



Introduction to TSANet

This tutorial is for parties interested in learning more about TSANet. It will introduce TSANet from a concept and theory perspective.

Many companies are using TSANet as their strategic tool for cooperative multivendor support. Understanding the organisation and how it can be used to meet your relationship needs, and how the program can be justified and implemented is the objective of this document.

General Business Structure

TSANet is a worldwide, not-for-profit, vendor-neutral support alliance formed in 1993. The business model is similar to industry trade associations like SSPA, AFSMI or SNIA. Although these trade associations and many others certainly have their value, TSANet differentiates itself as a tactical relationship tool. Support engineers use TSANet everyday on a worldwide basis, working on behalf of your customers to isolate and resolve multivendor problems.

Justification

Different companies justify the cost of membership in different ways. For many members, it is a combination of factors. In a multivendor environment, having a relationship with other partners and even competitors can be key to customer satisfaction. Every call between you and another member must involve a mutual customer. By being part of the organisation, you will have a relationship with all other members of the TSANet community you belong to. **You will only place and receive calls to other members when it involves your customer.**

At a more strategic level, companies who have integrated TSANet into their overall multivendor support structure also justify the value in cost savings. The cost of separate bi-lateral support contracts can be time-consuming and expensive. Many members will request membership in TSANet as opposed to creating separate by-lateral agreements.

The Community Model

It is important to understand that TSANet itself does not accept nor place calls on behalf of its members. The organisation provides the infrastructure to allow its members to place calls to each other when a mutual customer is affected. Every call placed between members must involve a mutual customer and be focused around the isolation or resolution of a multivendor problem.

The infrastructure comprises multivendor communities that are either “open” or “closed”. Membership in an open community is available to all members that qualify. Membership qualification in a closed community is driven by a member or group of members. Each member signs a Code of Conduct which contains a set of guidelines for multivendor cooperation. The code contains language similar to that used in a cooperative support agreement (CSA) each member agrees to work with other members of the community where a mutual customer is involved in a multivendor situation.

Communities vary in size from very large to one-on-one relationships depending on the focus and scope. Each community contains a set of relationship elements that all members agree upon. The community focus can vary to involve products and/or members or customers.

How calls are placed

TSANet provides a common database over the internet. The database provides members' information and instructions concerning contacting other members for support. Designated personnel within the support center(s) are given a user-id and password to enter the database to gain information on how to place a call to another member. Managers are also given access to the database to manage their support personnel and keep the information up-to-date. This allows a secure single point where members can obtain the necessary information to support customers with multivendor problems. The primary and back-up web sites are maintained by TSANet staff personnel and provide a secure environment for member information. The database does not provide incident tracking as members prefer to utilise their own internal tracking systems but does provide several functions including:

- Inbound procedures for contacting members
- Escalation points and procedures
- Notification of call placement via email
- Follow-up notification on problem resolution
- Management interface to update personnel
- Inbound and Outbound call statistics
- Management personnel database

TSA.Net will provide vendor-neutral escalation if needed and members must adhere to the policies and procedures of the alliance.

General Description of Open Communities

Standard or quid-pro-quo;

Standard membership includes a very large worldwide community with minimal entry requirements. Members agree to isolate and/or resolve mutual customer, multivendor problems. Members define their own hours of operation, products supported and if the call will be accepted on customers with or without support contracts. A single escalation contact, business manager and program manager is designated. Vendor-neutral escalation is part of the service.

Requirements

- Sign Product Member Code of Conduct
- Provide second level (tier 2) support.
- Be a manufacturer and provide and maintain a support organisation for those products
- Call originated must be placed by a designated outbound contact point limited to three callers per support site.

Flexibility

- Member defines the products supported
- Member defines the hours of operations
- Member defines Mutual Customer
- Member must accept calls worldwide but can set rules of engagement for customers outside their global region
- Calls can be transferred to internal contact points after initial contact by a designated caller

Strategic Use –

The standard TSA.Net is used by members as an entry point to establish relationships. Although the community has its limits via the number of outbound contact points and flexible hours, it assures you have a relationship with a large number of vendors. Several members will provide 24/7/365 support and most will not require the member have a high-level support contract. It is however, required that there be a mutual customer be involved in each call. It is optional as to how that customer is defined. Most members will provide support on a majority of their products.

