Acquisition Innovation through Technology

AIT

Robotic Process Automation (RPA):

Determination of Contractor Responsibility

DORA (Determination of Responsibility Assistant)

In support of Army modernization, the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Procurement (ODASA(P)) established the Acquisition Innovation through Technology (AIT) Reform team to explore and apply emerging technologies to the acquisition process with the objective of improving mission effectiveness, boosting workforce capability, and driving operational efficiencies. The purpose is to shift the culture and focus from low-value, compliance driven work to high-value, business outcome focused work.

Project Details

- The U.S. Army awarded a firm fixed price contract to an 8a (Eagle Harbor Solutions, LLC) for robotic process automation (RPA) software as a service (SaaS) "bot" to automate the data collection process required for contractor responsibility determinations.
- The contract is structured to support other DoD and Government Agencies.
- The project was first piloted at the U.S. Army Mission and Installation Contracting Command (MICC) from 12 November 2019 through 6 January 2020 and is now fully deployed across the Army.
- The Army Contracting workforce voted to name the bot "DORA" (Determination of Responsibility Assistant)

Process Details

- The process starts when a contracting professional sends a contractor's DUNS/SAMMI/UEID number(s) in the email subject line to one of two designated email addresses depending on the dollar value of the action; "UnderSATbot" for actions under the simplified acquisition threshold (SAT) and "OverSATbot" for actions over the simplified acquisition threshold.
- The email triggers the bot to complete searches in FAPPIS and SAM on the specified contractor's data, summarizes their respective responsibility data and provides this information in an email attachment as a Microsoft word document (OverSAT bot) or pdf document (UnderSAT bot) back to the initiator within 2-4 minutes.
- The current Army process outlines a short form (one page) for the UnderSAT process and long form (three pages) for the OverSAT process.

Results

- This automated process saves up to 13 working days of procurement administrative lead time (PALT) per each contracting professional in the Army with an estimated labor cost savings of $29.3M annually.
- Deployed across the Army contracting workforce in January 2020
- Reduces PALT, therefore giving contracting professionals the ability to focus on other critical aspects of their profession
- Increased compliance, accuracy, and standardization of acquisition documents
- Improved end user satisfaction and engagement
- Improved efficiency of Government operations

What's next?

The team is looking to fully deploy the DORA bot across the rest of DoD. The team is looking for other automation use cases, ideas, and areas to improve our acquisition processes.

If you have an idea or are interested in learning more, please contact Liz Chirico at (703)697-1923, elizabeth.a.chirico.civ@mail.mil; or Craig Stiller at (703)697-0846 or craig.r.stiller.civ@mail.mil

If you are interested in leveraging the DORA bot, please provide the following information so we can better assist you:

- Estimated # of contracting actions per year and per month
- Peak months of projected usage
- Do you require a customized template and/or process different than what is described above? If so, please describe.
- Status Report frequency (monthly/quarterly)
- Delivery timeframe

Strategic Alignment

- President's Management Agenda, Cross-Agency Priority Goal 6 – Shifting from Low-Value to High-Value Work
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum 18-23
- National Defense Strategy (NDS)
- Department of Defense (DOD) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Strategy
- DOD Digital Modernization Strategy
- The Army Strategy - Modernization

About RPA:

Robotic Process Automation is an emerging form of business process automation also known as a "bot." It is a form of automation that uses simple rules for structured data. The tools and techniques mimic those of human interactions with IT systems on a computer or desktop and perform other repetitious processes.

About MICC

The MICC supports the warfighter by acquiring equipment, supplies and services vital to the U.S. Army mission and well-being of Soldiers and their families. The command also supports the Army's contingency and wartime missions by rapidly deploying trained and ready contingency contracting Soldiers around the world to procure goods and services in austere environments.

About ODASA(P)

The ODASA(P) serves as the principle advisor to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Acquisition, Logistics, and Technology ((ASA(ALT)) on all matters relating to contracting, and execute responsibilities support the ASA(ALT)'s designation as Agency Head of Contracting, Senior Procurement Executive, and the Senior Official Responsible for managing the acquisition of contract services (see Army General Order 2017-012). In this capacity, the ODASA(P) provides policy, oversight, and support for the Army Contracting Enterprise. The Army Contracting Enterprise provides functional execution of contracts supporting every aspect of the Army Mission, such as worldwide training for our troops, installation support for CONUS and OCONUS locations, major weapons systems platforms, construction and facilities services, medical research and hospital operations, and expeditionary operations.