

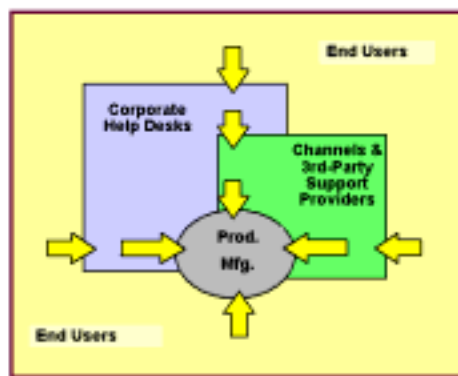


Virtual Support Communities Program Team

Through open systems and plug and play standards the install base has become highly integrated. Our model for support is not.

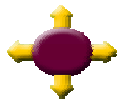
The Virtual Support Communities Program team is developing a framework for interaction across organizational boundaries. The model is a standards-based business framework that will enable service organizations to efficiently interact by sharing knowledge and by facilitating analyst-to-analyst communications. The framework creates a managed plug and play capability for service and support that potentially includes all the players.

The Players



The supply chain for support is complex and unorganized. There is no standard format or mechanism to pass information between the players.

The VSC framework defines four relationship models



Information
Access to support knowledge



Collaboration
Pre-arranged relationship with known entities



Assistance
Just in time outsourcing



Alliance
Strategic partnership, customized

The VSC team has facilitated a number of pilot activities to bring the concepts of the VSC framework to an operational level. For example, the answer exchange pilot provided consumers with web access to information from multiple players through a single user interface and search mechanism.

Deliverables this team is currently working on:

- Pilot programs to test the relationship models
- Global issues for eServices
- Managing legal and competitive issues in the relationship models

Team members include representatives from: Ask Jeeves, Compaq, EMC, eTranslate, Hewlett Packard, Kanisa, Microsoft, Novell and sgi.