

HP Instant Support Corporate Edition

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Overview

The purpose of this document is to communicate both the capabilities of HP Instant Support Corporate Edition (ISCE) and its business benefits.

Product definition

HP ISCE is a tool that offers a suite of Web-based troubleshooting capabilities that automatically identifies, diagnoses, and resolves computing problems. It is designed specifically for implementation within a company's distributed information technology (IT) environment for business desktop support.

Problem resolution can be accomplished in two ways: self solve and assisted solve.

Self solve

Depending on the nature of the problem, end users can attempt to resolve their own issues by using ISCE's suite of tools. These tools are designed to be very intuitive for an average end user to use. ISCE offers various ways to self-solve computing issues, as described below:

PC hardware and driver software diagnostics

When ISCE is launched, a quick test of the health of all the software drivers is done, and the results are returned. In many cases, an automated fix is offered to the end user to resolve any problems. If a problem cannot be resolved automatically, specific content is supplied to guide the user's next appropriate steps. If the drivers are deemed healthy, a set of diagnostics is offered that allows a health check of the computing device hardware.

Augmented knowledge search

Users are given the opportunity to describe their problems in natural-language text. They are then given the option to refine their search to their specific computing device. When this option is chosen, system data is gathered and concatenated onto the search string, thus augmenting the search. With this concatenated information, only content that is pertinent to the specific computing device and problem is returned.

Printing diagnostics

When printing problems are encountered, simple automated printing tests can be launched for local printers (parallel or USB connect) and all configurations of network printers. These tests check the printing driver, spooling service, hard disk drive space, and network card firmware. If problems are identified with the printer driver, spooling service, or network card firmware, automated solutions are offered to the end user to fix these issues.

PC hardware, driver, and BIOS support *(available in 2004)*

Often new driver or BIOS versions supplied by the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) will resolve computing issues. ISCE will automatically gather identifying system information and present it back to the end user's drivers and BIOS that are designed for their hardware and operating system. It also supplies information on each driver and BIOS and what they were designed to repair. Finally, it allows the user to download and install these software components from the local or hosted server Web site.

Application fix on the fly *(available in 2004)*

When applications (Microsoft® Office Suite, Internet Explorer, etc.) fail to open, the problem is often related to application or operating system (OS) dependent files. These files can either be missing or corrupted. When ISCE is used, these conditions are automatically detected and the application is repaired while it is opening. A second common problem experienced with an application is changes to preferences (IP address, proxy setting, e-mail configuration, etc.). When this is encountered, the end user is shown an onscreen calendar. When the end user picks a date on the calendar when the application was functioning correctly, the application preferences are rolled back to this earlier date.

Assisted solve

If end users are unable to resolve their problems, the assisted-solve tool allows a seamless escalation to the next level of support. This is generally internal corporate support. The flow for assisted solve is as follows:

Online assistance

At all points in the self-solve experience end users are given the option to “get assistance online.” When this option is chosen, end users are given a screen to describe their problem in free-form keyword or natural language text. Depending on the need, this could be a very short description or a very long one.

System data

When the problem description is complete and the user clicks “next,” system data is automatically gathered. Along with the system data, all the results of the self-solve action that the user has taken (such as diagnostic results) are also sent.

Insight

The corporate help-desk agent receives the problem description, results of the self-solve effort, and system information. Along with receiving the data, a Web chat session is now set up between the end user and the corporate help-desk agent. The system information that was gathered has been refined over time by HP and found to be very effective in resolving issues in most cases. With this information, the corporate help-desk agent is able to immediately go into problem resolution rather than data gathering. The data and the problem description are presented to the corporate help-desk agent using a tool called “Insight.” This tool allows the end user to view the text of the Web chat session along with the associated gathered information. Knowledge searches and pre-scripted solutions can also be obtained within Insight.

Options

Corporate help-desk agents have many options that can be chosen predicated on what the gathered information and problem description are indicating. They can ask the end user for more information (via Web chat), they can search content and return information via the Web chat, they can launch more diagnostics remotely, they can remotely gather more system information, or they can use an integrated remote-control module and take control of the end user’s PC.

Collaborative support

If the corporate help-desk agent is having difficulty resolving the issue, the agent has the option of escalating (via the tool) to the next level of support. This next level of support could be HP or a higher tier within their support structure. All information about the case to date is electronically sent to the next level. This includes the gathered system data, chat session, diagnostic results, etc. The corporate help-desk agent is now in a chat session with the next level of support to resolve the issue on behalf of the end user.

