



US Navy to increase participation for next online business war game

Key Points

- The navy looks to grow number of players from hundreds to thousands
- The plan is to develop ideas that could be implemented

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The US Navy (USN) will run a second online business war game beginning 15 July, aiming to identify how industry and navy programme offices work together, and any innovations that can help the service do a better job in acquisition.

The USN ran its first Business Innovation Initiative (BII) in January to test whether the idea of a crowd-sourcing game would help improve how the navy engages with industry, Nickolas Guertin, director for transformation in the office of the deputy assistant secretary of the navy for research, development, test, and evaluation told *IHS Jane's*.

The focus was on whether there were any holes in the navy's open architecture strategy and what could be done to improve it. Guertin reported that the game went very well and provided good feedback. "We got a lot of ideas and it really helped us understand how to play the game at a larger scale," he said.

"I was happily surprised with the ideas that came out of there; they were not industry focused. [Players] wanted to see their government get a better deal, so it was refreshing to see people coming in from the perspective of 'how do I help this be better with my creative ideas' and not 'how do I defend my organisation'," Guertin added.

First time around the navy had approximately 100 players. For the July game Guertin is looking for many more to participate. "This time we are going to open up the aperture, way open, to get as many people to come in and play as possible. We are looking for thousands instead of a hundred," he said.

The next iteration of BII will use what Guertin referred to as a card game to help develop ideas and topics for discussion among the players.

"You set out idea cards and ... discussion threads flow out from that and expand as different ideas become more intriguing and more thoroughly thought out," he explained.

Players are limited to 120 characters per card and the cards function very much like Twitter 'tweets', Guertin noted. "They look like cards when you play it on your computer screen. You can only type so many characters so it is limited in terms of what ideas you put down."

As online discussions develop, players will be asked to consolidate their ideas into a one-page action plan the navy can potentially implement, he said.





"The outcomes of these discussions are the action plans, and those are the kind of real product of the game. We use those to determine whether or not they are actionable or suitable and then bring them forward to leadership to make a difference," Guertin said.

The idea is for players to be able to come and go from the game, he added. "When you log in you will see a handful of ideas. You can fill out a couple of cards, sign off and come back later, see what new ideas came in. It is not meant for a player to sit down and do this for two weeks."

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