LA Grid

Business Strategy

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Executive Summary

LA Grid is an industry / academic initiative to dramatically increase the quantity and quality of Hispanic Technical Professionals entering the Information Technology fields.

At the core of this initiative is the development of a computer grid across multiple universities and businesses. It will serve as the platform for education in the critical and emerging fields of grid computing, distributed systems and supercomputing. The Grid will also serve as a living laboratory for advanced research by the universities in the areas of grid technology as well as the applications that can be leveraged by the technology (i.e., healthcare, hurricane mitigation, bio tech, nano tech). This research will be done in a collaborative fashion between universities as well as with IBM’s Thomas Watson Research Laboratories and the Barcelona Supercomputing Center.

LA Grid will serve as a catalyst for talent development. Coupled to the initiative are internships, mentorships, research projects and education intended to sharpen the focus and commitment of these future leaders.

LA Grid has three key phases: Definition and Design, Launch, Rollout and Growth. The phases are not just for the technology but also for the partnerships, research initiatives and talent programs. At the core of LA Grid is a management system inclusive of a Board of Governors with an executive sponsor from each university, a Technology Committee and associated plans, schedules and milestones.

Critical measures for LA Grid’s success include growth in the quantity and quality of Hispanic graduates in Computer Science and Engineering, key advanced research projects and grants obtained by these universities, replicability of the innovation from the different initiatives and research projects.

1) **LA Grid Definition and Design Phase**

This initial phase of LA Grid includes the definition of technology, high-level areas of research, talent development programs and the teams to drive the leadership.

The selection of the initial universities focused on the quality of Hispanic talent produced, potential for advanced research, commitment by the university executives and faculty to drive the initiative. To ensure the level of expectation from both IBM and the universities, Master Joint Study Agreements were developed and executed by all parties articulating the responsibilities ahead.

A high level and preliminary Grid technology model was created as a starting point. The true value will come from students, faculty and researchers collaborating in the discovery of better networks and their usage in the most advanced applications.
The business infrastructure has been established to create and fund internships, collaborative research, mentorships, marketing programs and the supporting executive commitment within the universities and IBM.

A series of extended partnerships have been created in order to focus, model and visualize what LA Grid will be able to do. The International Hurricane Research Center and Miami Children’s Hospital were chosen because of the potential to drive innovation into two major areas of national priority: hurricane mitigation and healthcare (electronic health records and telemedicine). These advanced applications provide ample room for innovation and also provide a very large potential for research grants to the universities. The Barcelona Supercomputing Center will provide unparalleled supercomputing capabilities to qualifying research projects.

With the business and technology infrastructure in place, we move forward to the Launch.

2) **LA Grid Launch**

In order to position communicate and drive attention to the impending projects, a high profile event has been coordinated to launch LA Grid.

The launch event has been crafted to articulate the “Vision of LA Grid”. This will be done through some very dramatic and highly visual demonstrations of target research areas, overview of the multiple initiatives and endorsements from all participating universities, Barcelona Supercomputing Center, the National Science Foundation and IBM.

This event will receive media coverage from the IT industry, Hispanic journals, Florida and international (Latin America, Spain, Mexico) press.

We will offer to each of the participating universities, the opportunity to conduct similar launch events. These could be used to enhance the universities’ brand, research stature, and economic development of the region it serves.

3) **LA Grid Growth Phase**

Post launch, LA Grid will focus on the key elements of growth, number of students, quality of innovation and revenue generating research and selectively attracting new partners.

The core LA Grid students are being identified and development plans will be established to create internships, mentorships, research and educational programs.
Target Grid research will be defined in collaboration with IBM Research, the universities and the Barcelona Supercomputing Center. Application specific research will be driven towards focused areas having university leadership and expertise.

The LA Grid Board of Governors will provide leadership by defining strategic initiatives, collaborating in execution and driving sponsorship and commitment. This Board will meet on a frequently scheduled basis to discuss plans, progress and launch new initiatives.

The Technology Committee will have the continued responsibility to define, maintain and grow the Grid. They will work with the research teams to identify dependencies, support and plan for growth.

Once target research areas are identified, proposal writing and execution should follow the Principal Investigator model familiar to the universities. The Governance and Technology teams will periodically review these projects to provide expertise, leverage collaboration and extend as applicable.

A key area of focus for LA Grid is the leverage of its technology and platform as a “living laboratory”; available to its participating partners providing computing power and communication with proportion unmatched by individual institutions. The second focus area is to pull the resources as LA Grid to seek very large grant opportunities, investments, endorsements and partnerships. Independently the partner institutions are self-funding.

Additional universities and partnerships will be executed per a strategy of focused growth in line with LA Grid’s objective of Hispanic talent, advanced research, commitment and collaboration.