

## **The Navy Connection: Engaging the NEXCOM Supply Chain to Support the Fleet for the Navy Professional Reading Program**

The Award for Excellence in Supply Chain Operations  
U.S. Department of Defense Operations Excellence  
Navy Exchange Service Command AWARD for EXCELLENCE Submission

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2. Explain how this initiative can be transferred to other organizations, and specify the likely candidates for transference

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### **Who We Are**

The Navy Exchange Systems Command (NEXCOM) is a subordinate command of Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP). NAVSUP provides U.S. Naval Forces with quality supplies and services ensuring their logistic readiness. NAVSUP's mission is inclusive of all naval logistics including: financial management, inventory control, merchandising, transportation, procurement, data processing, and quality of life services.

NEXCOM, as a NAVSUP subordinate command, provides vital quality of life retail products and services to Armed Forces personnel, with special emphasis on Navy Sailors, retirees, reservists and their families. It is a complex and diverse enterprise comprised of distribution, merchandising, lodging, ships stores and retail store operations generating \$3 billion in annual revenue. Its 433-store complex and seven major distribution centers are located on Naval bases worldwide. NEXCOM's mission is: *Providing quality goods and services at a savings and to support quality of life programs.* It is known as the "Navy Family" store, driven by local market needs and necessity.

### **The Navy Professional Reading Program**

In June of 2005, the "CNO Professional Reading Program Way Ahead" issue paper proposed a Navy-wide reading program with the Naval War College as the project lead. In July of 2005 the CNO approved and tasked full-scale development of this project.

The Navy Professional Reading Program was born as a CNO-sponsored program of independent reading designed to contribute to the professional and personal growth, education and development of sailors with the intent to stimulate critical thinking. This program replaced various reading lists and consolidated Navy reading into one professional reading program.

Guidance from the CNO was as follows:

- Establish clear and simple rationale for individuals and the Navy to invest in the program
- Don't compel participation
- Get input from other institutions
- Avoid the perception that readings are tied to intellectual capability and intellectual capability to ranks
- Prototype the list
- Provide multiple investment options

The Navy's Reading Team was established, with Naval War College as the project lead, and included the Navy General Library Program, the Navy Exchange Service Command, the Commander, Naval Installation Commands, the Navy Chief of Information and key private sector partners, including U.S. Naval Institute and the Navy League of the United States.

The Navy Professional Reading Program (NPRP) today is a voluntary, independent reading program, designed to contribute to the professional and personal growth, education and development, and to stimulate critical thinking. The NPRP seeks to improve Sailors' deeper appreciation for who we are and what we are a part of, to broaden our understanding of naval heritage, the profession of arms and the world in which we operate; to foster better decision making through improved intellectual habits and skills and expanded intellectual capacity; and to develop better leaders.

### **NEXCOM Supply Chain Support**

The Navy Professional Reading Program is off to a terrific start. The Navy Exchange was able to leverage its existing supply chain in several different ways to support this CNO initiative.

NEXCOM leveraged supply and distribution channels, industry relationships and marketing vehicles.

Through significant organizational investment in the program, NPRP books are prominently displayed in Navy Exchange locations around the world and NEXCOM has modified on-line sales web site to ensure ease of ordering. Demand to date has exceeded expectations.

Industry relationships allowed NEXCOM to provide 40% discounts off Publishers List Price on all books directed toward E1 – E6 sailors. All other NPRP books are sold at 35% discounts from Publishers List Price, making the program affordable to all Navy sailors. Additionally, NEXCOM was able to negotiate value added services exclusively in support of Navy Libraries and Liberty Centers.

NPRP books are merchandised in Navy Exchange bookstores, uniform shops and through the Web/Call center.

Joint development of NPRP visual signing packages in Navy Exchange retail stores highlights the product. We are able to leverage Navy Exchange's 700,000-member mailing list using existing advertising production core competency to produce and distribute NPRP advertising material.

