

ASG-ZARA™

For Automated Tape Management

OVERVIEW

ASG-Zara is an automated MVS tape management system. It automatically monitors, manages, and records all tape processing while providing online, real-time access to all tape management data.

ASG-Zara provides easy-to-use formatted screens, simple operator commands, and online options for customizing the system.

ASG-Zara tracks all dataset contents on a volume, determines tape status, and performs its own database maintenance. Other features include transient tape support, SAF security, optional SMP/E support, alphanumeric volser support, peer-to-peer communication with silo devices, electronic vaulting support, real-time off-site storage management, and external label printing. ASG-Zara tracks the physical location and contents of every volume, whether in the data center or off-site, and provides this information through online displays and hardcopy reports.

ASG-Zara stores all tape management data in a centralized location, giving users constant, immediate access to all tape data, including non-corporate, transient tapes. It provides online view and update capabilities including expiration-date tables and off-site management rules. An open application-programming interface provides communication and data to inhouse and third-party applications, ensuring total system integration. ASG-Zara also automatically determines which versions of critical datasets need to be moved to off-site storage facilities.

ASG-ZARA HELPS:

- Protect important tapes and data from untimely expiration or costly overwrites
- Track the physical location and status of every volume in a library, including transient and off-site tapes
- Ensure that the most current versions of critical data are safely backed-up and stored off-site
- Supply Operations with a well-documented, easy-to-follow audit trail of all tape activities

COMPREHENSIVE, ONLINE, REAL-TIME DATA ACCESS AND UPDATES

With ASG-Zara, an organization can quickly access and update all MVS tape management data online and in real time, including expiration date tables and off-site management rules. ASG-Zara uses an ISPF, menu-driven system, complete with online help and tutorials, which is extremely easy to install and implement. ASG-Zara's database contains all data in one central location. Maintenance is simplified because secondary datasets never have to be maintained or accessed. User changes and data edits are reflected immediately, which drastically improves how quickly and easily database information can be located, controlled, and modified.

MAIN FEATURES

- Protects important tapes and data from untimely expiration or costly overwrites
- Tracks the physical location and status of every volume in a library, including transient and off-site tapes
- Ensures that the most current versions of critical data are safely backed-up and stored off-site
- Supplies Operations with a well-documented, easy-to-follow audit trail of all tape activities

THE POWER OF ASG-ZARA

Around the world today, ASG-Zara is being used to manage libraries that range from thousands of tapes to hundreds of thousands of tapes. It is a flexible, efficient system that provides all the standard services expected — and more.

TRANSIENT TAPE MANAGEMENT INCREASES CONTROL

ASG-Zara tracks the physical location and status of every tape in a library in an online, real-time mode, including all transient, externally created tapes. Duplicate volsers situations are eliminated because ASG-Zara assigns a unique identifier to each transient tape. This is critical for tape libraries that receive outside tapes with volsers that are identical to volsers already defined. In addition, ASG-Zara tracks physical characteristics and last-use information for transient volumes. ASG-Zara significantly simplifies the management of all corporate, outside data and non-corporate tapes.

EASY ONLINE DEFINITION OF RETENTION VALUES WITH NO JCL CHANGES

ASG-Zara supports all accepted methods of defining retention values and special expiration types (i.e., catalog-control, cycle-control), and does this with refinements beyond the basic support. ASG-Zara will recognize and honor existing JCL parameters and will allow an organization to override them for selected datasets — without making any JCL modifications. And ASG-Zara does this online. It determines if JCL overrides exist. If they do, ASG-Zara applies the overrides. If they do not exist, it uses local JCL values or global defaults. ASG-Zara makes it simple and easy to specify volume retention and expiration criteria.

MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY WITH MULTIPLE CPU OR MVS ENVIRONMENT SUPPORT

With one ASG-Zara database, an organization can support multiple CPUs or MVS environments using either a single catalog or multiple, separate MVS catalogs. ASG-Zara performs catalog management to the appropriate MVS catalog when the data center does not share the MVS catalog across the system. This means that ASG-Zara will automatically manage all MVS catalogs, regardless of how many CPU or MVS environments in use. This enables an organization to define their environment based on business considerations and be assured that ASG-Zara will manage it all — easily and accurately.

DIRECT COMMUNICATION IMPROVES ATL OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY

ASG-Zara takes a proactive, peer-to-peer approach to interfacing with Automated Tape Library (ATL) systems. ASG-Zara will notify the ATL system of a tape's scratch status in real time as soon as the tape is made available. This dramatically reduces the processing demands on the ATL since it is no longer burdened with the job of interrogating the tape system for tape status. Moreover, because it already has access to the newly identified scratch tape, the operational efficiency of the ATL is improved.

OPEN APPLICATION PROGRAM INTERFACE (API) ENSURES SYSTEM INTEGRATION

ASG-Zara's Application Program Interface (API) is easy-to-use and provides communication and data to in-house and third-party applications. ASG-Zara's API promotes an open, flexible environment, protected by SAF calls, that includes random and sequential volume data access. In addition, the API allows other programs to update information or mark specific datasets or volumes for expiration during the next scratch run. ASG-Zara's API provides the flexibility to support custom-application integration.

EXPORT AND IMPORT SERVICES PROVIDE VERSATILE ADMINISTRATIVE DATA MANAGEMENT

ASG-Zara offers export and import batch services for administrative data control. These services allow an organization to merge databases together and select specific records to merge into other databases. This is critical to companies that are downsizing or merging data centers and want one database. These features are also used during the relocation of data centers or LPARs, or to clean-up old, unused volume ranges. The export and import services split and merge ASG-Zara database(s) based on current business requirements.

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