Platform-as-a-Service: How Government Contractors Drive High Growth Within The Defense Market
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From systems integrators to manufacturers, aerospace and defense contractors are facing fierce competition with the largest federal contracting agency, the Department of Defense (DOD).

Securing business with defense agencies is growing harder because of complex acquisition processes, pressure for low-price bids, and a growing need within government for systems services that provide easy and continuous support.

As a result, some companies are consolidating to secure more market share. Another key step to deliver value to the DOD is to enable all members of a contracting organization to continuously focus on customer success.

To better serve defense agencies government partners must learn how to use technology to support changing mission demands and customer expectations.

Defense agencies face the same challenges. In November 2017, U.S. Deputy Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan directed the DOD to adopt cloud platform services to align technology with complex mission sets. To help the DOD meet this objective, contractors need to deliver best-in-class services, from business development to supply...

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chain management. To enable growth within the DOD market, contractors are turning to Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS) as a means to offer more value to government clients, gain greater visibility into resources, and increase profitability.

PaaS gives contractors a strategic advantage in a tight, consolidating market where achieving real growth hinges on being able to adapt and evolve quickly. By embracing PaaS in their own organizations, contractors are positioning themselves to be the DOD’s trusted partner.

**Improving Internal Operations**

There is currently a new focus on High Productivity PaaS, or HPA PaaS, which provides the speed, agility, and acceleration needed for users to quickly bring concepts to reality; test and deploy them; and see business value faster. All the elements that go into developing applications are provided in no-code, low-code, and pro-code environments, from logic mapping to security. With HPA PaaS, organizations simplify, improve, and automate process, as well as leverage data in more integral ways.

While the concept of PaaS was first created by Salesforce in 1998, HPA PaaS is the latest evolution. It combines data and intelligence with powerful ways for system users and customers to engage with each other. HPA PaaS empowers everyone, not just IT specialists, to focus on and improve mission outcomes. Organizations very quickly identify and produce applications they or their customers need.

How does HPA PaaS improve a contractor’s internal operations? Every government contractor competes essentially on price, and price is largely based on the cost of doing business. Speed and efficiency in operations translate into more effective pricing and more business. For any company, business operations are a series of workflows that people move information in and out of. With HPA PaaS, organizations not only move information faster by accelerating and streamlining time-consuming or duplicative workflows, they realign infrastructure-focused IT departments to teams that focus on rapid application development. At Salesforce, clients roll out solutions within days or weeks, resulting in significant efficiencies, savings, and profit margin.

A business leader knows whether or not his or her systems and processes are working. Oftentimes, even if a system is delivering its basic business purpose, leaders almost always look to improve and maximize efficiency. In these cases, organizations should consider PaaS first. It is absolutely the most efficient and most effective way to move systems forward and to digitally transform.

**Delivering Value to Government**

HPA PaaS also accelerates delivery of external products. For systems integrators in the business of providing IT solutions to government, developing apps with HPA PaaS drives greater value. For contractors on a fixed price contract, the faster the right systems or solutions are delivered, the more profitable a contract becomes. More and more government agencies are requesting contractors deliver capabilities that can be repurposed to minimize maintenance costs. HPA PaaS allows contractors to meet agency requests.

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For manufacturers it’s all about delivering high-quality products and services efficiently, often through complex supply chains. PaaS streamlines major functions, such as procurement and partner management.

One key element is a platform that delivers no-code, low-code, and pro-code options. What this means is contractors have the ability to hire and leverage teams with varying technical skills to deliver, repurpose, and scale solutions. The platform brings the agility, speed, and efficiency companies need for high growth.

Another important element is innovation – something that Salesforce invests in constantly. In addition to providing all the infrastructure, networking, security, and development environments, Salesforce regularly introduces game-changing advances in technology. For example, Salesforce has built artificial intelligence into the platform so that users continuously gain business insights. Innovation is introduced through seamless updates that take place throughout the year – keeping all customers on the same version of Salesforce while preserving any customizations they may have. With today’s cloud technology endlessly evolving, customers are prepared for the future of doing business with government.

**Implications for A&D Contractors**

The DOD is all about speed, agility, and acceleration. Roughly two decades ago, the DOD had a program, called Velocity Management, that focused on logistics. It emphasized the concept of moving material and personnel into combat faster and faster, like deploying a battalion of the 82nd Airborne Division anywhere in the world in 18 hours or less.

So how does the DOD move faster to accomplish objectives? And how does it move with more efficiency? By removing extra mass and weight from the equation. Cloud does that and the DOD recognizes it. The DOD no longer can afford the old way of doing business. There is always going to be a time where the DOD needs data centers, servers and networks, but there is no equivalent to cloud in terms of the ability to move quickly and efficiently to meet mission objectives.

Additionally, traditional long-term system environments and slow acquisition speeds hinder the DOD’s ability to reach its goals. The established path of buying software and placing it into a data center comes with many complexities such as managing an entire environment, meeting security requirements, and establishing networks. To further complicate the process, every department has its own acquisition requirements. This process takes time, costs money, and results in losing sight of objectives. With cloud, departments go back to focusing on process, insights, and mission.

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In order for government contractors to effectively consult and advise the DOD on cloud strategies, they must keep pace with today’s latest technology offerings. Currently, a large number of government contractors are using cloud or moving to the cloud.
for different business functions and processes. Salesforce has assisted contractors who want to modernize business process with cloud-based HPA PaaS. Because Salesforce has already built the architecture, implemented security requirements as set by the DOD Cloud Computing Security Requirements Guide, and expanded capabilities over the years, contractors may get ahead of the curve quickly.

Contractors have an opportunity here. For contractors embracing cloud, they have the ability to become trailblazers – particularly for the DOD.

These early adopters can learn how to monetize cloud systems and services for government agencies and will set the course for other contractors to follow. There will always be a world with traditional on-premise environments, but more and more requirements are going to be for cloud. Contractors that understand cloud – that have shifted their workforce, processes, and data to the cloud – they are the ones that are really going to set the market and make it take off.