



Virtual Internet Service Provider

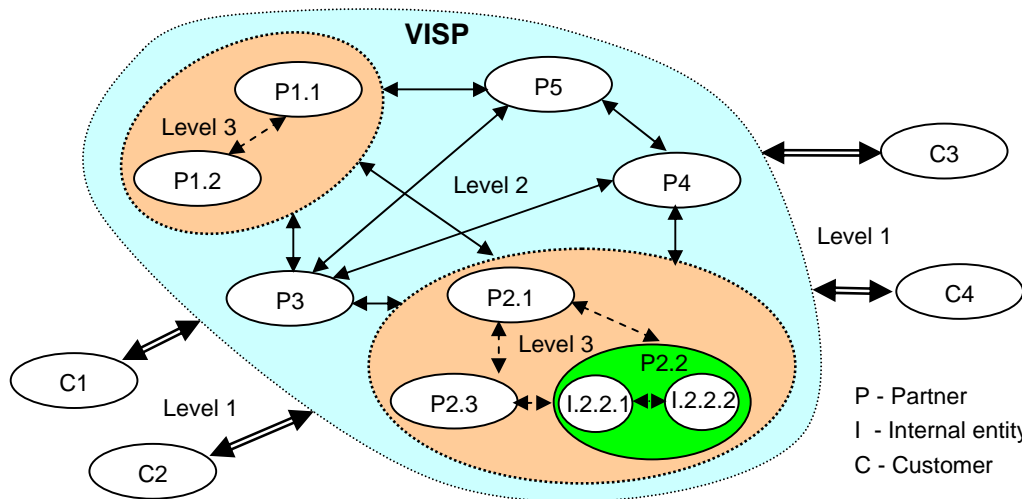
IST project: FP6-027178

Objectives

The main objective of the IST project VISP (Virtual ISP) is to develop a software platform enabling a cluster of SMEs to collaborate and operate as a single business entity in multiple dynamic business models in order to produce tailored Internet Service Provider (ISP) solutions adapted to local business needs.

There is a growing demand for increasingly specialised, complex and individualised services. The VISP project will specify these tailored services by combining customisable atomic and composite services selected from a number of services available. This will enable the most appropriate individualised services to be provided to each customer, thus allowing small ISPs to differentiate themselves from their larger competitors and the incumbent operators.

The knowledge, experience and visibility gained during the project will allow the SMEs involved in VISP to initiate and/or extend their eBusiness and semantic Web commercial activities by developing commercial projects specific to their customers, undertaking consultancy activities, etc. The VISP project intends distributing part of the software developed in the project as open source software so that others can also benefit from the project results. The innovative technologies and solutions developed will be contributed to relevant standards groups.



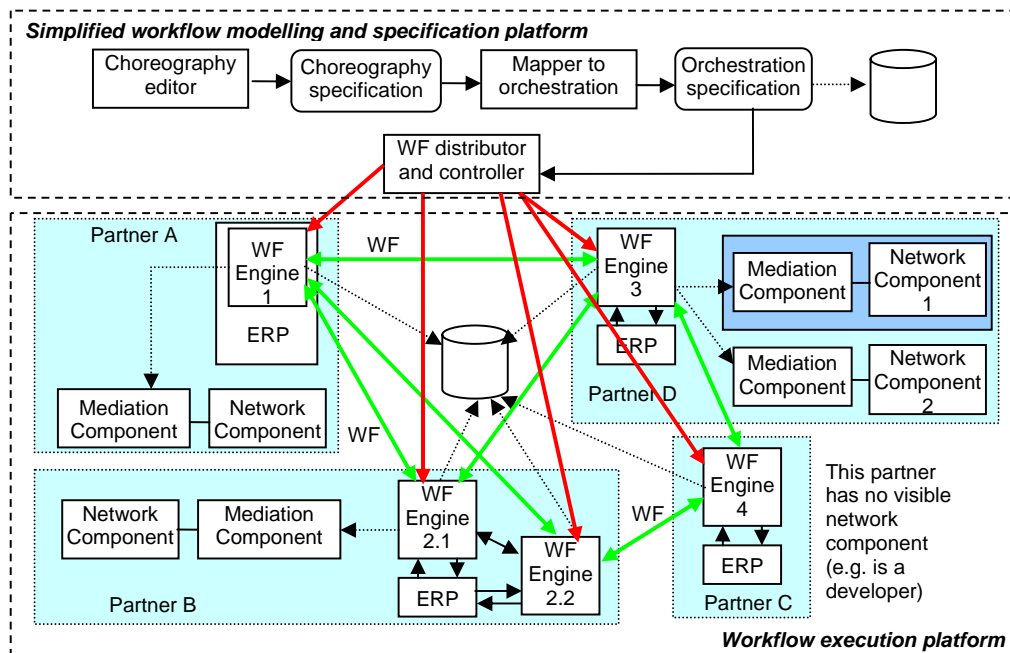
Approach

In order to achieve its objectives, the VISP project is carrying out the following work.

New business models: VISP has explored various business models and has identified a set that will allow a cluster of SMEs to collaborate dynamically and behave as a single virtual ISP. This will enable isolated SMEs to benefit from the services provided by other partners in the cluster and to develop additional business.

Workflow technologies state-of-the-art: VISP has provided a comprehensive state-of-the-art analysis and comparison of workflow technologies and software.

ISP service decomposition and knowledge representation: VISP is building an ISP knowledge base by decomposing ISP services into atomic service elements, specifying these service elements in a textual language and formalising the semantic links of these service elements and of their parameters with formal ontologies.



Software platform: VISP is designing and building an integrated and automated software platform comprising a workflow modelling and specification platform supporting different technologies (such as BPMN and BPEL) via an integrated tool chain, and a workflow execution platform allowing cluster partners and their customers to manage and monitor workflows in a secure way.

Cluster business workflows: VISP is providing a consolidated set of realistic business workflows based on existing specifications and complemented with missing workflows, able to deal with business processes in a dynamic cluster of partners. Business workflows will be specified both at the choreography and at the orchestration levels for multi-relationships as well as for binary relationships.

Formal service implementation and provisioning: VISP is providing ISP service implementation and provisioning workflows, thus allowing the operations in a cluster of partners to be automated so that the cluster can behave as a virtual ISP. VISP is

addressing this issue using a top-down approach, starting from the business workflows, and more importantly re-using business workflow technologies instead of low level programming languages. This approach will provide a higher level of abstraction, integration, efficiency, re-usability and effective achievability.

Technologies: VISP is innovating in its technical approach by relying widely on Web technologies based on XML. It is defining and implementing an integrated workflow tool chain fulfilling BSS (Business Support System) functionalities that will be integrated with a workflow execution environment interfacing with existing ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) software and with an abstract OSS (Operations Support System) environment. By relying mainly on XML-based technologies, VISP intends to simplify and harmonise the implementation of its solution as much as possible. This is a key aspect for SMEs that cannot afford to use multiple BSS and OSS technologies.

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Public deliverables and publications are available here:

Web site: www.visp-project.org

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