

Q&A with Karta Technologies, Inc.

VP of Army Training and
DLETP Program Manager

Dennis K. Redmond

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3Dsolve recently had the pleasure of speaking with Dennis K. Redmond, Karta Technologies, Inc. Vice President of Army Training and Program Manager of the highly regarded Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Distributed Learning, Education and Training Product (DLETP) program. Karta Technologies, the prime contractor on the DLETP program, has assembled a team of product and service providers to provide high-quality, state-of-the-art distributed e-learning for soldiers worldwide. 3Dsolve, Inc., The Simulation Learning Company, is a proud member of the Karta DLETP team.

The following interview reveals Karta's initiatives of the DLETP program and reasons for selecting 3Dsolve as a partner.

What was the goal in creating the Karta team?

The Karta team was established to fulfill the requirements of distributed learning for education and training product opportunities under contract with United States (U.S.) Army. The DLETP contract supports distributed learning, and leads doctrine training within the Army—a classroom without walls. I additionally wanted to provide the Army a team of industry proven professionals whose sole mission is to provide soldiers and leaders the right training at the right time.

Is DLETP a new initiative?

DLETP is a re-compete of Distance Learning XXI. It is a new five year, \$483 million contract.

How strategic or important is distributed/simulated learning to the military today?

Speaking as a retired Colonel who worked in TRADOC, distributed/simulated learning is **the** key way to help soldiers in the Army prepare for today's battlefield. There is no longer the time to get them into "schoolhouse" style classrooms. We must provide opportunity to learn by other means; blended learning that can be done on one's own time or during designated periods within the soldier's duty day, remotely. Distributed learning is very critical to the strategic direction the Army and DoD are supporting training while our Nation is at war.

Has the need for distributed/simulated learning increased due to wartime?

Before 2001 and fall of The (Twin) Towers, the Army was already looking at ways to provide blended learning solutions that were more relevant to today's needs and to keep soldiers interested. A lot of platform training is pretty dull and monotonous. Since The War (on Terror), we have to keep soldiers out on the operational front. We can't put them in a "schoolhouse" classroom for extended periods. We need to send them the training they need, when and wherever needed.

Today's younger generation of soldiers has grown up differently than previous generations. Do you think that drives the need for distributed/simulated learning?

As a matter a fact, that's probably the second most significant factor driving distributed learning for the Army. An 18 or 19 year-old, coming out of an environment where they are used to multi-

tasking might not have the knowledge on current history or math, but sure can manipulate game boys, cell phones... We need to use better methodologies to train these individuals.

In the past, the Army trained by the "Crawl-Walk-Run" method. You teach a soldier how to, for example, salute. You teach them to execute that skill at a walking pace, and then a running pace. That doesn't entertain kids anymore who are coming out of the MTV Generation and off of computers. So, absolutely!

What do you view as the biggest opportunity for your team with this contract?

Well, there are six other primes on this contract. The Karta team is going to be the leading prime on this five year contract, and there are several reasons why:

(1) TRADOC experience within the Karta team. I came out of TRADOC. There is another fellow on the team who used to be the Director of Training at Ft. Lee, VA at the U.S. Army's Combined Arms Support Command (CASCOM). With 30 years in that environment, we understand the Army's needs in TRADOC. We are very well positioned in that respect.

(2) We have quality partners who have proven themselves within the TRADOC space, so we can use them as examples of what you are going to get from the Karta team.

I think over the five years, you'll see the Karta team lead the other teams in this effort.

What are your biggest challenges in working with the Army on this particular contract?

The biggest challenge is the volatility of the Army's budget. Right now we've been waiting for the contract to be "funded." They just can't begin task orders (projects) because the rest of the Army is tightening their fiscal policies to make sure they have enough money to support an army at war.

Additionally, there are differences across TRADOC. There is the capability to get a standard template out of TRADOC schoolhouses. At Ft. Gordon they do things one way, but at Ft. Bliss or Ft. Sill or Ft. Knox they might do things another way. So, we have to be very cognitive of that, and I think that is going to be difficult. But with our TRADOC experience and the experience of our partners, I think it will be solvable.

The biggest challenge though, is the volatility of the budget.

You spoke earlier about wartime, the remote nature of soldiers, and the digital media MTV generation... Is there anything else that you think is driving or contributing to the need or demand for distributed learning and/or simulated learning?

Simulated learning is interactive and immersive by nature. The Army is moving towards flexible and adaptive leadership and training for its soldiers and leaders. 3Dsolve puts the soldier within the environment and through an immersive, interactive interchange that produces a lot of learning. So then, when the soldier confronts special situations they'll be better prepared and definitely remember what they have learned and been trained to do.

Lack of money, lack of equipment, and lack of capabilities are also contributing factors. The TRADOC schoolhouses have downsized some of their support organizations for the operational Army. Simulated learning allows you to put a soldier in a simulated tank and that soldier can do

virtually everything they can do in a live tank but launch a live round out the tube. So, even if the slider doesn't ever see a tank (in training), when they do get in one they will know what to do.

Let's take another step back. Can you tell us a little bit about Karta? What is Karta, and what do they try to accomplish on behalf of clients?

Karta is a 20-year old company that started out of the garage of the company's founder and CEO, G.P. Singh, in San Antonio, TX. Karta really cares about the client and understands their needs. I know a lot of companies say that, but Karta does it daily. In fact, Karta still "has" the first client they ever worked with! Karta looks at solutions that are usable and adaptable across the spectrum of customers. Sometimes companies get an opportunity or contract to create a solution for a specific need and then try to go out and get other business; where Karta might try to make it a multi-purposed solution so it can be used by other people.

We (Karta) are really client-focused. Karta works within the health care industry, logistics and engineering, training solutions—we've done a lot of training support. In the case of the U.S. Army, Karta came in and evaluated how they could best maximize the use of resources and get training out in a blended solution.

Karta also focuses on its partners. Karta never, ever, ever talks about subs (subcontractors). Never. They are either partners or teammates. We are all in it together. If the partners are doing well, then we're doing well. It's that type of an organization.

Karta is a large business wrapped within a small business shell. We have about 400 employees, and are a \$60 million company which is looking to grow even more.

About Dennis K. Redmond

Dennis K. Redmond retired as full Colonel from the U.S. Army in 2003. In 2000, Mr. Redmond became the TRADOC Director of Individual Training with responsibility for all TRADOC schoolhouses, leader development, and schoolhouse training. Since retiring from the U.S. Army, Mr. Redmond has worked on several DoD contracts in the area of training. Mr. Redmond joined Karta Technologies, Inc. in 2005 as Vice President of Army Training, and is the DLETP Program Manager.