Results, commitment and support for the Navy Professional Reading Program launch have been exceptional. Through a strategic partnership with the Navy,

NEXCOM has enabled support for the program through a focused use of the Navy Exchange supply chain.

## Naval War College Comments

15 Dec 2006

To whom it may concern,

I am thrilled to be able to comment on behalf of the Navy Exchange Systems Command's (NEXCOM) submission for the "Award for Excellence." In short, NEXCOM is supremely deserving of this prestigious award for their unprecedented efforts on behalf of the Navy Professional Reading Program.

The Navy partnered with NEXCOM immediately upon the new CNO creating a need for an entirely new Reading Program in 2005. It was obvious we needed a unique organization with large scale purchasing, marketing, and distribution expertise combined with world-wide reach. From the outset the program design efforts were predicated on this unique combination or our primary objectives could not be met. Creating our strategic partnership was critical and NEXCOM eagerly accepted the challenge.

NEXCOM helped us meet CNO's mandate by leveraging their industry relationships to offer books for sale at their lowest cost ever for titles aimed at junior Sailors. This significantly helped increase access while generating interest and demand fleet-wide. They undertook developing a unique processing, packaging and delivery of book sets to 530 units prior to official program roll-out, exceeding all milestones, thereby creating and capitalizing on initial program "buzz." On top of this, their extensive marketing expertise was invaluable in crafting a promotion campaign to supplement official program pronouncements. They invested significant resources for in-store displays, signage, and website changes which dovetailed perfectly with other program initiatives.

It cannot be overstated that the Navy Professional Reading Program's fabulous initial success would not be possible were it not for the strategic partnership with NEXCOM. Their enthusiasm, willingness to commit significant resources and superb supply expertise were wholly responsible for making the Reading Program roll-out one of the most successful new program in recent Navy memory.

I am willing to answer any and all queries on behalf of NEXCOM's submittal.

Sincerely,

Professor John Jackson  
Director, Long Range Planning.  
Naval War College  
Program Manager,  
Navy Professional Reading Program  
401-841-6515  
[jacksonj@nwc.navy.mil](mailto:jacksonj@nwc.navy.mil)

## Section 1

### General Information and Project Complexity

#### Indicate the award category of submission (Operations, Academic or Technology)

The category of the submission is Operations

#### Provide the name of the submitting organization

The submitting organization is the Navy Exchange Service Command.

#### Identify the organizational unit responding (site, function, etc.)

The responding organization unit is the Navy Exchange Service Command, worldwide headquarters for Navy Exchanges, located at 3280 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach, VA 23452.

#### Provide a brief mission description of the overall business objectives, product lines, and mission of the organization

Our mission is to provide our customers quality goods and services at a savings and to support quality of life programs.

#### Vision

- We are your “Navy Family” Store
- We are driven by local market needs.
- We are passionate about quality customer service.
- We are relied upon for our best value and low-price leadership.

#### Values

- Service to our customer is the top priority of every Associate and the purpose of every position.
- Honesty, integrity, loyalty and trustworthiness guide our behavior.
- We believe in, promote, and pursue excellence throughout our organization.
- We shall ensure superior customer service, associate development and mission accomplishment.
- We are responsible and accountable for the fulfillment of these values.
- The results of living these values are:
  - Quality services for our customers
  - A rewarding work environment for our people
  - An indispensable non-pay benefit

The Navy Exchange is part of the Naval Supply Systems Command, which provides U.S. Naval Forces with quality supplies and services. A principal source of readiness for U.S. Naval Forces, NAVSUP’s diverse team delivers

information, material, services and the quality of life products our Naval Forces need. The Supply Corps is United States Navy's professional staff corps responsible for the supply phases of naval logistics such as financial management, inventory control, merchandising, transportation, procurement, data processing, personal services, as well as Navy Exchanges.

The Navy Exchange System is a Navy retailing operation that provides quality products and a variety of services to the men and women of the Armed Forces, with special emphasis on Navy Sailors, retirees, reservists and their families. Navy Exchanges are located on Navy bases in the United States and around the world. The Navy Exchange Service Command, or NEXCOM, is headquarters for the worldwide Navy Exchange System.

