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January 22, 2003

As a CI professional, you are always looking for ways to identify news sources, learn new techniques, and improve your analytical skills. Many of you have found value by reading (and writing) short articles for *scip.online*. Yet a constant theme in member email has been the need for more short tips and techniques.

Please consider sharing your knowledge by writing a one to three paragraph description of a specific process or resource which has helped you through your day. As Scott Swanson points out in his article, the feedback you get from your peers is well worth your time.

Bonnie Hohhof, editor bhohhof@scip.org

January 22, 2003

Two in one: academic conference at SCIP03.

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Carolina Olivieri, colivieri@scip.org

At SCIP03, attendees get two exciting conferences back to back! On the final day of the SCIP Annual Conference, Saturday, March 15, 2003, the SCIP Academic Conference will begin. The Academic Conference is a one-day event seeking to encourage practitioners and academicians to meet and build relationships at the world's largest CI conference and exhibition.

SCIP03 will host academics from around the globe who will present cutting edge research in the CI discipline and exchange tips and techniques for teaching CI in the classroom. The conference will give the Academic community the opportunity to discuss, debate, demonstrate, and deliver research papers in a forum designed to grow the body of knowledge associated with the CI discipline.

The chairman for this year's Academic Conference is Dick Klavans, who is particularly interested in forming research and teaching alliances within CI and between CI and related academic disciplines. Dick will give the opening welcome.

CI interdisciplinary research

The morning sessions of the Academic Conference will focus on interdisciplinary research—CI research that links to strategic management, marketing, information science, information technology, political science and/or other established areas of research. Five different research papers will be presented. The afternoon sessions will focus on helping instructors teach CI more effectively at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Interactive roundtable discussions will include such topics as:

- competency models.
- case study development.
- sharing of syllabi.
- textbook selection.
- course development strategies.

"The academic community is an important part of our constituency, and to have them involved with SCIP03 makes these events special and unique," emphasizes Melanie Wing, SCIP's Vice President of Programs. "As the CI discipline continues to gain interest on campuses around the world, SCIP03 provides a forum for practitioners and academicians to interact and be a valuable resource to one another," she explains.

Registration is \$299, and contact [Jen Griffith](#) to register. For additional information regarding the SCIP Academic Conference, please see the [conference website](#) or contact [Dick Klavans](#) or [Michael Reed](#), SCIP's Director of Learning.

January 22, 2003

Hairstyling 101 for CI practitioners: defining intelligence needs.

Hairstyling 101 for CI practitioners: defining intelligence needs.

Scott Swanson, Oracle, scott.swanson@oracle.com

After writing my previous *scip.online* article on lessons learned from military intelligence, I received some very inspiring communications from people very much like myself, those who are figuring out CI, selling CI to management, or simply settling into their new roles as a CI professional. Most e-mails or calls were similar to the ones I put out earlier to other people to gain additional perspective on improving my job performance and my organization's competitive positioning.

I am always looking for a new way to tap resources, obtain hard to find intelligence, or learn new techniques to work with leadership. Hearing that so many others were in similar situations made my daily quests a little less lonely. To me, it's akin to college calculus classes, when I couldn't grasp the lesson and felt like I may be the only one being confused, judging by the poker faces of my peers nodding affirmatively during the lectures.

Encouraged by your support, and having some spare time while riding home in a cab, I've written about a rebuttal tool for getting requirement definitions from senior people. It's a bit different, but I hope it is of value as it sometimes just takes thinking outside of the box and throwing a person off guard. I have found many of the short commuter length SCIP articles perfect for new techniques used during the day or as great final thoughts to my day's end. Many of the longer e-mails people send me with best practices suggestions would also be great submissions. I would encourage more people to put their thoughts to pen or keypad and share ideas.

Headhunting as intelligence

My professional career basically started as an executive headhunter. Many would say recruiter or staffing professional, but I was not an HR representative. I worked for a private search firm in a "boiler room" setting, banging out calls on the phone, developing human assets for referrals or inside corporate information, and using an extensive amount of rebuttal to close clients and candidates. My job was not to place actively looking people in jobs, but to receive a client request and then hunt for the appropriate person, anywhere in the corporate world. Pretty simple parallels can be constructed from the intelligence community to this headhunter role.

