



firefly

# Rapid Firefly works for US Department of Defense

## Firefly virtual adviser helps US defense staff with procurement



### Complex process, mounting risk

The US Department of Defense (DoD) has 134,000 members of staff engaged in acquisition, technology and logistics. Training and knowledge management is provided by its Defense Acquisition University (DAU), whose mission is to enable defense procurement staff to make smart business decisions which deliver to US military forces what they need, when they need it, at an affordable price.

Buying smart matters: errors can be costly in terms of faulty equipment, delays in delivery and extra expense. Ensuring suppliers are reliable, products work as specified and the buyer gets good value typically involves many steps and decisions, input from many projects and departments - and, to manage risk, rigorous compliance with mandated processes.

Rapidly expanding technology purchasing and a rising number of specialist suppliers are making this challenge increasingly difficult, in a context where processes need to handle every item from lightbulbs to gunboats. A highly skilled and mature workforce lead the way today - but with two-thirds eligible soon to retire, the DAU confronted an urgent and critical need to capture and share their knowledge.

### Virtual Adviser - follow the experts

The DAU, working with Informavores, addressed the problem by creating an online 'virtual adviser' to guide staff - particularly new staff - through the increasingly complex rules and procedures to ensure effective and compliant procurement.

Using Firefly, DAU procurement experts wrote down the rules and processes, creating a virtual adviser. The support tool they developed provides policy guidance, refresher information and technical assistance as well as describing techniques for achieving fair and reasonable pricing. Deployed over the web, it is now readily available to all DoD staff - and with built-in tracking they can clearly demonstrate compliance with relevant regulations.



DAU: 1st in US Government for leadership & development, 2005



Users follow a series of interactive screens resulting in a guided course of action.



## Solution focus

- Interactive procedure guides allow procurement staff to buy efficiently
- Train new staff in days not months
- Links in to legacy procurement systems
- Automatic data capture and audit data

## Solution benefits

- Experienced procurement staff build procedures - no programming
- Developed within a month - by DAU team (no consulting help needed)
- Minimal training needed for users and authors
- Minimize IT - maximize ROI

## Technology summary

- Firefly
- Uses J2EE, HTML, XML, SOAP
- JDBC compliant database
- J2EE server



Procurement experts set out the recommended process in a flow diagram


The application is run and maintained entirely by users, and can be changed easily and quickly - without any need for delay to obtain, brief, and develop code with specialist IT staff. Its ease of use means that business experts can respond immediately to changes in procurement practice and legislation.

## By using Firefly

- The Department of Defense benefits from:
- More effective and efficient procurement
- New staff able to operate effectively within days of starting
- Peace of mind that procedures and regulations have been followed - with audit information to demonstrate this

## And the DAU enjoys:

- A highly flexible, easy to use technology
- Maintained and managed directly by procurement staff..



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Our unique technology is business-user focused meaning that our transformational solutions are built and managed by business people not by the IT department. Our solutions become deeply embedded within our clients' infrastructure so that time consuming activities such as CRM data entry or post call dispositioning are completely eradicated.



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