

IDEAS IN ACTION: A Case Study



XIO Supports Item Unique Identification (IUID) July, 2008

Background

To succeed in a changing global military environment, the Department of Defense (DoD) is leveraging new technologies to ensure logistical posture and readiness for the warfighter. As part of this effort, the Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics signed a memorandum on July 29, 2003 outlining policy for the use of Item Unique Identification (IUID) throughout the DoD community. This policy requires all items delivered to the DoD with a unit acquisition value of \$5,000 or more, or that are serially managed, controlled inventory, mission critical or otherwise designated, to be marked with a Unique Item Identifier (UII).

By assigning a UII, one tangible item can be distinguished from all other like or unlike items. This significantly enhances asset visibility by creating the capability to identify a specific item and its history, track an item throughout the supply chain and corresponding lifecycle and have item visibility regardless of platform or "owner". In addition, this greatly improves the efficiency of acquisition, repair, and deployment of items by reducing item management costs, improving inventory accuracy, and combating counterfeiting of parts.

In order to realize the benefits of IUID, the DoD needed to educate and communicate with a broad audience, including suppliers, program managers, depots, and the warfighters. Each functional community needed to understand the IUID policy, the technology, the requirements, and their role within the DoD IUID implementation. Additionally, the DoD needed to supply its audience with training, implementation guidelines, and best practices.

In June 2005, XIO Strategies (XIO) was selected to provide change management and outreach support for the implementation of IUID throughout the DoD supply chain.

XIO Approach

To facilitate the adoption of IUID by DoD suppliers, XIO developed a comprehensive and sophisticated change management program that included electronic and print communications, marketing, education and training. Change management minimizes risks for all stakeholders involved by providing a comprehensive plan and schedule for implementing the human side of change. By identifying target audiences and the impact of implementation on their tasks and perceptions, XIO developed key messages for each audience and a corresponding schedule to correlate with milestones and critical events. In order to reach the greatest number of stakeholders, XIO developed training and educational materials to maximize learning across different modes, including aurally, visually, and interactively.

Execution

To successfully execute the developed approach, XIO first identified the audiences crucial to the success of the IUID policy: suppliers, program managers, depots, and the warfighters. Once the stakeholders were defined, XIO crafted key messages for each target audience and worked with the IUID Policy Office to develop a step-by-step "roadmap" to compliance. This roadmap aimed to clarify policy requirements by providing a straightforward guide for IUID implementation.

After the audience key messages and roadmaps were finalized, XIO developed a communications plan relevant to each audience. The roadmaps were used to create an online toolkit (available at www.iuidtoolkit.com; see image at right) in which users could view



interactive, audience-specific content along with other supporting information and documentation. The toolkit was designed to deliver concise, critical information without overwhelming the intended audience with details that did not pertain to the specific community. Key IUID messages were communicated through brochures, one-pagers, e-newsletters, advertisements, training, videos and additional online tools. XIO also developed the IUID tutorial, another key communication tool that is accessible via the internet.

In addition to on-demand education and training, XIO has facilitated multiple DoD-sponsored IUID Forums and BootCamps. To promote awareness of the Forums and encourage attendance by suppliers, XIO has developed online and print marketing materials and conducted market research to determine the best media outlets to reach the intended audiences.

Results

By developing and implementing change management and communication plans, XIO played, and continues to play, a vital role in the success of the DoD IUID program. Since beginning to collaborate with the UID Policy Office, both audience knowledge and IUID compliance have significantly increased. Since its launch in October 2005, the Toolkit and Tutorial have been uploaded over 2.5 million times, with over 2,000 visits per day.

Additionally, the UID Forums and UID BootCamps have been attended by thousands of individuals. The UID E-Newsletter currently reaches an audience of over 5,500 and the IUID Registry contains over 2.6 million items.

As indicated by client feedback (*at right*), XIO continues to demonstrate success in contributing to this crucial DoD program.

“We have had the pleasure of working with XIO Strategies for the past few years, as they have provided strategic support to the US DoD UID Policy Office. Not only does the XIO team demonstrate dedication to the UID program, but they have emerged as a key in-house advisor in: development of communications tools, facilitating and coordinating working groups, and participating in the development of materials to support policy and implementation.”

Robert Leibrandt, Deputy
Unique Identification Policy Office

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.