

Navy's OA Efforts Opening Doors For Small High Tech Firms New To Defense

January 5, 2010

By Geoff Fein

The Navy's move to incorporate open systems into its surface combatant fleet is providing opportunities for companies that have not traditionally relied upon defense for their revenues.

From its inception, Washington-based **GoAhead Software** has been working on commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) and high availability and fault management systems as a middleware solution for telecommunications systems and networks, Tyson Moler, director of federal operations, told *Defense Daily* recently.

Five years ago when **Lockheed Martin** [LMT] began working on its Aegis open architecture effort, the defense giant found GoAhead, Moler said.

The two companies crossed paths as the Navy began pushing Lockheed Martin toward an open architecture model, and as Lockheed Martin began looking for a company that had an industry open standard developed for the commercial marketplace but with equal relevance in defense systems, Moler noted.

"Lockheed Martin found us initially for the DDX capture effort back when they were the blue team," he said. "DDX unfolded and it is now DDG-1000 and Raytheon is the prime. TSCI (Total Ship Computing Infrastructure) sort of replaced the role we were fitting into as the Lockheed Martin proposed solution.

"That relationship was formed over DDX and then we were able to follow through on a program of record via Aegis," Moler added.

Following a Lockheed Martin analysis, GoAhead's middleware was baselined into the advanced capability build (ACB) 08 and installed on the USS *Bunker Hill* (CG-52), the first cruiser to undergo the Aegis modernization effort, Moler said.

"[It] is also baselined into ACB 12. The only COTS high availability fault management middleware," he said. "It's actually gone through combat readiness and operational trials and successfully passed. We are extremely proud about the ability to prove our software with Lockheed Martin, and the Navy, in that capacity."

GoAhead has also worked closely with the program executive office integrated warfare systems (PEO IWS) and personnel supporting IWS at Naval Surface Warfare Center Dahlgren, Va., to define the objective architecture, Moler added.

"We gathered a bit of knowledge of where the Navy wants to go with objective architecture. We were able to work with them closely and provide some Service Availability Forum standards expertise as well as some commercial lessons learned and expertise," he said.

The Service Availability Forum is a consortium that develops, publishes, educates and promotes open specifications for carrier-grade and mission-critical systems. SA Forum specifications enable COTS ecosystems for highly available platforms, streamline development and accelerate time to market, according to the organization.

Another benefit of the relationship with Lockheed Martin has been the company's ability to find uses for GoAhead's middleware, Moler said.

With ACB 08 Lockheed Martin started what they called the Open Architecture System Manager (OASM).

"Our middleware sits at the core of OASM providing these availability services to the tactical infrastructure of the ship--fire radar, fire control and vertical launch," Moler said. "That is all aimed at ensuring the availability of service within that infrastructure for the weapon systems."

With the success of ACB 08 and ACB 12 on the horizon, Moler sees GoAhead's work shifting into other components such as the Common Processing System. There will also be some activities that GoAhead is involved in that are Lockheed Martin specific for ACB 12, he added.

"What Lockheed Martin has done, which I think is the exact vision of the Navy, is taken this OASM technology and 'productized' it, such that now variations of OASM are employed in LCS, the Spanish F-105 (frigate), and the Australian [Air Warfare Destroyer] program," Moler said. "We've been able to be a partner to Lockheed Martin on other naval systems as well as international navy fleets because of what they have done with OASM."

From a revenue standpoint, about 30 percent of GoAhead Software's business today is from the federal market, Moler said. "When you look at our new business, about 50 percent is from the federal market. We see that eclipsing telecom and the other industries that we are a part of.

"From an open architecture perspective, we see the DoD and the federal work really driving a significant amount of growth of our business in the near future," he added.

Copyright © 2010 Access Intelligence, LLC. All rights reserved.
Reproduction in whole or in part in any form or medium without express written permission of Access Intelligence, LLC is prohibited.