

# INPUT<sup>®</sup> Research Bulletin

Route to:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

---

A Publication from INPUT's Customer Services Programme—Europe

## New Colours for Old—Sun Shines Its Light on Services with Bronze<sup>SM</sup>, Silver<sup>SM</sup>, Gold<sup>SM</sup> and Platinum<sup>SM</sup> Programmes

Sun Microsystems Computer Corporation (Sun) has launched a new worldwide service and support programme under the title of SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup>. Sun reports that the launch of this new service, which is due to be available for first deliveries on 1st May 1993, is the culmination of a three-year planning and introduction cycle. This cycle included extensive market research into user needs using a variety of market testing techniques. The key note of the whole process has been *simplification*.

The new programme is managed by the Customer Services divisions in Sun, which are responsible for customer training, managing all system and product upgrades in the installed base, as well as for fulfilling the on-going contract and ad-hoc service demands.

### Sun Microsystems Organisation

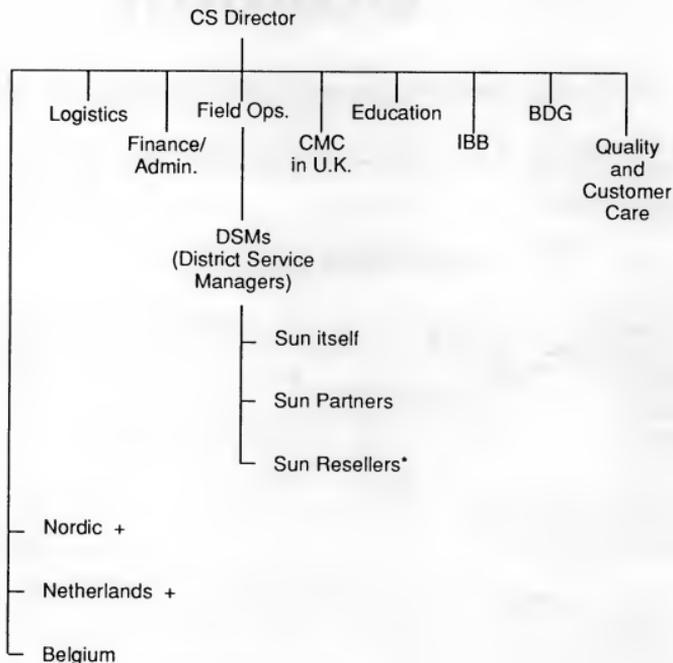
Sun operates in Europe within three regions:

- Northern Europe covering the U.K., Ireland, the Benelux and Nordic countries
- Central Europe covering Germany, Austria and Switzerland
- Southern Europe covering France, Spain and Italy.

The CS Division for each region has a similar internal structure. This structure is illustrated in Exhibit 1 for the Northern European Region.

Exhibit 1

### Northern European Region Customer Services Division Organisation



- Notes:
- CMC = Call Management Centre
  - IBB = Installed Base Business
  - BDG = Business Development Group
  - + = also possesses a CMC

\*Sun Resellers are signed up for one or more programmes (see below under Sun's Reseller Programme) but can only provide service to systems that have been sold by themselves.

Source: INPUT

## SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup> Services

The new services have been conceived at four levels:

- **Platinum<sup>SM</sup>** - is for the most mission critical systems across the whole Enterprise
- **Gold<sup>SM</sup>** - for important but not mission critical Systems
- **Silver<sup>SM</sup>** - for less critical Systems
- **Bronze<sup>SM</sup>** - is a low cost support package.

Common to all levels are:

- A simple pricing system based on the processor only—and not on the size of the configuration
- Full telephone support for the Solaris<sup>®</sup> operating system and Sun licensed software products, as well as all enhancement releases for Solaris
- Licences for both the on-line and the CD-ROM versions of SunSolve<sup>TM</sup>, which is Sun's problem resolution/support database as used in its own response centres. These versions are updated regularly—on nightly and quarterly frequencies respectively.

