



Interview:

Corporate Output Management at KION Group

With Peter Schweibert, IT KION Group and Johannes Hesel, Head of Business Line „Corporate Output Management“, SEAL Systems AG

? Mr. Schweibert, what was the initial situation at KION Group and what were your demands for a new output management solution? Where did you want to achieve improvements?

KION Group began looking for the implementation of a high-performance output system capable of **efficiently processing more than 1,500,000 pages per month and providing advanced output functionality to 40 connected SAP systems**. They required automatic processes to increase productivity with the assurance of maximum system availability.

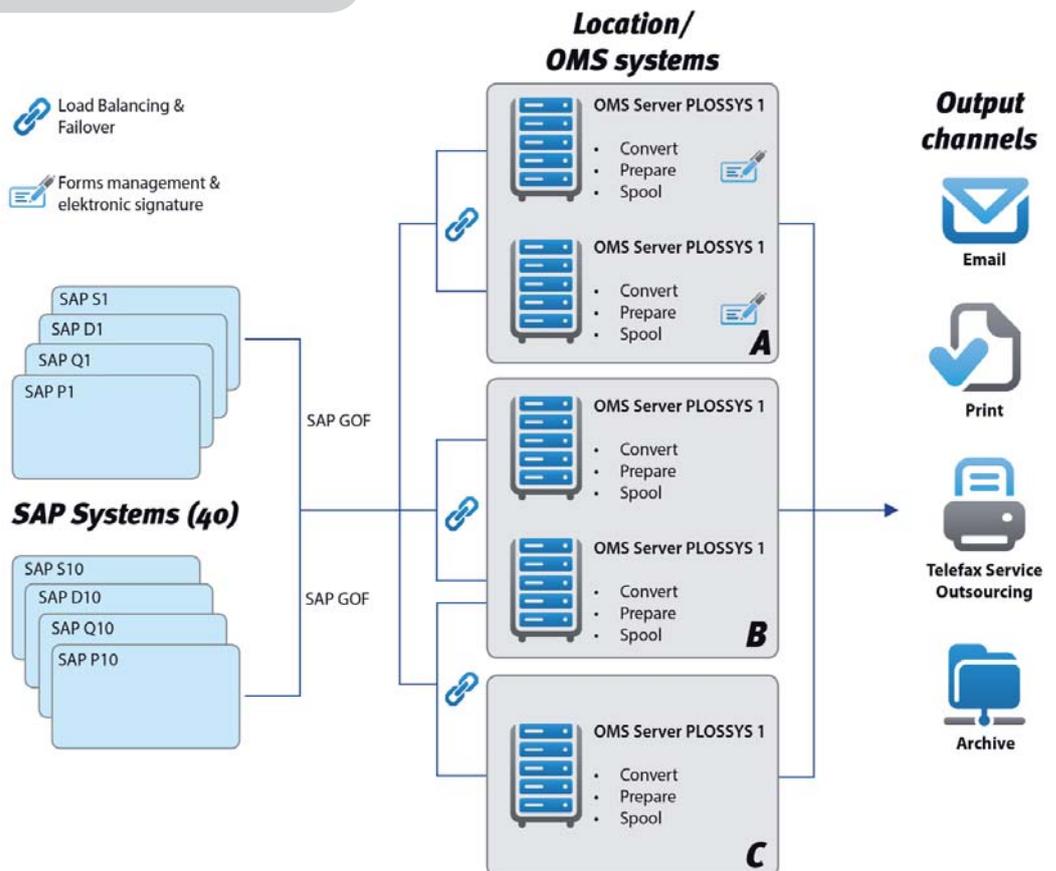
In this interview, Peter Schweibert from KION Group and Johannes Hesel from SEAL Systems will explain why SEAL Systems solutions were the products of choice for these requirements and how the project was implemented.

In January 2005, we replaced our existing SAP® R/2 system with an SAP R/3. In the first instance, we wanted to introduce an output management system for printing business documents and working papers only. Since we already knew that more than one SAP system would be installed our aim was to keep printer management as simple and as clear as possible. Several hundred output devices were to be administered, maintaining maximum system availability. Failure of one or more print servers was not to affect the overall system stability or the performance of the printers connected to the SAP systems.

With the project advancing, the requirements of the operating departments grew so that additional functionality like automatic sending of fax output through a fax service, data archiving with an IBM CommonStore® archiving system, generation of PDF documents and digital signing of documents were added. In the meantime, 40 SAP systems are connected to the Corporate Output Management system PLOSSYS® netdome (of which 10 are productive systems). On average, 1.7 million pages per month are being processed and output by PLOSSYS netdome at the moment.

