



Case Study: Defense Robotics – Structured Market Entry into Southeast Asia

Engagement Type

Full Execution – New Market Entry Mandate (18 months)

 Sector: Defense Robotics |  Region: Southeast Asia

The Challenge

A deep-tech defense robotics company with a highly specialized UAV platform for reconnaissance and intelligence missions sought to expand into Southeast Asia — a region with rising defense modernization budgets but notoriously complex procurement ecosystems.

They had:

- Zero in-region presence or licensing
- No access to procurement stakeholders or defense attachés
- A sales process stalled by misaligned messaging and bureaucratic friction

What We Did

Instaura was retained under an 18-month New Market Development Mandate with a clear goal: activate the market, unlock the first contract, and build a repeatable pathway for institutional sales.

Our approach included:

- Designing the Market Signal Architecture: Repositioning the UAV platform around regional defense priorities (coastal surveillance, counter-infiltration, unmanned force multipliers)
- Building the Entry Funnel: Identifying key defense ministries, internal R&D divisions, and partner-viable distributors
- Facilitating On-ground Access: Engaged trusted local advisors to build cultural, regulatory, and technical alignment
- Structuring a Pilot-to-Contract Conversion Model: Created a low-risk pathway for product evaluation and deal escalation
- Running Sales Ops until market handover: Full-cycle management of pipeline, buyer mapping, and contracting



Outcome

🔑 First 6 Months:

- Secured the first contract with a Southeast Asian government entity, focused on field-testing and platform deployment
- Total value of first deal: ~\$4.2M, including integration and training modules
- Created internal momentum within buyer ecosystem leading to renewed interest across departments

📦 Over 18 Months:

- Delivered 3 defense contracts totaling \$13M
- Established a local strategic partner for long-term delivery and compliance
- The client now operates with a repeatable, signal-based sales funnel across the region

Why It Matters

Entering a foreign defense market isn't about having the best product — it's about understanding how trust, protocol, and perception drive decisions.

This case demonstrates how a structured, signal-first strategy can break institutional inertia, convert pilots into real contracts, and build lasting commercial presence in one of the most complex sectors on earth.