



IDE NEWSLETTER



Brigade Combat Team
Project Management Office

SPOTLIGHT:

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE BCT PROGRAM OFFICE

The IDE offers an Internet accessible document repository for the extended BCT program office which allows BCT to share and develop information among the JV, Army, TACOM and other organizations. The solution is designed to improve personal productivity and collaboration. It enables virtual IPT teams to collaborate and leverage a common set of information to resolve program issues using web browser technology such as Microsoft Explorer or Netscape Navigator. The user interface is very similar to Windows and requires limited training. The IDE empowers knowledge workers by providing version control, check in/check out, security, and document content searches.

Complementing the document management system is the IDE Calendaring solution. This solution is based on Microsoft Outlook and provides the capability to schedule conference rooms and IPT/Work Group meetings. The IPT/Work Group meetings are also posted to a global BCT Calendar, which provides a consolidated view of IPT and Work Group events. The Calendars are then posted to the private IDE website to provide BCT users who are not located at TACOM insight into key BCT events.

These solutions were implemented with training classes and mentors to help reduce the stress that comes with implementing new processes and technologies. CBTs, video training and IDE Quick Reference Guides were also created and distributed to the IDE user community to help people efficiently use the IDE.

MODELING & SIMULATION UTILIZES IDE

Sharon Chase trained her 25-member Modeling and Simulation (M&S) Working Group in March of 2002 to use the BCT IDE to access all documentation related to her working group activities. Her team can find all M&S documentation such as briefings, meeting minutes and video clips in the IDE. This activity has improved communication since 15 members of M&S are located outside of TACOM. The team no longer uses e-mail or hard copy documents to share information. Sharon commented that "The Help Desk has been very helpful and responsive in adding users and I recommend that all working groups and IPTs use the BCT IDE for storing and communicating documentation."

Sharon Chase is the manager of the M&S work group and is responsible for coordinating all modeling and simulation efforts for the Stryker program. She is the POC for CAD models and supports multiple sites such as Fort Lewis, Fort Benning, Transportability Agency, TARDEC, GM Defense, and GDLS. Sharon has a Master's Degree in Software Engineering and has worked for the government for 15 years.



BCT/EDS



This BCT IDE Newsletter is a joint production effort, edited by BCT with support from EDS.

IDE CONTENT

IDE Public WEB: <http://www.bctide.com>

The Public Website includes general information such as the BCT mission statement, product description, a downloads page and contact information among other public content and information.

IDE Portal: <https://ideifs.bctide.com/ifs/BCTPortal>

The Portal Website provides information regarding Calendars, MICOS, etc. The portal contains sensitive data. Only those with an ID and password may gain access to the IDE Portal.

IDE File Storage: <https://ideifs.bctide.com/ifs/files/>

The IDE File Storage is a web based document management system. Key features of the IFS include document check-in, document check-out, document security and document versioning. An ID and password are required for access to the IDE File Storage.





PEOs' INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

BCT recently conducted a study of the US Army PEOs' Information Technology techniques and/or methods they have used in support of their mission – what worked, what was the best investment, and what gave them the most benefits. This tasking is in accordance with the AKM Strategic Goal #2 (Knowledge Management & Best Business Practices).

The amount of information technology being utilized by the PEOs varied greatly depending on how long the PEO had been organized. From establishing a basic local area network within the new PEO Soldier to operating a highly sophisticated knowledge center within PEO C3T, all were aiming for an integrated data environment that would deliver the right information to the right users at the right time. For those PEOs that either have an IDE or are in the midst of establishing one, the type of technology being used varied as noted below:

PEO IEW&S – C3T (Command, Control & Communications, Tactical) Knowledge Center
PEO C3T – internal developed portal technology
STRICOM – C3T Knowledge Center; going to AKO (Army Knowledge Online) portal technology
PEO EIS – Oracle Knowledge Management
PEO AMD – iFS (Internet File System)
PEO CBD – Livelink
PEO CS&CSS – AKO Collaboration Center
PEO Aviation – Microsoft “Sharepoint” & “Exchange 2000 Conferencing Server”; going to AKO portal technology

The majority of the PEOs expressed concerns or frustrations with “cultural change” in that users were sometimes reluctant to try new ideas such as sharing information, using on-line conferencing techniques, and expressing what features they would like to see automated. All were concerned with the new direction the US Army was taking with its AKM Goal #3 (“Manage the infostructure as an enterprise to enhance capabilities and efficiencies”). In addition, they were all trying to sort out how NETCOM will affect their internal networks.

Most tools of an IDE seem to be concentrated within the areas of Product Data Management focused on the Program Office and Executive Support. These are areas where the most payback will occur and where the users will see the most benefits. Specific tools were focused in the areas of Document Management with emphasis on Workflow, Work Collaboration, Calendar, and Project Management. All PEOs indicated that Document Management and Work Collaboration were key features of their IDEs.

HUMOR: DON'T QUOTE ME...

"A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. On my desk I have a workstation..."
-unknown author

SECURITY

A sound password policy alone won't guarantee your company's security, but you have little chance without one.

Listed below are tips to creating a safer password:

Creating a good password

- Use between six and 10 digits.
- Use a mix of upper-case and lower-case letters.
- Use non-alphanumeric symbols such as the dollar sign and percentage symbol.
- Make sure the password does not include any word that can be commonly found in the dictionary -- although pieces of words are okay.
- Make sure the password can be remembered without your having to write it down.
- Create a policy to go with the password, including end-user education and enforcement and a procedure for what to do if someone forgets his password or just can't get it to work for some reason.

TIP OF THE MONTH:

Ever wonder where you can find BCT or Stryker logos, icons and graphics? You can easily download them at: <http://www.bctide.com/dloadpagespublic/dloadpublicgraphics.shtml>.

HOW TO ADD AN IDE USER

A formal process exists to request a new user to the IDE. The process and appropriate form can be found on the File Storage System (<https://ideifs.bctide.com/ifs/files/>) under the Reference Material\Processes folder. Please note that there is a list of authorized PM BCT “Sponsors” who can submit a user new ID request. A high level view of the process is:

- Prospective user fills out form and emails it to the sponsor
- Sponsor forwards (approved) ID request form to the PM-BCTIDEHelpDesk@eds.com
- The BCT IDE Help Desk verifies data
- BCT IDE Help Desk creates ID
- User is notified of ID and Password
- Sponsor is notified of ID creation

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Is there something you would like to see in future issues of the IDE Newsletter? We welcome your questions, comments and suggestions at anytime. Please send your feedback to:

John Brobst, brobstj@tacom.army.mil

