



Case Study

Industry: Social Security
Operating System: VSE
Dataorganisation: VSAM

The customer is a public institution and part of the German Social Security System. The Operating System being used is VSE/ESA 2.4 All applications have been developed in-house. COBOL has been used as a programming language. Production data is stored in VSAM. The file structures are very complex. They consist of multiple record types and variable table structures. Access to the data is being accomplished by COBOL subroutines, which are being called from that application programs.

For many years the customer uses a mainframe based word processing system. Special COBOL subroutines have been developed for this system. These subroutines process the data and create the components needed by the word processing system.

The end-user departments requested to use MS-WORD as their new word processing system. The requirement has been quoted, that all capabilities of the mainframe based word processing systems still should be available.

The contact to the customer has been established during spring of 2000. The tcACCESS concept has been discussed and it was agreed to perform a trial installation during summer of 2000.

During the trial period the customer requirements had been thoroughly tested. The direct access to the complex VSAM files had been performed. The existing COBOL-programs of the mainframe word processing system had been called from WORD VBA macros.

Production use of tcACCESS:

MS-WORD: The end users work with predefined WORD templates. A customer number can be specified in a dialog box. A VBA macro uses the tcACCESS ODBC-driver and CALLs an existing COBOL-program. The customer number and additional parameter, related to the template are being passed to tcACCESS. TcACCESS calls the COBOL-program. The program gets executed and passes back all data relevant to the template. The data is then passed to the VBA macro.

It was the goal of the customer to not have to modify these COBOL-programs. This goal has been met. A "stub"-program had been developed which is called by tcACCESS. This program accepts the parameter being passed by tcACCESS, reformats them into a format acceptable by the COBOL-program, calls the COBOL-program, receives the data and reformats it into the appropriate tcACCESS format.

Customer files: The end users use predefined views to access the customer information. This enables them to create customized reports.

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