



IBM's Porting Center of the East

By Valerie Paul

The Solution Partnership Center—East recently opened in Waltham, Massachusetts, a suburb of Boston, to provide training and technical support for solution developers on the East Coast. The 8,000 square foot porting and marketing center provides 24-hour access with total security for developers to perform their ports and validation functions.

Amidst dust, noise, and construction workers everywhere, the Solution Partnership Center—East (SPC—East) opened its doors for the first time in May 1995. Developers could not wait; they wanted to port their products and they needed support to make it happen. Although construction was not complete until August, developers began checking out the center.

The first Solution Partnership Center was established in San Mateo, California to serve the developer community in the West. The new center was set up in Waltham because that area is considered the “Silicon Valley of the East.” The Route 128 area is often billed as “Technology Highway” because in Massachusetts alone there are over 1,900 software companies. And those companies generate over \$7 billion in sales—more than 8% of the U.S. software market.

Developer Support

The Solution Partnership Center offers several types of support to solution developers:

- ◆ **Porting center.** SPC serves as a porting center, with seven rooms available 24 hours a day in a totally secure environment. Each room can be configured to meet the needs of developers. For example, one day a room could be equipped with a Symmetric Multiprocessor (SMP) RISC system, and the next day it can have an entry-level Power Personal system.

- ◆ **Executive briefing room.** This room can accommodate 70 people with up-to-date electronic media. IBM presents technology briefings in this room, but as a solution developer you can also use this room for your own customer presentations.
- ◆ **Customized lab.** The lab has PS/2s® for up to 32 people. OS/2, AS/400®, RISC System/6000, and client/server labs are driven off the servers.
- ◆ **Technology lobby.** The technology tables contain the latest ThinkPads® and provide demonstrations of IBM's entrance into the Internet, demos of Lotus Notes, and games on OS/2 Warp™.
- ◆ **Solution Developer Hall of Fame.** As a solution developer, once you have ported to IBM technology, you are eligible for a “mini commercial” to appear in this corridor for all to see. SPC—East is located next to the IBM customer center in Waltham, so customers often see these glossies and request more information about developer packages and offerings.

Special Offerings for AIX Developers

Mike Sheets, program manager for RISC and AIX, said, “What we have found with solution developers is that they are very interested in doing business in the same accounts where IBM is successful. We are well-positioned at the Solution Partnership Center—East to answer the question ‘How do I do business with IBM?’ Solution developers need to stay ahead of the technology curve to be able to compete successfully in their markets. We help them do that by providing con-

venient, no-charge access to the latest IBM software and hardware products.”

One of the most important offerings to AIX developers is the availability of the center for porting. The center provides full scalability with three Power Personal stations, 42Ts and 43Ps, two J30 4-ways that can be made into one 8-way SMP, plus front ends to the J30. It also has a C10 and expects a 39H soon. By the end of 1995 the center will have an SP2 8-node machine as well. This variety of equipment makes porting less complex and almost painless.

In addition to the 24-hour availability of equipment, the center has technology consultants dedicated to RISC System/6000 porting. These consultants have systems engineering backgrounds and work closely to help you understand IBM's RISC technology and the latest product offerings.

A typical scenario for doing an AIX port begins with a pre-port meeting of the technology consultants and the technical staff from the solution developer organization. This meeting is to ensure that the center has all the equipment necessary to support any porting needs, networking

requirements, and software. The dates for the actual porting process result from this meeting. The solution developer actually does the port, with the technology consultants working hand-in-hand to ensure that the process proceeds smoothly.

Technology consultants also ensure that the developer takes advantage of IBM's latest technology. Since this technical resource is on-site, it helps increase the developer's productivity and keeps the process moving. Since technology consultants have a direct link to the development labs, they can get immediate response to any issues that arise during porting. There is no waiting for answers—problems are resolved on the spot without losing productive time.

The center also offers marketing, education, and detailed technical lab events for AIX developers. Seminars on AIX are often presented by IBM technical staff from Austin. According to Glenn Rigby, marketing program team leader, “The response to our marketing and education events has been overwhelmingly positive. It gives us a great feeling to bring leading-edge technology to independent software vendors at a price that is hard to beat—free.”