The Corporate Output Management architecture at KION Group is designed for high availability, efficiency and maximum performance.

The complete forms management as well as the digital signature of SAP documents is provided by two fail-safe servers.



? Why did you choose SEAL Systems as your solution partner for this project and what does your final solution look like?

We had been using a PLOSSYS system from SEAL Systems for several years to manage our engineering printing (PLM, CAD, DMS Repro). Users and administrators were always very satisfied with the solution and the support from SEAL Systems. We had a close look at 3 suppliers of output management solutions in the forefront of the project. Our contacts from SEAL Systems proved to be very competent and flexible partners in the dialogue and created a well-arranged concept in a very short period of time, even as more and more requirements from the operating departments had to be integrated into the solution concept.

During the implementation period an experienced project engineer from SEAL Systems was continuously on location and guided us through the installation procedure as well as the successive SAP go-live.

Currently, we are operating 11 PLOSSYS servers at seven locations in two countries. The servers are working in load balancing configuration on each site. In case of failure of one server, a second server will take over within seconds. If a printer is defective for any reason the corresponding output jobs can be diverted to another device with only a few mouse clicks by the administrators. Documents from all sites that are to receive a digital signature are being processed by a central signature server. In case of failure of the signature server, PLOSSYS is automatically redirecting the arriving jobs to a hot-standby signature server. The same setup is used for automatic sending of emails (Email Output).

For label printing, all labels are being created in SAP before being spooled by PLOSSYS without conversion. In this way, the desired system stability and the central administration and monitoring functionality of PLOSSYS can be applied to the label printing processes.

The complete pool of output devices, which are used through SAP and of other systems, can be comfortably administrated in a central data base. This means time savings and low efforts for maintenance.

The core modole of this solution is a centralized, system neutral printer data base.

? Can you give us a short overview of the schedule and important steps of the project? How was the cooperation with SEAL Systems?

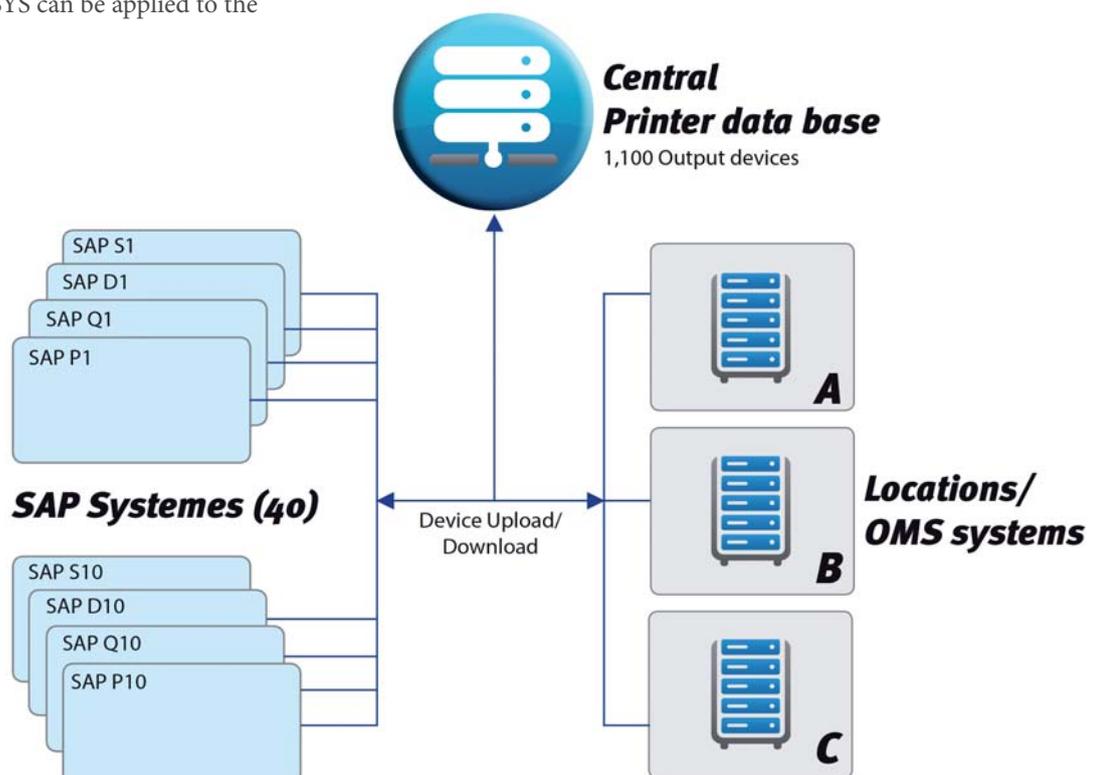
First, we had to determine on which locations we wanted to print from SAP R/3, which locations were to receive their own PLOSSYS server and which were to be served from Aschaffenburg. Subsequently, the printer portfolio of every site had to be registered and checked for compatibility with PLOSSYS. Furthermore, we had to determine which printers were critically relevant for production processes and where we needed very fast and reliable printing processes.

