



Insuring the Future

SmartIS user experience

SmartIS as a central repository

The Information Technology division of the Hannover, Germany, insurance group **Concordia Versicherungen a.G.** utilizes a central data repository, SmartIS, from HORIZONT Software GmbH.

All relevant and important information, from the IBM mainframe, relating to Production and Application Programming is available for access in one centralized location.

Initial situation

In order to quickly react to the ever-faster changes in the insurance industry, and to best serve their customers, Concordia's IT division resolved to unify and modernize the z/OS mainframe Application Development.

Consequently, they decided that, instead of using the ISPF-based development platform, they would utilize the IBM Eclipse-based environment *Rational Developer for System z* (RDz.) They also wanted to integrate a central repository solution.

The main reasons for choosing RDz and an integrated repository, was to involve the developers in the changes early on and so achieve a higher acceptance rate for the selected solution.



Vision

The new repository should not only fulfill the then-current requirements of existing cross-references, but should also be flexible and simple enough to easily integrate the data and information of the future.

The tools should be fully integrated into the RDz developer environment, in order to give the developers direct access to this central information repository.

At the same time, Production should also be able to access this information independently from RDz.

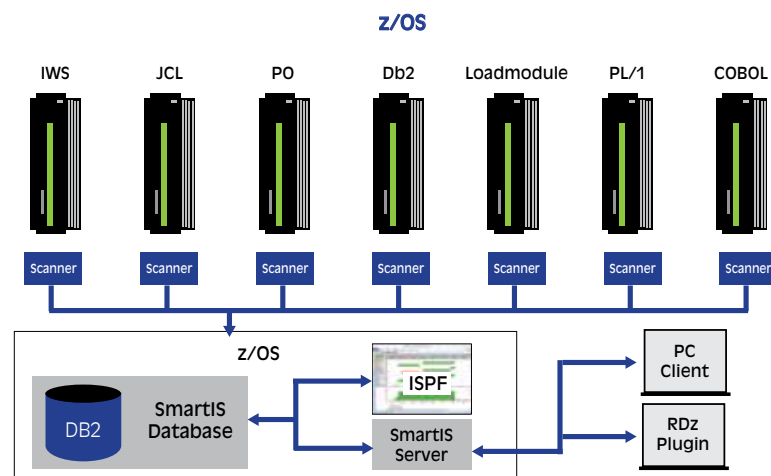
Solution

After a careful market analysis of all established repository providers, Concordia decided to implement HORIZONT's¹ standardized solution XINFO². (Within the North American market, XINFO is known as SmartIS and is distributed exclusively by SEGUS Inc.)

The determining factors for this decision were SmartIS's slim structure and—by far—the highest fulfillment of the Concordia requirements catalog.

Utilizing the SmartIS Eclipse/RDz Plug-in, a seamless integration into the developer environment was possible.

With the modern SmartIS Windows client, Production could still utilize, depending on the process requirements, the SmartIS ISPF interface to access the same centrally-stored database information.



¹HORIZONT Software GmbH products are distributed in North America by SEGUS Inc.

²XINFO is known in North America as SmartIS.



Operation of SmartIS

SmartIS is built as a modular application. Each module determines program source codes or Db2-relevant data from the respective components and stores this information centrally in a relational database. Data content relationships within a specific module, or through a combination of overlapping modules, are stored as cross-references in the database. Legacy data from home-grown applications can also be integrated.

Historical statistics regarding systems and job activities can also be stored here incrementally over longer time-frames—regardless of the source data storage.

It doesn't matter if queries are executed through the TSO/ISPF dialog, the Windows client, or the Eclipse/RDz Plug-in, all methods access the same central data model. Of course the data can also be administered centrally.

The SmartIS analysis programs (called "Scanners") that access different data types, are continuously maintained by the vendor and updated if the source systems change.

Implementation

Concordia updates the central repository on a daily basis using IBM's Workload Scheduler. Db2 provides the updated data to SmartIS. Specifically, this includes data from: COBOL and PL/1 source code, load modules, PO files, Db2 databases, JCL libraries, and IWS itself.

The scanners not only scan Production, but also QA and Development so each individual development environment is mirrored in SmartIS, where it is consolidated and easily accessed. During SmartIS implementation, all required JCL was automatically generated as part of the installation process..

Benefits

The largest benefits from SmartIS are enjoyed by the Application Development and Production teams, as they can now all access the same information. Now, correlations between programs, databases, files, JCL and their process control in the IWS Scheduler can be shown in a clear way. For instance, a developer, using an *include*, can quickly find the programs and all related database tables and data. If the output format is changed, the JCL in need of change can also be quickly found.

Example: The Production planner can start with a specific Job to find the programs - and which database tables they use - in order to very quickly find what is causing a deadlock.

Diverse questions can be easily answered by accessing the central data—all without affecting the operating systems and resources.

“XINFO (SmartIS) is well-integrated as a central repository for the Production and Application Development environments.”

Ullrich Rieke
Acting Lead Development, Concordia
Versicherung a.G.



Summary

Conclusion

Benefits

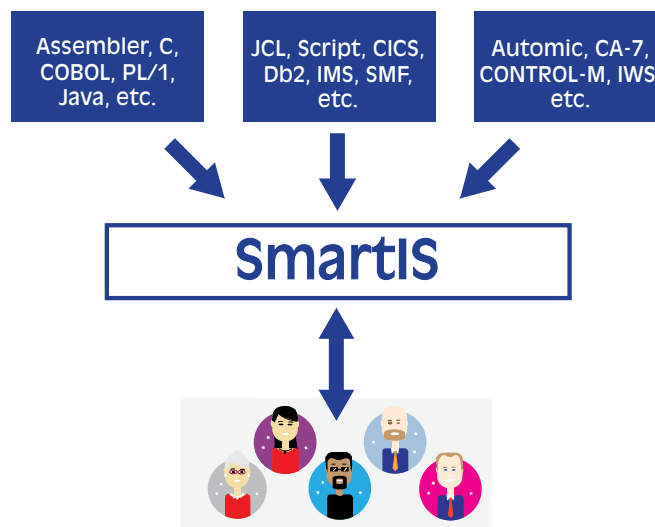
Extremely short implementation time. Simple-to-use repository for analysis and description purposes. High acceptance rate among users. Effortless integration with existing IT infrastructure.

Total Project Time

3 days to install SmartIS and all components, tailor the source scanners to Concordia-specific requirements after taking approximately 12 months to initially create a requirements catalog and reach a vendor decision. One day training session for Developers and Production.

Technical Infrastructure

SmartIS is installed in Db2 z/OS, SmartIS access via ISPF, Windows Client, Windows, or RDz Plug-in. All z/OS data in a central SmartIS Db2 repository.



The Concordia group, which is headquartered in Hannover, Germany, has been serving customers for 150 years. Up-to-date, true to life insurance solutions for private, commercial, and farming customers are continuously developed from the perspective of mutual benefits – to be there when the unexpected happens.



With over 1,250 employees around Germany, as well as a dense network of Concordia representatives and partners, Concordia looks after more than 1.3 Million customers. The mutual insurance company, together with its subsidiaries, have approximately 2.4 Million policies and around 824 Million Euro turnover each year.