

Case Study

Strategic Interim Technology Leadership in Aerospace & Defense Manufacturing

The Challenges

IT Department Evaluation: A leading manufacturer for aerospace and defense required an in-depth assessment of its IT capabilities and infrastructure to ensure alignment with its business growth objectives - especially for the DIB (Defense Industrial Base) sector. The leadership team cited their top four challenges:

CMMC/NIST Compliance: Compliance with NIST SP 800-171 and CMMC was critical for conducting business with the Department of Defense (DoD), but the organization lacked a clear roadmap to meet these requirements.

Cybersecurity and IT Resilience: The existing IT environment needed improvements in security and infrastructure reliability to mitigate risks associated with cyberattacks and operational downtime.

Operational IT Alignment: The internal IT team was stretched thin, impacting day-to-day operations and limiting the ability to focus on strategic technology initiatives.

ITAR Compliance: A significant ITAR (International Traffic in Arms Regulations) compliance issue required immediate attention, remediation, and preventive controls to avoid regulatory penalties.

The Solutions

To address these challenges, the Fortium Interim CIO developed and executed a strategic technology transformation plan:

- **Technology Roadmap Development:** Conducted a full assessment of the technology environment and designed a Strategic Technology Roadmap to support the company's rapid growth.
- **IT Outsourcing Strategy:** Transitioned day-to-day IT support to a vetted and secure Managed Service Provider (MSP) in order to ensure scalable and reliable IT operations aligned with business growth.

Client Profile

- Industry: Aerospace, Defense, and Space Manufacturing
- Business Focus: Precision machining and manufacturing for critical aerospace and defense applications
- Revenue: \$100M+
- Employees: ~350

- **Infrastructure Modernization:** Relocated all hardware off-premise to a co-location data center that enhances stability, reduces downtime risk, and improves overall business continuity.
- **Cybersecurity Enhancement:** Strengthened cybersecurity measures to protect the organization from potential cyber threats.
- **Regulatory Compliance Alignment:** Developed a comprehensive roadmap for implementing NIST SP 800-171 and CMMC requirements to ensure readiness for DoD business engagements.
- **ITAR Compliance Remediation:** Led the resolution of an ITAR compliance issue by collaborating with legal counsel and business leaders to remediate the incident and implement controls to prevent recurrence and regulatory fines.

The Results

- **Strategic IT Alignment:** Established a clear Technology Roadmap and positioned the company for scalable and secure business growth.
- **Improved IT Efficiency:** Outsourcing IT services enabled the internal team to focus on strategic initiatives rather than day-to-day operational challenges.
- **Enhanced Security and Compliance:** Strengthened the organization's security posture and aligned IT practices with CMMC and NIST SP 800-171 compliance requirements.
- **Risk Mitigation and Business Continuity:** Migrating IT infrastructure to a co-location facility reduces downtime risks and ensures uninterrupted business operations.
- **Regulatory Compliance Success:** Successfully resolved an ITAR compliance issue, mitigating potential legal and financial repercussions.

Through expert fractional CIO leadership, the company transformed its IT landscape, aligned technology strategy with business growth, improved security, and ensured regulatory compliance. By implementing a robust IT foundation, the company is now well-positioned for sustained success and scalable growth in the aerospace, defense, and space industries.