Contrary to most beliefs, the hardest part was never the hunting and networking, but getting requirement definitions from the client. Often, I was speaking with a CIO or CFO who would simply say, "I need a senior-level person with a background of X, Y, Z, and I need ed him yesterday. Do you have anyone for me to talk to tomorrow?" More often than not, I didn't have someone in my back pocket right then, but with more details I could find someone shortly.

No details on the details

Oddly enough, clients didn't like to elaborate on the details of the person they needed, the roles they would perform, future growth opportunities, the cultural environment, or personalities that would fit best. These are all details that would make my hunt easier with a greater percentage of immediate success if I had clearer definitions.

Despite many attempts to convince the client that I needed more information, they refused to expand on details citing lack of time. "Do the best you can with that, see what you find, and I'll tell you if it's what I am looking for." Sound familiar?

In the intelligence area, not much is different when internal clients request various competitor or threat projects. Note that I am not talking about details involving need-to-know or issues of security. This is simply someone initially not taking the time to provide enough detail to make a project successful the first time. Why won't leadership take the proper time to define requirements upfront, instead of taking more time later revamping findings and resetting expectations?

Reasons for dearth of details

In my experience, I have found a few general reasons for this lack of detail:

- Management doesn't know what they want until they see it (and even then that's debatable).
- They don't view the intelligence practitioner, headhunter, whomever, as worthy of their immediate time.
- They see the practitioner as being so successful in the past that knowing what is best will materialize on its own at the right time.

I have had success in intelligence projects and hunting candidates by consulting my own internal crystal ball. But had I known upfront what the exact need was, I would have saved a lot of energy and thought process that could have been redirected toward more results-oriented efforts. I have also flown by these at of my pants, taking the less confrontational approach with management and re-consulting that crystal ball

of mine. That usually resulted in my working along weekend because I missed the target. (Again, sound familiar?)

So how can this situation be rectified? Is there an easy way of convincing a senior manager that more details are needed despite the fact that it may require more due diligence on their part before making the request?

Well, I won't say it's an easy way, and it won't always work, but as a former mentee told me, "While some rebuttals won't work all of the time, all rebuttals work some of the time." I present: The Haircut.

Defining haircuts

I have had more success with this rebuttal than any other in convincing a client that I need more upfront details to create a more successful outcome. And I (you) can phrase it as simple as this:

We can all relate to receiving a haircut. We can also relate to changing barbers or stylists to a new person who knows neither you nor your hair. The first time you sit down with someone new or see the same stylist but you want something done differently, you tell him or her just how you want it. Not only does this give them a clear idea of the cut you want, but they can commit this to your history, and even pattern the cut from existing hair lines and scissors trails the next time.

My barber knows me, knows how I like my hair, and starts cutting by the existing hair pattern, calculating the time elapsed since my last visit without taking much time upfront. If I want something new, we cover the general details, but don't need to go too far into them. Other times, a suggestion I may make to the barber about a style change I want comes back in a form of gentles suggestion that it won't look right on my head or with my body (I think a pear was the word used).

If I see a different person for a cut, I can give an overview of what has been done in the past, quickly detail how I like it, and even show in front of a mirror where more attention should be paid. My initial consultation with my client is similarly as important to ensure that an unwanted outcome does not happen.

Defining intelligence needs

When I started defining needs with the leadership at my present employer, some were willing to spend the necessary time while others were not. Those that were not willing to elaborate learned a bit about 'Hair styling 101 For Intelligence Practitioners.' If we could set certain parameters upfront, detail a pattern, establish time concerns, areas to avoid, and spots to focus on, we wouldn't need to spend so much effort the next time--unless a new request came about that was significantly different from the last.

Most leaders caught on to the concept and the benefit it was attempting to convey. Equally important, the executives saw a person who, when tasked with the assignment, valued their own time and wanted to conduct the investigations or operations efficiently and precisely. This leads to a greater respect toward the individual providing the intelligence findings.

Don't get me wrong, we still do end up with a few bad hair days and some cuts that seemed better in concept, but in the end as the leaders gave the requirements to work on, we can always say, "Well, looks good on you."

However, in the interests of job security, we must not forget how easy it is to start looking for a new barber.

