



GTSI Delivers a Lifetime of IT Services to the FDA – All Under a Single Contract

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA) is the lead office for all of the agency's field investigations, a far flung operation with 198 locations nationwide. But the pursuit of its critical mission, to protect consumers from harmful foods and drugs, was at times hampered by an aging, increasingly inadequate IT infrastructure.

Some computing components were more than a decade old – ancient in the rapidly changing world of technology. Spare parts were scarce and software patch service dates had been long passed. Storage capacity was unable to meet rising demands, yet the low grade system resources provided little opportunity for growth. Moreover, each field location was responsible for maintaining its own equipment – and systems would go down for days while sites awaited hardware repairs.

The advanced applications the FDA desired to accelerate its mission could not, in most cases, be installed on the outdated devices. However, upgrading was a challenge, given the high cost of new technology – and shrinking capital funds. Adding to the frustrations was the lack of coordinated infrastructure support, of particular importance when facing the interoperability issues inherent in a nationwide technology rollout of such magnitude.

Clearly, a quick fix would not be enough to solve the IT problems. What ORA and the FDA needed was a comprehensive approach that would result in an upgraded and standardized

configuration that could be used in all locations, could be effectively supported throughout the life of the IT – and would be within the constraints of a limited budget.

FDA turned to GTSI to create an approach that could meet those rigorous demands. What GTSI proposed was a turnkey solution based upon the company's definitive Technology Lifecycle Management (TLM) approach. TLM revolves around an "Infrastructure as Service" model, a value proposition that in a single contract provides for every stage in the life of an IT infrastructure. For ORA, GTSI would deliver comprehensive services that covered everything from assessment and acquisition to IT support and disposal, all at a pre-negotiated price that continued for the life of the IT – without unexpected rises in cost. What's more, the technology and services would be paid for out of the agency's operating and maintenance budget, eliminating the need for a huge capital outlay to procure and support the IT. With GTSI focusing on all aspects of IT, ORA could focus its resources on mission-critical core activities.

The financial solution gave FDA the convenience of only a single contract to cover a myriad of services, plus the predictability of a plan that was manageable and within budget. As a result, FDA was able to secure more upgrades than would have been possible with a direct purchase. GTSI would retain ownership of the equipment, and FDA would lease the technology out of its operating budget. Said Lori Davis, CIO of the FDA, "We had limited resources to apply to the installation of new equipment, so allowing GTSI to retain ownership and oversee its implementation and support relieved both a financial burden and staffing burden."

Included in the project was the replacement of Wide Area Network (WAN) routers at 199 sites, SAN server clusters and switches at six sites, district servers at 17 sites, and SMA distribution point servers at 125 sites. Built with leading-edge components from GTSI's technology partners, the solution created an innovative, high performance infrastructure capable of meeting ORA objectives both today and into the future. Said Davis, "Not only was the agency's aged, end-of-life hardware replaced with new, state-of-the-art

equipment, but with GTSI, we were assured of seamless support for new technologies as they become relevant to FDA, resulting in an overall best value approach.”

In pursuit of the project, GTSI built a collaborative environment that brought FDA, GTSI, its vendors and subcontractors together to work seamlessly in delivering all services. Not only did GTSI coordinate and complete the integration, logistics, asset tagging, installation, implementation, system software stack customization, and networking services as planned, on budget, but as well conducted in-depth training for FDA staff on all new system components. Post installation, GTSI established a readily accessible Support Desk for the maintenance of hardware and operations, as well as handling all warranty support with

the convenience of a single contact. The end result was a coordinated effort between GTSI and the FDA that replaced an outmoded systems and network infrastructure that, in the past, appeared to be an insurmountable task – and ensured that OAR’s technology would remain up-to-date into the future.

GTSI’s approach allowed the FDA to accomplish more work with less capital outlay of funds. Moreover, TLM established a solid foundation on which the agency could continuously build and expand in support of the agency’s mission. “This was a bold step towards fixing the IT problems that have plagued the agency,” said Davis, “GTSI has created a model of program and project management that FDA intends to apply on all of its current and future IT initiatives.”

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GTSI Corp. is the first information technology solutions provider offering a Technology Lifecycle Management (TLM) approach to IT infrastructure solutions delivered through industry-leading professional and financial services. GTSI employs a proactive, strategic methodology that streamlines technology lifecycle management, from initial assessment to acquisition, implementation, refresh, and disposal. TLM allows government agencies to implement solutions of national and local significance quickly and cost-effectively. GTSI’s certified engineers and project managers leverage strategic partnerships with technology innovators. These experts use proven, repeatable processes to design, deploy, manage, and support simple to complex solutions, to meet governments’ current and future requirements and business objectives. GTSI is headquartered in Northern Virginia, outside of Washington, D.C.

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