

Why We Need the Navy Marine Corps Intranet

By Sharon Anderson



Rear Adm. Munns, Director NMCI and the Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Gordon R. England.



Lt. Gen. Edward Hanlon, Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command and Deputy Commandant for Combat Development.



Dave Wennergren, Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer.

New Orleans was hot June 20-23, but it just wasn't the temperatures, the 2004 NMCI Industry Symposium, a forum for Department of the Navy (DON) leadership, users and industry to candidly discuss the successes and friction points of the five-year NMCI program, raised the definition of "inspired leadership" and "interested users" up a few degrees.

During the two and half-day gathering, discussion centered on NMCI challenges, solutions and progress. Rear Adm. Chuck Munns, NMCI Director, who has been tireless in his dedication to ensure the success of NMCI, emphasized the importance of working through NMCI performance issues to harvest the benefits of NMCI's capabilities.

"NMCI is not just an e-mail system; it will provide a warfighting advantage and reach-back capability that the Navy never had before," said Rear Adm. Munns.

Populating the NMCI with capabilities is the essential next step in fulfilling the vision of an enterprise network serving the needs of the DON. But first the completion of the rollout of the more than 400,000 seats is a top priority.

Lt. Gen. Edward Hanlon, Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command and Deputy Commandant for Combat Development, acknowledged the enormity of the task at hand, but expressed his disappointment that seat rollout for the Marine Corps was not going as quickly as anticipated.

Hanlon explained the Marine Corps' initial frustration a year ago in having to dismantle the Marine Corps enterprise network, a fully functional and dependable system to move to the NMCI.

"Our network had a reputation for secure, effective and responsive service. But, we also recognized that NMCI was a transformational effort ..."

"NMCI implementation is a huge job, and it's going to present us with challenges. I've talked about friction in the imple-

mentation process, and I know that can come across as a strictly negative message. But I don't think about it like that, and you shouldn't either," said Hanlon.

"One of the colonels on my staff said something to me the other day that I'd like to quote," continued Hanlon, "Without friction, there can be no traction.' That's a very insightful statement, and I think that it can be applied to any undertaking of the complexity and magnitude of NMCI."

Hanlon pledged the Marine Corps' commitment to the success of NMCI and belief in its advantages, "In fact, we're counting on it as a critical enabler — foundation if you will — of our process of transformation."

Vice Adm. Patricia Tracey, Director Navy Staff, who also heads up the Functional Area Manager (FAM) process to reduce the number of Navy applications and ensure their compatibility within the NMCI; and Rear Adm. Anthony Lengerich, Vice Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command, also outlined their concerns with NMCI performance as well as its successes.

Vice Adm. Tracey said EDS, prime contractor for the NMCI, was superb in relocating the Navy's Operations Center to the Navy Annex when the center was destroyed during the 9-11 attack on the Pentagon. In 24 hours the Navy was back in business due to the decisive action of the EDS Information Strike Force.

"We need NMCI," said Vice Adm. Tracey.

DON leadership encouraged industry to seek enterprise solutions for the Navy's network-centric environment. Rear Adm. Lengerich said that if an industry proposal cannot operate within the security and structure of NMCI, "I'm not particularly interested in it."

"The Navy must have 21st century business processes, and NMCI is the path."

In his remarks, Dave Wennergren, Department of the Navy Chief Information

Officer (DON CIO), addressed the need for industry and the DON to work as a team for matching requirements with enterprise solutions.

"Our greatest strength is in our partnership together — industry and government. Many of the tools that industry has developed for the Navy have been used for the entire federal government. So if you have more ideas, more tools, let us know."

Mr. Wennergren also stressed the importance of aligning Navy's efforts to find solutions that will benefit the larger Navy-Marine Corps Team. "We must align to an enterprise view. We can no longer afford to build duplicative local area solutions. Instead, we must find the best set of commercial solutions that will optimize operational effectiveness and deliver the transformation of our warfighting and business systems."

Wennergren closed with suggestions on how to successfully work as cross-organizational teams to break through the cultural change barriers that face the Navy and offered the tools below as some information resources.

√ *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done* by Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan

√ *Leadership Is An Art* by Max DePrees

√ *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership* by Howard Gardner

√ *Empowerment Takes More than a Minute* by Ken Blanchard, John P. Carlos and Alan Randolph

√ *The Department of the Navy Chief Information Officer Information Management/ Information Technology Strategic Plan*

The Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Gordon England, forcefully expressed his support of the NMCI in his address, "I believe in and support this program.... I have made every effort to make sure it survives and thrives It's too important not to."

The secretary emphasized that NMCI is much more than hardware, an e-mail system or large-scale network.

