

CASE *IN PRINT*



VPS/Email Provides Fast Relief For the Slow Report Headache

When a healthcare facility blends medical technology with the human touch provided by caring doctors and nurses, high-quality patient care is often the result. When the human touch is involved in distributing mainframe-generated reports, however, the result can be inefficiency.

UNIVERSITY OF **ROCHESTER**

Once it began to study distribution of mainframe-generated reports throughout the enterprise, the data center staff at the University of Rochester found examples of such inefficiency. A single data center at the university operates a mainframe with a logical partition, or LPAR, devoted to university administrative functions and another LPAR running applications for healthcare operations at the University of Rochester Medical Center, which includes the University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, the School of Nursing, the Eastman Dental

Center, the University of Rochester Medical Faculty Group, Strong Memorial Hospital and the Golisano Children's Hospital at Strong.

Mainframe reports for the Medical Center were being printed on a high-speed Xerox printer in the data center. The university's courier service would deliver many of those reports to a central location.

MANUAL DISTRIBUTION AND SUB-DISTRIBUTION

"In the hospital, the reports would get delivered to a room they call the closet," explained Gary Wade, Manager of Technical Services and Production Control. "All of these people from the different floors would have to come down and pick up their reports. A lot of the departments within the hospital were getting a bundle of reports and then somebody was given the role of actually separating those reports, so they would go to the mail room and pick them up and then bring them back to their office and unbundle them and then distribute them to all

EXECUTIVE*SUMMARY*

The combination of VPS, VPS/TCPIP, and VPS/Email has helped the University of Rochester automate mainframe report distribution. Now the University delivers information to users instantly and has reduced the inefficiency of manually distributing paper reports.

the people within their area. So there was distribution to the hospital and then sub-distribution to the individual departments.”

The data center staff discovered that in one department, the secretary would collect the department’s single copy of a report and make photocopies for all 28 staff members.



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“We found all these little pockets of people who were just spending their time doing all this clerical stuff,” Wade recalled. “So we figured, what better way than to deliver directly to the printer in their area.”

Distributing output to network printers would have been difficult with the aging print utility the University of Rochester was using. That software sent print through an SNA gateway to network servers, and each server could drive up to just nine printers. The university installed VPS® and VPS/TCP/IP to route mainframe output directly to TCP/IP-attached printers throughout the enterprise.



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“We got the products in and we started a big project to roll it out, to ‘sell’ the services to folks,” Wade explained. “We decided to focus on all the little jobs, all the jobs that are 20 pages or less because these would be perfect to send to an office printer. Something that’s 600 pages—and some of our reports are like that, especially our finance reports—that’s probably not something they’re going to want to print on the printer in their office.”

The production control staff began the effort to sell remote printing to staff members throughout the office. The University of Rochester was also encouraging the use of online viewing, which was also part of the sales effort. People could view a report online and then choose to print some or all of the report on their remote printer.

EMAIL OPTION

At that time, Wade recalled, he received information about VPS/Email, the LRS software which sends mainframe reports directly from the JES spool to an email address or multiple addresses.

“Everybody lives by email, so we’ve offered that as an additional option,” Wade recalled. “Now we’ve got some people who don’t want anything but email. They want all their reports in email.”

Mary Ann Ziegler, production control coordinator, was active in the effort to promote remote printing and email distribution of mainframe reports. After a round of presentations that introduced the concepts, Ziegler said, selling them became a routine part of the way she handles reports of problems.

“We have a tracking system that allows people to call about missing reports,” she explained. “As a rule of thumb, every time I get a problem ticket, I offer a choice. I say that reprinting the report will take you this long, but if you let me email it to you, you’ll get it instantly. Then I say, if you like that feature we can set you up on a permanent basis. And basically the product sells itself. When you say to somebody, I can email you that report, they just say, wow, where has this been all my life?”

Because the courier service picks up reports at the data center every 2 to 3 hours, Ziegler can’t promise that a reprinted report will be delivered to the user any quicker than that. Instant delivery via email, by comparison, is very attractive, as usage shows. In the first 10 months that

VPS/Email was in use, the number of reports delivered by email increased from about 500 per month to more than 3600 totaling over 70,000 pages. During that period, the number of small reports printed in the data center dropped by about 50 percent.

"Some users have turned off printing to their printers altogether because they like email distribution that much," Wade said. "They can distribute a report using email, we can put different email users on the list to receive the report, and they can send it to a group that's already defined in Microsoft Outlook, the email package we use. They can also send it to individuals."

Ziegler described how one manager uses Outlook to send a report to a defined group of subordinates.

ADDING IMPACT

"We have an ambulatory area here which provides most of our outpatient services to about 2500 people a day," Ziegler said. "The manager of the department gets a particular billing report which he distributes to his direct reports, who then in turn distribute it to their direct reports. Along with the report, the managers add their own comments in the email message and, you know, it gives that much more impact because they're giving that instant information. They don't have to wait for a secretary to make copies of the report or send it through interoffice mail. It's instant information."

That instant delivery of mainframe-generated information is the key benefit every user mentions, Ziegler said.

"Time is important and now they can send a report to multiple people in the blink of an eye," she said. "The couriers have probably seen a drop in the number of small reports they deliver. One of them asked me about a report he used to deliver but never delivers it any more. Well, we email it. That's a benefit for them too because their job is not only to deliver paper, but also to move research items and medical supplies to locations where they're needed."

VPS/Email has helped the data center staff reduce the human touch, along with its inefficiency, from mainframe output distribution at the University of Rochester.

LRS PRODUCTS

The University of Rochester installed a collection of LRS products that work together to provide the solution to the University's output management challenge:

VPS®

VPS sends output from the JES spool on the OS/390 mainframe to the most appropriate printer or output device. Printers can be quickly and easily added without IPLs, JES definitions, or re-starting the VPS system.

VPS/TCPIP

VPS/TCPIP dynamically sends output from the JES spool directly to a TCP/IP-attached device or a Line Printer Daemon (LPD). P.J.L.-based Bi-directional Internet Printing (BIP) support provides printer status monitoring and page-level error recovery capability.

VPS/Email

VPS/Email sends mainframe reports directly from the JES spool to an email address or multiple addresses. Short line-mode reports can be sent as text in an email message and longer reports can be sent as PDF, HTML, or RTF email attachments.

VPS/PCL

VPS/PCL converts AFP output to a PCL data stream on the mainframe, so you can send AFP output to your PCL5-compatible printers without the need for expensive IPDS data stream conversion cards or other cumbersome solutions.

VMCF Client for Windows

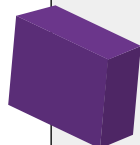
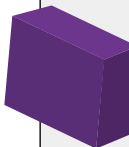
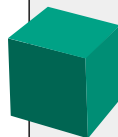
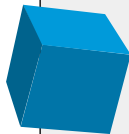
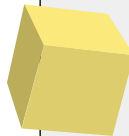
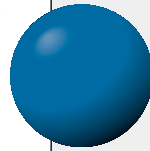
VMCF (VPS Monitor and Control Facility) Client for Windows is a single point of control for network printing, enabling PC users to monitor all JES and VPS-controlled output devices on any network and fix problems that occur.

DRS

DRS enables users to dynamically send output created by online applications (CICS or IMS applications, for example) to the JES spool. The University uses DRS to send output from Siemens Invision to the JES spool, where VPS and VPS/TCPIP route it to network printers.

DRS/STI

The DRS/Smart Tag Interface provides a single interface for dealing with all the output from vendor-supplied and legacy applications. The DRS/STI can also merge regular line-mode output with AFP resources to create attractive, easy-to-read reports.





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