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**Sun, Microsoft can agree on Java**

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Microsoft and Sun last week agreed to extend Microsoft's license to support Sun's Java code through the Microsoft JVM for nine months beyond the previous expiration date of January 2004. The new pact extends the agreement to September 30, 2004, and keeps Microsoft under the Sun Java umbrella for longer than anticipated.

"Customers asked us to come to this sort of agreement because they want a little bit of extra time to transition from the Microsoft Virtual Machine," said Jean Elliott, group manager, Java Distribution Programs at Sun. "As customers are transitioning to current technologies, they want to make that transition while still being supported."

The announcement was a departure from the norm in stories about the two companies, in which terms like "salvo" frequently appear. Elliott said the agreement was reached because both companies decided to put aside competitive issues and focus on what would benefit the industry as a whole.

"It was actually a very positive working experience," said Elliott. "Sun and Microsoft have proved in this that they can work well together when they keep the needs of their customers and the developer community first."

Elliott added that when the extension of the license runs out and Microsoft's support of JVM ends, Sun will provide options for users that still require the Sun JVM.

"We are absolutely committed to helping these customers transition to current technology and in making that transition as smooth as possible," she said, adding that a relatively new Web site ([http://java.sun.com/upgrade](http://java.sun.com/upgrade/)) has been launched for that specific purpose. "It is the place where we hope developers will go to get information on how to transition their applications from relying on the MSVM to a current, compatible version of Java. And there they'll find the standard things that you would expect to find on a developer Web site: support forums, upgrade guides, tech tips, articles ... that sort of thing."