripts and specific settings
  - Script 1: Grant an [AD user group](#) access to the database
  - Script 2: Automatically [convert the database on startup](#) (in case the .bak is from an older CU than the container)
  - Parameters: Use [Windows authentication](#) and our [dev license](#)

### ► Example docker run command:

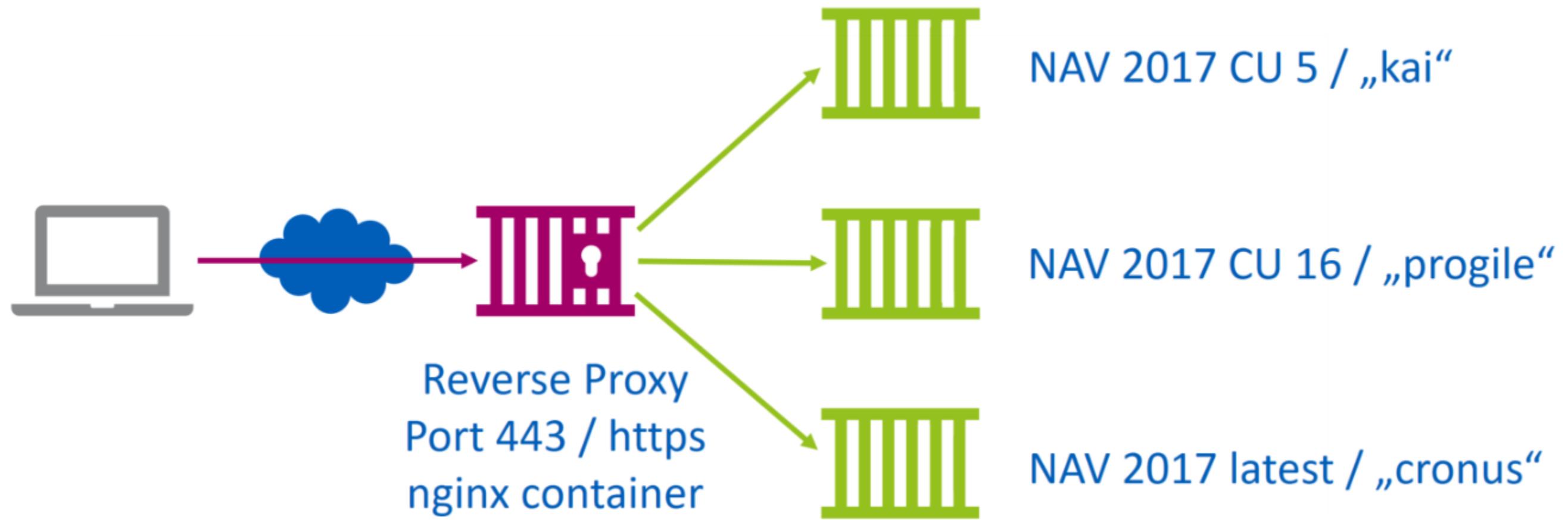
```
docker run --security-opt "credentialspec=file://testtfe.json"
--name testtfe --hostname testtfe -e accept_eula=y -e accept_outdated=y
--network MyTransparentNetwork -e clickonce=y -e usessl=y
-e auth=Windows -e username=admin -e password=Passw0rd*123
-e folders="c:\run\my=https://tools.axians-infoma.de/grant-user-
access.zip\nav-docker-samples-grant-user-
access,c:\run\my=https://tools.axians-infoma.de/invoke-
conversion.zip\nav-docker-samples-invoke-conversion"
-e DevDomain=FUM-GLOBAL -e DevGroup=GRP_INFOMA_DEV_ALL
-v c:\nsys-freeze:c:\bkp -e bakfile=c:\bkp\newsystem_180100200.bak -v
"c:\temp\testtfe.180100200\kumulativ:C:\Program Files\Microsoft Dynamics
NAV\100\Service\Add-ins\Infoma"
-e customWebSettings="Productname=Infoma newsystem"
-e customNavSettings="SqlLongRunningThreshold=10000"
--label Owner=FUM-GLOBAL\TFENSTER --label InfomaApiGenerated=true
--label NsysRelease=180100200 --label NavRelease=100
-d microsoft /dynamics-nav:2017-cu16-de
```

