Module 2 Assignment

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I currently lead an effort to develop a tactical marketplace solution for the Army, TacMark. The need that is being filled is that there is a growing number of end user devices in use at the tactical edge by warfighters and those devices are becoming increasingly integrated into the warfighter mission space. TacMark will provide storage, management, and distribution of digital assets***[[1]](#footnote-1)*** in a austere, comms-challenged environments. While the term end user devices usually refers to commercial smart phones and tablets, our program also embraces laptop, desktop, ruggedized PDA, and appliance support. Management and sustainment of these devices and their use is a chore that is quickly out-pacing the capacity of the Field Service Representatives (FSRs) and inability to manage this effort will have it falling onto the already burdened S/G-6.

The integration opportunity is that a varied array of consumers has to be served with an equally diverse pool of apps and data. And the integration effort is complicated since commercial lines of smart phones and tablets comprise a quickly moving landscape. Today’s devices are not likely to be available tomorrow and tomorrow’s devices are not likely to look much like those of today. And everyone (today, tomorrow, and beyond) wants the same ubiquitous access to apps and data.

The approach we chose to make this work was to expose a feature-complete set of RESTful web services and facilitate 3rd party development of clients on specific platforms, effectively crowd-sourcing our monumental support and integration effort. Likewise, on the producer side, we created a dynamically bound plug-in interface by which new data types could be introduced. Lastly, to prevent an endless cycle of client updates in response to newly added data types (picture a dog chasing his tail) we encode the logic of conflict resolution and installation details into the data types, themselves, relieving the end user device clients from the responsibility.

The net result is a highly integrable and extensible system built around the principle of published, open standards. We are transitioning through PM Mission Command in FY13.

1. Digital assets are both applications and data. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)