Navy Exchanges are a self-supporting operation. As a non-appropriated fund instrumentality of the federal government, the Navy Exchange System is subject to pertinent directives issued by the Department of Defense, the Department of the Navy, applicable federal laws and oversight by a specific sub committee of the House of Representatives.

Navy Exchange annual worldwide revenues are \$3 billion. There are 433 stores worldwide at 109 Navy Exchange Complexes/Naval Installations worldwide with individual location sales volumes ranging from \$68 thousand to \$136 million annually. Annual contributions to Navy morale, welfare and recreation (MWR) (our net profit) average \$50 million.

**Provide a brief description of the supply chain and the processes the submission spans (Plan, Source, Make, Deliver, Return)**

The NEXCOM supply chain is a "Value Chain", an integrated set of activities that are organized and managed to support the organization's vision, mission, strategy and objectives with the ultimate purpose of providing maximum value to customers.

Our focus is on establishing our competitive advantage to enable us to get product to the sales floor in the quickest and most efficient way.

MERCHANDISING → LOGISTICS → OPERATIONS

Primary Value Chain Process Activities are as follows:

Inbound Logistics

- Includes receiving, storing, inventory control, transportation scheduling

#### Operations

- Includes machining, packaging, assembly, equipment maintenance, testing and all other value-creating activities that transform the inputs into the final product

#### Outbound Logistics

- The activities required to get the finished product to the customers: warehousing, order fulfillment, transportation, distribution management

#### Marketing and Sales

- The activities associated with getting buyers to purchase the product including channel selection, advertising, promotion, selling, pricing, retail management, etc

#### Service

- The activities that maintain and enhance the product's value, including customer support, repair services, installation, training, spare parts management, upgrading, etc.

Our profitability depends on our effectiveness in performing these activities efficiently.

**Provide the names of the supply chain partner organizations (external) involved in the project. Indicate the number of people involved from each partner organization and the functional category of each**

Naval War College

(3)

**Provide the names of the functional organizations (internal) involved in the project. Indicate the number of people involved from each partner organization and the functional category of each**

Distribution (Code D)

(20)

Merchandising (Code M)

(10)

Store Operations Group (Code N)

(5)

Uniform Support Center (Code U)

(3)

Financial Management Group (Code F)  
(2)

**Provide a point of contact for each supply chain partner (name, mailing address, commercial telephone number, DSN, and e-mail address)**

Naval War College

Dr. Jim Giblin  
Provost & Dean of Academics  
401-841-7004  
[giblinj@nwc.navy.mil](mailto:giblinj@nwc.navy.mil)

Professor John Jackson  
Director, Long Range Planning  
Program Manager, NPRP  
401-841-6515  
[jacksonj@nwc.navy.mil](mailto:jacksonj@nwc.navy.mil)

Professor Mike Barker  
Dep. Program Manager, NPRP  
401-841-6598  
[barkerm@nwc.navy.mil](mailto:barkerm@nwc.navy.mil)

## Section 2

### Implementation

#### **Describe the reason that the supply chain initiative was undertaken and how it was selected**

In June of 2005, the “CNO Professional Reading Program Way Ahead” issue paper proposed a Navy-wide reading program with the Naval War College as the project lead. In July of 2005 the CNO approved and tasked full-scale development of this project.

The Navy Professional Reading Program was born as a CNO-sponsored program of independent reading designed to contribute to the professional and personal growth, education and development of sailors with the intent to stimulate critical thinking. This program replaced various reading lists and consolidated Navy reading into one professional reading program.

Guidance from the CNO was as follows:

- Establish clear and simple rationale for individuals and the Navy to invest in the program
- Don't compel participation
- Get input from other institutions
- Avoid the perception that readings are tied to intellectual capability and intellectual capability to ranks
- Prototype the list
- Provide multiple investment options

The Navy's Reading Team was established, with Naval War College as the project lead, and included the Navy General Library Program, the Navy Exchange Service Command, The Commander, Naval the Navy Chief of Information and key private sector partners, including U.S. Naval Institute and the Navy League of the United States.