Background:

Scott Swanson is the current Director of Intelligence for Oracle Corporation's CEO Office. There, his primary strategic and tactical focus is on competitor's pricing and licensing practices. Previously, Mr. Swanson has worked for Big 5 management consultancies, operated as a successful Executive Search firm, and has done extensive Competitive Intelligence contracting. His professional interests are in Intellectual Property containment and counterintelligence exercises. Scott is bald and never goes to a barber--just kidding. He can be reached by phone at 312.651.8001.

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January 22, 2003

Save \$100 by registering for SCIP03 by January 31.

Attention SCIP members: You have less than two weeks to sign up and save \$100. The deadline is January 31st. What are you waiting for?
Sign up today at www.scip.org/anaheim

Imagine all the great things that you can do with that \$100 savings coupled with the best CI learning experience of the year.

Join us in Anaheim and participate in SCIP's 2003 International Conference & Exhibit, "Leading for Results: Using Intelligence for Competitive Advantage."

SCIP's Annual International Conference & Exhibit, scheduled from March 12-15, 2003 in Anaheim, California USA, will prove to be the most comprehensive and energizing CI event of the year. You will be able to choose from over 45 sessions and 25 workshops to learn how to turn information into intelligence and achieve competitive advantage. Competitive intelligence empowers organizations to anticipate and face those challenges head on!

Bill Walsh, Hall of Fame Coach and former General Manager of the San Francisco 49ers, is the opening keynote speaker. He will address the role of CI in professional sports, and the role of leadership in creating successful teams. Additional keynote speakers are Michael Raynor, Director of Deloitte Research and Vikki Jones, E.V.P. of SBC Communications, who will show how strategic flexibility in planning will increase competitive success.

Come and network with leading professionals and educate yourself in CI. There is no better time than now to sign up for SCIP03, the world's premier CI event!

You can sign up for the Conference after January 31st, but why wait? Do it today and save \$100! You and your wallet will be glad that you did.

January 22, 2003

Conference job postings.

SCIP job market place listings

The following titles and descriptions are taken from current postings on the [SCIP Job Market Place section](#) of the SCIP website.

Market intelligence manager

We are a preeminent, global consulting firm. We are searching for a Market Intelligence Manager, whose role is to facilitate the successful design and implementation of secondary and primary research to aid in the organizational understanding of its competitive marketplace.

Director, competitive intelligence

Successful candidate will serve as internal consultant on global competitive intelligence issues across the organization and manage ongoing market, competitor, and trend data gathering activities.

Industrial products and services consultant

We are looking for an experienced member to join our dynamic, collaborative research and consulting team which advises clients on Industrial Products & Services such as metals, mining, manufacturing, petroleum, plastics, aerospace and automotive.

Director business intelligence

Conduct and manage corporate intelligence gathering and investigations, involving internal and external corporate matters and often high profile civil litigation.

Food and beverage consultant

We are looking for an experienced member to join our dynamic, collaborative research and consulting team which advises clients on Food & Beverages, in particular Natural and Health foods such as organic foods, health food retailing, vegetarian foods, soy, nutraceuticals, food ingredients and food technology.

Senior investigative researcher

We are currently seeking a senior investigative researcher for our Business Intelligence Practice who will produce three principal products: due diligence reports, litigation support, and marketing and competitive intelligence analysis.

CI analyst

Telecommunications research and consulting firm is looking for an analyst with significant primary research experience to perform competitive intelligence research.

Competitive intelligence associate

Position is responsible for researching, evaluating, and analyzing current and future trends within the market and among industry competitors

Business intelligence analyst

A major international law firm of several hundred attorneys seeks a Business Intelligence Analyst (BIA) to find and interpret a wider range of business and economic data and apply it to the firm's business development opportunities and to the improvement and development of client services and intelligence products related to the firm's clients and client industries.

Executive director, competitive intelligence

The Executive Director of Broadband Competitive Intelligence will coordinate all intelligence activities. This will involve working closely with senior management to identify the CI needs of the Broadband group; being responsible for the quality of CI output; presenting intelligence generated by the department to senior management.

Manager competitive intelligence

Senior Level Researcher with 5+ years experience for our market and competitor assessment position. Position is responsible for researching, evaluating and analyzing current and future trends within the IT market and among industry competitors.

Competitive intelligence manager

Skilled in competitor analysis, data interpretation, and recommendation formulation. Sound business acumen, ability to incorporate technical marketing data into meaningful business objectives and strategies.

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January 22, 2003

Web tool that makes life easier.

