

Why Aerospace and Defense Companies Must Rethink their IT Systems



Interview with: Tim Burke, President & Chief Executive Officer, and Mike Dillon, Chief Technology Officer, Quest

Aerospace companies are spending two to three times more than they need to, for the results they are getting, according to Tim Burke, President & Chief Executive Officer, and Mike Dillon, Chief Technology Officer, at **Quest**. "There has been huge overspend in this industry for a long time. Companies have to reconsider how they even look at Information Technology (IT), as challenges in successfully executing on projects is costing them even more," Tim Burke highlighted.

Quest, a technology management company, is a solution provider at the **marcus evans Aerospace & Defense Manufacturing Summit 2014**, in Las Vegas, Nevada, October 5-6.

Why do aerospace and defense manufacturing companies need to look at their technology systems?

Burke - Much of their infrastructure is very old and needs to be upgraded. The systems must get ready for manufacturing automation and proper service level agreements, as well as be more secure. We see many defense contractors paying far in excess of what they should for what they are getting. Some of them could achieve savings of two to three million dollars per month.

The baseline of pricing and costing was established many years ago, dating back to the cost plus model, and it has just grown from there. Pricing is way out of reality based on current trends. If a company has multiple contractors coming from this model of 10 or 20 years ago, it should rethink how it even looks at sourcing IT. Many aerospace companies are not taking that perspective. Lack of execution on projects as they should and need to, is costing them even more. There are other ways of doing IT.

Could they reduce costs and become more IT efficient on their own?

Dillon - From our experience, that is tough for the defense industry to do on its own, with existing resources and staff in most companies. Many IT organizations may want to buy new products, contract for new systems and figure out how to make the upgrades on their own, but upper management has now realized that it cannot wait any longer. Their systems are 10 or 20 years old, so they must move on to the next era of technology.

It is important to note that some of these defense contractors have merged with others, but they have not yet fully merged technologies, people and processes. They have to act as one. The

IT systems must be centralized on to a single standard, a single service level agreement, and ultimately, a single platform. That would help optimize the infrastructure and resources for managing it.

What trends do companies need to prepare for?

Dillon - Manufacturing automation and big data are two trends. The current system must be up to date and able to handle big data demands. Not only must it work, but be secure and have some fault tolerance to it.

In most industries today, technology is changing every six months to a year. Some IT directors in this industry look at cloud technologies and think they cannot benefit due to security concerns. That is not true. They can take advantage of much of that technology in their own secure environment.

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The 10th Aerospace & Defense Manufacturing Summit is the premium forum bringing leading manufacturing and engineering executives from global aerospace and defense manufacturers and solution providers together. Taking place at the Red Rock Casino, Resort & Spa, Las Vegas, Nevada, October 5-6, 2014, the Summit includes presentations on innovative manufacturing technologies, research partnerships, counterfeit parts risk mitigation and so on.

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To view the web version of this interview, please click here: www.aerospacedefensesummit.com/TimBurkeMikeDillon