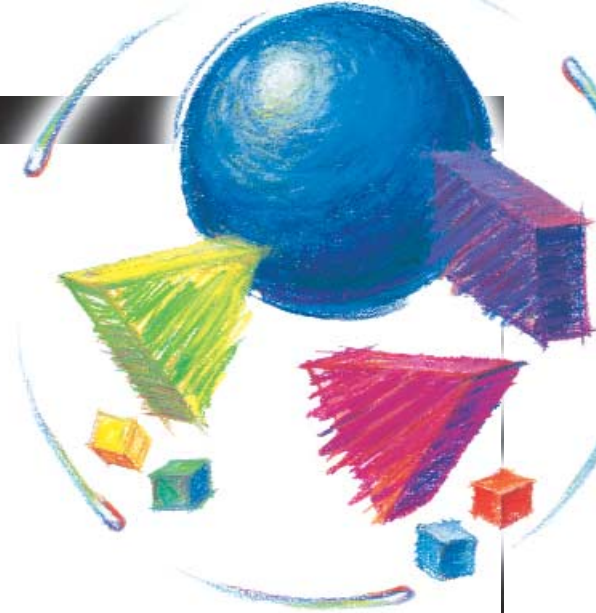


# CASE *IN PRINT*



## USAA: Ensuring Customer Satisfaction With AFP Documents On Demand

United Service Automobile Association (USAA) started out in 1922 with a simple mission: provide affordable automobile insurance to military officers who had difficulty obtaining insurance elsewhere. Over the last 75 years, USAA has grown from an informal association of 25 policyholders into a 16,500-employee powerhouse, offering its three million customers a full line of insurance, banking, mortgage, and other financial services.



USAA conducts most of its business by mail and telephone, and is the largest mail-order company in the United States. Most of the company's service representatives never actually meet their customers face-to-face. Customers judge the level of service by the quality and timeliness of telephone calls and external documents (policy statements, claims letters, etc.). For this reason, the company's IS and telecommunications systems are key elements in the operation, growth, and overall success of USAA.

At USAA's headquarters in San Antonio Texas, the company's IBM 9672 and 9021 MVS mainframes supply the computing power for the company's information systems. A VTAM network connects the mainframes to remote servers at regional offices around the United States, as well as European offices in London and Frankfurt. USAA's printers churn out over 1.5 million pages per day. Much of this output is customer correspondence in the form of AFP documents.

Timely, flexible document delivery is important to USAA's success. VTAM® Printer Support (VPS®) and its extension products from Levi, Ray & Shoup, Inc. (LRS®) deliver AFP output to USAA's LAN-attached printers in the most efficient manner.

### ***Batch Mode vs. Print-On-Demand: It's a Matter of Time***

Imagine this scenario: the big oak tree in your neighbor's front yard falls over on your brand new car. You're glad that no one was hurt, but you wince at the thought of spending a month in a loaner car. You immediately call your insurer to start the claims process as soon as

## EXECUTIVE **SUMMARY**

VPS® and VPS/PCL gave USAA customer service representatives the capability to print AFP documents immediately upon insurance customer request. The improvement in responding to customer requests was dramatic—before implementing its VPS-based print-on-demand process, USAA printed customer documents in batch every night and distributed them to representatives for mailing or faxing the following day.

possible. The USAA customer service representative takes down your information and starts preparing the necessary documents.

Paul Manz, IT Systems Analyst at USAA, described the next step. "When our service representatives get off the phone with a customer, they enter the customer information into an IMS application that generates Advanced Function Presentation (AFP) documents. This application writes the documents to the JES spool. Until last year, the documents were printed during the nightly batch cycle on a large centralized laser printer, and were returned to each representative the next day to be signed, then mailed or faxed."

This system proved to be time consuming. User departments asked IS for a better solution: they wanted the ability to enter customer information while the customer was on the phone, then instantly generate the letter or form and send it to the nearest printer. By speeding up the document generation process, USAA representatives hoped to further improve customer satisfaction.



Over 10,500 employees work at the USAA Home Office Building in San Antonio, Texas.

#### **AFP Output to LAN printers: It Starts With VPS**

To fulfill the AFP print-on-demand requirement, the system needed the ability to take output from the JES spool and route it to the destination printer. Luckily, another division had already implemented such a system to resolve another print management issue. The solution was VPS.

VPS is an MVS host software solution that retrieves output from the JES spool and routes it to the appropriate printer anywhere in an SNA network. Its reliability and ease of use have made it the choice on over 4500 MVS systems worldwide. The monitoring and control facilities in VPS give authorized users full control over how and where output is routed, and provide an interface for monitoring all VPS-controlled functions.

"We had some applications that printed to SNA-attached printers," said Tom Heady, task group leader in USAA's Executive Systems Management group. "For maintenance reasons, we didn't want to define these printers directly to JES. VPS gave us a way to define printers on the fly, and maintain them from a single interface."

For the AFP print-on-demand project, IS staff needed a way to convert the mainframe AFP output into a data stream that their HP LaserJet printers could understand. The systems group chose VPS/PCL, an extension to the base VPS product. VPS/PCL converts AFP resources into PCL data streams on the MVS host, then uses the base VPS product to deliver the output to any PCL-capable device. This may be a printer or any other PCL device hooked to an SNA, TCP/IP, or local area network. Because the AFP-to-PCL conversion runs on the MVS host, USAA did not need to add hardware protocol converters or intermediate servers to the network.