Solution Partnership Centers Supported by Development Labs

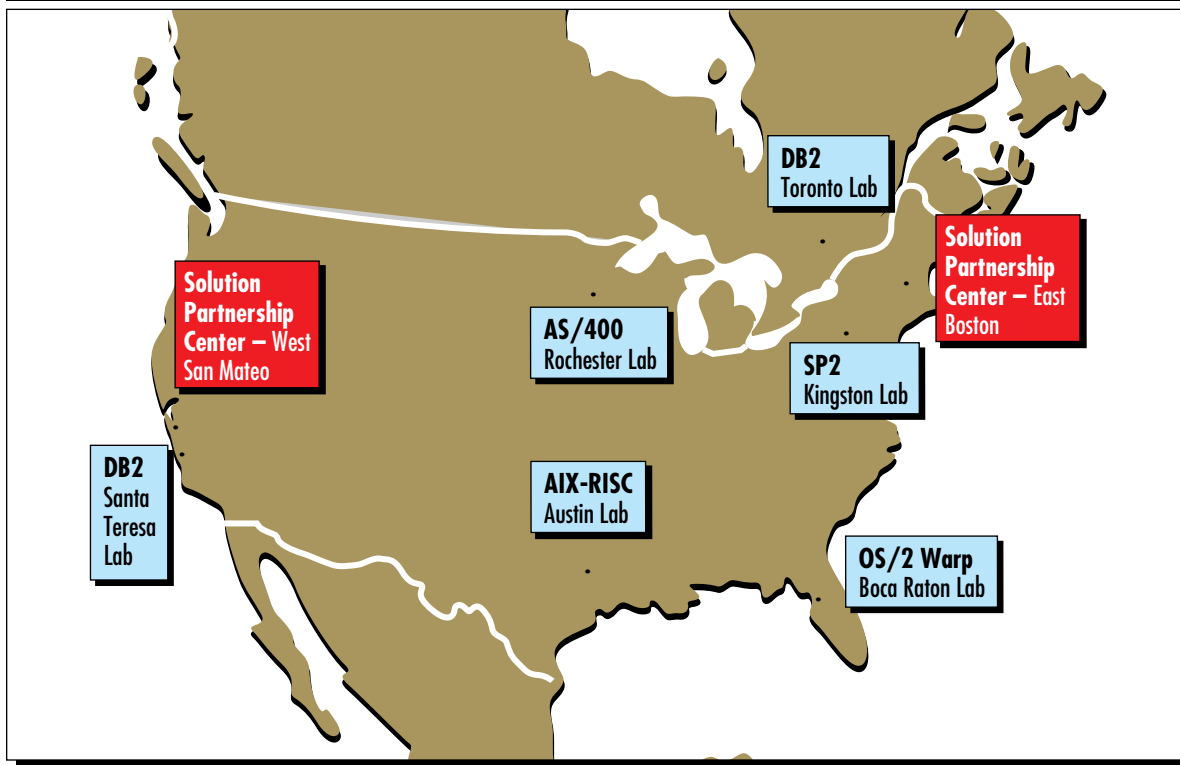


Figure 1. Solution Partnership Centers in the U.S. and Canada

When To Call The Center

SPC—East is the ideal solution if you need to port your product to a more extensive platform, such as moving from a uniprocessor to an SMP processor or from an SMP to a POWERparallel processor. Bring your application to the center and validate that your software does what you are committing that it does on the platform of choice. You can validate your port and establish a prototype, often needed to close business in a bid situation.

Or simply use the center to take advantage of the latest technology, such as moving from AIX 3.2.5 to AIX 4.1. The center has many machines that have the latest technology capabilities. You can fine-tune applications in a dedicated test environment that may not be possible on-site at your own location.

And if your application does not run on IBM technology, the center provides education technology presentations to introduce you to the platforms and the technology available. This can be followed up with ports, validation and prototype tests on IBM platforms, and then conclude with help in defining a strategy after your applications have been ported.

Although the center provides a full support service, you can choose any portion of the process that benefits you. For example, one developer whose market was about 90% Sun®

How to Contact Solution Partnership Center—East

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Waltham, MA 02154-1280

Phone: 1-800-678-4249

Fax: 617-890-7587

World Wide Web: <http://www.austin.ibm.com/developer/>
(list of events)

For AIX developers: Mike Sheets—program manager
for RISC

Internet: msheets@boston.vnet.ibm.com

Upcoming Events at SPC—East

AIX Multi-vendor Platform Open House	November 28-30
Solution Development with Lotus Notes	December 6
OpenDoc Seminar	December 13

and only 5% IBM was not comfortable in really knowing from experience how their application ran on IBM. The center provided a test bed of multiple machines so they could determine how their application equates on IBM equipment and how to increase the IBM market share for their product.

Why Call the Center

The SPC—East can offer significant benefits to solution developers:

- ◆ Provides access to the latest IBM technology for AIX, OS/2, AS/400, or client/server
- ◆ Provides flexibility and customization based on needs, whether they are ports, validation, prototypes, or benchmarks
- ◆ Increases productivity with on-site resources to answer questions and resolve issues
- ◆ Reduces costs by serving the local community and providing the latest equipment
- ◆ Increases awareness of new technology through marketing and education programs

Now that the dust has settled and the center is established, it's time to investigate the opportunities that await. For more information about how you can take advantage of the center, contact the center.



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