The Navy Professional Reading Program (NPRP) today is a voluntary, independent reading program, designed to contribute to the professional and personal growth, education and development, and to stimulate critical thinking. The NPRP seeks to improve Sailors' deeper appreciation for who we are and what we are a part of, to broaden our understanding of naval heritage, the profession of arms and the world in which we operate; to foster better decision making through improved intellectual habits and skills and expanded intellectual capacity; and to develop better leaders.

The Navy Exchange became involved with the NPRP as part of a strategic partnership with Naval War College. NEXCOM is the enabler of the program,

making creative modifications to our established supply channels to support NPRP.

The Navy Exchange was able to make books available for sale in Navy Exchange retail stores, as well as on-line and via the Uniform Call Center.

**Indicate the duration of the project. Note if the project was a pilot that is being rolled out. Note if the project is ongoing / still in process**

The official launch date of the Navy Professional Reading Program was October 2, 2006. The program is completely rolled out and support is ongoing. Initial shipments to stores began on 21 August for OCONUS stores and on 5 September for CONUS stores. All sales floors were set for the 2 October launch.

**Describe, in detail, the process used to complete the initiative**

The Navy Exchange was able to leverage its existing supply chain in several different ways to support this CNO initiative.

NEXCOM leveraged supply and distribution channels, industry relationships and marketing vehicles. Start up costs for the Navy Exchange to enable support for program implementation was incremental in nature.

Through significant organizational investment in the program, NPRP books are prominently displayed in Navy Exchange locations around the world and NEXCOM has modified the on-line sales web site to ensure ease of ordering. Demand to date has exceeded expectations. The Navy Exchange was able to use our fulfillment capabilities, already in place for Navy Uniforms, to purchase and ship book sets to designated libraries afloat and ashore based on a request by Naval War College and CNIC on 18 January 2006. With the infrastructure in place to accept funding documents, stage book purchases, pick and ship books to designated addresses and record the sale, NEXCOM was able to provide service, on an incremental basis, to distribute the book program world-wide. Roughly 40% of the shipping locations were already built in our system. The Navy Exchange invested in an option for overseas customers with limited bandwidth to allow web ordering of uniforms. We were able to make books available as an option through this new capability. The Navy Exchange is able to provide free shipping through our web store and call center.

The Navy Exchange was able to process bulk orders to commands using existing Uniform Support Center Standard Operating Procedure for all Government Agencies. The customer's accounts were created in the supporting software (those that did not already exist) and the appropriate UIC/DODAC was indicated. Orders were processed as kits to minimize picking/packing efforts at the South East Distribution Center. Freight costs were added to each kit using the shipping and handling function. Orders were generated and staged for printing prior to

receipt of the product at the DC, speeding the time to delivery and optimizing the workload. Once product was received, product was shipped via best way.

Leveraging industry relationships allowed NEXCOM to provide 40% discounts off Publishers List Price on all books directed toward E1 – E6 sailors, offering the deepest discounts to support this program. All other NPRP books are sold at 35% discounts from Publishers List Price, making the program affordable to all Navy sailors and even more affordable to junior enlisted personnel reading the titles in their categories. Navy Exchange purchasing support allowed the Navy to buy books for provision to ships libraries at the least cost and best value. Additionally, NEXCOM was able to negotiate value added services exclusively in support of Navy Libraries and Liberty Centers. NPRP stamps were added to all books included in the program and the supplier provided library quality protective covers on all books shipped as part of the packages/sets. Anderson News, NEXCOM's primary book distributor and business partner in this category provided specially designed fixturing. All books were built and marked with unique title specific Universal Product Codes (UPC's) and individually priced. This differs from basic book stock, which is built by price point. It allows NEXCOM to track and analyze the project from a title and program specific perspective. All books that are part of the NPRP are marked with a NPRP logo sticker on the front cover.