Web tool that makes life easier.

Donna Fryer, President, Global Information Search and Retrieval, dfryer@searchitright.com

Dale Tincher, President, ConsultWebs, dtincher@consultwebs.com

When doing research on the internet, do you ever feel like you get lost in the "World of Too Much Information"? It can be a daunting feeling. It's not unusual to feel like everyone else knows more than you do about different internet tricks.

How can you tame the internet, be more proficient, and spend less time spinning your wheels? A few Web tools can help you be more organized and feel more in control. Most of the software discussed in this article are downloadable. Not all are free, but many are relatively inexpensive. There may be similar product offerings, but the products mentioned are the ones with which we are familiar.

Capturing information

Ever have a presentation to do and need screen prints in your PowerPoint presentation? You have to capture the whole screen and do a lot of cropping. Fortunately, TechSmith's **Snagit** allows you to easily capture only the part of the screen that you want and remove the extraneous additions such as sidebars, extra spaces, and advertisements. Snagit is one of our favorites—it's so simple to use. When you find a document and want to capture a portion, just drag a box around that area, copy it, and then paste it to the final document. No cropping needed!

If you are a small company that wants to look like a major corporation (including the budget), TechSmith's **Camtasia** is the product for you. Camtasia's motto is "Show them how." According to Camtasia, this tool "creates videos of on-screen activity from any application, and allows you to easily show people how to use software and websites."

There are quite a few of these products on the market, but according to some trainers that regularly use these types of products, Camtasia compactly shows the information better and creates a smaller document. This software allows you to record video files of a screen, window, or particular region with a single click. You can then embed this into a PowerPoint presentation or other targeted document. Once you have developed the video you can add text, drawings, and cursor highlights. You can even narrate the video during or after recording.

Spamandpop-ups

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Background:

DonnaFryerisaresearchconsultantandownerofGlobalInformationResearch&Retrieval,LLCinGreensboro,NC.Shehasdeveloped trainingCD'sonhowtosearchtheinternetefficientlyandCLECDsforattorneys- [Searchitrightpackagedtraining](#) .Shealsodoessecondary competitiveintelligenceresearchforbusinesses.Herwebsiteis www.SearchitRight.com.

DaleTincheris presidentofConsultwebs.com,aRaleigh,NorthCarolina-basedwebdevelopmentandsearchEngineoptimizationfirm. Consultwebs.comspecializesinhelpingbusinessesmaintainaprofessionalwebpresenceaswellashelpingthemobtainhighsearchengine rankings.Hiswebsiteis www.ConsultWebs.com.

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Academicians enjoy a special rate to attend the entire Annual Conference! If you are employed full time in a research or teaching position with an accredited institute of higher education you can register for \$525 US. To register at this rate you need to download a registration form, and submit it with payment and a letter from the Dean of the Department or College where you work. If you have any questions regarding the registration process, please contact [Jen Griffith](mailto:JenGriffith).

January 22, 2003

Patents, profits and power: book review.

Patents, profits and power: book review.

John McGonagle, The Helicon Group

Patents, Profits & Power: How Intellectual Property Rules the Global Economy. Curtis Cook. 202 pages. Kogan Page, distributed in the US by [Styles Publishing](http://www.stylespublishing.com), \$35.00.

[**Editor's note:** John McGonagle reviews key CI books for Competitive Intelligence Magazine. He will be reviewing secondary but useful books in a regular article for SCIP, online.]

Canadian consultant Curtis Cook has followed upon his book *Competitive Intelligence—Create an Intelligence Organization and Compete to Win* with Michelle Cook as lead author [\[1\]](#) with one with a much broader scope. In *Patents, Profits & Power*, he has taken on the difficult task of educating lay readers about a complex and critical topic: the development of and power of global intellectual property rights.

Curtis has skillfully woven together clear, intelligible discussions of patents, trademarks, trade secrets and the like with well-organized presentations on how the property rights that businesses generate can and are enforced around the world—and where and how they are ignored. And, in a short space, he takes the reader from the theft of trade secrets to the wide-spread abuse of copyright laws in the academic world, making important connections along the way.

Internet rules

This section I found most interesting was Chapter 8, dealing with 'internet rules.' There, Curtis points out how little protection exists for internet 'publications,' but reminds us that the lack of effective protections does not mean that poachers can proceed without risk. The penalties for poachers can be devastating.

