Print Access Methods in SAP

Purpose

The purpose of this page is to describe the various access methods for printing from SAP to printers.

Overview

When printing from SAP there are various ways to connect to the printers. There are local backend access methods, which differ depending on whether the SAP server is on a Windows or Unix operating system. There are also remote backend access methods. Again, these are slightly different depending on whether the operating system is Windows or Unix. There is also Frontend Access Method G via SAPGUI.

Local Access Method L for Unix

When printing from an SAP system running on a Unix system, it is possible to configure the output devices via transaction SPAD with Access Method L. This Access Method L is a local access method and the print file created in SAP is transferred to the unix OS spooler system of the local of the server that the SAP system runs on. The printers entered in the field Host Printer of the output device in SPAD must be defined as print queues at unix level.

Local Access Method C for Windows

When printing from an SAP system running on a Windows system, it is possible to configure the output devices via transaction SPAD with Access Method C. This Access Method C is a local access method and the print spool file created in SAP is transferred to the windows print manager of the local Windows OS of the server that the SAP system runs on. The printers entered in the field Host Printer of the output device in SPAD must be defined as printers at windows level in the windows print manager.

Remote Access Method U for Unix

When the printer is connected to the SAP system via a remote print server and this print server is unix, then the correct access Method is Access Method U. Here the print data created in SAP is transferred to the spooler system of the unix OS of the remote unix print server. The printers entered in the field Host Printer of the output device in SPAD must be defined as print queues at unix level on the remote print server. It is also possible to connect directly to the printer from SAP via Access Method U. However this is not recommended. The printer tries to simulate a host spool system but it is not very successful. See the SAP note 64628 about this problem.

Remote Access Method S for Windows

When the printer is connected to the SAP system via a remote print server and this print server is windows, then the correct access Method is Access Method S. Here the print data created in SAP is transferred to the windows print manager of the remote windows print server. The printers entered in the field Host Printer of the output device in SPAD must be defined as printers at windows level on the remote print server. If the device type in SAP is a windows device type like SWINCF or SAPWIN, then the SAP system sends windows GDI commands to the windows system and the print data is created in windows via the windows printer driver. If a native device type is used in SAP, then the print data created in SAP is forwarded directly to the printer.

Frontend Access Method G

With Frontend printing via windows, the output device must be defined in transaction SPAD as Access Method G with the control technology as described note 821519. In the field Host Printer, normally DEFAULT is entered. This automatically selects the default printer defined on the Frontend PC. It is possible to change this printer in the windows pop-up that appears. You can also define a specific windows printer in the field Host Printer in SPAD. You can disable the windows selection pop-up in the output device definition within SPAD also. Generally the Frontend output device is defined with a windows device type like SAPWIN or SWINCF which utilizes the windows printer driver. This is useful as it allows printing to almost any printer. It is also possible to use a native PCL or postscript device type etc. Here the print data from SAP is forwarded directly to the printer rather than being processed by the windows printer driver.

Printing immediately with Frontend printing via a background job is not possible. For Frontend printing a SAPGUI connection is required and there is no GUI connection with a backend job. It is possible to create a spool and print it later via dialog mode from transaction SP01. Large scale printing is not recommended for Frontend printing because it is done over the local GUI connection which is not suitable. Frontend printing via SAPGUI for Java or SAPGUI for HTML is also possible. See also the wiki Frontend Printing for more information about this.