



## United States Office of Naval Research

**THE FORMARK OUTSIDE AND FORMARK COURIER APPLICATIONS IMPLEMENTED AT THE OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH (ONR) HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED THE EXPENSE AND TIME COST OF MANAGING HUNDREDS OF UNITED STATES NAVY AND MARINE CORP RESEARCH PROJECTS.**

### **Formark Makes Livelink<sup>®</sup> the Right Answer for Engaging Outside Researchers at ONR**

The official mandate of the Office of Naval Research (ONR) is to coordinate, execute, and promote the science and technology programs of the United States Navy and Marine Corps. A less formal way to describe their role is that ONR is a matchmaker – matching the research needs of the Navy and Marines against hundreds of research proposals from universities, institutions and private contractors, looking for the proposals that offer optimal return for the millions of dollars in the annual research budget.

When ONR receives a research request from an agency within the Navy or the Marines, ONR makes the request available to the research community, which typically results in anywhere from 10 to 100 proposals for specific research projects that address the requirements of the agency. ONR reviews all the proposals, selects the best one, manages the contract negotiation with the winning research organization(s), monitors the progress of the research project, approves the research results and submits a completed summary to the contracting Navy or Marine agency. At any given time there are dozens of active projects at some stage in that project life cycle.

Each process requires pages and pages of documentation – the research requirements, the proposals, the reviews, the contracts, the status

reports, and the research results – with many projects requiring hundreds of documents. To help manage this constant flow of paper, ONR adopted Livelink to provide document control, reduce the handling of physical documents, and improve the cycle time. Not satisfied with just making it easier to manage and share the documents for each research project inside the organization, ONR envisioned that Livelink could be the primary platform for managing the flow of all types of information among ONR, the contracting agencies and the external research community.

### **Request/Proposal Exchange**

The first step was to bring order to the ebb and flow of requests and research proposals between ONR and the research community. One of the ways ONR communicates funding opportunities is called a Broad Agency Announcement (BAA), which describes the specific areas where the Navy and Marines want to fund research. Making the BAA documents available for download from the public ONR website was very straightforward – a bigger challenge was managing the submissions coming back to ONR.

The solution was to use Formark Courier to automate many of the steps in the processing. When a research request comes from an agency to ONR, the administrator enters the parameters describing the request into the Formark Courier application, which is linked to the Web page through which the researchers will submit their proposals. Using Formark Courier, the administrator can have a site ready to accept submissions in 45 minutes.

When the outside researchers come to the submission website, they enter their contact information and a proposal summary, and then

*“Interactions that used to take weeks and days now happen in hours and minutes.”*

*- ONR Website Administrator*

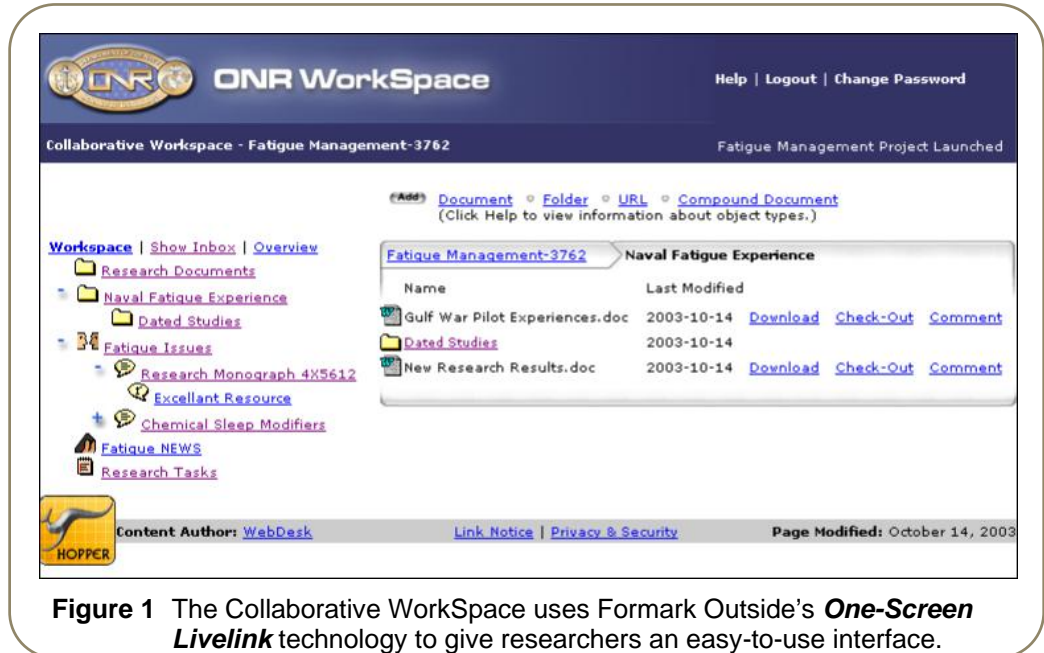
upload the document describing their proposal. If the documents are in a valid file format that the receiving agency is prepared to handle, Formark Courier does a secure transfer of the documents, puts the entire submission into the proper Livelink containers prepared by the administrator, and sends a confirmation email to the submitter.

It's fast, it's simple and it's secure. ONR no longer has to field calls about obscure FTP client software or about lost documents, and there's no more sorting through all the dozens or hundreds of uploaded proposals to get them into the proper place. Now as soon as a research proposal is submitted, it is available for the project administrators and the agency research staff to begin their evaluations.

### Collaborative Work Application

With the initial request/proposal exchange automated, ONR is now deploying a Formark Outside application to automate the creation and management of a Collaborative Workspace that enables the contracting agency to easily collaborate with the outside researchers using Livelink. Once a research proposal is accepted, ONR uses the Administrator component of Formark Outside to create a secure collaborative project in Livelink, which is then managed by the project administrator within the agency.

The research team and others outside of ONR who have an interest in the project are directed to a self-registration web page where they apply to participate in the research collaboration. The page triggers a Formark Outside workflow that presents the researcher's request to the project administrator.



**Figure 1** The Collaborative WorkSpace uses Formark Outside's **One-Screen Livelink** technology to give researchers an easy-to-use interface.

As they are approved, emails are automatically sent containing a URL/userid/password that allows the researcher to log into ONR's Collaborative Workspace Application.

Using Formark Outside's "One-Screen Livelink" technology, the Collaborative Workspace makes it easy for researchers, even those who have never even seen Livelink before, to collaborate with all the project participants. The interface supports Livelink task lists, threaded discussions, news channels, and provides access to the ONR knowledge base for that area of research.

### The Benefits

ONR immediately began to reap benefits from the deployment of the Formark Courier and Formark Outside applications:

- Much less administrative time and effort
- Much simpler submission process, which means far fewer support calls
- Better management of the research projects by using the collaborative work area
- Complete audit trail of entire process
- Completed projects are "frozen," reviewed and archived for future reference

Formark enables more business solutions to be built around Livelink, the premier collaboration and knowledge management solution from Open Text Corporation. By making it easy for Livelink solutions to engage external users, exchange content and execute business processes, Formark makes Livelink the right answer for a much broader set of business requirements.

For more information visit [www.formark.com](http://www.formark.com), phone (613) 599-5173 x230 or email to [sales@formark.com](mailto:sales@formark.com).

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