For the CI professional, an understanding of the world of intellectual property and its rules (and lack of rules), should be a critical element of CI training programs. Not only does this information expand the CI professional's understanding of the way businesses are developing new types of wealth, it has several other, more important, benefits:

- It enables the CI professional better to understand what data its competitors are protecting, why and how.
- It provides the CI professional with additional guidance, from the ethical and legal perspectives, on what can and cannot be done.
- It allows the CI professional to better guide a program protecting a company's competitively sensitive data from the collection efforts of other CI professionals.

For its well-directed handling of all of these issues, I strongly suggest that this book become a staple in all CI training programs.

Background

John J. McGonagle, a SCIP member since 1991, is a managing partner of [The Helicon Group](http://www.thehelicongroup.com), a firm specializing in providing consulting, research and training in competitive and strategic analysis since 1980. He received SCIP's Fellows Award in 1998. John is co-author with Carolyn Vella (Helicon's founding partner) of seven books on CI, the most recent of which is *Bottom Line Competitive Intelligence* (2002). John and Carolyn, in their "other life," breed, show, and judge pedigree cats in the American Cat Fanciers Association. John can be reached at 1.610.916.2081.

[1] Reviewed in [Competitive Intelligence Review](http://www.scip.org/news/cireview_article.asp?id=259), Vol. 12(1), 2001. Accessible to SCIP members at http://www.scip.org/news/cireview_article.asp?id=259

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The ideamachine: CI practice and patents.

The ideamachine: CI practice and patents.

Lynn Tellefsen, Cypheron Systems LLC, ltellefsen@rapidpat.com

The information economy and its emphasis on innovation grows stronger as organizations increasingly look internally to generate new ideas and to fuel their innovation process. That the world needs pioneers among thinkers and inventors has been a much-reported topic on mainstream media lately—from “25 Ideas for a Changing World” [i], “A New Strategy for Igniting Inventiveness” [ii], to “The Invention Factory,” [iii] and “Creation Nation,” [iv] to cite a few.

Leading technology companies have introduced marketing strategies that clearly express today’s emphasis on innovation. Consider these trademarks and service marks of leading technology providers: Sharp®-BeSharp™, Hewlett-Packard®-“Invent™”, Canon-“KnowHow™”, NEC®-“Empowered by Innovation™”, “Philips®-“It’s getting better all the time.”™

Making patent information more accessible

In 1997, IBM introduced its Patent Server, leveraging its enormous server and DB2 database technology and computing capacities to provide the public unlimited access to patent information. This technological milestone helped to educate organizations and the American public to the benefits of patent information from the United States patent collection.

Because being competitive depends upon the generation of new inventions and their applications, organizations are increasingly looking in-house to fuel their innovation practice. [v] The evolution of hard disk devices and improved networking technology, combined with an organization’s need for privacy, security, and better system performance is the momentum behind a growing trend for companies to replace outsourced, browser-based internet information solutions with in-house systems of standard and proprietary content holdings.

Enterprise development presents a valuable investment for many companies, with exponential returns including more efficient information acquisition and management, faster knowledge transfer, the generation of more ideas, better human resources management, and increased end-user satisfaction. How can the CI practice benefit from an in-house system to leverage competitive stance and foster growth?

The CI practice and patent information: discovery and analysis

An organization’s CI practice examines patent information to identify and to understand competitive portfolios, to analyze trends like the breadth and depth of market penetration in selected industries and classes, to assess the speed to market of their inventions and representative products, to gauge the number of true novelty vs. “metoo” products, and to identify areas where a competitor’s patent coverage overlaps and its relationship to the overall strength and make-up of its product mix.

The CI professional’s ongoing discovery and analysis with respect to patent information also includes analyzing patenting activity within classes or market segments, and understanding a competitor’s type of patent protection, its geographical coverage, their prominent inventors and teams, the strength of original patents, and other patent-specific considerations depending on the business needs. He or she may also use patent information to rate and report on his/her own company’s initiatives, particularly pre-launch product strategies in their own organizations.

An overabundance of patent information

Patents can be one of the richest sources of technical information, offering “between 70 and 90 percent of invention disclosure not found elsewhere.” [vi] At the same time, at more than a terabyte and growing, the United States patent collection is one of the world’s largest information collections, posing a frustrating problem for patent-centric businesses and competitive intelligence professionals. How does an organization identify, acquire, and integrate the patent information that it needs to fuel a successful competitive intelligence practice?

