Have you noticed that most companies are now offering solutions rather than products? Of course, no one knows better than you that simply calling a product a solution does not make it a solution.

After all, a solution implies that a product or service completely solves your company's problems. Given today's complex IT environments, chances are that no one product or service can completely solve even one of your company's problems. Most products and services provide one piece of the overall solution. For example, your company's security solution may include a firewall, a Virtual Private Network (VPN), virus protection, and a certificate server. The problem, of course, is tying these individual security pieces together and filling in the cracks between them so that your company has a complete security solution.

In addition to finding the products to create a solution, you must ensure that all of the products work well and play well together. The last thing you want to do is spend your time trying to make products work together or troubleshooting problems to figure out which products have conflicts. Ideally, you should be able to find products that are compatible with the other products—both hardware and software products—already running on your company's network.

THE PROBLEMS ARE CLEAR, BUT WHAT IS THE SOLUTION?

To help you find products and build solutions to solve your company's business problems, Novell has created the Novell Solutions Search web site (www.novell.com/solutions). As the name suggests, the Novell Solutions Search web site contains information about Novell and Novell-compatible products. Using the Novell Solutions Search web site, you can search for and find products to build the solutions your company needs.

In fact, the Novell Solutions Search web site is part of Novell's effort to help you simplify and secure your company's computing environment and accelerate your company's business transformation. Novell designed the Novell Solutions Search web site to put the information you need at your fingertips and, thereby, help you build complete solutions quickly and easily. Toward this end, the Novell Solutions Search web site provides the following search methods:

- The Problem Wizard
- Advanced Search
- e-Business Solutions
- Category Search

The Problem Wizard

The Problem Wizard is a good place to start your search. By entering a key word (such as e-business) into the Problem Wizard, you can view a list of all the products and services that you can use to build a solution for your company's particular problem. You can then click on each product or service listed and read the product profile or service profile, which includes the following information:

- Description. As you may guess, this section briefly explains what the product or service does.
- Availability and How To Buy. This section lists the areas (such as Asia Pacific, Europe, or North America) in which the product or service is available and how you can purchase the product or service.
- Compatibility. This section lists the operating systems that the product or service supports and also the Net services software (such as NDS eDirectory, NetWare 5.1, and Novell Single Sign-on 2.0) that the product or service supports.
- Company Size Best Suited For. This section lists for which size of company the product or service is targeted. For example, the product or service may be ideally suited for large-sized or Fortune 1000 companies.
- Industries. This section lists the types of industries the product or service best supports. For example, the product or service may be ideally suited for law firms, government agencies, publishing offices, or manufacturing companies.
- Additional Information. This section includes information such as white papers, demos, case studies, or links for downloading evaluation software. If the product or service has been Novell Yes, Tested and Approved, this section will also include the technical bulletin for this certification. A technical
bulletin explains the exact configuration Novell tested with this product or service, as well as the versions of the Novell products supported.

- **Training and Support.** This section includes information to help you get training and support for the product. For example, this section may include a list of telephone numbers for technical support or a list of systems integrators who can help you install or implement the product. If applicable, this section may also include information for developers who want to make their products compatible with this product.

The product profile or service profile also lists the name and address of the company that developed the product or service.

**Advanced Search**

If you want to save time and effort, you can use the Advanced Search to narrow your search and list only the products that will work in your company’s unique network environment. With the Advanced Search, you can specify the following search criteria:

- **Name** of the company, or vendor, that makes the product or service for which you are looking
- **Size** of company the product or service supports
- **Regions** in which the product or service is available
- **Industry** the product or service supports
- **Novell platform** the product or service belongs to
- **Software** category to which the product or service belongs
- **Hardware** category to which the product or service belongs

In addition, the Advanced Search allows you to customize your search based on key words. After selecting the key words for your search, you can specify whether you want the Advanced Search to find only products or services that match the key words exactly or if you want the Advanced Search to find products or services that match any or all of the key words.

You can also limit the search to software, to hardware, to services, or to Novell Yes, Tested and Approved products or services. Finally, you can limit the search to information that has been updated after a date you specify. For example, you could limit the search to information that was updated after April 1, 2000.

After you have specified your search criteria, the Advanced Search displays the products and services that match your criteria. You can then click each product or service to view the product profile or service profile.

**e-Business Solutions**

To help you implement complete solutions to specific e-business problems, Novell is building those solutions for you. The first solution is called Net Security, which provides a blanket of security for your company's entire network, including its intranet, extranet, and the Internet. The foundation of the Net Security solution is, of course, NDS eDirectory, which integrates all of the security elements (such as firewalls, authorization and authentication, and VPNs) and enables you to manage these elements as a cohesive solution.

Novell Solutions Search outlines each element in the Net Security solution and shows you how the different elements interoperate. In addition, you can view a demonstration of the Net Security solution, read case studies about companies that have implemented the solution, receive online training about the solution, and read an IDC white paper about managing secure e-businesses.

**Category Search**

Because companies are looking for solutions to many of the same problems, the Category Search includes predefined categories that address these problems. The Category Search divides products and services into the following categories:

- **Software**
- **NSS QuickSearch**
- **Hardware**
- **Services**
- **Company**

Each of these categories is further divided into additional categories. For example, the NSS QuickSearch category is divided into five categories: NDS eDirectory, Groupwise, ManageWise, and BorderManager. If you click one of these categories, the Category Search displays all of the products and services included in the category. By clicking each product or service, you can view the product profile or the service profile.

**CONCLUSION**

You know that building a solution is not as easy as purchasing a product and installing it. First, you must find the products that may help you solve your company's particular problem. From the list of possible products, you may then identify the product or the combination of products that will provide the most complete solution. Next, you must research each product carefully to ensure that it will work with the other products on your company's network. Only when you have carefully compiled all of this information can you begin to consider purchasing and installing products.

Novell Solutions Search can simplify this process for you. Using one of the four search methods outlined in this article, you can find the options available to you, and you can build a solution that meets the specific needs of your particular company. Next time you need a quick answer to a big problem, let the Novell Solutions Search do the work for you.

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