



# IBM AIX release and service strategy restructured

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## At a glance

IBM® intends to enhance the release and service strategy for the AIX® operating system by extending the service of future Technology Levels for up to three years. Clients with a valid Software Maintenance Agreement for AIX V6 and V7 will be able to contact IBM support for support during that period without having to move up to the latest Technology Level.

## Overview

The AIX operating system release and service strategy has been enhanced to provide up to three years of support for each Technology Level, to reduce the number of Technology Levels released per AIX version to one per year, and to deliver fewer Service Packs per year.

These changes are effective starting with AIX 6 Technology Level 6 and AIX 7. Prior Technology Levels of AIX 6 and all Technology Levels of AIX V5.3 continue to be limited to two years of service life. These changes do not apply to IBM PowerVM™, IBM PowerHA™, or any other IBM products other than AIX 6 and AIX 7.

### Longer technology level service life

Starting with AIX 6 Technology Level 6 and AIX 7, IBM will provide a service life of up to three years for each Technology Level. During that three-year life cycle, IBM will deliver new fixes for problems discovered on these Technology Levels and support for new hardware on a best-commercial-effort basis.

The expected benefit of this change is to reduce the client administrative workload of upgrading Technology Levels by lengthening the life span of each Technology Level. This benefit is particularly true for clients that have long preproduction qualification cycles for adoption of new Technology Levels.

IBM also intends to provide support for new IBM Power Systems™ hardware enhancements that may be released during the three-year service life of a Technology Level.

Hardware enhancements such as processor speed improvements, new I/O adapters, and new processors within a family (for example, IBM POWER7™) may be supported on previous Technology Levels by installing a Service Pack. Full exploitation of the new hardware may require upgrading to a newer Technology Level or new release of AIX.

Clients can get support for the new hardware by installing a Service Pack that contains the necessary changes to support the new hardware on a previous Technology Level. This support may in some cases only include toleration of the new hardware, rather than full exploitation of new hardware features such as higher degrees of simultaneous multi-threading.

Systems that offer preload or preinstallation of the AIX operating system will only include the latest available Technology Level. Preload and preinstallation for previous Technology Levels of the AIX operating system will not be available.

Technology Levels will be available through electronic software distribution in the countries where electronic distribution is available. Clients who require boot media for new hardware on previous Technology Levels will be able to order boot media via the Programming Request for Price Quotation (PRPQ) process.

### **One technology level per year**

IBM intends to release only one new Technology Level per year, per AIX release. New Technology Levels are planned to be released in the second half of the year. New Technology Levels may include new hardware support, cumulative bug fixes, and in some cases, new functionality.

In the past, new hardware support was primarily delivered via new Technology Levels; however, since 2007 we have expanded delivery of new hardware support via Service Packs on top of already released Technology Levels. This new capability eliminates the need for multiple Technology Levels per year per release.

The expected benefit for clients is a reduction in client administrative workload, particularly for clients that were upgrading to the latest Technology Level twice per year.

### **Fewer Service Packs**

Fixes for problems discovered in a Technology Level are delivered via Service Packs, which are cumulative collections of multiple fixes. IBM intends to deliver Service Packs on a slightly less frequent basis of approximately once per quarter compared to about every six to eight weeks as is done today.

Interim Fixes will continue to be used to deliver critical fixes to clients between Service Packs.

### **Statement of Support for OpenSSH, OpenSSL, and LSOF on AIX .**

For those customers with a Software Maintenance Agreement (SWMA) for AIX , IBM will provide support for OpenSSH, OpenSSL, and LSOF in accordance with SWMA.

### **Statement of direction**

All statements regarding IBM's future direction only represent IBM's current intent, are subject to change or withdrawal without notice, and represent only goals and objectives.

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## **Planned availability date**

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February 18, 2011

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## **Announcement countries**

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All European, Middle Eastern, and African countries.

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