Once determined, PLOSSYS servers were installed onsite at seven locations by SEAL Systems staff. We started with the installation of a few printers on an SAP testing system. After the first test run, which was successful, we defined all output devices and started testing them.

Parallel to the installation procedure, solution-specific training was given to the future PLOSSYS administrators onsite and new output devices were bought and installed where needed.

The connection of the CommonStore archiving system, automatic fax output, and generation of PDF documents from SAP, which are stored on a Fileshare, could also be completed without obstruction.

During the whole process experienced employees from SEAL Systems were on location and were able to realize the manifold requests from the operating departments quickly and smoothly. In the end we had a very successful go-live of the productive systems.



? What are the advantages of the new system for KION Group? Were you able to accelerate or improve business processes? How is the support from SEAL Systems?

By using easyPRIMA for company-wide administration of our nearly 1,100 output devices we were able to significantly reduce our daily administrative effort around all topics like installation, as well as change or removal of output devices on our 40 connected SAP systems. This central printer management tool is drastically increasing administrative efficiency and clarity. Furthermore, we are using PLOSSY OCON (Operator Console) as a central platform for the administration of all output processes. The OCON always shows the current status of servers, jobs, and devices at a glance and allows administrators to quickly intervene in real-time with all systems up and running. The performance of our output management is very high (up to 1,500 output jobs per hour) and providing maximum system availability.

Our contact person at SEAL Systems is normally our personal system engineer. If he is not available, his well-experienced colleague from the IT helpdesk are always there to help us solve our issues. In addition we are using JIRA as an online ticket system to communicate with the SEAL Systems support.

? Mr. Hesel, where is SEAL Systems locating future requirements for output management systems? Which trends can you see in the market?



The current trend in the field of output management solutions aim at company-wide output solutions, Corporate Output Management systems. In the past all the different output requirements from different units of a company have been met by introducing numerous point solutions. Output from SAP

was often done with the SAP spooling service or an external output management connected to the corresponding interface BC-XOM (External Output Management). Printing from Windows® applications was achieved through Windows print servers and printing from engineering systems (CAD, PLM, DMS) was again achieved using a different system. In this way, large companies can maintain a dozen or more different output systems. This creates enormous overhead costs. Often even specific hardware has to be bought and maintained for specific output requirements, for example barcode or Unicode modules for printers.

However, more and more companies are beginning to see the benefits of Corporate Output Management solutions in the form of significant savings and increases of efficiency and functionality of corporate printing processes. Using generic drivers for SAP and Windows, all output channels inside the whole company can be addressed system and device neutrally. The time when all SAP forms had to be implemented and adjusted for every single device type individually are over. The same is true for driver administration on Windows systems. Instead of juggling manifold drivers between the Windows XP,

Windows 7, Windows 2003 and Windows 2008 server in 32 and 64 bit format, today there is only one generic driver left to take care of while offering all device-specific functions individually.

Corporate Output Management means there is only one application in your IT infrastructure, which processes, manages, and monitors all output processes company-wide. Printers are being distributed at the push of a button worldwide onto all connected servers and systems. Windows print servers become obsolete since users can directly connect their client with the output system. Companies begin to see the value of such a holistic output concept immediately.

Another visible trend is the aim to reduce the daily paper consumption. Digital distribution has been on the agenda of many corporate IT departments for quite some time now. Just recently a new concept to reduce paper consumption was discovered. Using FollowMe® printing systems the users are printing more on central multifunctional devices than on local desktop printers. Directly at the device, the output job is printed only after the user has identified himself with his identity card. Surveys have shown that up to 40% of daily print output is not being retrieved from the device by the users, so for this reason the introduction of pickup printing as a default printing option can effectively reduce paper waste.

Reduced numbers of central output devices and reduced paper waste normally lead to a fast amortization of these printing solutions and are also contributing to the concept of Green IT.

All in all, these trends are just new expressions of an old motive to introduce output solutions and these solutions reduce printing costs which make up 50% of a company's IT costs.

Interview and first publication through Competence-Site.de, www.competence-site.de/SEAL-Systems-AG



SEAL Systems is an international leading solution supplier for information and document distribution.

With Corporate Output Management the company offers 30 years of experience in output management with a modular, universal software platform. This experience guarantees maximum customer benefits.

More about Corporate Output Management:

www.sealsystems.com/com