



IBM's Solution Partnership Center

By Suzanne Briggs

Powered by IBM's newly formed and fully dedicated Solution Developer Operations, solution providers now have access to the complete range of IBM platforms—from RISC hardware and software to OS/2 Warp products and beyond. This includes access to all aspects of these environments for testing and porting, in addition to assistance with go-to-market strategies.

Software vendors have long relied on IBM's AIXwest technical support facility to simplify their migration from non-IBM platforms to AIX. Renamed the Solution Partnership Center, the San Mateo, California-based facility's expanded services reflect IBM's intensified commitment to furthering the success of solution developers throughout the world. Its purpose is twofold:

- ◆ To help developers streamline the time-to-market process for applications using industry-leading IBM platforms
- ◆ To create and expand market opportunities for those applications

A second center will open this summer in Boston to serve East Coast software vendors, systems integrators, and consultants; more sites are slated to open throughout the year in Asia/Pacific, and Europe.

According to the Solution Partnership Center's manager, Patricia Meacham, the timing could not be better. "To be truly competitive in today's global marketplace, it has become essential for developers to provide client/server distributed solutions across the enterprise," she emphasizes. Since technology alone does not smooth this transition to client/server, Solution Partnership Center's support includes business seminars, marketing and vendor recruiting programs, product

education, 24-hour porting labs, and on-site technical assistance—all free of charge.

Solutions for the Ongoing Evolution

As IBM technology evolves, so will the Solution Partnership Center. By the end of 1995, the center will support AS/400® and ES/9000™ products as well as networking and object technology. It currently offers free access to the following IBM platforms: OS/2® Warp™, the RISC System/6000 family including Symmetric Multiprocessing (SMP), AIX, POWERparallel™ (SP2™), Power Personal (PowerPC™), the DB2® family, and Client/Server products.

Eric Leong, a solution developer program manager for IBM, believes that today's growth path for applications is unparalleled. "In terms of scalability," he says, "the center gives solution providers the ability to concurrently enable products on the smallest PowerPC to the largest SP2, demonstrating the scalability across IBM's RISC platform." Leong goes on to illustrate how developers working in the AIX environment, for example, can come in to learn and work with the latest client/server and intelligent tools. These same hands-on opportunities also exist across the board for developers using leading-edge object technologies such as Taligent, System Object Model (SOM), OpenDoc, and human-centered products such as pen, speech, and multimedia.

Marketing, Recruiting, and Education

Helping solution developers identify the most effective and profitable channels for getting their products to market is one of the benefits of the Solution Partnership Center. "IBM is clearly committed to assisting developers with their marketing strategies," explains Meacham. "Our business seminars target expanding market opportunities, as well as issues shaping the computing industry and how they directly impact applications."



Suzanne Briggs

Solution Partnership Centers Supported by Development Labs

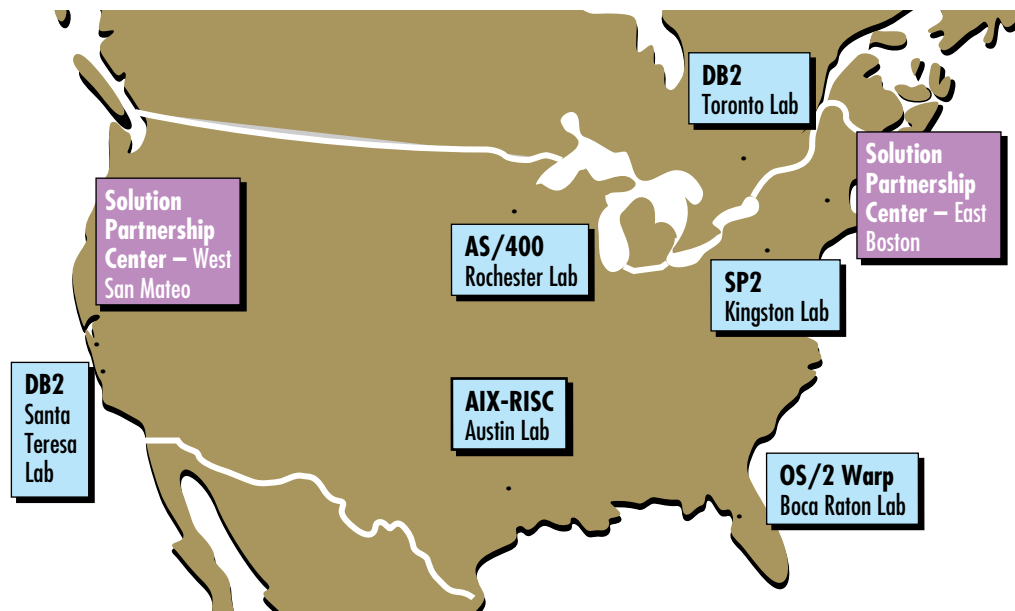


Figure 1. Solution Partnership Centers in the U.S. and Canada

The center's ongoing schedule of informative business seminars, consultant briefings, and product briefings also keeps solution developers on top of emerging IBM technologies, including Client/Server, PowerPC- and POWER-based systems, and software solutions for object technology, National Language Support (NLS), and communication products. Solution developers are privy to the latest product evaluations, publications, and a variety of special-interest sessions that cover topics such as bottleneck determination and isolation, implementing decision support on the SP2, and recruiting software partners.

IBM works with developers to forge mutually beneficial marketing partnerships through its Business Partner Program. This joint recruiting mission includes trade show opportunities, listings in IBM solutions catalogs, entry into IBM's National Solution Center database, and more.

Porting Convenience

Another advantage of the Solution Partnership Center is its 24-hour porting labs where solution providers can port and validate applications across IBM's entire spectrum of systems and configurations, evaluating performance and fine-tuning code. Users work at their own pace in a private, secure, and interruption-free environment that also provides benchmarking and prototyping assistance, and an expansive networking lab for product testing.

Whether investigating the feasibility of an application or conducting application development work, users are encouraged to exploit all the technology and information available to them through the labs. Access is scheduled in advance so the center can have a solution developer's specific environment set up and ready upon arrival.

Direct Technical Support

Even the most experienced solution developers need technical support now and then; and when they do, Solution Partnership Center is ready. Experienced technical consultants are available on-site, as needed, supported by product developers at IBM labs in Austin, Texas (AIX, RISC, SMP); Kingston, New York (SP1™ and SP2); Boca Raton, Florida (OS/2 Warp); Toronto, Canada (DB2); and other locations worldwide.

For more information about Solution Partnership Center services and how they assist in deploying and marketing IBM-driven applications, call 1-800-678-4249 in the U.S. From outside the U.S., call 415-312-0240.



Suzanne Briggs, IBM Corporation, 2929 Campus Drive, San Mateo, CA 94403. Ms. Briggs is the marketing communications manager at IBM's Solution Partnership Center—West. She has a BS in Mathematics and Computer Science from Georgia State University in Atlanta.

“To be truly competitive in today's global marketplace, it is essential for developers to provide client/server distributed solutions across the enterprise.”