

Cray/SGI Service Plans

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ABSTRACT: *The merger of the Cray and SGI service groups into the new Worldwide Customer Service (WCS) organization provides a unique opportunity to leverage the best practices of each group. This paper discusses the plans and progress to date on the formation of the new WCS organization. Topics include: a high-level overview of the WCS organizational structure, the objectives used in merging the field service delivery groups, plans to increase customer satisfaction, and the framework for our unified service offerings.*

Worldwide Customer Service

The service organizations of Cray Research and Silicon Graphics have been merged to form the Worldwide Customer Service (WCS) division. The new organization brings together people with expertise in delivering support on a wide range of system types, from large volumes of desktop systems to relatively small volumes of the world's most powerful supercomputers. The integration of the two provides an enormous opportunity to leverage the strengths of each to form a world-class service organization.

WCS has the global presence to effectively support the combined customer base. Specifically, we have:

- over 125 sales & service offices
- presence in 67 countries worldwide
- more than 2,000 support and service professionals
- response centers in 13 locations
- 25 customer training centers
- four manufacturing and repair sites: Switzerland, Japan, and two in the US

Mick Dungworth, now based in Mountain View, is SGI vice president of worldwide customer service. Mick's organization includes the following direct-reports:

- Technology Services, Chu Chang, VP/GM
- Technical Operations, Gary Kadomatsu, Director
- Business Operations, Tony Cefalu, Director
- Finance, Steve Houck, Director
- Human Resources, Nancy Hill, Director
- U.S. Field Operations, Steve Ursenbach, VP
- European Field Operations, Keith Van Sickle, Director
- East Asian Field Operations, Jiro Matsubayashi, Director

- InterContinental Field Operations, Chodi McReynolds, Director
- The Minnesota Supercomputer Center, John Sell, Director

U.S. Field Service Integration

The integration of the Cray and SGI U.S. field service groups is a good example of the approach used to merge the various departments that now make up WCS. As with the rest of the company, the U.S. field service groups from Cray and SGI had distinctly different backgrounds:

SGI Attributes	Cray Attributes
Desktop orientation	Large system orientation
High volume	Low volume
On-site dispatch	Dedicated on-site staff
Broad markets/ applications	Focused accounts/ markets
Few really big accounts	Foundation of large account successes

This gives us a unique opportunity to leverage the best practices of each area, and our customers have high expectations for our ability to do this.

When we began the integration of the U.S. field groups, we developed a number of criteria for the design of the organization. First, we want the new organization to be able to deliver the highest level of customer satisfaction and loyalty. We also want to build on the Cray account management experience and expertise in the combined large account installed base. We will take advantage of the change in structure to rework our processes to make it administratively easier to do business with us. We need to complete the transition quickly to minimize confusion, and we want to be careful to keep sales and service teams in general alignment so that we can focus on the same customer

base in each locality. In the end, we are striving to build on our combined best practices and best people and invent new practices.

A Solutions Approach

In recent years customers have shifted the focus of the computer industry from a hardware-centric view to a complete solutions view. These solutions include hardware, system software, applications, support, and a number of professional services in a "value chain" focused on the customer. The question is no longer, "what type of computer system do you need?" Instead it has become, "what business problems are you trying to solve?" At SGI, we use a solutions approach and apply technology to help customers solve problems and gain competitive advantage. In WCS, we have the expertise to help you design the best solution for your business needs, manage the ongoing operation of that solution, and provide support services to meet your availability and software enhancement needs.

Customer Satisfaction

The satisfaction and loyalty of our customers is the goal of each element of the customer solution value chain. J.B. Wood, CEO of Prognostics, has defined customer satisfaction as, "Managed expectations, consistently met." Our strategy for managing customer satisfaction can be expressed in two parts: 1) managing expectations; 2) meeting the expectations consistently.

Managing Expectations

We focus on setting the right expectations with our customers, based on our understanding of their needs and our own capabilities. First, we talk to customers to understand their business needs. Then we develop and introduce service programs that meet those needs and provide value. We won't make promises we can't keep. Our service marketing team works hand-in-hand with our product sales team to ensure our service programs are properly positioned, well understood, and meet the needs of our customers. We work hard to define and communicate our service offerings in ways that are easy to understand and manage, both for us and for customers. We also work closely with our service channels and strategic partners to ensure they are able to market and deliver service value. We choose our partners very carefully, because they are a virtual extension of our own service delivery capabilities.

Meeting Expectations Consistently

WCS is committed to the process of continuous improvement. In order to meet this commitment, we must measure our performance and take action to improve based on those measurements. Measurement of performance is done in two ways. First, we measure key metrics of our operational performance internally. We track several key metrics of the performance of our products, working in partnership with our product R&D organizations to improve quality, reliability, and serviceability. We also have several key metrics for measuring the performance of

our service marketing and delivery. These include satisfaction with availability of service offerings, time-to-respond, time-to-resolve, average number of incidents per system per year, etc. We can act to correct any negative trends which might occur in our own performance.

Second, and perhaps most important, we measure our customers' perception of our performance. In Worldwide Customer Service we manage and fund two major customer satisfaction measurement programs. We invest substantially in the annual Prognostics "Comparative Customer Satisfaction Survey." This survey polls several hundred of our current customers regarding overall company performance, product performance, sales and marketing effectiveness, and value. In addition to the annual program, we monitor our service delivery performance through a field survey, which is given periodically to customers who have had a recent service call. All of the data we gather is used to help us improve overall product quality, make it easier to do business with us, and improve our overall service quality and value.

Among our current initiatives, we are working hard to improve our escalation management process. This is key to tracking customer issues through the escalation mechanism from call center to engineering and back, being able to advise our customers on the status of their issues, and bringing actionable information to our product division engineering teams to improve our products. We also have a dedicated service planning team focused on service readiness for all new hardware and software products. The team also works together with R&D early in the design phase to ensure ease of serviceability. This allows us, and our customers, to minimize total cost of support and ownership.

Silicon Service Support Programs

Last week, we announced the Silicon Service Support Programs. These support packages are the culmination of our efforts to merge the Cray and SGI service organizations and offerings. These new packages combine the best of the former Cray and SGI offerings into a single, comprehensive set of support packages. Additional information on the new portfolio and the services available in your area is available through your SGI/Cray representative.

New Synergies

With this merger, we have succeeded in creating one worldwide service organization with expertise from desktop systems to the highest-performance supercomputers. WCS will provide support through a unified, comprehensive, world-class portfolio of support offerings. The best service professionals at Cray and SGI are using the best practices from each organization, and together we are creating new best practices to benefit our new and existing product lines. At the core of all our efforts is the commitment to provide the best possible solutions to all your business needs.