Round Table Discussion

Developing an Integrated Supply Chain for Legacy Systems

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Overview

COTS component obsolescence is a two-edged sword: good because it is evidence of the relentless improvement in technology; bad because market demands force industry supply chain players to move away from supporting older technology. In order to stay competitive in a highly demanding market, component manufacturers end-of-life (EOL) their products forcing computing suppliers to EOL their products, forcing equipment suppliers to scramble for long-term support solutions.

This waterfall effect creates a gap between new technology and older technology where customers of so-called “obsolete” products find it difficult to get reliable support for their legacy applications.

The defense industry collectively calls this scramble “DMSMS” and the challenges come in many flavors including: lack of visibility of PCN, EOL, and last-time-buy notices; inability to forecast remaining lifecycle quantities and increased exposure to counterfeit components.

In the face of increasing counterfeit risk, achieving long-term sustainment extends way beyond best practice logistics and engineering tactics. It requires a fundamental shift in perspective from each supplier trying to solve their problems in isolation towards all suppliers working in a collaborative and integrated fashion to deliver proactive solutions.

This shift cannot happen without understanding the supply chain players and their challenges. With an understanding of what proactive legacy management means in relation to the supply chain as a whole, working together ensures system longevity and is the basis for tailoring a forward-thinking support solution for any program, regardless of where it is in its lifecycle.

This presentation will briefly describe a typical supply chain for systems and profile the various challenges faced by OEMs, component suppliers and distributors. Also, it will touch on traditional approaches used to satisfy system longevity requirements and how they are anticipated to evolve in the face of today’s current counterfeiting climate.

The presentation will be interactive and open discussion will be encouraged throughout.