TeleDirectory™ Host Interface

Number: P02.07

TeleDirectory Host Interface is a software package from Conveyant Systems that converts files generated by the customer's Host system to automatically update TeleDirectory Console directories. Host Interface significantly boosts overall productivity by ensuring timeliness and accuracy of the information in the TeleDirectory Console directories, and by reducing the need for manual updates.

TeleDirectory's integration of directory and call processing capabilities greatly improves efficiency and productivity in a broad spectrum of user environments where real-time access to up-to-date information during a telephone call is important. TeleDirectory Host Interface lets the users benefit from the user-defined, telephony-integrated information directories while utilizing their existing procedures and applications for updating and maintaining the information on host computers.

MARKET

Many corporate, government, education and healthcare facilities have existing databases of personnel, products and services. With TeleDirectory, users have the choice of managing the directory information from within the TeleDirectory application or keeping the update and maintenance on their present host computer and moving those changes to TeleDirectory. Host Interface allows these changes to be automatically applied to TeleDirectory, thereby keeping both the host computer and TeleDirectory synchronized and up-to-date.

As changes are made to your personnel database on a host computer, in Active Directory, or in your Telecommunications Management Package to change telephone numbers in the Central Office/PBX – they may also be applied to the TeleDirectory directories using Host Interface.

In the healthcare environment, patient information is generally updated in the Hospital Information System by multiple departments from admitting, nursing, billing and others. If a Patient Directory is created in TeleDirectory, then Host Interface can keep the TeleDirectory Patient Directory current with the Hospital Information System. As the patient is moved from one room to another or their status changes, this information is immediately available to the hospital attendant using TeleDirectory.

PRODUCT INFORMATION

The TeleDirectory Host Interface product allows transactions to be performed against the TeleDirectory database. The changes are directed by messages sent over a serial communications link from a host computer to a Host Interface computer, or are directed by records in a disk file created on a host computer. When used with the DIRCONV utility program provided with TeleDirectory, Host Interface supports a variety of input file formats:

- Delimited
- SDF
- BatchDir
- LDIF (LDAP Data Interchange Format)

Functional Overview
The interface between the host computer and the Host Interface computer is via messages. Directory-transaction messages are sent from the host computer to the Host Interface computer to add, delete, or update entries in the TeleDirectory database. Second-page entries can also be added, deleted, and updated.

PRODUCT INFORMATION (continued)

Operational Modes

The Host Interface system runs in one or two modes, depending on how the host computer is configured and programmed. These two modes are outlined below:

Serial Communications Mode

In a serial communication mode, the host computer connects to the Host Interface computer over an asynchronous serial link. The host computer must be programmed to send messages over this link. The advantage of this mode is that changes to the host database can be immediately available in the TeleDirectory database.

The Host Interface software returns a status code to the host computer after each transaction is processed. The host computer waits for this returned status before sending the next transaction message.

Import Mode

In an import mode, the host computer periodically writes directory-transaction commands to a disk file that is processed by the Host Interface computer. Usually, it is easier to program the host computer to operate in this mode, but it is a little more difficult to program the Host Interface computer. With import mode, transactions are not immediately available in the TeleDirectory database until the disk file is processed.

Import mode must be used if the host computer does not support serial communications, or it is difficult to change the program on the Host computer.

Personal Computer and Local Area Network

The Host Interface PC must be a Pentium with a minimum of 256 MB RAM. The serial link from the host computer must be connected to a COM port on the Host Interface PC. The PC must connect to the file server PC via the network. One or more users may be running the TeleDirectory System on other PCs attached to the network. These TeleDirectory users normally run concurrently with the Host Interface application. Changes made to the TeleDirectory database via Host Interface are immediately available to these TeleDirectory users. The TeleDirectory database resides on the network file server.

BENEFITS

TeleDirectory Host Interface allows the user to preserve the existing investments in people, equipment and procedures while bringing the significant benefits of integration of telephony, messaging and information processing to the desktop. For example, if an organization is using a host-based directory application, there will be personnel assigned to update the host directory, and procedures for soliciting and collecting the change requests. When TeleDirectory is implemented the user has the option of continuing to use these established procedures. In this situation the user has two choices - manually maintain both systems or maintain only one system and keep the second slaved to the first. The TeleDirectory Host Interface provides the automatic link for keeping the two databases synchronized.

The TeleDirectory Host Interface is also very critical for applications where delays typical with manually updating the database are not tolerable. Patient information in a hospital or guest registration information in the hospitality market are examples of such an application.

The TeleDirectory Host Interface promotes efficiency in an organization. Manual procedures require the data to be processed once at the Host Computer and again in the TeleDirectory application. Host Interface significantly reduces the effort associated with keeping information current, timely and accurate.

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TeleDirectory System Diagram with Host Interface on a Console PC

Centrex or PBX

TeleDirectory Consoles

Network and/or
TeleDirectory Server

Customer Host System

TeleDirectory Console with Host Interface

The TeleDirectory Host Interface application allows for automatic directory updates to the TeleDirectory database from external sources. Updates can be applied on a batch basis or real-time. Depending on the mode utilized, Host Interface may reside on a TeleDirectory Console PC, TeleDirectory Update/Lookup Position, File Server or dedicated PC.

Local Area Network

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