"I want to dispel a rumor ... one of the complaints I hear about NMCI from Naval constituents is that they can get the same thing at Best Buy or Circuit City for less. They can't," continued Secretary England.

"NMCI buys everything behind the user's PC. Investments that EDS was required to provide to engineer a complete IT service to the Department — local area networks, wide area networks, guaranteed network performance, security, all network support, all help desk support, training, user satisfaction, etc., — are all covered under NMCI."

"NMCI is now the largest single network in the world ... only the Internet itself has more users than NMCI."

"This was simply not the case with our legacy networks. All of that investment has to perform to the service levels specified in the contract ... or we don't pay the full cost," explained Secretary England.

The secretary talked about NMCI progress, which he is closely monitoring. This includes four NMCI Network Operation Centers (NOCs) up and running, 27 unclassified server farms and six classified server farms — all designed to keep the Department operating through fires, floods, blackouts, hurricanes and unplanned deployments.

There are currently about 360,000 users online with over 55 percent cut over to the desired end state.

"NMCI is now the largest single network in the world ... the second largest is an IBM network (319,000 users) ... the third largest is for the United Kingdom government (100,000 users) and the next largest is for General Motors (80,000 users; also supported by EDS)," said England.

"In fact, only the Internet itself has more users than NMCI."

The secretary pointed to the Department's achievement in eliminating approximately 90,000 duplicative and costly stovepipe-legacy applications. The Department estimates the current number at less than 10,000.

"The NMCI effort has focused us on our applications and pushed us to a much needed reduction of applications — a 90 percent reduction."

Secretary England talked about what the numbers signify, "... these numbers really mean that we are fundamentally changing the way we think about IT in the Department. We now talk about numbers — things that we can measure and compare; means by which we can gauge progress and assess our efforts against our aims."

"Prior to NMCI, the Navy's IT environment was severely challenged We had basically 28 separate commands budgeting, developing, licensing and operating IT autonomously. It was inefficient and from the larger Department perspective, produced results that were far from optimal."

"NMCI allows the Department to focus its energy where it is most needed — on war fighting — not desktop information technology. One of the things we discovered is that we were not very good at accounting for IT costs before NMCI. We often didn't even break out IT costs separately; rather, they were included in line item costs. They were generally not accounted for in the IT budget or even known by the claimant budget and chief information officers."

"No chief executive officer in business could afford this situation and the Department could no longer afford it either," stressed England.

Locking down network security was another factor which led to the NMCI enterprise solution.

"One of the most pressing areas that needed attention was security. It wasn't just that we weren't following our own rules; in many cases we weren't even aware of them," said England.

"For example, every Department of



Above left to right: Founding Fathers panel: Dr. Lee H. Buchanan III, Mr. Charlie Nemfakos, Mr. Dan Porter, retired Adm. Archie Clemins, Mr. Joseph Cipriano, retired Marine Col. Dave Litchfield and (not pictured) William Ryzewic. Left: Retired Adm. Clemins and Dan Porter.



Defense (DoD) network is supposed to do something called DITSCAP or the DoD Information Technology Security Certification and Accreditation Process, a process by which a command certifies that the applications on its network have been certified and accredited for use on the network. This policy has been in place since 1997 — well before NMCI came into being.”

“When the Naval Audit Service measured compliance with this requirement ... on some of our legacy networks, the results were not good. One major command’s compliance rate was in the single digits. And those results were just for the applications that the Audit Service could find.”

“The lack of security was probably the most deficient aspect of our legacy networks. Our legacy IT was insecure because we bought it and built it that way.”

“NMCI is fixing this problem,” said England, “it’s taking time, money and people ... and sometimes our users don’t like the compromises that security requires, but security is paramount. In short, NMCI is replacing our disparate, costly, inefficient shore-based networks and providing a worldwide reach-back capability to deployed operational forces.”

Secretary England acknowledged the struggles with the NMCI deployment schedule saying that initial projections were much too optimistic because both EDS and the DON did not fully understand the complexity of the task to be accomplished, but he also noted that NMCI

is one of the few systems of its kind that actually started with a design, a plan and a schedule of what needed to be done.

“Before NMCI, the Department of the Navy did not schedule our networks ... rather, we grew them. There’s a huge difference. In the past, someone started a network and then added on a capability as technology, funding and the situation allowed. Some of our organizations did a pretty good job in growing their networks, but most did not have the resources,” said England.

“Putting together the NMCI contract was not only a groundbreaking move — it was the right move ...”

Commenting on some of the financial setbacks that EDS has experienced, the secretary stated that the Navy and EDS are in a “committed partnership” to ensure the success of the NMCI.