NPRP books are merchandised in Navy Exchange bookstores, uniform shops and through the Web/Call center. The assortments include sixty titles in total; five collections of twelve titles each. Collections are grouped by rank and genre. All book assortments were tailored by the size of the store and the base demographics. Book titles that were not made available in a particular store's basic assortment could be ordered via the web store or the call center. "Red Phone" programs, already established in Navy Exchange uniform centers, were made available to customers to order books at the store location.

A single Distribution Center in the southeast was used as a consolidation point for Navy Professional Reading Program books. This practice has afforded maximum availability and allowed NEXCOM to use functionality to automatically replenish books in the NPRP.

Joint development of NPRP visual signing packages in Navy Exchange retail stores highlights the product. We are able to leverage Navy Exchange's 700,000-member mailing list using existing advertising production core competency to produce and distribute NPRP advertising material. NEXCOM coordinated development of the sign packages with the fixturing provided by our business partner, Anderson News. The launch date for the NPRP coincided with the Navy Birthday event in NEXCOM's retail stores. This allowed NEXCOM to highlight key titles and everyday savings to the sailor. Quarterly print promotions will continue to highlight and promote the NPRP. Detailed coordination and a

team approach to advertising and marketing support in complement with other Navy promotional activities provided program visibility.

Results, commitment and support for the Navy Professional Reading Program launch have been exceptional. Through a strategic partnership with the Navy, NEXCOM has enabled support for the program through a focused use of the Navy Exchange supply chain. This support continues.

**Identify significant challenges encountered, the process for resolution, and the solutions. Identify any best practices employed or developed**

Modifications to the NEXCOM systems supporting the Call Center/Web Store were made to support the Navy Professional Reading Program. A SQL statement was created on the system to supplement the main system interface between core retail systems and the software that supports the Call Center/Web Store. This allowed us to selectively bring down the NPRP item master and detail retail price information every fifteen minutes to keep the two systems in sync.

Initial research indicated that the eighty-four “military” type titles carried from the MCPON reading list in Navy Exchanges accounted for \$78,000 in sales from 2003 through 2005. These titles accounted for less than 2.2% of NEXCOM’s military book business since 2003. Clearly, combined focused support would be critical to the success of a new CNO sponsored Navy Professional Reading Program. The combined efforts of all of the business and Navy partners, lead by Naval War College, provided an opportunity to achieve buy-in from senior leadership.

**Indicate the metrics used to measure (a) progress and (b) success**

**Store Metrics/Web & Call Center**

Former book programs generated roughly \$26,000 in annual sales for a three-year total of \$78,000. Based on these historical sales, initial projected annual sales were estimated to be \$40,000. Since the introduction of the program in October 2006, the actual YTD sales generated by the NPRP are \$47,028 and projected annual sales at this rate will generate \$141,084. The Web/ Call Center has generated 709 individual customer orders for 727 copies of NPRP books for a total of \$8,258 in sales. The program at retail has far exceeded our initial expectations. While the retail demand may level off as the newness of the program fades, we have strong expectations for projected annual sales. We are able to partner with Naval War College to use the marketing tools available to us to promote the program and drive demand.

**Ship’s Libraries and Liberty Center Distribution**

NEXCOM has shipped 838 sets of Junior Enlisted Collection kits, 734 of the LPO Collection kits, 666 of the Division Leader Collection kits, and 644 each of the Dept/Command and Senior Leader Collection kits. These kits are valued at \$570,411. An initial plan of \$900,000 in kits was predicated upon a one-time distribution of book kits for commands and libraries, and shipping all of the book kits during one round. Naval War College NPRP Program Lead is having us work the book kit distribution in phases. We are currently processing Phase 2-A, and expect to complete shipping on the majority of remaining book kits by the end of our FY06. We will have a small amount of reserve inventory for future requests or replacements as needed by commands. The book kits are not anticipated to be recurring annual sales. However, due to the unexpected fleet wide demand, Naval War College has approached us regarding the possibility of purchasing additional book kits for FY07.

