HOBCOM:
Control and Administrate
1,700 Printers in Parallel

HUK-COBURG

HUK-COBURG, with about 8,000 employees and over 8 million customers is one of Germany's largest insurance companies. It is also the most important insurance company in the German public service sector, insuring almost 50% of all public servants. HUK-COBURG only insures private customers: it is not active in commercial or industrial insurance fields. The traditional focus is on automobile insurance. Personal liability and household insurance also play an important role. In these three fields, HUK-COBURG is the second-largest insurance provider on the market.

Through forward-thinking planning and full integration of their employees, HUK is striving for the leadership in cost control: all employees, members and customers are to have up-to-date information, always. HUK-COBURG achieves this through consistently deploying the appropriate information technology. This is why, after comprehensive research, this insurance company decided for a Unified Messaging solution and the Host/Server communications and printer-optimization software HOBCOM from HOB.

Since October 2000 HUK-COBURG, via their subsidiary HUK24, offers a comprehensive catalog of insurance for private customers who want online communication with their insurer. For the transmission of sensitive data, HUK24 uses SSL-based encryption. Part of the decision to strength the online area was the desire to send host-generated messages per e-mail or fax. For this, HUK-COBURG deployed TOPCALL Communication Server ONE. Additionally, all printers in the central and branch offices were to be centrally controlled.

The task that faced HOB was to find a way not only to print the customer-specific, standardized documents (correspondence, bills, reports, etc.) created by a host application, but also to send these, on demand, via e-mail or fax to the corresponding customer. All print jobs were to be channeled over the host.
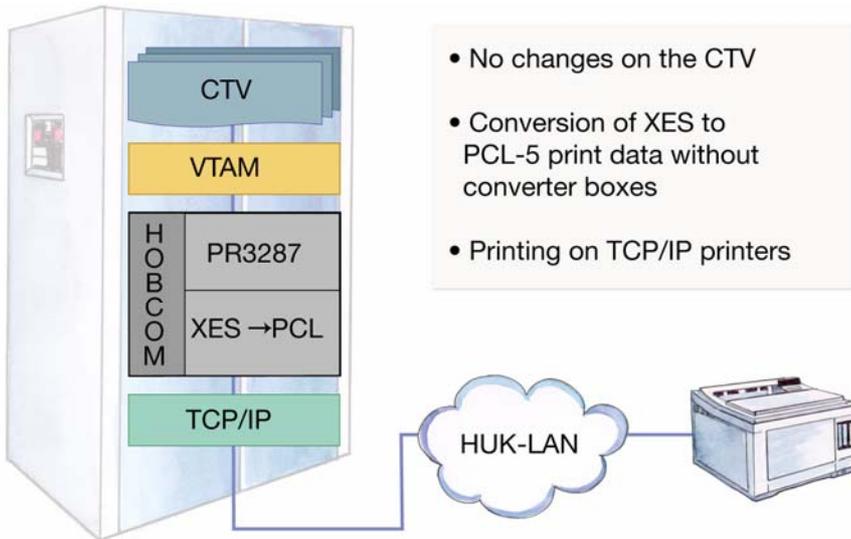
XES to PCL 5

HOBCOM, a powerful transaction program monitor, was initially developed in 1982 and has been continuously refined and upgraded to the stable and powerful system that it is. It enables you to easily administrate and control a large number of functions and devices, for example, PC's, NC's, terminals, and printers. At HUK-COBURG up to 1,700 printers run in parallel, distributed over all their locations. With the deployment of the HOB software, they can use their conventional devices to print the documents created in CTV, or send via e-mail or fax, by converting the original XES protocol into PCL5 format. In the various offices, all documents can now be printed out with no trouble at all: the documents range from "green insurance cards" (Europe-wide proof of auto insurance) to training materials. Employees can thus immediately provide their customers with the necessary documentation, a service the HUK-COBURG customers greatly value.

- No changes on the CTV

- Conversion of XES to PCL-5 print data without converter boxes

- Printing on TCP/IP printers

HOBCOM in Use

Dr. Michael Weiss, head of system programming and co-responsible for print solutions at HUK-COBURG says: "In implementing the concept and selecting the software product HOBCOM, we considered several requirements, which have brought us convenient operation and cost-savings:

- as little change as possible for our central word processing

- elimination of the converter boxes by converting XES ➜ PCL5 in the central HOBCOM software
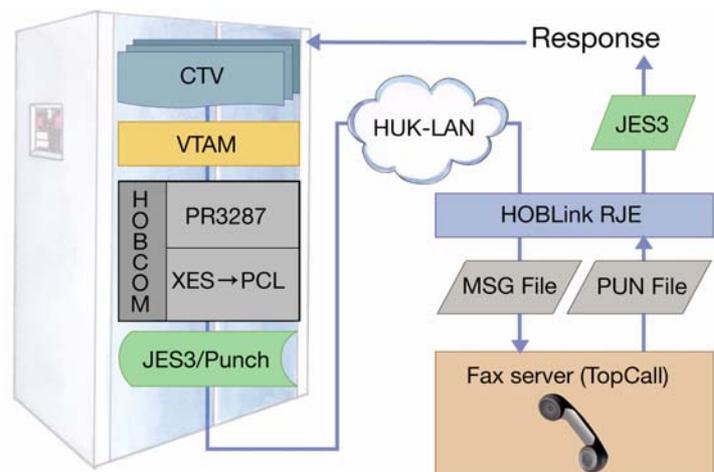
- the use of the latest wiring technology, as the coaxial cables for connecting the converter boxes were no longer necessary

- deployment of a standard solution for FAX and printing

- Central administration of all printers

In addition there was the data security of the mainframe computer and access to the central inventory data."

HOB WebSecureProxy

HOBCOM provides many other additional benefits, such as encryption, compression, LDAP-compatibility and Single-Sign-On (SSO). With SSO, the user need only authenticate himself once and can then access all computers and services for which he has proper authorization, without having to logon each and every time. HOB WebSecureProxy, based on the same architecture as HOBCOM, provides these services for Windows and Unix/Linux environments. HOB WebSecureProxy is the core component of the connectivity and security solution suite HOB RD VPN.

Klaus Brandstätter, Head of Development and owner of HOB comments: "Stability is one of the most important demands today. This stability is often not found with conventional PC's and laptops, sometimes resulting in major damages. This is where the stable solutions from HOB come into the picture. The example of HUK-COBURG's deployment of HOBCOM has proven this."

The Companies

HUK-COBURG works according to the principle of mutuality, and places great value on a sense of community. This means that their customers are seen as equal partners. The strong risk association resulting from this means the financial risk for each individual can be reduced to the necessary minimum. With its optimized software solutions, the HUK-COBURG IT department is doing its part to achieve this and other goals.

HOB was founded in 1964. Since 1981 the company has placed its strategic focus on the development of cross-platform and protocol-independent, server-centric computing solutions. The company uses its competence in the IBM Mainframe area as the basis for the development of new security solutions, such as HOB RD VPN, HOBLink VPN (IPSec VPN with PKI), as well as server-based computing solutions for Windows and Linux Terminal Servers.

HOB has subsidiaries in many countries, for example, France, Austria, the USA, Japan and Mexico. Additionally, HOB has research and development centers in Germany and Malta.