

Customer Case Study

Süddeutsche Krankenversicherung (SDK): tcVISION for synchronization between VSAM and Microsoft SQL Server



The focus of Süddeutsche Krankenversicherung (SDK) is the human being.

As a mutual insurance association SDK is solely obliged to their members.

Founded 1926 SDK today serves more than 640.000 policy holders with nearly 800 Mio. Euro premium volume.

ABOUT TREEHOUSE SOFTWARE

Treehouse Software is a B.O.S. partner, offering the most comprehensive and flexible portfolio of solutions available anywhere for integration, replication, and migration of data between mainframe sources and any target, application or platform; and virtually any mainframe application modernization project. Using ETL, CDC and SQL/XML technologies, we connect your enterprise—from anything to anything. We offer software and services that enable mainframe customers to leverage their investments in legacy systems—employing virtually any data source—with data integration, data warehousing, modernization and conversion, Service-Oriented Architectures, and other new technologies.

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BUSINESS BACKGROUND

Süddeutsche Krankenversicherung (SDK), located at Fellbach, is the health insurance specialist of the cooperative banks (Volksbanken Raiffeisenbanken) in the southern part of Germany. More than 640.000 policy holders count on SDK for health care. Nearly 800 employees provide competent assistance in indoor- and field-service. SDK uses a mainframe. The reasons are reliability, high availability and excellent performance. Operating system is z/VSE. CICS is used for the online systems and the production data is stored on VSAM files.

BUSINESS ISSUE

Christian Ebinger, Manager Document-Management and Dispositive Systems: "One of our planned projects has been the migration of our VSAM/COBOL applications to Microsoft SQL-Server/Java. We were looking for a solution for this project which should include the offloading of the VSAM-files and the loading into SQL-Server tables as well as supporting a bi-directional replication in real-time between VSAM and Microsoft SQL-Server. We did a market evaluation and finally shortlisted 2 products. Because we have been a tcACCESS customer, tcVISION was a candidate for the replication solution. In addition to tcVISION we looked at the "z/VSE e-business connectors and utilities" from IBM. This is a bundle of various interfaces and utilities that allow a TCP/IPcommunication between z/VSE-VSAM and relational databases.

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTION

After extensive testing of both solutions we decided to go with tcVISION, because the synchronization between VSAM and Microsoft SQL-Server is implemented into the product in a lot more mature and sophisticated way. Using the IBM solution we had to program

essential parts of the synchronization because – compared to tcVISION – it is not a complete application but in the end only a bundle of tools that could be used to implement a synchronization into a relational model."

In 2014 the implementation of the testing environment started. Christian Ebinger: "Our VSAM-structures have been evolved over the decades and they had to be transformed into a relational model under SQL-Server. The challenge was the synchronization of a "flat" VSAM file with different number-ranges into different SQL-tables using artificial keys representing a complex relational model.

The decisive advantage of tcVISION was that the implementation of this challenge was possible without any significant programming efforts." Also the bi-directional synchronization was successfully implemented in the testing environment and tcVISION provides a method to recognize bidirectional changes and securely excludes multiple changes.

Christian Ebinger: "An entry into the synchronization on a larger scale will probably be implemented mid/end of 2016. Until now we use tcVISION to offload VSAM files on a time-controlled base and bulk-load them into SQL-tables with similar structures. During a week we transfer approximately 30 million data records at various points.

Up to now tcVISION has fully met our expectations. The real endurance test will probably start in the coming next months when SDK starts the data synchronization. However we do not expect any problems when going into production with the bidirectional replication because we had absolutely convincing results during our tests despite the immanent complexity of the task.

The technical support for tcVISION has been very competent, fast and congenial on a human level. We are convinced that together we will master the synchronization project."



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