

ArmyNET is the Army's award-winning, Internet portal which allows soldiers and their families to keep in touch regardless of where they may be in the world. ArmyNET's most popular features include: secure web-based email, instant messaging, moderated forums, pay statements, promotion lists as well as information on operational and welfare matters that would otherwise not be available over the internet.

Lieutenant Colonel Frank Tipton is in charge of British Army's Web Exploitation Group and is responsible for the exploitation of web technology to meet the Army's information needs.



The **ArmyNET** portal was developed to deliver a secure communications channel over the Internet's infrastructure. As the ArmyNET matured from a pilot system to an official system, LTC Tipton was faced with the challenge of providing information assurance and reliable delivery of ArmyNET capabilities. "Following an investigation into the security and reliability of our servers at our previous hosting organisation and their lack of responsiveness in deploying new capabilities within ArmyNET, we decided to go to tender on a brand new hosting contract for the Army's internet servers." Five hosting companies were invited to submit tenders against a very specific set of requirements.

- ❑ Network uptime and security had to be guaranteed.
- ❑ Hosting had to be their core business.
- ❑ They had to offer a 24-hour hardware replacement guarantee.
- ❑ A stock of replacement hardware should always be available.

LTC Tipton said, "Out of all the companies that submitted full tenders one clearly shone out above all the others - **Rackspace®**. They offered managed hosting as their core business; in fact this is all they do. They exceeded our hardware replacement requirement as they provide a one-hour hardware replacement guarantee. Their data centre was fully secure and protected from both Virus and DDOS attacks (*Distributed Denial of Service*) and their Fanatical Support® was the icing on the cake that sealed the deal."

LTC Tipton revealed, "One contender for the contract did suggest that they could offer 24-hour hardware replacement as long as they had two weeks notice. Enough said!"

Rackspace clearly knew what they were doing. Their submitted tender was reviewed by the **DCSA** (Defence Communication Services Agency) and pronounced to be the best specification as well as the best value for money of all the submitted proposals. The end result is that the Army's Internet

websites and the ArmyNET capability are currently hosted at Rackspace. The Army Internet website communicates the Army image on the Internet and is a primary source for recruitment. The Internet websites are delivered using Windows based technology while ArmyNET, a fully secure, online internet communications portal, is hosted on the latest Rackspace Red Hat Linux Intensive hosting platform. This fully monitored, high-end solution utilises the latest Linux hosting environment and guarantees 100% network uptime on a self-healing network. It provides the highest levels of security and reliability available for an advanced application running on MySQL.



LTC Tipton went on to say, "A modern army thrives on information and the Web Exploitation Group delivers the communication channels that underpin the Army's exploitation of internet technologies. ArmyNET delivers a unique communications capability by providing information that is sensitive but unclassified over the Internet. It enables soldiers to access information published by the Chain of Command as well as to communicate with their loved ones whilst deployed through instant messaging and web-based e-mail. Members can view their pay statements on-line, find out about operational and welfare arrangements and

download Army forms. They can also participate in on-line communities and discussion forums, buy and sell in the electronic marketplace - even keep up to date with the latest sports news. Every user is given a unique armymail.mod.uk e-mail account for the duration of their Army career, and what's more, their mail can be automatically forwarded to the user's normal home e-mail account. That means that important information can still reach registered ArmyNET users when they are away from their barracks. We have grown from 0 to 61,500 users since April 04 and the system has remained completely stable and available to all our users".

LTC Tipton concluded, "The support that we have received from Rackspace has been truly outstanding. We now have a secure system with the ability to reconfigure at will. We have complete visibility over our system and its components and are beginning to fully appreciate how it all works! In most cases, technical issues are resolved before we are even aware - a real demonstration of Fanatical Support if there was one. I am delighted with the service provided by Rackspace and would not hesitate to recommend them as a managed hosting provider".

Fabio Torlini, Marketing Director at Rackspace said, "Security is a vital issue for many of today's enterprises and none more so than the Army. We are delighted to have been selected to host the Army and are very proud that our security and uptime guarantee meets the specifications and selection criteria demanded by Lieutenant Colonel Tipton and the DCSA."

For more information on Rackspace's secure Hosting please call **0800 988 0100** or visit the Rackspace website at www.rackspace.co.uk