

Case Study

GroupSystems Success Story: The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Support Decision Making in System Engineering and Acquisition Programs

The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory needed support with their System Engineering and Acquisitions Programs decision making process. There were a number of items that needed to be addressed when going through their process of information and decision gathering. The Applied Physics Lab needed to identify future needs and capabilities, examine system and operational concepts for value added, analyze alternatives, conduct and support experimentation and demonstrations, and identify and prioritize the issues for decision makers.

Generally the Applied Physics Laboratory would structure seminars around verbal discussion of key topics. The factors that needed to be discussed to determine the structure of sessions included; which analysts would be assigned to note taking responsibilities; should they limit audience size to optimize time; how audience interaction would drive the agenda; and what type of scenarios should be used to structure the discussions.

GroupSystems in Action

With the use of GroupSystems collaboration software tools, the Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory was able to integrate technology into their existing seminar format. The GroupSystems software helped supplement participants' verbal discussion with visual comments and ideas. The software provided participants with the ability to contribute simultaneous and parallel input. Participants were able to speak and type ideas while the session was in progress.

Anonymous input was another key feature of the GroupSystems software. Non-attribution was used to encourage frank and candid discussions. This feature created a large number of ideas and comments written in the participants own words. This honest and direct input was later used the software provided for electronic voting and surveys to record and measure the participants' viewpoints and perspectives.

By implementing GroupSystems group collaboration software, the Applied Physics Lab was able to develop a greater volume of feedback, input, comments, question exchange and sharing among participants. The anonymous input aided in managing personalities and behavior; and also allowed for greater participation of the broader audience. By being able to quickly vote and survey within the audience, they were able to integrate quantitative and qualitative data important in their decision making.

Customer

The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory

Business Benefits of GroupSystems

- Immediately created physical records and reports of participants ideas in their own words were created immediately
- Effective time management for large audiences attending sessions
- Reduced barrier to audience interaction