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Have No Fear, We Are Here

Want someone else to fix your problems for you? OK. Log on.

by Cheryl Walton

Just when you think your IT systems are doing everything they can to give your organization a competitive edge, someone devises a way to make them do more. Whether it's automating new-hire orientation or monitoring your sales fleet's performance, you can bet the industry's next new IT service will soon become your company's competitive imperative.

With no end in sight to the number of business practices you'll eventually need to automate, it's little wonder that the question of support comes to mind with each new project you undertake. After all, each new initiative introduces yet another layer of complexity. Fortunately, with solutions from Novell underpinning your IT initiatives, the availability of award-winning support is never in question.

A leading provider of quality programs, services and products, the Novell Technical Services organization (part of Novell Services) recently made changes that eliminate guesswork about your support options while providing new technologies and tools that make getting the support you need—when you need it—easier than ever.

A Better Way to Meet Basic Support Needs

On February 1, 2008, Novell announced a new Volume License Agreement (VLA) maintenance program that gives customers *unlimited* access to the industry-acclaimed Novell support organization. Partners also get *unlimited* support for products within their specialties through the 2008 Novell PartnerNet program.

If you are a VLA customer, you know that before this announcement, you had the option of purchasing, for any of your Novell products, a maintenance agreement that covered upgrade protection and support. Your total spending on these separate maintenance agreements determined the level of Premium Service to which you were entitled. And like some VLA customers, you might also know that under this program, the level of Premium Service to which you were entitled *might* not have met your basic support needs. In this case, you might have purchased additional support that offered a specific number of service requests (SRs) or paid for support via credit card at a SR-based price—a method that would have made budgeting difficult, to say the least.

Test Drive the New Online Service

Checking out the new chat service is as easy as registering a new service request through Novell Technical Services Online. If you aren't sure how, follow the steps in the demonstration at support.novell.com/online/demo.html. This comprehensive demonstration steps you through the entire support process—from searching for answers via the Knowledgebase to registering your service request to setting up and using the new chat-based tool. It even shows you how to download a transcript of your chat session and where to enter your feedback.

The feedback Novell has received so far has been positive. For example, one early user wrote: "This worked great! Excellent feature to add to your support people. Having Nate being able to see the errors first hand I think definitely helped speed up the process." Another customer wrote: "Used it the first time and it was just perfect. Possibly the last time I'll call by phone. I feel sorry that I do not have enough problems to use it on a daily basis :-). Thank You!"

With glowing responses like these, what have you got to lose? Next time you need support, try out this new service. When you do, please don't forget to share your feedback about the experience.

Under the new program, maintenance agreements are not optional for the first year you own your product licenses, although they are optional thereafter. Instead, you purchase affordable, year-long maintenance *with* your licenses under a single product code. How affordable are the new maintenance options and what do they give you? The answer to this question may surprise you: for less than the price of an upgrade license, you get product updates, unlimited online technical support and unlimited online training.

In other words, you have at your fingertips every resource you need to get your new products and solutions up and running quickly and flawlessly, which means you'll enjoy the best-possible experience with your Novell products and solutions. (Online training courses are not available for all Novell products. For more details about how the new program will affect you as a VLA customer, visit novell.com/licensing/collateral/vla_programguide.pdf.)

New and Improved

The task of providing unlimited support is arguably a tall order—especially if you are committed to delivering the same high-quality support that your customers and partners have come to expect. To keep its commitments without sacrificing quality, Novell has invested in several new technologies. You may have read about some of them in [Pursuit of Excellence](#), in *Novell Connection* magazine in February.

If you read that article—or if you've checked the news on the Novell Support Web site lately—you may already know that Novell is upgrading its Knowledgebase search engine. Finely tuned document tagging and other new capabilities will make the search engine smarter than ever. And it will include features such as Best Bets, document rating and favorites. Best Bets will allow Novell support engineers to tag documents they think are especially useful, document rating will enable you to rate documents and share your ratings with others, and favorites will enable you to save your favorite documents for easy reference.

The upgraded search engine is now in the final phase of user-acceptance testing. Novell Technical Services will validate its new features at [BrainShare](#) and will release it shortly thereafter. For details about the search engine's many new features and benefits, visit support.novell.com/search/about.html.

More New and Improved

You may have also heard about Novell Technical Services Online, the new Novell chat-based Web support tool. You can use this convenient online tool to make direct, real-time contact with a Novell-certified support engineer. And your engineer can use this same tool to help you resolve your issue as quickly and easily as if he or she were sitting right next to you. How? By enabling your support engineer to see your system and (if necessary) take control of it.

Your support engineer will always ask if it's okay to view the resource he or she thinks may lie at the heart of your service request. Likewise, the engineer will ask if it's okay to use the chat tool's remote-control capabilities to walk you through the troubleshooting process—or simply do the troubleshooting for you. This permission-based support is not merely Novell policy. It's actually built into the chat tool's feature set. For a more in-depth discussion of this tool's impressive list of capabilities, visit support.novell.com/online.

“Very good, a great improvement over telephone or e-mail support.”
—Anonymous Novell Customer

The new chat-based technology is available for you to pilot and test today, and Novell will make it completely available by May 1, 2008. This means you don't need to wait for Novell to contact you. If you have an issue to resolve, why not register your service request online through the Novell Customer Center eService

portal? To access the Novell Customer Center eService portal, simply point your browser to novell.com/center/eservice. You'll soon see why Novell customers have proclaimed the new tool "...fantastic!" (See [Test Drive the New Online Service](#) for instructions.) Novell encourages you to try out the new service and provide feedback.

Easy Does It

While you're visiting the Novell Customer Center, be sure to check out some of the many features Novell Technical Services has added to make managing your product entitlements easier. Novell has completely integrated Novell Customer Center portal capabilities, making this secure, easy-to-use interface your go-to place for a comprehensive view of information about your Novell products. The portal now features:

- revised product and product subscription pages that give you quick access to activation codes, media downloads, patches, updates and much more
- a single, comprehensive view of all products you have registered, which makes it simple to find upgrade and maintenance-protection products
- updated navigation and order tracking capabilities that make it easy to find purchase information.

The Novell Customer Center portal also offers access to a complete order history of your products, easy-to-use tools for quick downloads, and role-based access control that enables you to delegate tasks without revealing information about your products and services that you'd rather not. For more information about the Novell Customer Center and how it can help you lower costs, minimize complexity and manage risks, visit novell.com/center.

There-for-You Support

With the inherent complexity of today's computing environments, you need to know that support will always be there for you. The new Novell VLA maintenance and partner support programs—and exciting new Novell technologies and tools—eliminate guesswork about support availability and give you peace of mind. After all, immediate access to a certified Novell support engineer is only a click away. **N**