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BEAM — Doing More With Less

About the commentator

John Monahan is President of RT Logic, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Integral Systems. RT Logic has been supporting the space industry with cost effective, innovative, software defined solutions. Its products currently support 90 percent of the nation's space programs including GPS, SBIRS, MILSATCOM, TDRS, DMSP/NPOES and others. For more than 10 years, RT Logic has provided the space sustainment community with new ground system capabilities including: modems, receivers, front-end processors, gateway devices, red/black separation devices, and more. RTL has an unmatched reputation for solving the toughest obsolescence issues and developing and integrating next-generation capabilities into existing operational systems.



Due to budgetary pressures by the US Government, there will be renewed interest in providing new, modernized capabilities through technical refreshment efforts. Upgrading a legacy ground system through a technical refresh offers many advantages over a new-start acquisition. Capabilities can be provided in a timely and cost effective manner. Risk can be reduced by taking a phased approach to adding new, modernized features.

A more responsive system hardening capability is possible through on-going information assurance upgrades to counter evolving cyber threats.

Today's flexible, tailored-COTS systems are extremely powerful and enable software-defined solutions to perform the same missions that, in the past, required custom hardware. These upgradable software capabilities not only solve current problems, but also provide flexibility to meet future (currently undefined) needs without the corresponding cost or complexity associated with a hardware upgrade. This not only reduces overall hardware costs, but also simplifies logistics/sustainment maintenance of the fielded capability.

By taking a technical refresh approach, it also enables a new set of players to participate in the development activities. Without the programmatic burdens of a new acquisition, it encourages

smaller, more agile technology companies to play a bigger role in solving legacy ground system problems. These companies tend to be more responsive to customer needs while offering greater flexibility and cost effective solutions compared to the more established, bigger primes.

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