Managing the Complex Environment

*Managed multivendor hardware and software support
capabilities from IBM*

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In today's on demand world, your organization is able to achieve a competitive advantage through IT systems. The goal is to support your business while developing new IT capabilities that differentiate your organization in the marketplace. Because IT plays such a pivotal role, operational reliability and efficiency are essential to achieving business goals. But, it can be difficult to achieve these goals when critical IT systems are not in top operational form. Until now, hardware and software support are areas that traditionally have been overlooked when it comes to increasing IT efficiency.

"In 2005, the IS organization will continue to transform itself in support of business growth … This will require delivering an efficient core of IT services ...."

Gartner: Delivering IT's Contribution: The 2005 CIO Agenda, January, 2005

Most organizations receive support from several support providers through a complex business process. This type of piecemeal support can be time-consuming for your IT staff, complex in service delivery and cost-inefficient. An increasing number of organizations are looking to a managed support model in which a single vendor is responsible for providing custom hardware and software support services for the complex multivendor environment. The result is a simplified business process for support services.
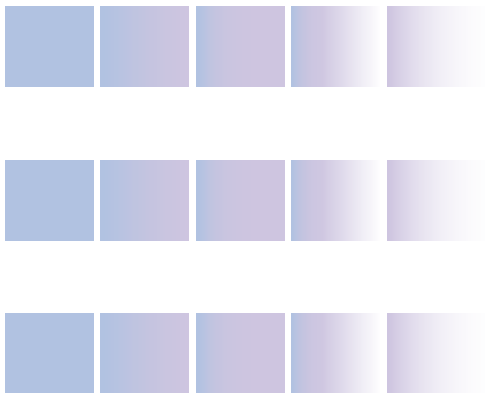
IBM has been at the forefront of this trend with its managed support capabilities. These capabilities provide a single point of accountability and access to a simplified, integrated and automated service delivery model that can help meet your business requirements. Our unmatched technical expertise and proven service delivery model help you maximize IT reliability and efficiency, as well as staff productivity.

"… a new model of support has emerged— the management model. In this model, the customer organization contracts with one firm to be the single point of contact (SPOC) for all issues—irrelevant of whether the source of the problem is hardware or software."

IDC: Managed Support Services: A New Model of Hardware and Software Support Emerges, IDC #32966, March 2005

The piecemeal support challenge

You need to ensure that your systems are in top operational form as you support business initiatives. But this can be a challenge with a piecemeal support solution in which different vendors each support some of the hardware and/or software systems in your multivendor environment.

On the business side, this leaves you facing high administrative requirements with many invoices and contracts to manage. On the technical side, you may be experiencing slower resolution times and inconsistent service levels that cause a "ripple effect" of problems throughout your environment. And on the personnel side, your staff must take time away from important priorities to coordinate services—across the multiple service providers and across the hardware and software environment—when a problem arises.

But consider the needs of your business lines as well. What is the cost of downtime? There can be a significant dollars and cents cost, but there are also intangible costs like lost productivity, impacts to customer commitments and satisfaction, credibility concerns and potential public image impacts. Then there are your business requirements—it can often be difficult to craft a custom solution that meets your business requirements when multiple vendors are each providing a discrete aspect of support.

Introducing managed support capabilities

IBM has the depth and breadth of capabilities to provide managed hardware and software support services with a single point of accountability. These custom service capabilities are designed to provide consistent support and focused management services for your complex environment. Key features of IBM's managed support services capabilities include:

Single point of accountability

IBM helps simplify the business process of support. We can provide a single point of accountability, a single contract for enterprise support and a dramatically reduced number of invoices. This helps you lighten or eliminate the administrative burden. When your technical staff is freed from serving as the central point of management for a number of different support providers, they have more time to focus on key priorities like innovation and supporting business growth.

An IBM team for your support services

An IBM project team simplifies processes for all service requests and manages support for your environment. When you have an issue, you contact IBM either by phone or electronically and we take it from there. We serve as your focal point for problem resolution, management and coordination. One call does it all whether the problem is hardware-related, software-related or both.
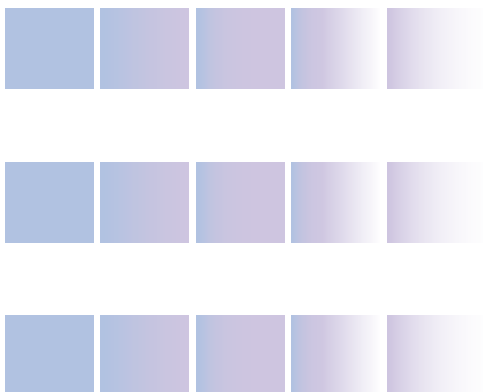
The project team is more than just a single point of contact. This team—including your project manager—meets with you regularly to tailor the solution on an ongoing basis and adds additional value as well. For example, they analyze information about your inventory, assets and services to adjust support levels, look for ways to increase support efficiency, provide input into your technology refresh decisions and work with you to establish priorities and initiatives.

Multivendor managed services
IBM has the breadth of technical and process expertise to manage your environment in a comprehensive way—from the data center to the distributed network. In addition to supporting IBM systems and software, IBM provides warranty and maintenance support for hundreds of different types of hardware including, Intel-based servers and laptops, midrange and UNIX® servers, high-end processors, high-end storage devices, network equipment, printers, point-of-sale devices, ATM machines, kiosks and more.

We also provide support for the key software that drives most enterprises—including several IBM and Linux operating systems, some IBM middleware and applications and other third-party enterprise software and technology. As a result, you gain a more consistent support solution that helps minimize gaps in coverage and helps reduce unintentional impacts as you apply an update or upgrade.

