

ORION II

JCL Conversion Meeting Minutes

August 13, 2003

2:30 – 4:30

ATC 241

Attendees: Julie Rowe (via con call)
Robert Scott
Bob St. Leger
Patrick Grayson
IT Applications Staff
IT Operations Staff
Bob Cronan
Linda Swanson

Agenda:

1. Open Discussion (existing implementation)
2. Questions / Issues

Issue: External interfaces - a number of datasets are currently created at FCCJ and sent to external customers. Similarly certain datasets are received from external customers and used as input to particular processes.

Problem: All of these external interface datasets are presumed to be in EBCDIC format. On the UNIX platform the datasets will be created in ASCII format and input data would also need to be received from customers in ASCII format. These external users will have to be involved before the system testing phase to determine whether the format of the ASCII files created would be acceptable to their applications. We would also require external customers to provide FCCJ with ASCII format files in order to test and ensure that this input data matches the anticipated format.

Tasks:

- Identify all external interface file requirements (both input and output)
- Document whether these are used on daily, weekly, monthly etc basis and which processes they are used in.
- Determine how these datasets are sent to / received from customers (FTP, tape, floppy..)
- Determine whether the physical format of the dataset is still acceptable as is – for example it would no longer be possible to create or read a 3490 tape based file.
- Establish any file naming standard requirements.

- Obtain / create file layout - if dataset contains non alphanumeric data fields (binary, packed etc), provision will have to be made as how best to convert the data into an acceptable format.
- Put process in place to ensure regular communication with external customers to discuss issues such as anticipated test dates, cutover dates, validity of data.

Issue: Offsite backup requirements – we need to understand what offsite / general backup requirements FCCJ has.

Problem: Currently, a number of applications are backed up to 3490 tape and in some cases are sent to an offsite disaster recovery site.

A decision would need to be made whether to backup to cartridge / other medium and how to manage the chosen medium.

Tasks: Document current backup procedures detailing items such as

- What is being backed up and who is responsible for the backup
- Frequency of backup (daily, weekly..)
- Procedure used to perform backup (example - Adabas database backup utility)
- Procedure used to perform restore
- Speak to Don Harris regarding his plans for backups (“flash backup?”)

Issue: No enforced dataset naming standards

Problem: In UNIX any file that is created is allocated certain Read Write and Execute permissions. Normally the person creating the file has full read, write and execute authority over that file. Secondly, the file has permissions allocated for members of a particular group. Lastly, there are permissions for anyone else that is either, not the owner or, not a member of the group.

Tasks:

- Setup a matrix aimed at allocating each user into a group or set of groups, that will allow suitable access to dataset resources on an as needed basis.
- A possibility to be investigated could be to base these groups on groups found within the Natural Security group settings.

Issue: Job scheduling is performed in a ‘manual’ fashion. Each day a list of jobs is drawn up to indicate to the operator which jobs need to be run that evening. Jobs are read into the hold queue and the operator releases the jobs to run in a pre-determined sequence.

Problem:

Tasks: Obtain a better understanding of current procedure and possible impacts that could be found under UNIX

Issue: Messages are automatically written to the Operator Console, providing a record of various informational messages, error messages, hardware problems and environment issues that occurred during a particular period. This log is often used by programmers or operational staff to investigate possible causes for any number of issues. There is second form of information (FAQS?) currently used by programmers to monitor the progress of particular tasks. Programmers are able to observe whether requested tapes have been mounted, which step the job is in and so on, in a real time basis.

Problem: An equivalent system is not immediately available in UNIX. Batch scripts will have to be tailored to write various messages to an agreed destination.

Tasks:

Issue: There are sometimes requirements for the results of jobs to be written to output devices other than disk or tape. Some examples mentioned were CD's, floppy disk and also a file destined for microfiche creation.

Problem: As mentioned previously, the format of data will change from EBCDIC to ASCII and it becomes important to understand the detail relating to the creation of this media category.

Tasks:

- Document all processes that write out information ultimately destined to be placed on medium such as CD's, microfiche, floppy disks.
- Identify the ultimate recipient / owner of this data – if an external user, communication should be instituted to establish whether the user has provision to accept the data in ASCII format.
- Describe the file layout

Issue: It appears that certain end users seen as 'power' users, in other words they are used to doing certain functions that are not done by regular users.

Problem: End users would normally not be able to do anything outside of Natural. In the mainframe environment, this is enforced through a CICS transaction, however in UNIX if an end user is allowed out of Natural and is placed at a UNIX command prompt, unforeseen events could occur.

Tasks:

- Decide whether end users have the need to perform any function outside of Natural.
- If there are needs, these should be identified and a subsequent decision made on how best to address these requirements.

Issue: The mainframe has built in operating system software to perform various print management functions – for example, when a job finishes, the output is held on a central print spool where it can be viewed online and user could decide to print, delete or possibly reroute the output to a different destination.

Problem: Generally speaking, the print management facilities are not provided as a standard part of the UNIX operating system.

Task: Identify print requirements more thoroughly and decide how best to accommodate these requirements.

Issue: Dataset versioning - The VSE operating system provides a dataset versioning capability similar to the Generation Data Group (GDG) facility. If a batch job fails while in the process of creating a new dataset, there is no need to worry about deleting this dataset as a rerun of the job will simply create a new version of the dataset in question, ignoring the previous partially created dataset.

Problem: The versioning facility does not exist under UNIX. In certain cases, batch job rerun instructions will have to be revised to remove the dataset before rerunning the job.

Tasks: Batch jobs creating new datasets will have to be identified and their rerun procedures amended to cater for the removal of offending datasets.

3. Next Steps

- SAG will schedule subsequent meetings on specific topics