

Scope

Computing is well on its way to becoming a utility, such as the electricity grid changed power distribution more than a century ago. The different components of a desktop computer -the hard drive for storing information, the microchip for processing information, the applications for manipulating information – will be spread throughout the world, integrated through the internet and shared by everyone.

This evolutionary stage of distributed computing has many faces. Terms like “Software as a service”, “Service-oriented Architecture” or “Grid computing” are different aspects of one and the same. Due to this more and more obvious shift to a networked future the whole IT business is going to be reshuffled.

The development in the area of grid computing will have radical effects on the software services landscape. It is one of the biggest challenges for the European software and software services area in the coming years and raises many questions, from legal issues to standardization and software service lifecycle, to name just a few. It will also bring new business models and offer new possibilities for SMEs.

Advances

The EU-funded project 3S deals with this fundamental shift and analyses the upcoming challenges, both on a technical and a non-technical level. The aim of 3S is to push the involvement of the EU to a competitive position worldwide by identifying strategies and technologies that will facilitate future developments.

3S has produced a Green Paper, showcasing the major challenges that will influence the area of software services and grid computing.

ECSS has been implementing a comprehensive consultation process involving international experts from both research and industry. The objective will be to mobilise all players in the preparation of the final Action Paper, defining jointly common long-term views for key areas of S&S in the future.

The ECSS White Paper for R&D and Industry in S&S will identify technological and socio-economic trends/needs and identify potential research areas related to S&S looking towards FP7 and national and regional RTD programmes.

The development of the ECSS White Paper will enable synergies with industry and research linked organisations.

Positioning in global context

With the creation of the think tank – the European Community for Software & Software Services (ECSS) – the 3S project established a platform for networking and knowledge transfer between the relevant scientific and industrial communities and for jointly pursuing the interests of the stakeholders in the field of IST.

Target users / sectors in business and society

The target group is the community of stakeholders in the convergence of Software Engineering and Software Services (S&S), which can be broken down into the following subgroups:

- Researcher (academic and non-academic organizations)
- Researcher (industries)
- General multipliers (organizations related to S&S like national and international software and IT associations, chambers of commerce and so on)
- Press and media

Overall benefits for business and society

The grand vision of Grid computing can be compared to power grids: users get access to electricity through wall sockets with no care or consideration for where or how the electricity is generated. From this point of view computing becomes pervasive, seamless and invisible. Individual users or client applications gain access to computing resources like processors, storage, data and applications with little or no knowledge of where those resources are located or what the underlying technologies are.

This vision of Grid computing supported all the Ambient Intelligence Scenarios of EU Framework Programme 6 (FP6). If we consider this as an ultimate goal, there are many smaller steps that need to be taken to achieve it. This is where 3S and ECSS come in.

Today we can already see the move from Grid as a high performance computing platform to the acceptance by businesses that it can be an architecture for business flexibility. But the speed of this transformation depends on how deep Grid is linked with the paradigm of service orientation.

Achievements

The 3S Green Paper

The Green Paper, which was published in September 2007, opened the floor for a Europe-wide dialogue between research, industry and intermediaries in the IST field. An online consultation process, carried out via the ECSS website, offers a collaborative space and in April 2008 there will be a second interactive workshop.

The ECSS

With the creation of ECSS (European Community for Software & Software Services – Architectures, Infrastructures, Engineering) 3S established a platform for networking and knowledge transfer between the relevant scientific and industrial communities and for jointly pursuing the interests of the stakeholders in the field of IST.

The ECSS Website will be a major tool to facilitate the exchange of ideas and the networking, especially with a focus of finding synergies between industry and research.

The ECSS White Paper

The overall outcomes will be published as ECSS White Paper, an action paper for the European Commission, defining common long-term views for key areas of S&S in order to foster the competitive position in the area of software services and grid computing worldwide. It will be presented at the ECSS International Conference, which is planned for the end of 2008 / early 2009. The outcomes of the two workshops as well as the “online consultation” and the contributions by the ECSS-Advisory Board, will be incorporated into the White Paper.

The ECSS International Conference

Dissemination and sustainability of results beyond the duration of the project will be assured through the creation of a self-financing annual International Conference.

Awareness Building

Making relevant stakeholders in IST aware of a common S&S-identity and establishing the basis for a European Community, is one of the key target of the 3S-project.



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30