

WHY TOFFLER ASSOCIATES CONDUCTED THIS STUDY

“Planners in the Military Services measure their organizations’ return on investment (ROI) not just in dollar terms but also in terms of an intangible but critical value: the security of the nation. We promised outside-of-the-box thinking, creative insight and a synthesis of many different perspectives to give them that value, and we delivered as advertised.”

-Toffler Associates
Engagement Leader

Toffler Associates’ Creative Solutions Help the Military Defend Against Future Threats

WHAT TOFFLER ASSOCIATES FOUND

During the Cold War, military planning and weapons procurement were relatively straightforward. Our enemies had missiles, tanks, and battleships, so if we matched them at least one for one, our country remained safe. But today, with the proliferation of lethal technologies that can be carried in a briefcase, purchasing weapons and other capabilities that match or surpass our adversaries’ has become an inexact science. If, for instance, the Defense Department spends millions on a missile system that a “rogue” country counters with a comparatively inexpensive high-tech device, those decision-makers will have wasted millions of dollars and opened a potential seam in our nation’s defenses.

WHY TOFFLER ASSOCIATES?

The planning department in each Military Service (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps) is charged with guessing what our adversaries—from nation states to three-person terrorist cells—might use to attack us, and with determining how to counter the threats. It is a daunting task that requires creative thinking and unorthodox solutions. To help anticipate what “disruptive” new technologies and concepts our enemies might develop to harm the U.S., and help develop ideas for how to neutralize those enemy strategies, the planning department of one Military Service called in Toffler Associates.

“Our approach includes more than simply predicting the future,” said the Toffler Associates Engagement Leader. “We take a careful look at a client’s entire environment to identify forces that are shaping the future. When envisioning the disruptive capabilities that an enemy can develop in the next 20 years, we went beyond what many consulting firms do, which is to focus on the ‘scary’ technology itself. That’s only half the picture. We take a broader view. After identifying the most devastating technology that might be developed, we go to the military and

say, If you had such-and-such a capability, what would you do with it? This approach differentiates us from the competition: we never consider a technology without also considering its various concepts of operation, its strategic and tactical uses.”

THE TOFFLER ASSOCIATES APPROACH: SEVEN QUESTIONS

After months of study and interviews with experts in a variety of fields, Toffler Associates developed a methodology, centered on seven key questions, that helped identify potential enemies and their threats. The questions are:

- 1) What is the adversary's strategy?
- 2) What is the motivation that drives this strategy?
- 3) What capabilities must they have to execute the strategy?
- 4) What evidence is there that they are seeking to obtain these capabilities?
- 5) Which of their capabilities are conventional and which are not?
- 6) Why are they investing in these capabilities?
- 7) Which capabilities are the most disruptive to U.S. defenses?

“If we can answer these questions,” said the Toffler Associates Engagement Leader, “the U.S. military can then develop several concepts of operation as to how the technology might be employed against us. With this knowledge, we can disrupt the enemy’s plans.” One reason why the military planning department hired Toffler Associates is the firm’s ability to access a coterie of creative thinkers from around the world. “We have a network of experts outside normal channels that we can draw on to help us solve any problem,” continued the Toffler Associates Engagement Leader. “These are people the military does not typically reach out to, and they bring a fresh, new perspective to the table.”

INTANGIBLE ROI: NATIONAL SECURITY

Besides Toffler Associates, the planning department asked two other organizations to forecast potential “disruptive” enemy capabilities and attacks and how to defend against them. But in the client’s assessment, at the end of the day only Toffler Asso-



ciates delivered plausible, technically accurate scenarios, which included situations the other firms did not foresee. "It's difficult for an American to think the way someone from another culture thinks," noted the Toffler Associates Engagement Leader. "But that is exactly what was required to deliver the solutions the planning department needed. With the diverse professional background of the consultants in our firm, and the network of other experts we can access, we could do that, and we did."

Several scenarios that Toffler Associates conceived have already happened and, as a result, the military was better prepared to address them. "We gave our client the breadth and depth of knowledge they needed to make highly informed decisions with their multibillion-dollar budget," added the Toffler Associates Engagement Leader. "The military planning department measures its return on investment (ROI) not just in dollar terms but also in terms of an intangible but critical value: the security of the nation. We promised outside-of-the-box thinking, creative insight and a synthesis of many different perspectives to give them that value, and we delivered as advertised."