

IDEAS IN ACTION: A Case Study



Putting Families First: The Defense Personal Property System

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Background

In mid-2004, SRA International in Fairfax, VA was awarded the development of the Defense Personal Property System (DPS), Families First Phase II, in response to a 1996 congressional study revealing that change of station moves ranked as a leading quality of life issue for military families. In an effort to modernize a piecemeal framework of aging applications and manual procedures used by household goods carriers and Department of Defense (DoD) transportation offices, SRA proposed a single Web-based end-to-end platform to absorb over 1,000 functional requirements and streamline the process of managing a half million personal property moves each year.

As the prime firm fixed-price provider of a turnkey solution of unprecedented complexity for the Military Surface Distribution and Deployment Command (SDDC), SRA urgently required numerous core competencies. The call for talent included an enlistment for project managers, functional analysts, data modelers and database administrators, systems integrators, software testers, documentation and training specialists; and change management champions. Ability to complete the project amid funding uncertainties and aggressive deadlines within one year also added to the challenge. Specialized services procured from over a dozen subcontractors were ultimately utilized in fielding the Defense Personal Property System (DPS).

Approach

XIO Strategies collaborated with SRA senior principals to launch the program and establish standards for over 300 required written deliverables. XIO provided multifaceted subcontractor support and value through Change Management and technical writing expertise, assisting with interagency technical- and program-level correspondence; and by ensuring that all teams were coordinated and empowered to meet aggressive contractual commitments with critical written deliverables.

Applying knowledge acquired from all aspects of the project; XIO emerged as a leading and steadfast contributor.

Perhaps the greatest success was developing a comprehensive training solution tailored to multiple stakeholder roles while DPS was being constructed; which required dozens of interactive multimedia courses, user and quick start guides, reference manuals and “train the trainer” materials. Additionally, XIO provided support with software testing and the Tier Two Help Desk; leveraging “out of the box thinking” to help meet the challenges and demands required in the development of DPS.

“XIO has been a steadfast contributor to the Defense Personal Property System (DPS) program for the past 4 years, providing exceptional technical writing services. Not only do they bring the right skills to the table, but they have consistently met tight deadlines and demonstrated a genuine commitment to the program.”

Donald Tindall, PMP, Principal
Project Manager, SRA

Results

In December 2007, DPS “went live” for Transportation Service Providers (TSPs), enabling them to submit their respective paperwork in the Web-based environment to qualify for moving government shipments. Now in its fourth year of consistent support with DPS, XIO Strategies continues to support this valuable Families First initiative. Despite periods of funding uncertainty, XIO possesses the necessary experience to be part of the solution needed to overcome project challenges, and was recently asked to increase its number of staff supporting of the program.

About XIO Strategies, Inc.: *XIO Strategies specializes in providing end-to-end supply chain management and change management consulting services to government, military and commercial organizations. XIO works with organizations both large and small to effectively support technology deployment, conduct research and training, create marketing materials, and manage communications programs during periods of change. Through work in policy planning, process analysis and deployment of the next generation of AIT tools, the XIO team strives to optimize supply chain processes so they are poised to propel our clients forward. For more information, please visit us on the Web at www.xiostrategies.com.*