Announcing ROPES Version 13

June 15, 2007

We are pleased to announce a new version of ROPES. ROPES Version 13 is now available to order for any new installation or trial. An upgrade kit is planned to allow all existing accounts running ROPES V9 or higher to migrate from your current release to Version 13. The upgrade kit will be available by July 2007. Migration from earlier versions of ROPES is supported, but requires a more complex process, which is outlined in the Conversion Guidelines manual for ROPES Version 13.

There are a number of new features being introduced. Here is a brief description of these features. Full descriptions and instructions for use are included in the new ROPES V13 product manuals, which can be downloaded from the ROPES Technical Support Download page.

All prior fixes have been applied

All fixes that were introduced in ROPES Version 12.0 PTFs or fixes have been applied as part of the Version 13.0 base release.

On line Queue Reorganization now can produce a report of its activity

The On Line Queue Reorganization program can generate a report of its activities to a Transient Data queue. The generation of the report is controlled from the ROMT transaction. You can select from two report formats: Short and Full. The Short option will generate a report detail for each report processed in which some data is purged. The Full option generates a report with a report detail line for every report in the system. The report format is the same as that generated by the Batch Queue Reorganization program.

Support for IBM 4247, IBM 6400 and other PPDS capable printers is now available

Support for printing bar codes using PPDS (Personal Printer Data Streams) controls for printers such as the IBM 4247 or IBM 6400 is now available. These printers can be used by ROPES as either LPR/LPD devices or as Direct Socket printing devices. The bar code request is embedded in the ROPES report using the same strings as are used for IPDS printing. ROPES converts the IPDS information to PPDS information and transmits that data stream to the printer.

Direct printing to an IP socket is now supported

ROPES can now print to IP attached printers by printing directly to a socket on the printer. Most such printers can receive data this way on port 9100. The overhead associated with generating an LPR/LPD compliant data stream is removed for printers that support direct socket printing.

Improved Trace Output

The trace output generated for TCP/IP LPR / LPD transmissions, the new Direct Socket printing transmissions, as well as the SMTP traffic created for e-mail report transmission has been significantly

improved. The trace will now show all data both in and out of ROPES and is presented in a conventional dump format, with the hexadecimal value of the data on the left and the character values on the right. This improved trace data should make it possible to quickly determine what is contained in the data transmitted by ROPES and the nature of the remote end or SMTP response. The online trace module is ROPETRCE and may be invoked with EXEC CICS LINK using a COMMAREA described by macro ROPETRCM. There is a batch equivalent called ROPEBTRC which can be called dynamically using the same data area map.

Batch Queue Reorganization performance greatly improved

The Batch Queue Reorganization program has been upgraded to use the ROPES Report to Printer Index data set to greatly reduce the I/O needed to perform the reorganization process. For each report in the system, the reorganization program had to browse the entire list of defined printers to determine which printer definition needed to be updated. With the changes introduced in this release, all printer records are read directly and substantial I/O overhead has been removed.

Miscellaneous Improvements

- Several diagnostic messages have been improved to provide more information to aid in troubleshooting.
- It is now possible to run the Report to Printer Index rebuild without first deleting and redefining the ROPERPI cluster.
- The Queue Reorganization Scheduler program has been updated to provide sample code for controlling the scheduling of the on line queue reorganization program based on the day of the week.
- Additional error messages have been provided to improve the level of symptom and component detail.