For an organization’s CI group, in-house access to patent information can provide end-users with unprecedented speed, convenience and security—while at the same time opening new possibilities for realizing insights into a company’s relative market strengths, weaknesses, and other analytics useful for determining or refining short and longer term strategies. Centralizing patents in a database/library and annotating, disseminating, and analyzing them provides value exponential to a company’s ability to become competitive. Indeed one annotated record morphs into a competitive item and of itself.

For example, various analyses are used to illustrate in a meaningful representation how Company A’s patent portfolio compares to industry trend or to Company B’s portfolio, and where (if any) the deltas lie. This type of intelligence requires that no data be lost, and assumes a regular, proactive approach to patent information acquisition and analysis, from a centralized, private, and secured data and software repository. The practice of “as-needed” patent downloading simply cannot achieve the longer-term needs for information access and analysis.

Strategic advantages to in-house patents

While some leading companies have secured centralized access to some or most of the patent data it needs, for most organizations, deploying an enterprise patent network remains an nebulous vision, despite the overwhelming strategic advantages. These include:

- privacy and security.
- data synchronization and validation.

- instantaneous access and interactivity.
- portability of data and intellectual analysis and findings.
- standardization of data elements and lexicons specific to a company's area of practice automated/facilitated discovery.
- machine learning.
- natural language queries.
- any other proprietary applications or analysis tools that is specific to a company's areas of business.

As companies reorganize and continue to invest in their IT infrastructure, this author anticipates growth of the trend to deploy enterprise systems that unite the data, software, and communications facilities integral to a company's growth, and to make it available to all users, all the time—from an internal, private, secure network. For instance, the centralized patent network would logically serve a company's CI, legal, R&D, administration and human resources activities from a single, centralized in-house data repository.

For the CI professional, in-house access provides a centralized, interactive, and ongoing system for identifying trends, analyzing patterns, gauging competitive strengths and weaknesses and the like. In short, such a system opens a new world of possibility for a CI professional to exponentially influence and contribute to its organization's growth. What better job satisfaction than that?

Background:

Lynn Tellefsen is President for Cypheron Systems, LLC and oversees the Rapidpat Complete product line. She has been strategically involved with patent and trademark information technology and the IP community since 1991. Prior to co-founding Cypheron Systems, LLC in 2001, Lynn managed a line of trademark services for CCH®, and served as the Director of Marketing for Micro Patent®, where she helped grow usage and expand its patent and trademark services, as she articulated the value of patent and trademark information within organizations.

Cypheron System's Rapidpat services help organizations to establish, maintain, and apply patent information strategically through the Rapidpat enterprise patent network systems. Rapidpat Complete™ makes every patent ever granted in the United States available in a compressed PDF format from an organization's private network. It is the first product that offers the complete US patent collection from 1790 as an all-inclusive enterprise solution. A proprietary compression algorithm reduces the size of the digital patent from 1.5 Megabyte to just 100k. Rapidpat EPN renders it technologically and economically feasible for even small organizations to integrate sizeable digital patent libraries with their existing collection of technical journals and scientific databases, for faster, more powerful and reliable information gathering and analysis. Rapidpat also offers document downloads, full-text patent research, and custom patent libraries. More information is available at www.rapidpat.com.

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- [\[i\]](#) BusinessWeek, August 26, 2002
 - [\[ii\]](#) Forbes ASAP, Summer 2002
 - [\[iii\]](#) Technology Review, May 2002
 - [\[iv\]](#) Inc. Magazine, October, 2002
 - [\[v\]](#) "Tech's Savviest Customers," Business 2.0, September 2002
 - [\[vi\]](#) Derwent Information

January 22, 2003

USTRANSCOM creates effective intelligence tool.

USTRANSCOM creates effective intelligence tool

Petty Officer 1st Class Gary Henry, Naval Information Bureau

A dangerous and volatile world may have just gotten a little more manageable, thanks to a new web-based program created by U.S. Transportation Command's (USTRANSCOM) Joint Intelligence Center (JICTRANS).

