

Raytheon turns iPhones into battlefield tools

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The new iPhone 3Gs at an Apple store. US defense contractor Raytheon on Wednesday unveiled the first of what it said will be a series of software applications to make iPhones or iPod touch devices into battlefield tools.

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One Force Tracker (OFT) software takes advantage of features built into Apple's wildly popular touch-screen mobile devices to let soldiers track whereabouts of allies and adversaries on maps in real time.

"We have developed a situational awareness application based on military messaging standards that provide multimedia access, audio and

textual point of interest, free text messaging, collaborative planning, spot reports and emergency call for fire," said Tushar Patel, director of Advanced Programs and Technology at Raytheon's Network Centric Systems.

"Raytheon is a leader in secured wireless networking. Combining that with Apple's expertise allows us to provide rapid, low-risk and affordable interoperable system solutions."

OFT capitalizes on iPhone and iPod Touch capabilities including global positioning, high-speed Internet, and accelerometers that let controls respond to twists, tilts or turns.

The software could also be used by medical personnel, firefighters and other emergency workers responding to disasters, according to the Massachusetts-based defense contractor.

Raytheon said it has built in augmented reality and content-centric networking capabilities along with guards against network disruptions or hacks.

A glimpse at OFT on an [iPhone](#) showed a map marking locations of military units in relation to each other.

Soldiers could potentially use iPhones or [iPod Touch](#) devices, which have wireless Internet capabilities, to feed each other updates in real time the same way motorists use smartphones to share feedback regarding traffic.

Military as well as civilian companies are eager to take advantage of innovations in mobile devices, according to Raytheon, which said it is working closely with Apple on applications tailored to the needs of soldiers.

"We are committed to providing innovative technology solutions for warfighters and all of our customers," said Jay Smart, chief technology officer of Raytheon's intelligence and information systems business.

"Raytheon's experience with mobile communications in the tactical environment and the government customers' need for low-power, simple plug-and-play applications led to the development of a real-time situational awareness application using Apple's touch technologies."

Raytheon, which posted 2008 sales of 23.2 billion, specializes in defense, homeland security and other government markets worldwide.

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