

## CASE STUDY

### Organization

**GENERAL DYNAMICS**  
*Strength On Your Side®*

### Product

Xythos Enterprise Document Management Suite

### Why Xythos?

- Enables secure information exchange and document collaboration
- Supports heterogeneous environments
- Accelerates user adoption

### Benefits

- Open standards-based
- Integrates with LDAP
- Intuitive, web-based interface

General Dynamics has leading market positions in business aviation and aircraft services, land and amphibious combat systems, mission-critical information systems and technologies and shipbuilding and marine systems. The company is a leading supplier of sophisticated defense systems to the United States and its allies, and sets the world standard in business jets. It is headquartered in Falls Church, Virginia, employs approximately 70,200 people worldwide, and has four main business segments: Aerospace, Combat Systems, Information Systems and Technology and Marine Systems.

### Challenge: Securely sharing information

Eric Baenen is a Program Manager for scientific network environments in General Dynamics' (GD) Advanced Information Systems strategic business unit, responsible for the Air Force Research Laboratory's' (AFRL) Human Effectiveness Directorate.

Baenen's users represented a very diverse group who relied on a variety of platforms and software – yet needed a common method to share information within and outside of their community. While they had access to a variety of systems throughout the Air Force, there was no system that would enable them to easily share information with the external contractors and academic institutions that comprised their team. AFRL had to identify and secure the resources, tools and facilities that would allow this diverse community to share documents and files with one another across whatever platform they were working on.

As a result, Baenen began looking for a web-based document or file management system that would support upper end WebDAV protocols, provide version control, ensure sharing within and outside of the community – but would also enable his personnel to control who had access to what information at what time. The evaluation criteria included the need for a solution that must:

- Be open standards-based (WebDAV)
- Support cross-platform clients (Windows, Linux, Mac, Solaris etc.)
- Support a variety of web browsers (Firefox, Netscape, Safari etc.)
- Ensure distributed file sharing/file locking
- Support access control (password protections)



- Support encrypted sessions
- Support user defined access control at the file and folder level
- Run on a Linux server
- Provide both application-based and web-based user interfaces
- Handle authentication via a Linux/Open LDAP-based server

## Evaluation and deployment

Having established selection criteria, Baenen began to review market surveys, conduct research, and meet with prospective solutions providers. Baenen discovered that most of the products would not work in the mixed environment AFRL had to support. Baenen found only one company that could completely meet all of his requirements. As a result, he initiated a sole source proposal for Xythos Enterprise Document Management Suite.

“Xythos provided us with a demonstration version of Enterprise Document Management Suite that we installed and ran for two months. Our users quickly learned how to set their own document permissions, manage document version control, etc. They were thrilled with the new software. The Xythos software gave them exactly what they were looking for. Having met their criteria and our own, we purchased the product,” Baenen reported.

At deployment, the ability of Xythos to be in full compliance with WebDAV, run on a Linux server and integrate with LDAP for authentication helped to ensure a successful implementation. 100% WebDAV support meant our users could continue to use all of their current software and safely collaborate. Xythos’ built-in WebDAV features worked right inside the products like Microsoft web folders and Macromedia Dream Weaver and even non MS apps like DAVFS for Linux, Safari and Open Office,” remarked Baenen.

Having a web interface to their files, as well as being able to use their favorite applications made the Xythos implementation a smooth one for Baenen and his users. The feedback he received confirmed that the software was interoperable with the variety of systems and platforms his users ran on, addressing one of Baenen’s primary criteria.

## Another set of AFRL users

Researchers at the Automated Target and Recognition Division of AFRL also use Xythos on a daily basis for document and file sharing. Prior to using Enterprise Document Management Suite, they relied on FTP and email file attachments for document collaboration – yet there was concern about the security of the information they were sharing using these methods. With Xythos, that concern has been mitigated.

In addition, most of the ATRD programs have competition-sensitive information, provided on a ‘need-to-know’ basis. As part of how this information is restricted, DARPA dictates with whom the information can be shared – and what level of access users can have on a particular site. Xythos enables this information to be shared securely, through firewalls, while also establishing security bridges to communicate outside the organization – achieving this without breaching ATRD security requirements.

*“Xythos’ adherence to open standards and cross-platform support are important reasons why Xythos Enterprise Document Management Suite has worked so successfully within our community.”*

**Eric Baenen**

*Program Manager for Scientific  
Network Environments  
General Dynamics*



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Xythos continues to serve an expanding list of projects. As more programs and sites are established, more users will be able to take advantage of this capability. Having the system available in real time, and being able to upload and download files easily, makes information sharing easier for users both inside and outside of AFRL. While the Xythos technology was adopted initially for the Targets under Trees and the Exploitation of 3 D Data programs, and has been successfully deployed, there are now other programs that can take advantage of the technology. A group of individuals conducting evaluations of software algorithms, for example, is one of the largest groups now using Xythos to safely share their information.

The General Dynamics/AFRL team is a resource for software development programs throughout DOD and is frequently invited to technology interchange meetings. Recently Baenen was asked to show existing VDL users how they could maximize the benefits from the Xythos system – and demonstrate best practices that would make their jobs easier and more productive. Baenen has also referred colleagues from other agencies to Xythos, as he has found the company to be customer-oriented and willing to promptly address his organization’s needs. “Xythos has provided excellent customer service and has been very responsive. The company’s adherence to open standards and cross-platform support, in addition to support for Linux and LDAP on the server side, are important reasons why Xythos has worked so successfully within our community,” Baenen concluded.

***For more information please call 1.888.4XYTHOS  
or visit [www.xythos.com](http://www.xythos.com)***

Xythos Software, Inc. 655 Montgomery Street, 16th Floor San Francisco, CA 94111