

## REPORT REPRINT

# Global Workspace Alliance 2.0 formed to deliver the last mile of support to customers

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Despite the rise of cloud services and automation, the Global Workspace Alliance knows that the end-user outsourcing market still requires some high-touch capabilities that only local service engineers can provide.

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The Getronics Workspace Alliance, headquartered in Amsterdam, was founded in 2009 by Getronics as the world's first alliance of IT service providers. It brings together the diaspora of Getronics businesses now owned by other companies: CompuCom, Getronics Middle East, NTT DATA Getronics, ServiceOne Getronics and Tecnom. Earlier this month, it unveiled an expanded group of partners and a new governance framework to strengthen global coverage, a common set of tools and processes for the members, and rebranding to become the Global Workspace Alliance (GWA).

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## THE 451 TAKE

Business users typically carry multiple devices, and the majority of employees access corporate data from their own devices. In response, the GWA is offering a proactive single point of accountability for its customers with end users across the world. The GWA is committed to providing next-gen workspace services such as Persona Portal Services and Solution Cafés, along with an integrated ITSM system so that tickets can be managed within the GWA from a single pane of glass. As a federation of regional players, it can provide a global focus blended with local expertise and culture. Its structure also means that it can offer contract flexibility in the various local markets. Some customers will like this, while others will want to deal with a single global legal entity. Nevertheless, the GWA is transitioning its scope and reach, and in so doing, is helping to define the global support services landscape.

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## CONTEXT

GWA 2.0 has a tiered structure and is led by CompuCom and Getronics, which have both invested in the development of the common tools and processes all members in the alliance have access to. The next tier reflects the larger, strategic regional members of the group, such as SPIE in France and Tecnom in Spain, and the lower tier includes smaller players such as Japan-based EIRE Systems; S&T, headquartered in Austria; Norway-based InfoCare Technology Services; Netherlands-based Centric; AGCN in the Middle East; and Italy-based NSC.

The GWA provides on-site coverage in 90 countries from five global service centers operating in 22 languages. It represents a team of 30,000 employees, 12,000 field engineers and 1,320 service desk agents. This means that each member of the GWA can support clients with large global footprints anywhere in the world, an opportunity that individual vendors would struggle to achieve on their own. But the GWA expects to offer its members more than a distributed network of hands and feet; it wants to help them become more innovative in the way they develop their customer relationships by offering proactive next-generation workspace offerings.

## SERVICES

About one-quarter of the GWA's business comes from its project work, so it is keen to point out that its value proposition is not simply built on feet on the street fulfilling managed service contracts, but also on its innovative work with customers where it can offer a diversity of support options. This is important because user requirements change more quickly than the managed service contract length allows, so the GWA needs an innovation-delivery framework/process to address this using shared financial, technology and cultural assets.

GWA was not organized as a set of vendor relationships to support RFP bids, but instead seeks to operate as a genuine alliance with integrated business development plans based on next-generation workspace services. To this end, it is transitioning to a structured network operating with a common charter for payment, service quality and pre-agreed contractual terms and conditions.

The GWA's services span 'feet on the street' field services and service desk capabilities that offer an analytics-driven service experience with service catalog, as well as cloud services with an end-user 'edge' in focus. In order to deliver this, the members of the GWA are using a single aligned technology architecture with the GWA's own enterprise service bus that has been created to unite ServiceNow images between CompuCom and Getronics. The GWA is also using Nexthink and MuleSoft tooling to integrate end-user data with other data sources and APIs. With this architecture and tooling in place, the GWA can provide Persona-based services to model workspace requirements and provide better service management. This is also supported by the End User Orchestrator

automation toolset that CompuCom has developed with Intel to provide access to end-user devices below the OS level to drive patch adoption.

CompuCom is also sharing with the GWA its Solution Cafés located within enterprises to pull IT support into the social hub of the business. As part of the offering, CompuCom, and now also the GWA, helps the customer with the location selection (the café is best placed near coffee machines or corporate cafeterias) and operating model for the café, such as the design, hours of operation and content. The service provider helps put the policies in place for end users and assists the IT group with rebranding and associated cultural change. Once a Solution Café is up and running, members of the GWA will offer service management for all devices that employees can pick up and carry in. In other words, the offering provides all the things you would expect from desk-side support but focused on BYOD requirements defined in a catalog of services.

## STRATEGY

CompuCom and Getronics began this transformation two years ago to rethink the way that the GWA is organized and the investments required to move the group forward. CompuCom acquired the North American business of Getronics in 2008, so the two organizations have a shared heritage and the biggest global footprint of the members.

When these companies were looking to select partners to join the GWA, their main criterion was to find partners with complementary regional coverage and the ability to deliver end-user services backed up by a strong track record. All alliance members have to sign up to the charter, and there is the ability to move partners out if necessary. The GWA is not looking for additional members but has been organized such that any companies acquired by the leading members would be able to join.

However, the GWA is not a single legal entity, so each customer contracts with the lead member for its region, which then takes responsibility for delivery. In structure, then, the GWA is centralized but leverages local knowledge. It argues that this is necessary because the logistics and tax processes vary so much on a country-by-country basis.

There is a core team within the alliance to source and contract for customers, and it is the GWA's intention to win market share with customers via joint sales and marketing opportunities. It does not see itself as simply an opportunistic network responding to bids. For example, one of its priorities this year is to accelerate the delivery of innovation and automation among the alliance, hence its investment in training in the use of the central toolset to define Persona requirements for each client site. Because the greatest appetite for the Persona-based service is with the more advanced markets such as the US, UK and France, the go-to-market motions will initially be led by CompuCom and Getronics. However, the expectation is that over the next couple of years, the broader alliance membership will be able to lead with these services as they create additional revenue streams for them.

## COMPETITION

End-user workplace services is a well-established market dominated by erstwhile (IBM) and continuing PC manufacturers (HP, Fujitsu, Dell); systems integrators, such as Capgemini, CSC, HCL, Infosys, TCS, Unisys and Wipro; regional service providers that began as PC resellers such as CompuCom in North America; and service providers with a background in managed network services, such as AT&T and BT. Although the end-user workplace services sector has been a somewhat stable area of the IT services market for a decade, the adoption of consumer devices and technologies and the requirement for mobility are disrupting that stability.

Furthermore, it is broadly believed that many large global providers do not want support services on their books and would prefer to partner with specialized providers to deliver the last mile of end-user support. There are many small regional providers working to backfill the gaps in support for the large device manufacturers. However, in terms of global reach, the GWA primarily competes with IBM, HP and Fujitsu, and a substantial part of its business comes from providing white-label warranty support for Dell.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

### STRENGTHS

The Global Workspace Alliance 2.0 now has the muscle and reach to compete with the tier one global vendors while retaining a credible localized market focus. Its new governance structure and integrated tooling are strengthening its market position and proposition.

### WEAKNESSES

The next-gen services are quite a complex sale, and the alliance is going to have to invest thoroughly in training to realize its goal of growing innovative services via its overall membership.

### OPPORTUNITIES

The potential for support services lies with the huge growth of device management required by the Internet of Things. Organizations with access to global field service teams will be in high demand as IoT services increase.

### THREATS

The biggest threat to the alliance could simply be that it is not a single global legal entity; some customers will prefer to contract globally with one (competitor) company.