We Insure People!

The focus of Süddeutsche Krankenversicherung (SDK) is on the individual. As a mutual insurance association, SDK is solely obliged to their clients.

The SDK Insurance Group consists of three parts:
- *the Süddeutsche Krankenversicherung (health insurance)*
- *the Süddeutsche Lebensversicherung (life insurance)*
- *the Süddeutsche Allgemeine Versicherung (general insurance)*

Founded in 1926, SDK serves more than 640,000 clients with nearly 800 million Euro premium volume. SDK is located at Fellbach and is the health insurance specialist of the cooperative banks (Volksbanken Raiffeisenbanken) in the southern part of Germany. Approximately 800 employees provide competent assistance in office and field service.

SDK uses a mainframe with z/VSE as operating system. CICS is used for the online systems and the production data is stored in VSAM files. SDK has already made good experiences with tcACCESS. (refer to user story "We wish you good health!")

Christian Ebinger, Manager Document-Management & Dispositive Systems, "One of our planned projects was the migration of our VSAM/COBOL applications to Microsoft SQL Server/Java. We were looking for a solution that included the offloading of the VSAM files and the loading into SQL Server tables as well as a bidirectional replication in real-time between VSAM and Microsoft SQL Server. We did a market evaluation and finally shortlisted two products. We knew the product offerings from B.O.S., because we already were a customer, so tcVISION was a candidate for the replication solution. We also 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/IP communication between z/VSE-VSAM and relational databases.

After extensive testing of both solutions we decided to go with tcVISION, because the synchronization between VSAM and Microsoft SQL-Server is implemented in a more sophisticated way. With the IBM solution we would have had to program essential parts of the synchronization ourselves; compared to tcVISION, it is not a complete application but a bundle of tools that could be used to implement a synchronization into a relational model."

In 2014, we began the test phase. A member of the B.O.S. team was on-site. Christian Ebinger, "Our VSAM structures have developed 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."

The bidirectional synchronization was successfully implemented in the testing environment and tcVISION provides a method to recognise bidirectional changes and securely exclude multiple changes.

Christian Ebinger, "A synchronization on a larger scale will probably be implemented mid/end of 2016. For now, we use tcVISION to offload VSAM files on a time-controlled base and bulk load them into SQL tables with similar structures. Per week we transfer approximately 30 million data records.

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 from B.O.S. 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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