

The EGEE user support infrastructure

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The grid user support model in EGEE can be captioned “regional support with central coordination”. This model is realised through a support process which is clearly defined and involves all the parties that are needed to run a project-wide support service. This process is sustained by a help desk system which consists of a central platform integrated with several satellite systems belonging to the Regional Operations Centres (ROCs) and the Virtual Organisations (VOs). The central system (Global Grid User Support, GGUS) interconnects the ROCs and VOs and the other project wide groups like middleware, network, and service groups. Additionally the central system acts as a portal for users, offering the possibility to document problems and requests in the form of trouble tickets. Since all trouble tickets pass through the GGUS system it is the perfect place to store information on problems and of course also their solution in a knowledge base, available to users and support staff.

3. Impact

A well established and functional user support service permeates the whole EGEE project and it is one of the core non-middleware services and as such one of the key success factors in running a production quality infrastructure. Over the course of the series of EGEE projects the GGUS system and the management of the support process has been professionalised by applying proper change and process management strategies. The GGUS system is being improved through a series of regular new releases, which are well planned and documented including release notes. A coordinating body involving all relevant parties meets regularly to plan the future strategy. Applying these processes, the GGUS system has been constantly improved and its acceptance throughout the project has constantly increased. With this presentation of the GGUS system at the User Forum, we aim at a better understanding of the importance of a proper support infrastructure and show the major achievements of EGEE in this area.

If demonstration is requested please explain what visual or interactive aspects of the contribution necessitate a demonstration rather than a presentation or poster?

To give the audience the possibility to see the user support system in action and to show all its features, a demonstration is the appropriate way of presenting GGUS. A guided tour through the complete life cycle of a support request can be given to users and prospective support staff. The audience can really get to know the look and feel of the portal and become confident of using the system.

URL for further information:

www.ggus.org

4. Conclusions / Future plans

At the end of 2007 a major release of the GGUS portal took place. Included in this release were several new features whose implementation included modifications of the interfaces of the regional help desks. A new search engine which performs semantic searches of the ticket data base and several other data sources will improve the search results will be available by the time of the User Forum. We want to present to the audience the new as well as the established features.

Provide a set of generic keywords that define your contribution (e.g. Data Management, Workflows, High Energy Physics)

User support, operations support, help desk

1. Short overview

Grid user support is a challenging task due to the distributed nature of the grid. The variety of users and Virtual Organisations adds further to the challenge. Support requests come from grid beginners, from users with specific applications, from site administrators, or from grid monitoring operators. With the GGUS infrastructure, EGEE provides a portal where users can find support in their daily use of the grid. The current use of the system shows that the goal has been achieved with success.

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