

Strategic Partnerships — Powered by GSA

In recent years, business literature and the popular press have been filled with references to "strategic partnerships." Whether a proposed corporate merger or a sophisticated sales pitch, the corporate world is filled with examples.

In the "real world" of wildland firefighting, the value of a strategic partner takes on new meaning. GSA's Ray Balli and his colleagues in the GSA Fire program exemplify the dedication, insight and anticipation of customer needs that signify a valued partner.

In early May, the Southwest Area Fire Cache in Silver City, New Mexico was supplying firefighting efforts in the Lincoln and Santa Fe National Forests. The firefighters' radios and headlamps use large numbers of AA batteries. The staff in Silver City submitted an emergency order to GSA's supply depot in Stockton, California requesting four pallets of replacement batteries.

Early the next morning, Ray Balli reviewed the order confirmation that Stockton had faxed in overnight. Something about the order struck him. While it wasn't unusual for Fire customers to use large numbers of batteries, the type of battery that had been ordered looked wrong. Ray checked with the emergency desk staff in Stockton and called the customer to verify his hunch that the customer had mistakenly ordered 6-volt batteries instead of AA. GSA's depot staff in Stockton located the commercial carrier's truck in the Sacramento area and arranged for it to return to the GSA depot to off-load the wrong batteries and pick up the correct size.



Ray Balli reviewed the order... over 1,000 miles away... Doug Benton was pleased to receive ... the correct batteries.



...ask the
Fire Cache folks
in Silver City,
New Mexico...
their strategic
partner works
for GSA.

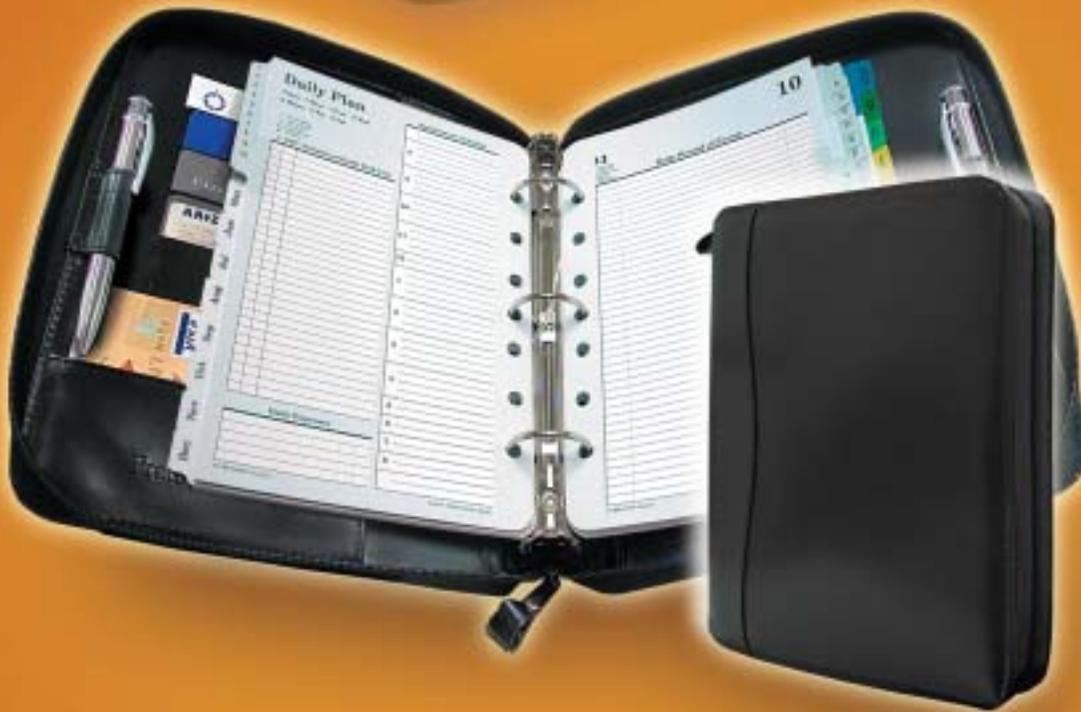
At 9:00 the next morning, over 1000 miles away in New Mexico, Assistant Cache Manager Doug Benton was pleased to receive four pallets of the correct batteries. Instead of enduring a dangerous delay while reordering the correct item, the Fire Cache was able to support its front-line firefighters.

If you look to the business pages, you might think that a strategic partner is an Internet provider with broadband capability, or a commercial bank with the right mix of assets. But if you ask the Fire Cache folks in Silver City, New Mexico, they'll tell you that their strategic partner works for GSA and has a sharp eye for batteries.



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