Custom services to meet your business requirements
Our managed support capabilities can be leveraged to help deliver services when and where needed. We collaborate with you to understand your business requirements and propose a solution that is right for you. For example, our existing clients have requested custom service features such as very rapid response for mission-critical areas; additional services to handle tasks like moves, adds and changes; technical consulting services; custom call flows; technicians on call globally; custom Web-based reporting and more. This level of customization helps to make a difference to your business as you strive to achieve a competitive edge.

Integrated, automated and proven service delivery model

Our proven, integrated and automated service delivery model enables us to respond to your needs as quickly and efficiently as possible. IBM has been providing support services to enterprises large and small for many decades and we have continually enhanced and refined our processes. Today, they enable us to deliver fast, efficient and cost-effective services to you.
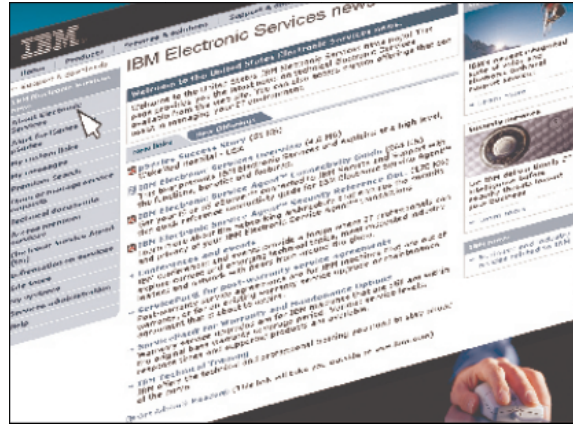

Leverages IBM Electronic Services

A facility called IBM Electronic Services is your online entry point for requesting both software and hardware support services. You can use this tool to search our knowledge bases, submit requests for service, read news, access technical documents and find information about your inventory. In addition, you can use our phone-based system to submit service requests. And of course, if this online tool does not meet your specific business needs we can develop a custom interface that does.

Case study

A prominent US-based retail chain was challenged to reduce complexity, achieve economies of scale and improve service levels in the support area. This retailer was growing very quickly and wanted a more scalable support solution. They chose IBM managed services capabilities for their environment, which consisted of thousands of multivendor servers, POS devices, printers and laptop computers in several hundred stores throughout the country. Through their IBM project team, they receive a single monthly invoice for all services and they receive an increased service level during the year-end holiday period. They have achieved economies of scale and feel that the support solution is now scalable. IBM has worked with the client to continually enhance services, and as a result, a cost-effective depot service was introduced for small POS devices. The customer is highly satisfied with this custom solution, including holiday availability rates and the valuable recommendations that the project team has provided.
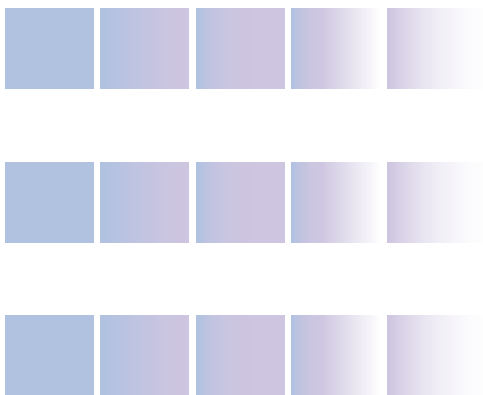
A proven process from the beginning

These managed support capabilities provide a foundation for partnering with you—from the beginning. We use a proven end-to-end methodology for developing the managed support services that are right for you. We learn about your business and IT strategies. We work with you to develop the solution—including the scope, objectives, timeline, work effort, resources and cost—to meet your operational and other needs. For example, if your IT strategy is to consolidate UNIX systems, we take this into account. Once we agree, we develop a transition plan and determine when and how to re-evaluate and optimize the solution. We believe you play a critical role in the overall success of the solution and work closely with you in developing, communicating and transitioning to IBM managed support capabilities.

Case Study

A U.S state government faced some dilemmas with their support solution in that their internal process for requisitioning support services was cumbersome and time-consuming. In addition, they were facing escalating support costs due to annual price increases from their different support providers. To alleviate these problems, they chose to use IBM managed support services for hardware systems, deskside software support and technical consulting services. IBM has developed a custom Web-based interface that enables this client to make service requests and access information related to their support solution on a 24 x 7 basis.

With about 6,000 hardware systems and devices under management, they appreciate the single IBM project team that coordinates services for them. They have achieved economies of scale, have reduced procurement needs and are enjoying consistency in service levels. They have dramatically reduced the number of invoices that must be processed— with an administrative cost savings. And finally, IBM technical expertise is available to them when and where needed.

IBM®

Award-winning services from IBM

IBM managed support capabilities help to simplify support for your multivendor environment with proven processes that have achieved significant industry recognition. In addition, IBM brings strong financials, a very broad range of other business and technical services, a full portfolio of hardware and software products and a history of innovation in support services and in many other areas. When you put this combination together, it is easy to see why IBM support services are award-winning. Get the process started today. To see how we can simplify management of the systems that your organization depends on every day, visit: **ibm.com**/services/managedsupport.

UK company-wide registration to ISO9001. Certificate number FM 92089.

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Offering components	Offering components
- **Custom service**	- **IT efficiency and reliability**
- **Single point of accountability**	- **Helps maximize IT system performance**
- **Integrated, automated service delivery model**	- **Helps enable business growth through IT**
- **Simplified business processes (one contract, simplified billing)**	- **Focuses your resources on other critical business initiatives**
- **Consistent hardware and software support**	- **Award-winning solution**
- **Unmatched skills and expertise**	- **Helps meet your business requirements**