Are You Ready to Market to the Government?

### Federal Market Research

Using your NAICS Codes, Federal Supply Class (FSC) Codes or Product Service Codes (PSC) you can begin to identify the agencies that buy what you sell. Within the government there are hundreds of agencies, administrators and bureaus that spend $425 billion annually to support their operations.

So where do you begin? By conducting market research, you can find out which agencies are procuring the types of products/services you sell, and how much they spend. Listed below are sources that can provide you with data about potential government customers:

- **Federal Procurement Data System** is the central repository of statistical information on federal contracting. This system contains information on contract actions of more than 60 federal departments. It will tell you who bought what, from whom, for how much, when and where. Access [https://www.fpds.gov](https://www.fpds.gov)

- **FedBizOpps** is an on-line system where government agencies post notifications of solicitations and awards over $25,000. By performing a simple search you can find bidding opportunities and information on agencies that have awarded contracts for what you sell. Log on at [http://www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov)

- Utilize **GACO's Bid Match Service** to search FedBizOpps, DLA's Internet Bid Board System (DIBBS) and other federal databases. This search is based on a profile of what the government buys using FSC's, PSC's and keywords of what you sell. Once the data is input into our system you will receive bid and award notifications.

- **Procurement Forecasts** are prepared yearly by federal agencies and show what may be purchased in the upcoming year. Access [https://www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts/index.html](https://www.acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts/index.html)

- **Award Posting Websites** are a great place to research the competition, buying agencies and potential teaming partners. Several websites to access include, [www.usaspending.gov](http://www.usaspending.gov), [www.governmentcontractswon.com](http://www.governmentcontractswon.com) and [www.fedspending.org](http://www.fedspending.org)

- **GSA Sales Schedule Query (SSQ)** provides sales data as reported by schedule contractors, for specific report quarters during the current and past five fiscal years. Information can be found at [www.gsa.gov](http://www.gsa.gov). Use search box to locate the SSQ page.

- **Proxity Research Database** is available to GACO/GCAC clients. In this database we can research the past procurement history of NSN numbers and part numbers. To use this database you will need to email your GACO/GCAC manager with a list of numbers to research. If data is available for the NSN or part number we will forward the information to you.

### State Market Research

If contracting with the state of Pennsylvania is your focus below you will find information on how to determine if the state purchases your product or service.

**Pennsylvania Department of Treasury**

**e-Contracts Library** holds state contract information which is the key to doing business with state agencies, regardless of the size of your business. Through the Pennsylvania Treasury Department’s e-Contracts Library you can obtain past procurement information about goods and services contracts back to July 1, 2008. Access [http://www.patreasury.org](http://www.patreasury.org) and click on “e-Contracts” at the top right corner of the page and then “Search Public Contracts.”
Statewide Contracts

The State purchases many of its supplies (and a few services) through Statewide Requirements Contracts. Statewide Contracts allow all state departments and agencies to purchase from the same contract, thus eliminating the need for separate bidding and contracting. Most statewide contracts are open to any business that is qualified and willing to accept the terms of the contract.

• **E-Marketplace** is a site to search for statewide contracts. At [http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/](http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us/) click on Search Contracts to view a list of awarded contracts. This will bring up a list of all statewide contracts. You can narrow the results by selecting Open or Archived or by clicking the arrow in the Search Items field and selecting a filter such as Contract Number, Description, Agency, etc. The search results contain the contract ending date. Several months before that date, the Bureau of Purchases will issue an Invitation for Bid (IFB) to allow new vendors the opportunity to be awarded statewide contracts.

Marketing to the Government

Marketing to federal and state agencies is similar to your commercial marketing practices. Government buyers are looking for the same things that your other customers are: high quality products, reliable suppliers and fair prices. There really are no specific steps to selling to the government. You still need to segment markets, target agencies, sell your company, demonstrate capability and establish and maintain relationships with your customers. The following will assist you in marketing your products or services to the government:

• **Contact potential buyers.** Do your research first to find the agencies that purchase what you sell. To locate the buyers of your FSC's, PSC's or NAICS codes, contact the small business specialist located at those facilities. [http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp](http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp)

• **Establish a web presence.** Make sure you have a website where potential customers can find information about your company and the products/services you sell.

• **Network.** There are a number of seminars, meetings and vendor fairs that target the federal and state audience. By attending or exhibiting at these events, you can make contacts and get the word out about your company.

• **Use available resources**
  - Sub-Net provides an opportunity for prime contractors to post their subcontracting opportunities. Although the site is designed for prime contractors to post solicitations and notices, federal agencies, state and local government agencies, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities and even foreign governments may also post here. [http://web.sba.gov/subnet](http://web.sba.gov/subnet)
  - For PA Department of General Services (DGS) contacts access the following site to search for all the Commonwealth Points of Contacts assigned to an agency. [http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/procurement/1271/points_of_contact/258044](http://www.dgs.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/procurement/1271/points_of_contact/258044)
  - Small Business Development Centers are available to provide consulting and educational services to help develop your small business. Services can include business plan development, creating market research and creating a strategic plan for growth. [http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/sbdc/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/aboutsba/sbaprograms/sbdc/index.html)

Upcoming GACO Sponsored Events

July 27, 2010 - Doing Business with General Services Administration (GSA), Comfort Inn, Penn Hills, PA
August 26, 2010 - Cost Accounting for Government Contracting, Regional Learning Alliance (RLA), Cranberry, PA
October 20, 2010 - 23rd Annual Procurement Opportunities Fair, Holiday Inn Meadowlands, Washington, PA