A TransQuest Success Story

Helping Enable the NIS Through Technology

According to the *National Intelligence Strategy* (NIS), the United States Intelligence Community (IC) must become integrated: a team making the whole greater than the sum of its parts. It must also be agile: an enterprise with an adaptive, diverse, continually learning, and mission-driven workforce that embraces innovation and takes initiative. The United States faces a complex and rapidly shifting international security landscape. Events at home and abroad move quickly, often in an interconnected fashion, driven by the pace of technological change and international communications. It is because national security priorities adapt as rapidly as these events unfold, that, insists former Director of National Intelligence, Dennis Blair in his preface to the NIS, the IC must keep a steady focus on enduring challenges in and among nation-states and persistent transnational issues, and also be agile in adapting to emerging threats and harnessing opportunities. The NIS sets out the following guiding principles: responsive and incisive **understanding** of global threats and opportunities, coupled with an **agility** that brings to bear the full IC's capabilities.

When you consider that the IC is made up of 17 separate agencies that collect and interpret intelligence for their own direct purposes, and typically not for each other, these guiding principles create daunting challenges for the community. One thing is clear, collaboration between the members of the community is an undeniable requirement and any intelligence improvements must be of a collaborative kind. To defeat the new enemies, the days of proprietary information and intelligence silos must become relics of the past. The future of intelligence lies in open collaboration within the IC, harnessing the resources of all IC members rapidly (perhaps even in real-time), and doing so in a web-based way, eliminating logistical and other obstacles that have prevented rapid information-sharing previously. The new IC will be an open one, one that uses blogs, wikis, chat rooms, social networking and other Web 2.0-type applications.

Collaboration Starts With an Attitude and Ends With IS

This "collaborative" approach to intelligence only starts with an open attitude. Certainly, without the right mindset, true sharing would not be likely, collaboration would not be easy or helpful, and rapid response would remain just a meaningless phrase. So, attitude certainly plays a big part, diminishing counter-collaborative skirmishing because when agencies deliver the goods as multiple agencies rather than one agency, people notice. Yet, despite the strides in attitude, the true enabler of the NIS is, make no doubt, today's new technology.

TransQuest plays a real role in the development of information architectures that facilitate the NIS. We have transitioned from an integrator and administrator of intelligence information systems, to now playing a vital role in future IC

information technology development. TransQuest is currently involved in key critical projects at one of the nation's largest and most influential intelligence organizations - projects that may well become the foundation and cornerstones for IS and IT strategies for the entire IC in the future.

We provide the IC with Web-based information sharing capabilities by using many collaborative tools that enable members of the IC to collaborate in a common shared-space environment. We deliver Web-centric capabilities, search and discovery, collaboration, web space, media sharing and authentication. These capabilities are delivered through modern browser-based technologies. Partnered with the IC, national defense, homeland security, law enforcement and the diplomatic community abroad, TransQuest helps assure access to the intelligence the IC needs - when it needs it.

Our project management, technical and administrative support, information technology (IT) engineering services and operations and maintenance (O&M) support play an important role in the integration, development and delivery of IT engineering solutions, architectures and services supporting the collaborative IC mission of delivering enterprise level Intelink services.

From Architects to Engineers, TransQuest Is Involved

Our personnel working in the IC on collaborative systems include high-level systems engineers, project managers and others. Our staff architects highly complex global solutions across a variety of engineering environments, meeting IC needs and enhancing performance. We review and recommend highly complex systems investment(s) based on results of independent assessments of current and future performance, stability, and systems management/life cycle issues. TransQuest personnel also provide escalated highly complex technical support to customers by investigating and resolving systems-related matters of significance and provide support telephonically and/or electronically. Our project managers plan, conduct and oversee the technical aspects of large, complex projects. We also review completion and implementation of system additions and/or enhancements and provide reliable management overview. TransQuest personnel also develop and apply advanced methods, theories and research techniques in the investigation and solution of highly complex system requirements and problems. We get involved in developing training tools and documentation, as well. But, most importantly, our staff is asked throughout the lifecycle, to provide complex technical consultation on current and proposed systems to ***other*** organizations and clients, in essence fostering inter-agency dialogue of the highest technical magnitude. TransQuest is highly involved in making the NIS happen.

As one ODNI official once put it – "We're not getting incremental gains in intelligence on the amount of information we collect. It is the degree we can link up people and collaborate that matters."

TransQuest is proud to be so engaged at the forefront of this new collaborative IC frontier.