For some companies, the standard TSA.Net may be sufficient to fulfill their multivendor relationship needs. Over 300 support departments worldwide participate in this relationship. Instead of finger-pointing customers, members join this community to

ensure cooperation between each other. Although 24/7/365 is optional, many of the larger companies will provide support around the clock. Although there are no required response times, most members provide same-day support. Should a company not be responsive in a critical situation, an escalation point is designated at each company. TSA.Net also provides vendor-neutral escalation worldwide. Many of your partners and competitors will be in this community. Keep in mind that you may define “mutual customer” however you like, but each call must involve a mutual customer. Most companies will join the *standard* TSA.Net and then create or join higher-level communities to meet more strategic relationship needs.

Mission Critical Customer (MCC);

A community formed by members that provide enterprise level support for some customers. This is a community that is generally open, meaning not related to a specific set of customer configurations. It was formed with relationship elements to meet most enterprise level relationship bi-lateral agreements.

Requirements

- 24/7/365 support
- Two-hour response time in critical situations
- Four-hour response time in serious situations
- 24/7/365 escalation
- Customer must be entitled to 24/7/365 support
- Designated Business Contact, Program Manager, Inbound Instructions, Escalation Instructions.

Flexibility

- Member defines the products supported
- Member can define global region where support will be provided
- Can designate individuals or groups that can originate calls.

Strategic Use –

MCC is designed to meet the needs of enterprise level cooperative support thus eliminating the need for bi-lateral agreements with multiple partners. The mutual customer definition ensures each call involves one of your customers entitled to 24/7/365 support. A minimum two-hour response time is required in critical situations and a 24/7/365 escalation point(s) ensure escalation when needed. Most companies will respond in far less time and the two hour requirement was implemented upon members’ legal department’s request.

This community is the fastest growing community outside the standard TSA.Net. MCC, along with the standard TSA.Net, ensures a broad coverage of cooperative support with a multitude of companies. In situations where the customer is not entitled to this level of

support, another member may be contacted via the standard TSA.Net as a back-up. While the number of callers is limited in the *standard* TSA.Net, MCC does not have a restriction on the number of outbound callers. However, there are some limitations on placing callers in global regions. Many members do participate in MCC on a worldwide basis, although this is not a requirement.

MCC is a self-regulated group meaning that should a company fail to meet its obligations, they can be terminated from the group.

General Description of Closed Communities

Closed Groups are formed to take advantage of the TSA.Net infrastructure without compromising confidentiality. TSA.Net will not disclose these relationships unless 100% of the members agree to disclosure. Relationship elements are defined by the group to meet the needs of the customer(s). Typically, these communities are formed to meet the needs of a specific set of customers or products. The relationship can take the form of an addendum using the common language already incorporated by many members, although this is not required. Contact TSA.Net staff to discuss the forming of these groups.

Requirements

- Membership in TSA.Net

Flexibility

- Member Defined

Strategic Use –

Members may want to utilise the TSA.Net infrastructure for ease of use and a single point for members to obtain the necessary information for contact with each other. Further, where open groups allow qualified members to participate; closed groups are more confidential and proprietary in nature. For example, a member may wish to only have a relationship with specific elements with certain members. The main advantage of these groups is to utilise the common language in the code and addendums that members have already signed.

Closed groups or one-off relationships are another form of a bi-lateral or multilateral agreement. Should a relationship be formed and other members are needed to join, you simply request them to join your group.

Legal Aspects

TSA.Net provides its members anti-trust documentation and monitors relationship elements to ensure member conduct is within legal guidelines. TSA.Net also has received

two Negative Clearances to operate within the European Union (EU) and is compliant with global data protection acts. TSA Net is trademarked in all countries where members have elected to participate.

Management of the Relationship(s)

For each relationship(s), a Business and Program Manager is designated. A general description of the roles follows:

The designated Business Manager for the relationship has overall strategic responsibility.

The designated Program Manager is responsible for the operational aspects of the relationship including management of the personnel in the database and inbound documents posted for all community members.

Pricing

Please see below for the cost of annual renewable membership in one geographical region. Discounts and additional membership benefits are available for “global membership” (membership in regions North America/APAC/EMEA) please ask TSA Net for more details.

A company cannot place OUTBOUND calls FROM a region where they are not a member.

Companies can elect to pay in USD/EUR/UKP.

MCC Membership

2,500.00 USD

1,485.00 GBP

1,738.00 EUR

Classic Membership (includes MCC if company can meet criteria for participation)

5,500.00 USD

3,275.00 GBP

3,830.00 EUR

END