

GovernmentVAR of the Week: Stratix

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Company: Stratix

Location: Norcross, Ga.

Top Exec: CEO Bonney Shuman

Year Founded: 1983

Why We Noticed: Leverages commercial expertise to win in government

Stratix wasn't always in the government business. As recently as two years ago, the company stuck with the commercial market for selling its mobility systems – and saw a lot of success doing so. But with the surge in demand by the military and first-responder community for wireless technology and supply-chain management, the Norcross, Ga.-based solution provider couldn't back away from the potential opportunity.



That said, Stratix is smart enough to not make the same mistake as other solution providers that decide to make a play for government; the company knows it has a lot to learn, and is strategically looking to partners for education, support and joint initiatives. But make no mistake – Stratix doesn't see its inexperience as a hindrance. Quite the contrary, CEO Bonney Shuman thinks vendors could stand to infuse more commercial strategy into their government practices.

"Manufacturers will move more to a commercial-type model where the channel partners are providing the complete solutions," says Stratix CEO Bonney Shuman

"Overall we have seen a difference in how the commercial market responds and supports partners," she says. "We believe that over the next two years, manufacturers will move more to a commercial-type model where the channel partners are providing the complete solutions," and vendors are doing a better job of supporting them on the back end with contracting processes.

Nonetheless, Stratix understands that its drive into the government market is powered by the vendor relationships that have proved successful on the commercial side. With more than 23 years in the mobile enterprise marketplace, the company has developed strong partnerships with Zebra, O'Neil, Xplore and Symbol, to name a few. It also has been repeatedly named Business Partner of the Year by Symbol. Those types of relationships, when brought to the public-sector market, translate to options for government customers and the ability to customize solutions to meet their needs.

And that strategy is working. The company's government business has grown by double digits in the past two years, with its ability to deliver leading to several contract renewals. For example, solutions deployed into DHS agencies are providing new and increased visibility into their supply chain, and a partnership with software company Iomedex led to the deployment of a mobile first-responder solution at the Boston Marathon, delivering real-time runner information for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Last year, Stratix opened offices in Washington, D.C., staffed with both sales and technical personnel.

"We continue to expand our government team to support the many new opportunities by adding experienced logistics and support personnel, Shuman says. "The mobile data collection market has changed over the last 10 years, shifting from a direct sales model. Many vendors have invested heavily in new commercial VAR programs to move major revenue through partners. We look forward to this type of model in the public sector."

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