

## REFERENCE

### ► About Vitra

Vitra is a Swiss company that has been manufacturing furniture designs by Charles & Ray Eames and George Nelson since 1957. In collaboration with progressive designers, this design-oriented manufacturing company has developed a wide range of furnishings for offices, homes and public spaces over past few decades. The headquarters of the company's German subsidiary are located in Weil am Rhein. Collaboration with haulers, subcontractors and other partner firms is also coordinated from here.

### ► About HURTER NETCOM IT-Systemmanagement

HURTER NETCOM IT-Systemmanagement has been involved in server-based computing since it was established in 1992. Ever since the very first versions, the company has been helping customers to implement server-based computing solutions. In addition to architecture, solution design, security, troubleshooting and streaming technology, the company's portfolio includes proposing and realizing optimum print concepts for server-based computing environments such as CITRIX and Microsoft Terminal Services. The Xen and VMware virtualization technologies are focal points for the area of VDI and provisioning in data-center environments. ThinPrint AG and HURTER NETCOM have collaborated on numerous joint projects and enjoy a longstanding partnership.

## The direct line from the SAP system to printers

Since the beginning of 2009, furniture specialist Vitra has made it possible for its external partners to securely access print jobs from its internal SAP system via the internet. Thus, suppliers can print purchase orders, bills of materials and order lists from the SAP system directly in their factories, or print jobs can be transferred automatically.

Vitra works with four suppliers in Germany, all of whom require up-to-the-minute manufacturing orders and purchase orders from the internal SAP system for their production processes. The employees at the company's Japanese office also need access to SAP documents. In the past, transferring print data over long distances, sometimes via unstable connections, was a particular problem – not least for the Japan office where between 200 and 300 pages are printed daily. Print jobs were terminated or seriously delayed and were often sent to suppliers in the wrong sequence. In the worst cases, print jobs were even deleted from the system after numerous, unsuccessful delivery attempts.

### A combination of tried and tested solutions

“We wanted to change this situation by ensuring that all print jobs are delivered automatically and reliably to the printers in the respective production centers, or by giving suppliers access to the SAP system so that they can pick up their own print jobs,” explains Katja Koch from the IT Infrastructure Services department at Vitra. The solution was a combination of the ThinPrint solutions .print Server Engine, .print Queue Manager and .print Connected Gateway.

The .print Server Engine is installed on the central print server where it acts as a hub for the provisioning of ThinPrint's basic technologies, such as bandwidth control, print data compression and SSL encryption. The .print Queue Manager guarantees that all print jobs are delivered reliably and prevents the deletion of print jobs in the event that connections are disrupted or receiving printers are switched off. If a print job is unsuccessful, the Queue Manager continues to send it at defined time intervals until the printer becomes available. Finally, the .print Connected Gateway makes it possible to address network printers in remote offices and branches via TCP/IP, even in the case of masked networks. It also stabilizes the transfer of print data and ensures reliable print output, even during connection disruptions of up to 90 seconds.

ThinPrint partner HURTER NETCOM IT-Systemmanagement developed an individual printing concept for this special use case. The company used existing ThinPrint components to guarantee dependable, disruption-free printing on any partner firm's printers, despite the differing time zones and unstable connections. This ensures that all print jobs sent via the internet are transferred reliably, even during relatively lengthy periods of disruption. Vitra can establish connections between remote locations and the central server and address specific network printers via TCP/IP, even in hidden networks. For security reasons, the print data transferred via TCP/IP is transferred in encrypted form with 128-bit SSL by the .print solution.



#### ► About ThinPrint

ThinPrint specializes in mobile solutions for printing in distributed network environments. The company is based in Germany and has offices in the USA and Australia. The solutions it provides are used successfully by companies of all sizes in all sectors around the globe. More than 500 well-known distributors and resellers in over 80 countries sell ThinPrint AG products. Thanks to numerous partnerships, client components that use patent-pending .print technology have been integrated into a variety of terminals, print boxes, PDAs and mobile phones manufactured by several leading hardware manufacturers. ThinPrint is particularly proud of the strategic partnerships it enjoys with BlackBerry (RIM), Bluetooth SIG, Citrix Systems, Inc., Fujitsu Siemens Computers, Lexmark International, Inc., Microsoft, Nokia, Orange, Palm, Inc., Sun Microsystems Inc., Symbian Ltd., VMware, Inc. and XPS Software GmbH.

#### User-defined print job output

The user's print jobs from the SAP system are sent to the central print server with the .print Server Engine installed. A specific port with Windows printer objects was established for each supplier. Each supplier's printers are served by one designated ThinPrint Port with specific settings for bandwidth control and compression. The SAP system then places each suppliers print jobs into supplier-specific print queues. The .print Queue Manager on the print server manages the print jobs and ensures their successful delivery to the suppliers' network printers. Should a print job delivery fail, it will be resent when printer and connection are available. The .print Connected Gateway actively connects to the Vitra servers and makes sure that the print jobs triggered there are sent reliably to the network printers. Furthermore, the solution counterbalances disruptions in connectivity.

#### Supply chain now significantly faster

The .print Server Engine was installed at Vitra's premises and the eight Connected Gateways were installed on the suppliers' PCs via remote access. The company in Japan manages the connection between the .print Server Engine and the local printer using hardware devices with an integrated .print Client supplied by ThinPrint partner SEH. The devices can be configured remotely and are easier to maintain than Windows PCs.

Now, whenever one of Vitra's external partners requires an SAP printout, this is in the safe hands of ThinPrint technology. Thus, all printouts are transferred reliably without technical glitches. Katja Koch continues: "The benefits of the solution are particularly clear with regard to the connection to Japan, which is affected by the time difference. If any problems occur online or locally, the automatic retry function ensures that the print process is restarted. The automatic delivery option has helped us to accelerate our supply chain processes significantly."



Katja Koch

Facts	
Customer:	Vitra Services GmbH
Industry:	Furniture
Project managers:	Katja Koch, Rolf Meier, IT Infrastructure Services
Project:	SAP print job output on external printers at suppliers' locations
Number of users:	20
Project duration:	06/2005 to 04/2009
Servers:	1 .print Server Engine, 1 .print Queue Manager, 8 .print Connected Gateways, .print Host Access License

**vitra.**

**ThinPrint®**

**HURTER NETCOM®**  
IT-Systemmanagement