**Document and quantify cost and performance benefits, including the project's return on investment and changes in the value of one or more of the SCOR Level 1 metrics**

**a. Supply Chain Delivery Reliability - Delivery Performance; Fill Rates, Perfect Order Fulfillment**

Use of NEXCOM's existing infrastructure allowed speed to program implementation. NEXCOM was engaged and shipping product within 30 days of receipt of the finalized NPRP list. This was consistent with the Navy's desire for specific launch and roll out dates. The integration of Navy Exchange capabilities with the overall plans for the mission allowed for swift execution of the NPRP.

In the first wave, the Navy Exchange distribution center shipped book sets to 530 commands. Navy has received formal requests from over 600 additional (often smaller) commands and Navy Exchange is prepared to fill these requests. Navy Exchange will ship 422 sets in the second wave of distribution, which exhausts the current book sets purchased. Navy intends to place orders for 200 additional sets of books for immediate distribution. Our supply chain is flexible to support an extended phased shipping model as requested by Navy.

**b. Supply Chain Flexibility - Value-Added Productivity, Warranty>Returns Processing Costs**

Navy Exchanges were able to leverage industry relationships to provide library quality covers for the books intended for Navy Libraries and Liberty Centers. Navy Exchange negotiated packing of the book sets and shipment as packs from the supplier to speed distribution.

All NPRP books purchased through the Navy Exchange are identified with the NPRP logo, which is applied by the supplier prior to shipping the books to the Navy Exchange distribution center.

**c. Supply Chain Costs – Costs of Goods Sold; Total Supply Chain Management Costs; Value-Added Productivity; Warranty>Returns Processing Costs**

Navy Exchange negotiated the lowest cost and best value on the Navy Professional Reading Program books. NPRP books are retailed at 40% and 35% off Publisher's Suggested Retail Price.

**Outline how the success of this effort supports the organizational objectives described in Section 1, Item 3**

The Navy Professional Reading Program (NPRP) today is a voluntary, independent reading program, designed to contribute to the professional and personal growth, education and development, and to stimulate critical thinking. The NPRP seeks to improve Sailors' deeper appreciation for who we are and what we are a part of, to broaden our understanding of naval heritage, the profession of arms and the world in which we operate; to foster better decision making through improved intellectual habits and skills and expanded intellectual capacity; and to develop better leaders.

Navy sailors shop in Navy Exchange retail stores currently. Sailors have an established comfort level with purchasing through the Navy Exchange. This adds to program acceptance and assists with making this program a success.

Navy Exchange involvement has allowed us to make the NPRP affordable to all Navy sailors. Additionally, NEXCOM was able to negotiate value added services exclusively in support of Navy Libraries and Liberty Centers.

Navy Professional Reading Program books are provided at the lowest cost and best value to sailors. This supports NEXCOM's primary mission of providing quality goods and services at the lowest cost and supporting quality of life programs.

Results, commitment and support for the Navy Professional Reading Program launch have been exceptional. Through a strategic partnership with the Navy, NEXCOM has enabled support for the program through a focused use of the Navy Exchange supply chain.

## **Section 3**

### **Knowledge Transfer**

#### **Describe the efforts to share lessons from this effort with other internal organizations**

The success of the effort to leverage existing Uniforms infrastructure to support the Navy Professional Reading Program has jump-started efforts to expand Navy Exchange E-Commerce initiatives.

#### **Explain how this initiative can be transferred to other organizations, and specify the likely candidates for transference**

The process of introspective exploration of existing resources to provide supply chain support in new ways is of benefit to investigate in any organization. Work arounds and minor changes can enable many new initiatives and provide solutions.

Due to the unprecedented success of the NEXCOM efforts on behalf of the Navy Professional Reading Program, the U.S. Coast Guard has begun a dialogue to structure a similar program for their newly created reading list.