“Today, the DON is paying 85 percent of the seat price. Obviously, EDS is anxious to receive 100 percent and we are just as anxious for them to achieve this goal. It is in the interest of EDS — and the Department of the Navy to complete this basic task as soon as possible. For the contractor, it’s financially important and for the Navy, it’s operationally important,” said England.



A highlight of the symposium was a panel discussion by the *Founding Fathers* — some members of the leadership group who envisioned the NMCI concept and nurtured it through its early stages. Panelists included former Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Fleet, retired Adm. Archie Clemins, who acted as moderator; former Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Research, Development and Acquisition, Dr. Lee H. Buchanan III; former Program Executive Officer for Information Technology, Joseph Cipriano; former Deputy PEO-IT and Director of NMCI Services, retired Marine Col. Dave Litchfield; former Senior Civilian Official, Financial Management and Comptroller Department of the Navy, Charlie Nemfakos; former DON CIO, Dan Porter; and Executive Director for Fleet Maintenance U.S. Pacific Fleet, William Ryzewic.

Retracing the steps that led to the NMCI, panelists discussed the \$8 billion dollar shortfall the Navy was facing in FY 2000 in providing IT services to ashore users. The

shortfall actually acted as a catalyst to the NMCI contract vision.

Dr. Buchanan and Charlie Nemfakos said executive leadership had already discussed outsourcing IT services as the only way the Department could go to reduce costs, get a handle on IT spending — and provide a secure enterprise network.

“Putting together the NMCI contract was not only a groundbreaking move — it was the right move for the Navy,” said Buchanan.

Mr. Cipriano spent three months investigating industry alternatives for outsourcing network services because there was not a government contract model with the scope and complexity of the NMCI.

“When I talked with IBM executives about how they outsourced this service, they cautioned me that the first two or three years would be hard for users, and that users would not be happy. But they also said that after those first difficult years everyone would be very glad we went this route,” said Cipriano.

Mr. Porter commented that the security vulnerabilities discovered during the Department’s cleanup of the Y2K bug were alarming. “Command compliance was sketchy at best,” said Porter. “The security benefits of the NMCI alone are worth the investment.”

The NMCI contract includes about 240 service level agreements (SLAs), specific tasks and levels of performance that prime contractor EDS must execute in order to receive payment.

Rear Adm. Munns announced that the Navy has been working for the last two and half months to reduce the total number of SLAs, some of which were ambiguously defined and difficult to measure.

“We are going to have fewer SLAs, but they are going to have a greater effect and be more measurable,” said Navy Capt. Chris Christopher, Deputy Director for Future Operations, Communications and Business Initiatives, NMCI.

The symposium was also an opportunity to recognize outstanding individuals and

Rear Adm. Mike Sharp, ASN (RD&A) Chief Engineer and SPAWAR Vice Commander and Sarah Lamade, SPAWAR CIO accepting the NMCI Spirit Award presented to SPAWAR and to commands whose transition to NMCI best captures the fundamental spirit of the NMCI partnership between industry and the DON.



organizations who have championed the success of the NMCI project. Rear Adm. Munns recognized winners at the 2004 NMCI Excellence Awards Reception.

Attendees applauded Department leadership’s commitment to resolve NMCI problems, expressed relief that their frustrations with performance issues were being heard — and gained a deeper understanding of the NMCI advantage.

Jerri Baeumel, a computer scientist and new hire under the SPAWAR Systems Center Charleston New Professionals Program, was among those who said that they had not fully understood the significance of what the NMCI means to the Navy until attending the symposium.

“I have never heard what the NMCI will really do once fully deployed or how important it is to the Navy explained so well. I learned so much; I wish more people could have heard Secretary England and the other speakers talk about all the capabilities that the NMCI will provide and how urgently they are needed.”

“I think people could quickly get over the temporary inconveniences if they understood the long-term benefits of what the NMCI will do for the Navy,” said Baeumel.

For more information regarding the symposium and the NMCI, go to the NMCI Web site at <http://www.nmci.navy.mil/>.

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Lt. Antonio J. Scurlock, NNSOC Detachment Ford Island, accepting the NMCI Leadership Award from Rear Adm. Munns. The award was presented to individuals who have shown extraordinary levels of commitment to the success of NMCI. Recipients contributed through improving morale surrounding transition to NMCI.



Capt. Peggy Feldman, Commander SPAWAR Information Technology Center, accepting the NMCI Command Achievement Award from Rear Adm. Munns. The award was presented to bases or commands whose transition to NMCI created notable and significant benefits to the DON.