maxSpool Spool File Management

maxSpool is a complete Spool File Management System; capable of reducing to a minimum the degradation on system performance, disk space occupancy, and operational efficiency caused by the proliferation of spool files which inevitably occurs during day-to-day system operation.

Spool files have always been the cause of some management problems on iSeries machines. Most of these problems are easily solved but can be time consuming, others are not so easily solved and can leave us exposed to more significant problems in the event of hardware faults with the network or printers. You are also aware that there may be some unforeseen problems in regard to your disaster recovery plans due to the fact that you currently have no method of backing up spool files, in some cases, the reproduction of a report is not a straightforward procedure.

Business Benefits

Use of maxSpool will improve the management of your iSeries machine and reduce your operations department's workload. It will also protect you from some hardware faults, and make your disaster recovery more comprehensive. In a business environment auditing can often require duplicates of reports to be sent to different locations and on a regular basis. maxSpool will assist with this by copying or moving files to these locations ensuring your reports are where they need to be. Along with these functions you can also import, archive, delete, protect and change your spool files giving you the flexibility you need in a fully automated solution.

It should also be borne in mind that while a spool file exists, the iSeries machine regards the job produced as a current job. The more current jobs it has to manage, the more of its resources are dedicated to the task. Reducing the number of spool files held will reduce the system management overhead as well as the disc space occupancy.

Technical Benefits

Spool files can be automatically selected for processing by any combination of several functions:

- Archive to tape
- Import to database files
- Copy to a different Output Queue
- Move to a different Output Queue
- Delete from the system
- Protect from deletion
- Change spool file attributes
- Email Spool file

The specification of rules for the selection of spool files for processing is extremely flexible and comprehensive, as well as being easy to use and understand. It is based on combinations of conditions for which a spool file can be tested. The Output Queue, User, Form Type, File Name and Age are among the spool file attributes that can be used to specify spool file selection. Additionally each set of selection rules is given a Rule Group Identity and this Group Identity is associated with the spool files selected under it for ease of use.

Within each Group, selection criteria can be compounded with 'AND' and 'OR' to support almost any level of simplicity or complexity required. maxSpool's enquiry suite of programs offer re-print options so that archived or imported spool files can be easily recreated.

For auditability, the product offers optional history recording and, for safety, a 'dry run' feature, which prints a list of proposed actions that can then be adjusted before processing is initiated. There is also an integral user/function level security system to protect against unauthorised use, a neccessary task which would be performed by the operations department on a daily basis.

Many spool files are produced and never printed: they are referred to when required but usually left on line when finished with. Other spool files are created with the SAVE attribute in case they fail to print successfully, these too are not deleted in a timely fashion.

With the flexibility offered by maxSpool in selecting spool files for deletion by several different criteria, this daily tidy up task can be completely automated.

There are several reports in our applications that demand some effort and expertise in order to reproduce, in some cases this would also inconvenience the users due to the manipulation of the applications required. You could use maxSpool's ability to convert reports to a database and reproduce them at will to alleviate this problem.

This ability would be particularly useful in protecting you from hardware faults. Since the product can operate in real time mode the sensitive reports could be copied to a database before they are sent to the network printers.

As these reports are now in database format they lend themselves to being backed up, ensuring you are able to fully restore your iSeries machine when a disaster strikes.

Often you are required to keep some of your reports for significant lengths of time. With maxSpool you can store them off line and maintain an index of them for ease of reproduction in the event it becomes necessary.

At present these reports are kept on line and, therefore, not subject to back up, as mentioned earlier. You may have some reports that can only be printed on certain printers, those with 198 characters per line for instance, using maxSpool these reports can be automatically routed to the correct output device. This can be actioned within your incumbent software, however the change control process is costly in terms of time and manpower, for what is clearly a simple requirement.

The same argument applies for situations where a user requests a copy of a report produced for someone else. You could change the software or you could simply program maxSpool to perform the task.

We can also make use of maxSpool's facility to allow reports to be stored in save files, with an index, and sent to other iSeries machines, by email or across the network. The prerequisite is that our spool file management module is required on both machines. There is the option to save to a specified target release of the operating system so the machines do not have to be at the same operating system level.

maxSpool has a spool file finder that can search by date spool file opened, spool file name, job name, user who created spool file, user data, actioned date and output queue so that spool files that have been imported, archived or saved to tape can quickly be located. The restore option selects the quickest way to restore the spool file required.

With maxSpool's email functions you can define a group of recipients and even send specific pages. Users can demarcate certain pages of the spool file, the last page, the first page or specify page ranges for emailing. maxSpool sends emails using the standard OS/400 SMTP server which can be linked to any email server regardless of operating system.

Specifications

- Control spool file management with real-time information

- Actions performed automatically based on user specified criteria. These are: Delete; Archive; Compress; Move/Copy; Import; Reproduce old reports; Locate; Audit; Identify; Secure; Email; Distribute any or all spool files.

- Full Integration with all other Maximise modules and your existing environment both inbuilt and through shipped OS/400 commands.

For further **information** contact our sales team on **01285 862 100** or email **info@apsu.com**