Transportation Intelligence Digital Environment (TIDE) lets the center's intelligence analysts create comprehensive transportation intelligence products directly on the internet. Using TIDE, analysts can get those products to decision-makers and planners much faster than most current methods allow. [TIDE is on the Department of Defense's secure internet. It is not accessible to the public and is protected on what is referred to as the SIPRNET, a secure, secret level, internet-like communication tool.]

Change is the only constant

TIDE, online since September, is a web-based program. It gives analysts the near unlimited ability to combine text, graphics, photos, video and audio files--including live feeds--into comprehensive reports, briefings and other web-based intelligence products. The program

automatically codes these files for the internet. That means after a unit-level review, users can easily and quickly post their products. Online, the information is instantly available to mission planners.

Because TIDE is database driven, the posted information automatically updates each time the databases TIDE connects to are updated. That, says Air Force Col. James Marchio, JICTRANS commanding officer, is a huge advantage in a world where change, often violent, is the only constant.

Bomb threats, anti-American demonstrations, mines in ports and surface-to-air missile launches are not every-day events, but they do happen, said Marchio, who has dealt with all of these situations during his 20 years in the intelligence community. TIDE's timely production of intelligence products will go further in helping missions avoid those unpleasant surprises.

Time is of the essence

Francine Billings, JICTRANS Chief of Systems Requirements, led the effort to develop TIDE. The nation's intelligence community has long sought faster, more in-depth methods for delivering information to leaders.

"Recent events, including September 11, have underscored the fact that time is of the essence in delivering information," she said. She contrasted the streamlined TIDE process to the cumbersome reporting methods of the 80s.

"You write a draft, send the manuscript up the chain for review, incorporate the changes, and then send the report to a graphics shop," she said. "From there it goes to the publisher, where it could be bottlenecked a while, depending on its priority. Eventually the report is printed and distributed. The only problem," Billings pointed out, "is that three months may have elapsed since the condition existed that you originally wrote about."

Although methods have improved since then, "before-TIDE" reporting methods still had bottlenecks and limitations. Analysts have had only a limited ability to incorporate other types of files into their text reports, and once completed, the reports still must be sent to another shop to be coded for the web. TIDE remedies all that.

They didn't wait

For Marchio, one of the most remarkable facets of TIDE is the way it was conceived and created. "TIDE is a tribute to the ingenuity of our folks," he said. "Ms. Billings' group saw a need and went out and filled it. They didn't wait for orders or money."

The group began by outlining what they wanted in program capabilities. They also asked the JICTRANS transportation analysts what they wanted. Then the group looked in-house to see what tools already existed. "We didn't want to re-invent the wheel," Billings said.

Finally, they spent about \$8,000 on new software--a pittance, Billings pointed out, when compared to the hundreds of thousands, and even millions of dollars often spent on program development.

TIDE's web-based modules

The result, TIDE, consists of several connected web-based modules. TIDE's heart is a report generator known as RIP (Report Integrated Process). It's in this module that analysts build their products, integrating whatever files they need to paint the picture.

They can also call upon the Transportation Intelligence Network (TIN), to create custom maps and charts showing port and airfield information. These "geospatial" images can be "layered," Billings explained. A click of the mouse can, for example, reveal on the map all airfields that accommodate C-17 Globemasters. Another click could show C-5 Galaxy-capable fields, then one more click shows the airfields that can accept both.

PACE2, the newest edition of the Portland Airfield Collaborative Environment, can be used with or independently of TIDE. It provides constantly updated data about port and airfield infrastructure worldwide.

A fourth module, WADE (Workflow Application in a Digital Environment), currently under development, tracks and coordinates production on line. That means TIDE managers can generate progress reports at a moment's notice. WADE also notifies analysts by e-mail as due-dates for recurring reports draw near as well as assign new tasks.

Rising TIDE

TIDE is currently used only by the analysts at JICTRANS, the part of Transportation Command's Intelligence Directorate responsible for producing transportation intelligence output. That could change, said Billings. Plans are in the works for analysts in the rest of the directorate to be introduced to TIDE by the new year. The ground-breaking nature of the program has also caught the attention of other DoD intelligence agencies. Tests with other Joint Intelligence Centers are being scheduled.

Though in use, TIDE is still in its infancy. Billings' crew is already at work on enhancements and additions. Meanwhile, JICTRANS is collecting data on the young program, measuring its effectiveness and estimating its potential.

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