Service Automation with IBM Electronic Service

Info

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■ He came to IBM in 2000 as part of the acquisition of Sequent Computer Systems. He received an IBM Outstanding Technical Achievement Award for the key conceptual design and implementation of IBM Electronic Service Agent. He works throughout IBM to achieve advances in service delivery automation.

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As Tom walked in the door Monday morning, he was surprised to see Joe, his IBM Customer Engineer waiting in the reception area. Tom doesn't see Joe as much as in the old days when he practically lived there. "Morning Joe", he politely reached to shake his hand. "Morning Tom", he responded. "What brings you here? I didn't think our scheduled maintenance was for another 3 weeks." "I'm here to replace your power supply." Joe said. "What power supply? Nobody told me that we had a problem this morning".

Tom questioned with concern, "Your system called us last night to let us know your power supply failed. You have redundant power supplies so your users are not impacted, but we should replace this soon to keep it that way" as he held up the new power supply. They walked into the computer room and within minutes Joe had the power supply swapped out. As Joe walked out of his office, Tom could not help but be impressed with the service he just received.

Tom realized that Electronic Service Agent™ makes it seem like he still works here. He still gets the same responsive service. As Tom thought about it, the scenario could have been much different. If he suffered another power supply failure before the failed one was replaced, things would have been much more chaotic around the office.

In today's competitive environment, IBM can no longer place an engineer at every customer site. Even so, there are ways we can automate certain tasks and allow us to provide that same responsive service. We can be notified within minutes of a customer problem. Along with the notification we auto-
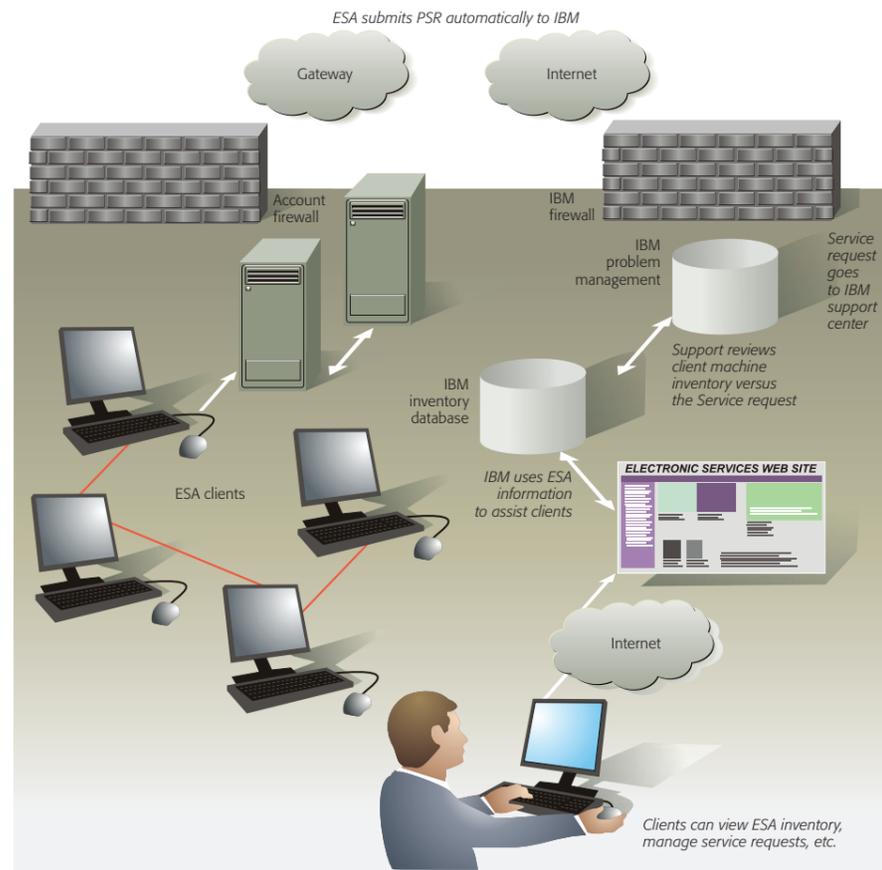
Service automation with IBM Electronic Service Agent.

ESA submits PSR automatically to IBM

Gateway — Internet

Account firewall

IBM firewall

IBM problem management

Service request goes to IBM support center

IBM inventory database

Support reviews client machine inventory versus the Service request

ESA clients

IBM uses ESA information to assist clients

ELECTRONIC SERVICES WEB SITE

Internet

Clients can view ESA inventory, manage service requests, etc.

Customer environment	"My Web Portal"	Inventory analytics engine	IBM intellectual capital
• Hardware inventory - Microcode levels - Capacity - Configuration • Software inventory - Program temporary fix - Product configuration	ELECTRONIC SERVICES WEB SITE Personalized portal for business partners and customers	Delivering IBM intellectual capital specific to the customer environment	• Internal knowledge bases • Redbooks • Support centers • Engineering • Entitlement systems • Contracting engines • Other knowledge repositories

Proactive support with a trusted support partner.

mate the problem data collection and send the information to IBM. With the problem data, we make informed problem determination decisions. And with the inventory data that is collected through this automation we can go one step further and proactively notify the customer when we find something wrong. IBM uses Electronic Service Agent™ to enable much of this automation and it allows us to continue to provide a high level of service to our customers.

With redundant components in our servers today, many times a hardware failure does not bring down the server. Even so, it's vital to replace the failed component quickly before another failure occurs. In many cases the second failure may bring down the server. As well, by using Electronic Service Agent™ customers no longer have to wade through all the error logs to determine if they should call IBM for a specific error. The system does this automatically and immediately. This allows IBM to be responsive and many times customers first learn of the problem when a support engineer calls them to replace the failed part.

Diagnosing problems in today's complex computer systems isn't easy. When diagnosing problems you need data. Collecting problem data often takes many steps for customers to perform. Electronic Service Agent™ automates those tasks and sends in diagnostic problem data when it sends a problem to IBM. This data makes it much easier for support engineers to determine what failed. It may be as simple as having the exact error code that occurred on the system or as complex as lists of all firmware, applications and Program Temporary Fixs on a system. Having the data you need to solve the problem is crucial to getting it right the first time. Customers have come to expect the high quality of service from IBM and the problem data collection of Electronic Service Agent™ enables our support engineers to continue that level of quality.

The ultimate in customer service is to notify the customer of an impending problem before it even occurs. By using the inventory collection capabilities of Electronic Service Agent™, IBM can be more proactive than ever. When IBM knows the inventory and configuration of our customers' servers, we can identify problematic configurations and notify the customer before an error occurs. We can establish rules to scan our inventory database looking for systems that may have a configuration problem. IBM has just started to take advantage of this capability, but it has endless opportunities to be more proactive. Today, Electronic Service Agent™ sends IBM over 500GB of new and updated inventory from nearly 150,000 systems each month.

Service automation enables IBM to be more responsive to customers, automates the problem data collection to ensure accurate problem determination, and enables IBM to be more proactive than ever before. IBM uses Electronic Service Agent™ to enable this automation between customer systems and IBM. For more information on IBM Electronic Service Agent™ visit http://www.ibm.com/support/electronic/serviceagent.