"We looked at implementing a hardware server-based product to perform the AFP-to-PCL conversions, but it was going to be expensive and burdensome," explained Paul Manz. "This product converted AFP to PCL at the LAN level — we would have needed to buy and install one PC server for every five printers. With VPS/PCL, the conversion takes place on the mainframe, and we can send output to as many printers as we want using VPS/PC."

#### **LAN-to-Host: VPS/PC Makes the Connections**

VPS/PC is a LAN-based extension to VPS that routes mainframe output to LAN-attached printers. In USAA's environment, VPS/PCL converts the AFP application output to PCL data streams and sends it to VPS/PC on the LAN. VPS/PC then routes the output to the appropriate printer queue. USAA originally used VPS/PC for OS/2, but switched to the Windows NT version of the product as NT servers proliferated throughout the organization. Both the OS/2 and NT versions have multitasking capabilities.

Catia Jendrzey administers both the host VPS product and VPS/PC. "From an administration standpoint, VPS/PC makes life simple," she said. "I can add printers on the fly, and start sending output to them right away. VPS/PC lets me add a new printer in minutes."

#### **The Proof is in the Printing**

In the scenario described above, the USAA representative gathers the customer's claims information over the phone. The employee keys the information into the claims process-

ing system, which is an IMS application. Pressing the Enter key starts the following series of events:

- The system merges the customer data from the IMS application with the correct AFP resources, and places the output on the JES spool
- VPS recognizes the job as containing AFP, and automatically invokes VPS/PCL
- VPS/PCL converts the AFP resources to PCL5 data streams and gives the job to VPS for delivery
- VPS sends the output to VPS/PC for NT, which places the document in the appropriate LAN printer queue
- The document is printed on the departmental laser printer, ready to be signed and sent via mail or fax

Along the way, VPS uses the security functions of JES and the LAN operating system to make sure the output gets to the destination queue. What's more, this stability does not come at the expense of speed. "VPS/PC is really quick," Jendrzey said. "You hit the Enter key, and the document starts printing in seconds. Some representatives work in our service centers, where customers walk right up to the window for help. They like being able to instantly hand the customer a customized statement or form."

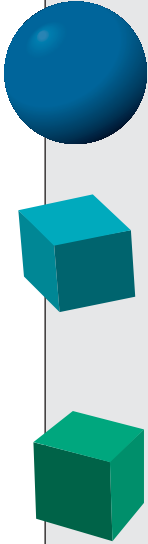
Manz noted that the success of his group's AFP-on-demand system has sparked interest from other groups at USAA: "For example, our auto insurance group has implemented this system for issuing auto insurance identification cards," he said. "When a customer comes in to insure a new car, we can generate the insurance card on the spot. Or if the customer is calling from a car dealership, we can automatically transmit the proof of insurance papers right to the dealer's fax machine. With VPS/PC, the service representatives can print insurance cards on their existing HP LaserJet printers, instead of sending output to the host printers

## USAA **FACTS**

- Three million customers of insurance, banking, mortgage, and other financial services
- More than 1.5 million pages printed each day
- 16,500 employees

## LRS<sup>®</sup> **PRODUCTS**

*USAA built on a solid foundation of Enterprise Output Management solutions when it installed VPS/PCL and VPS/PC for NT. LRS products working together at USAA include:*



**VPS—VTAM Printer Support** efficiently routes output from the JES2/JES3 spool to the most appropriate printer or output device. Printers can be quickly and easily added to the VPS system without the need for IPLs, JES definitions, or re-starting the VPS system.

**VPS/PCL**—VPS/PCL is a VPS AFP extension product that enables you to send AFP output to your PCL5 compatible printers, without the need for expensive IPDS data stream conversion cards or other cumbersome solutions. All you need are the PCL printers that you've already purchased and already connected to the network.

**VPS/PC for NT**—Used in conjunction with VPS on the host, VPS/PC for NT receives mainframe reports from the host and routes it to various servers, queues, files, mail, and printers anywhere on any corporate LAN. VPS/PC for NT communicates with VPS on the host using standard SNA LU6.2 or TCP/IP protocols.

and waiting for the cards to be hand-delivered. Our new system is great."

### **The Benefits of Enterprise Output Management**

Increased responsiveness to customer needs and greater IS productivity are two of the benefits of USAA's print-on-demand system. Like many companies in the insurance and financial sectors, USAA is seeking to improve its systems by concentrating on the most visible link to the customer: the document.



*The USAA AFP Print-On-Demand system improves the company's efficiency and helps customer representatives meet their clients' needs.*



*USAA sees technology as an investment, not an expense. Because the company operates via 800-numbers and direct mail, technology is vital to maintaining contact with more than 3 million customers worldwide.*

LRS is committed to raising the awareness and profile of output management throughout organizations worldwide. Enterprise output management should be a deliberate, strategic effort on the part of companies who want to maximize the use of their resources while standardizing and efficiently managing their computing environments.

To discuss your organization's current print strategy and ensure that it can meet the expanding needs of your enterprise, contact the enterprise output management specialists at LRS. Whether your interests are cost savings, flexibility, or increased customer service, LRS can provide the products and the expertise to fit your needs.



*Levi, Ray & Shoup, Inc.*

ENTERPRISE OUTPUT MANAGEMENT

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