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## **DEMO 1.2: SEE THE RUNNING CONTAINER**

## ► Why? Multiple very similar containers or more complex scenarios

- Release tests with **10 databases** and all need the same container with NST / IIS
- Tools host with **different images**
- Externally available environment with **multiple endpoints** but only a **reverse proxy** is exposed



## ► How? Docker compose

- Describes in YAML the **containers**, their **configuration** and the **networking setup**
- For the scenario with 10 identical containers: PowerShell script to **generate compose file from templates**

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NAV 2017 CU 5 / „kai“



NAV 2017 CU 16 / „progile“



NAV 2017 latest / „cronus“

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<https://.../kai>



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## **DEMO 2.1: CREATE COMPOSE FILES**

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## **DEMO 2.2: TOOLS HOST**

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## **DEMO 2.3: EXTERNALLY EXPOSED PROXY**

- ▶ YAML definitions can be **changed** and Docker will **only** update the **changed parts**
- ▶ Allows easily updating or even changing the host
- ▶ **Dynamically scalable** if needed: number of replicas
  - Windows auth works fine but needs correctly named containers (with Server 2016, no longer with Server 2019)
- ▶ Even **more flexible** alternative: **Docker Swarm**
  - Spans **multiple hosts** (nodes) and places containers on the nodes on demand
  - Very **flexible networking** from Server 2019 onwards
  - **Dynamic reverse proxy** setup with Traefik or others (almost no setup)
  - Can run **mixed OS**: some nodes Windows, some nodes Linux
- ▶ Widely used alternative to Docker Swarm in the Linux world: **Kubernetes**
  - Windows GA expected in the **next months**
  - Probably Windows authentication soon after

- ▶ Why? Automated builds should be a given and containers offer 100% reliable and clean environments
  - Manually building is very time consuming and error prone
  - Keeping build environments clean is difficult → often periodic re-installs
  - Creating a container for every build and every step is not much overhead but guarantees a clean environment
  - Standard bcsandbox / bconprem is quite big, multi-stage image reduces that
- ▶ How? TFS builds with custom images
  - Run a build on every commit ("gated checkins" possible)
  - Scripts and Docker images for building extensions
  - Run automated tests in the end
- ▶ Freddy Kristiansen and Stanislaw Stempin show CI/CD based on navcontainerhelper in parallel session "Setting up continuous integration and continuous deployment of your app → grab the slides!"

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# **DEMO 3: FROM CODE CHANGE TO TESTED .APP FILE**



# ANY QUESTIONS I CAN TRY TO ANSWER?

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- ▶ **Why?** You quickly need 1-n business central "installations" to test or demo something or for e.g. a workshop
  - Azure Container Instances (ACIs) **just run** 1-n containers without the need to worry about the **base infrastructure**
  - Paid **on demand** by seconds of CPU / RAM / Windows license (see ↑Azure pricing calculator)
- ▶ **How?** Multiple ways
  - Azure Portal **GUI**
  - Azure **command line** or **PowerShell cmdlets** for single containers
  - **ARM template** deployed manually
  - ARM template deployed through Azure **command line** or **PowerShell cmdlets**
  - Probably more... (including my little VS Code extension ↑<https://marketplace.visualstudio.com/items?itemName=tfenster.alrunner>)

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# **DEMO 4: CREATE ACIS**

- Azure Container Registry (ACR) offers "serverless" build infrastructure
  - Create your [own image](#) without installing Docker
  - Especially useful if you want to have custom images based on multiple standard images (like NAV 2017, NAV 2018, BC OnPrem, BC Sandbox, nightly build, etc.)