



MOUNTAIN VIEW ALLIANCE

Enabling the COTS ecosystem through coordinated open specifications

Mountain View Alliance FAQ JUNE 2005

What is the Mountain View Alliance?

The Mountain View Alliance (MVA) is a working group with representatives from three open specification organizations. MVA founding members include the Network Processing Forum (NPF), the PCI Industrial Manufacturers Computer Group (PICMG) and the Service Availability Forum (SA Forum). The Alliance was formed to accelerate the adoption of modular communications platforms based on open interface specifications. The MVA will provide a forum for coordination of the technical and marketing activities of its member organizations.

What is the Mountain View Alliance's mission?

The MVA's mission is to further the use of commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) elements in the telecommunications industry. A key component of realizing this goal is enabling and promoting a significant and vibrant open standards-based ecosystem. The member organizations recognized that the specifications from a single standards organization do not sufficiently address the breath of protocols, APIs and open source implementations needed to enable a COTS ecosystem.

How does the Mountain View Alliance relate to other specifications organizations?

The MVA and other specifications organizations have complementary goals in that the MVA creates an environment where specifications organizations can optimize their technical and marketing activities by avoiding overlap and by leveraging the work of other organizations. The MVA aims to enable an open interface specification carrier-grade base platform ecosystem. The Alliance is working towards this ecosystem by harmonizing the technical and marketing activities of the related specification creation organizations. The MVA differs from other bodies in that it is comprised of other open standards bodies rather than individual companies.

What are the specific deliverables of the Mountain View Alliance?

The MVA deliverables lay in two areas. The first is collective marketing activities such as tradeshow, press events, articles and road shows for the purpose of increasing the awareness and adoption of the member organizations' specifications. The second deliverable is the harmonization of member specifications by identifying gaps, overlaps and inconsistencies that would impede interoperability. Any changes or additions to existing specifications would be through existing liaison relationships with the working groups of the MVA members.

How will TEMs, service providers and suppliers benefit from the Mountain View Alliance's deliverables?

Equipment manufacturers will benefit from the increased building block interoperability, innovation and competition that enable them to build and deploy new products faster and less expensively than if they were vertically integrating all aspects of new systems. Service providers

will benefit directly from equipment built from open specifications with greater interoperability, manageability, scalability and availability.

What is the Mountain View Alliance's structure?

The MVA operates as an ad-hoc committee of representatives from the member organizations. The board and the technical committee make non-binding recommendations to the group's member organizations. The MVA operates on a non-NDA basis and does not intend to produce any specifications.

If the Mountain View Alliance didn't exist, what would the impact be on COTS adoption? Without the MVA, COTS adoption would likely be slower. Adoption efforts by companies might be slowed by technical issues between the standards of the organizations. Awareness of the value of the specifications as a set would likely not happen and ecosystems encompassing more than one specification might not arise.

Why isn't an interconnect standard included in the Mountain View Alliance's efforts?

Each of the founding members has a strong position in its domain with no directly competing organization. The interconnect specification organizations directly compete with each other. Selecting just one of these competing interconnect specifications would likely not further the overall mission of the MVA. That said, there may well be fruitful interactions in future between the MVA and these organizations.

How was the Mountain View Alliance formed?

There were two primary forces that drove the creation of the Mountain View Alliance. First, the SA Forum realized in the process of defining a "Service Availability" base platform environment that they had to harmonize their technical activities with other standards organizations that were either in the process of or have already created interface specifications that the SA Forum needed to interact with. No one set of interface specifications is an island and none of the individual groups possesses all of the domain expertise nor are they chartered to specify a complete carrier-grade base platform. The SA Forum had already initiated bilateral discussions and liaison agreements with PICMG, the NPF and other standards organizations to harmonize specification work. However, this was not enough as certain interfaces are covered by more than one organization. The standards organizations met in Mountain View, California in December 2004 and decided to work together to avoid overlap and inconsistency between specifications. The second motivation for the creation of the alliance was to promote the common goal of using open interface specification to enable the creation of a carrier-grade base platform based on COTS building blocks.

What is the Mountain View Alliance's short and long term plan to achieve its mission?

The MVA's immediate goal is to identify current projects within the participating organizations where cooperation is required / beneficial to avoid a technical conflict or to accelerate the closing of a gap by sharing the workload. In the long term, the MVA plans to serve as a clearinghouse for carrier-grade base platform interface specifications requirements and requirements for high availability enterprise applications. As the clearinghouse, the MVA will actively solicit input from various companies and organizations active in this space such as ITU study groups, IEEE, etc.