Each level of service includes a few options which can further improve its service level. Sun has, however, tried to keep these to the minimum so that the services are simple to purchase, deliver and administer.

Building up from the bottom:

- **Bronze<sup>SM</sup>** service offers, as well as the basic hotline support, an On-site Service Centre in which swapped out units can be repaired/refurbished once a week

- **Silver<sup>SM</sup>** service provides the basic on-site support as well as the basic telephone hotline. At this level, and above, Sun has introduced the concept of Customer-defined Priority Setting. Each call for service has its priority set at one of three levels (P1, P2, or P3, where P1 is the highest) after the initial interchange between the Call Management Centre (CMC) and the customer
- **Gold<sup>SM</sup>** service provides pro-active support on top of the Silver<sup>SM</sup> level services. This takes the forms of:
  - Personal technical support from an account assigned consultant
  - Access to the Self-paced Education Library for customer employees needing to improve personal, system or network productivity.

Gold<sup>SM</sup> service also offers extended coverage hours for the basic on-site service

- **Platinum<sup>SM</sup>** service is the top of the line, and is recommended for customers in transition between environments, e.g. migrating to a client-server environment from an older architecture. Features added as standard at this level include:
  - A 99% uptime guarantee for all servers
  - Technical reviews on-site
  - On-site coaching and training
  - Extended coverage hours (24 hours x 365 days).

## Sun's Reseller Programme

Sun has a number of different classes of relationship with the VAR (Value-Added Reseller) community. These fall into three categories:

- Applications partners
- Service resellers
- Service providers.

Applications partners are typically software product and professional services vendors whose products, in areas such as CAD/CAM, financial services or technical publications, run on Sun platforms. This class of vendor offers to Sun a whole range of extended accessibility to market sectors, but since applications are not the subject of this Research Bulletin, it is not dealt with further here.

Dealing with the last two in turn, we can briefly describe how each is affected by the new announcement of the SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup> programme:

- Resellers of SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup> fall into three categories
  - Maintenance Resellers are partners who have no capability to deliver service to support either hardware or software, but may wish to offer a complete solution including hardware, software and service to their customers. They can resell a SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup> contract which is then fulfilled by Sun itself. They would obtain a commission on the deal, but the user interfaces directly with Sun
  - Maintenance Managers are partners who are supplying value-added applications and systems software on Sun platforms to their customers. They will have a capability and desire to support their own software with an on-going support contract, and it, therefore, makes sense for them to include support of the Sun operating systems and other licensed Sun products in a comprehensive software support contract. They can now sell their customers a contract which includes a

SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup> contract and sub-contract Sun to deliver the hardware maintenance portion. They will supply their users with the first line help desk and transfer calls for hardware service to Sun, possibly through a network connection

- Authorised Service Agents (ASAs) have the training and capability to supply both hardware and software service for Sun platforms. They will already be supplying systems based on Sun platforms. They will now be able to include a SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup> contract in their own support contracts, but it is a stipulation of their agreement with Sun that this can only be done for systems which they have supplied themselves. In other words they cannot go marketing freely throughout the whole Sun installed base.
- The providers of SunSpectrum<sup>SM</sup> also fall into three categories
  - There is Sun itself, which will retain a full service capability
  - Sun Partners are specially selected hardware maintenance and software support companies, which have been trained to provide these services for Sun platforms to the required quality standards. Standard contracts with Sun platform users would normally be supported by a Sun Partner, of which there are 260 worldwide and some 50 or so in Europe.
  - ASAs, as previously shown, can be the service delivery channel but only within their own installed bases.

This Research Bulletin is issued as part of INPUT's Customer Services Programme for the information services industry. If you have any questions or comments on this bulletin, please call your local INPUT organisation or Peter Lines at INPUT, 17 Hill Street, Mayfair, London W1X 7FB England. (071) 493 9335, Fax (071) 629 0179.