

Business First of Columbus - March 30, 2009  
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# Southern Cal picks Columbus engineering firm for military project

Business First of Columbus - by [Matt Burns](#)

A Columbus engineering consulting firm is part of a group working on a more than \$3 million Air Force contract aimed at developing back-up electrical systems for the defense industry.

The \$3.6 million contract was awarded through the **Air Force Research Laboratory** to the **University of Southern California's** Information Sciences Institute. The institute, in turn, has tapped Columbus-based **AltaSim Technologies** and the **Ohio Supercomputer Center** for help.

The goal in the project is to find a way to test back-up electrical components for their endurance during an electromagnetic interference using computational analyses. Taking the analytical route allows the company making the components, Dayton-based **IAP Research Inc.**, to sidestep the use of physical prototypes.

Without the help of the supercomputer, prototype testing would prove time-consuming and costly, said Mike Mead, a vice president at AltaSim in charge of the seven-employee company's business development and marketing.

"In order to do that, however, it takes huge amounts of computer capability," he said.

That's where the Ohio Supercomputer Center steps in. The 45-employee facility operates and administers Ohio's shared supercomputer, the Glenn IBM 1350. The Glenn supercomputer has 900 nodes, each containing four processors. When all the nodes are connected, it becomes the equivalent of 3,600 computers.

AltaSim is working until mid-August, Mead said, at the center to finish the project's analytical phase.

About \$1 million of the \$3.6 million contract has been set aside for work in Central Ohio and will be shared by AltaSim and the center, he said.

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