Business benefits

ISCE creates a win-win situation both for the end user and the corporation, as detailed below.

End-user benefits

The benefits include the ability for ISCE to flow into any predefined support offering—even those with a standard graphical user interface (GUI), which enterprise corporations often have. The core screen flow is also available for customization to meet any corporation's business requirements.

History

Because the tool allows the self-solve efforts of the end user to be sent to the corporate help-desk agent, the agent can immediately see what the end user has attempted. This eliminates the problem of the agent asking end users to repeat what they have already tried.

First-time fix

Because ISCE has the ability to separate hardware problems from software problems and provide only pertinent content to the computing device, the chances of getting it right the first time are greatly enhanced. Also, the automated solutions to problems have been carefully scripted and tested, relieving the end user of having to follow multiple complex steps to resolve issues. Finally, when assisted solve is invoked, the ability of ISCE to automatically gather and present extensive amounts of information to the corporate help-desk agent results in significantly more accurate first-time resolution.

Efficiency

ISCE automatically presents pertinent options and content relative to the particular computing device being repaired, thus relieving the end user of having to hunt for this information. Also, because the gathered information is automatically sent to the next level of support, it eliminates the need for the end user to manually provide it. Industry studies have shown that, in a typical problem resolution, two-thirds of the time is spent in information gathering and one-third of the time is spent in problem resolution. ISCE has the capability of circumventing the information gathering, both for the end user and the corporate help-desk agent.

Disruption reduced

ISCE requires no preinstallation. Therefore, when a problem is encountered, end users can immediately go into problem resolution rather than configuration. If assisted solve is invoked, all actions taken by the corporate help-desk agent remotely (such as diagnostics or more data harvesting) are accomplished in the background, so end users can continue to use their computing device in parallel.

Support choices

End users are given the options of self solve and assisted solve. Depending on the nature of the problem and their skill level, end users can work through some self solve solutions or immediately go into assisted solve. Self solve and assisted solve are not disjointed experiences but are tightly linked to improve effectiveness.

Corporate benefits

Lower support costs

Support costs are lowered in three measurable ways:

1. Call deflection

Through the use of self solve, end users are able to resolve their own problems, thus avoiding calls to support personnel. Deployments of this tool by HP worldwide in support of their customers has shown call deflections between 10% and 25% (variation depends on language, location, and type of computing device).

2. Call efficiency

Because system information is automatically gathered, corporate help-desk agents are relieved of this task and allowed to immediately proceed to problem resolution. Also, when working with this tool, the corporate help-desk agent can actually multitask and work simultaneously with more than one end user. Typically, efficiencies gained are 2:1 as measured by the number of cases closed per day compared with classic phone support.

3. Increased remote resolution

Because of the increased accuracy of problem diagnosis, dispatched labor and parts are reduced. Improvements in remote resolution of 18% to 45% have been measured by HP in support of their customers (variations depends on language, location, type of computing device, expertise with the product, etc.).

End-user satisfaction

ISCE achieves the important goal of reducing hardware and/or application downtime for the end user and lessening disruption when problems are discovered.

Non-intrusive

ISCE requires no preinstallation, and it does not leave anything on the end user's PC when the session is completed. All software is server side. Improvements and updates to the software are also done server side. Onsite hardware is an option but is not required to implement this solution. Servers can be hosted outside the firewall. Also, no firewall holes are required because all communication is HTTPS, port 80.

Immediate benefit

Because usage of ISCE by end users requires no training and no change is required to the end user's PC, deployment of the tool is extremely simple. A typical method to make end users aware of the tool is a simple e-mail notification. The purpose of the tool can be explained within the e-mail along with an option to put an icon on the desktop that links to the ISCE Web site.

ISCE supports all PC hardware configurations running Microsoft Windows® 98, Windows NT®, Windows 2000, and Windows XP. No change to the image is required.

Conclusion

As detailed in this paper, HP Instant Support Corporate Edition offers unique and significant benefits in the total cost of ownership for corporations by speeding problem resolution for both the end user and corporation. This has the double benefit of increasing end-user uptime (and thus satisfaction) and lowering corporate support costs. It is very easy to deploy and in many cases can seamlessly integrate with existing distributed IT processes.

Future enhancements to HP ISCE will include added support for iPAQ PDAs, extended multivendor printer support, and application self-healing and rollback. These enhancements will be available in 2004.

For more information

To learn more about HP Instant Support Corporate Edition, visit www.hp.com/go/instantsupport.

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