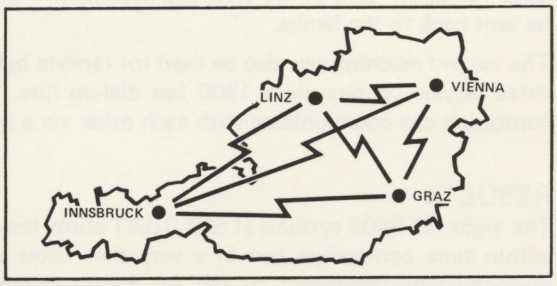
RC 3600
Spardat



SPARDAT

INDUSTRY
Banking Service Bureau

COMPANY
Sparkassen Datendienst, Ges.m.b.H.
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Austria

APPLICATIONS
Data Collection
Remote Batch Printing
Media Conversion
Off-Line Printing

PROBLEM

Sparkassen Datendienst (SPARDAT) is a service bureau serving over 140 Austrian savings banks with an average daily number of transactions of 300,000 (about 700,000 on peak days). SPARDAT has service centers in Vienna, Graz, Linz, and Innsbruck. This arrangement covers the country geographically.

SPARDAT's major task is to up-date member banks' accounts daily. Data collection and processing must, therefore, begin at the close of business each working day and end before the last mailing of the same day.

When operations began, paper tape was used for data collection, but these tapes could not be input fast enough to satisfy the time constraints present. Today most member banks use cassette tape and the more remote banks transmit the data on those cassettes via data communications to SPARDAT for processing.

In order to perform its services for member banks, SPARDAT must have a data collection system that is able to operate within the time constraints present. It must also have communications facilities to connect its four service centers. Finally, it must perform its services at a reasonable cost.

REQUIREMENTS

The basic requirement on the system is that it allow the operation of data collection and list production to be performed within an interval of 5 to 6 hours. A second requirement is that the system be able to work with the input of data either via communications or locally with the input of paper tape or cassettes. Thirdly, the system must allow flexible communications links to be established among the four service centers, with a fast link be-

tween Vienna and Innsbruck, which are farthest apart. Since these links must be used for remote printing, the system must also be able to print quickly, often with OCR quality. Finally, the overall cost of operations should be low.

SOLUTION

A basic decision was made to separate I/O (including communications) from mainframe operations. By organizing the work flow in this way, costs were kept reasonably low. In implementing this decision, currently there are two RC 3600's at each service center. One machine receives member bank data over four dial-up lines operating at 1200 bps and output magnetic tape. Simultaneously, the machine can also convert cassettes into magnetic tape for input to the IBM 370/145 mainframe and also print off-line. The other system is used for paper tape conversion and off-line printing, especially of the reports that are to be sent back to the banks.

The second machine can also be used for remote batch communications to any of the other three service centers via a 1200 bps dial-up line. Those machines that are in Vienna and Innsbruck can communicate with each other via a 9600 bps leased line.

RESULTS

The eight RC 3600 systems at SPARDAT allow the basic task of data collection to be done within time constraints and in a way that taxes the mainframe as little as possible. The magnetic tapes produced by the RC 3600's as input to the mainframe and the magnetic tapes that the mainframe produces for input to the RC 3600 off-line printing function serve as back-up tapes and records of the day's work. Input statistics are also produced by the data collection system.

The dial-up and leased line combination allows all centers to communicate with one another and allows OCR quality printing to be done between Vienna and Innsbruck at 1,000 lpm.

Local off-line printing can be done using two fast line printers on one RC 3600, which enables one RC 3600 to print at a speed that is only 20% less than the speed that would be attained with two RC 3600's, each having only one printer.

The flexibility of the RC 3600 allows a variety of tasks to be removed from the mainframe and also allows several different tasks to be performed at the same time.

Because the RC 3600 systems handle all I/O tasks, the mainframe is not time-dependent on the flow of incoming data, and data security is enhanced.

SYSTEM SOLUTIONS

The SPARDAT RC 3600 system displays the possibility of using RC 3600 capabilities to achieve the kind of work flow that the user desires, in this case the separation of processing tasks into I/O tasks and mainframe tasks.

RC 3600 configurations can be custom-tailored to the user's requirements and because RC products are modularized, an RC 3600 can also grow and change as the user's requirements change. In 1971 when the first RC machine was installed at SPARDAT (an RC 3000) the only requirement was to convert paper tape to magnetic tape. Today the emphasis is on communications and RC products have kept pace with this development.

RC welcomes the challenge of building customized systems from standard RC modules to serve the special requirements of organizations with special needs. At the lowest possible cost. With the maximum flexibility. In the shortest possible time.

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