

HOW TO **STANDOUT** IN THE CROWD OF GOVERNMENT CONTRACTORS?

A guide for technology and telecom vendors to take significant actions to win



Everyone is in a rush to bid for government contracts, certainly, there is a huge potential with these multi-million and multi-year opportunities with the government. If you are also in the queue, you can find out in this guide, how to win the race and stand out.



Government Contracting Landscape:

The government contracting space has changed dramatically over the last ten years, and discussions around contracts and how to win business have focused on tight budgets and government cutbacks: both of which are the new permanent reality. As a result, the way a company must position itself for growth is different. The U.S. government is the largest buyer of goods and services in the world, spending \$695 billion last year, especially in emerging technologies.

Winning contractors have embraced this change and are enjoying ongoing success in this new climate. This white paper is organised to guide you to develop the skills to survive – and win – in the government contracting marketplace. It includes advice on creating an effective marketing vehicle to drive new business.

Winning contractors pay attention to what their customers want and respond to that. Factors that can help you stand out are:

- a. **Innovate**: If an idea has already been proven to work, use it, also innovate through partnerships and joint ventures.
- b. **Expertise**: Sell what you know exceptionally well, instead of bidding for just anything
- c. **Focus** on understanding your customers need, and then provide your solution
- d. **No shortcuts**: Follow the process, as proposals are rejected otherwise
- e. **Leverage** what works, to obtain the necessary contract vehicles and certifications.

The three main phases in bidding:

1. **Pre-Bid**
2. **During the Bid**
3. **Post-Bid**

Pre-Bid

Elevate your business profile (Relationship Building)

Getting to know of small business liaisons at government agencies. Build relationships, work with the small business development centre, and establish partnerships. Winning contractors know how valuable each client is, and they nurture those relationships. Have a dedicated webpage for government visibility, and market it across channels.

Establish businesses with prime contractors-

For a list of the top 100 government contractors, you can visit the website:
<https://washingtontechnology.com/rankings/top-100/2022/>

You can also find partnership opportunities through networking or via the [General Services Administration \(GSA\) Subcontracting Directory](#).

GSASchedules are a favoured purchasing mechanism for many government buyers. Partnering with a prime contractor that is already on a GSASchedule is a great way to increase access to lucrative opportunities with minimal risk.

Keeping track of competitors-

Offering a distinctive product or service and developing a memorable brand identity are two ways to make your mark. Companies sometimes focus too much on their own story and not enough on key differentiators that will move them to the top of the pile.

Invest in delivering value

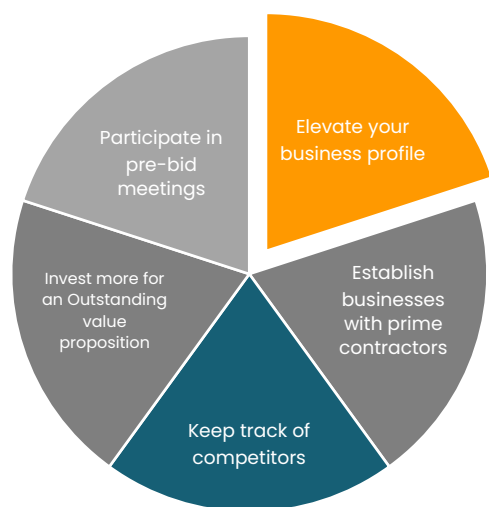
Make the most of online channels, starting with your website, by publishing your – success stories, new projects won, impact delivered to clients, innovative solutions, certifications obtained, contract vehicles you participate in, category of business...as these speak directly to procurement officers and end users at government agencies. Use clear and concise language to articulate how they will benefit from working with you.

Be sure employees know what signals to watch for in identifying opportunities and that they're passionate about promoting your offerings. This consistency is important for conveying stability and reliability – and helps to ensure your brand identity rings true to who you are.

If you as the Leader of your small business have decided to save costs by limiting your marketing budget, then you run the risk of stunting the growth of your business.

Participate in pre-bid meetings-

With potential customers to know about Clear, Comprehensive, and Non-Restrictive Specifications as well as to clarify any concerns with the solicitation documents, scope of work etc.



During Bid

Always submit a tailored proposal and focus on the agency with a very sharp value proposition. Do not get into the trap of boilerplate content.



When preparing proposals, focus on the **customer's problems** first, then your **solution!**

DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate to your customer that you have clearly understood their needs and challenges first! Convince them on the value you will deliver by showcasing – capabilities, solution, past performance, and the impact delivered, all in the sequence of the evaluation criteria mentioned.

EXPLORE

Explore through the RFP for essential keywords and map them throughout your response. Adding RFP keywords and phrases leads to a familiarity during evaluation.

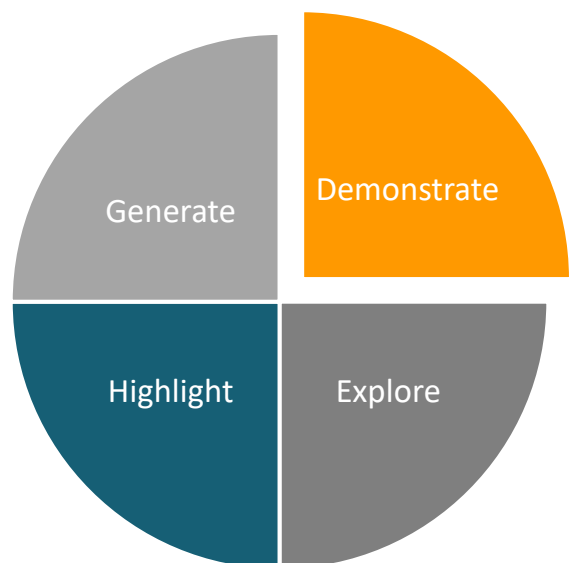
Be essentially compliant to their requirement with additional proof statements, metrics, quantifiers, validators and examples. Also, there should not be any unsubstantiated claims made.

HIGHLIGHT

Highlight success stories and develop case studies. Nurture a strong database of references. Happy customers can be your greatest advocates. Be sure to include letters of recommendation from customers in your RFPs. Ask satisfied customers if they would participate in a client success story outlining the work you performed and what benefits they gained. These real-world examples could be powerful resources to share with prospective clients via your web site, perhaps as an online video testimonial, or through print collateral.

GENERATE

Generate concise but engaging marketing materials. Highlight your accomplishments and what differentiates you from your competitors. Underscore what the agency will gain from working with you. Above all, the language should be about the prospective client, not about you!



Post Bid



Lost Bid Analysis : Identify lessons learnt, conduct a detailed lost bid analysis of the last quarter, and identify reasons for the loss i.e. solutioning, pricing, competitor advantages, lack of understanding of the requirement. Accordingly strategize on subsequent bids basis these analysis and learnings. The best win strategy ever developed is to uncover a customer’s wants and needs and address them.

Capture Research : Develop a system to identify upcoming and future bids and check for them regularly. Register on free public procurement portals or paid subscriptions like gov win to receive alerts when appropriate opportunities arise for you to bid on. You can also use the government Procurement Data on government website to learn about contracts that are nearing their expiration date and contact the procurement officer to find out if the contracts will be renewed.



DO's

Your proposal should be:

- « **Compelling** - delivering great value proposition in terms of what a customer needs.
- « **Responsive** - listening to your customers to cater their goals and challenges
- « **Reliable** - supporting what you have claimed in the proposal with accurate proofs.
- « **Remarkable** - planning and designing of proposal's look and feel in an organized manner.
- « **Scoring** - compliance with the RFP with customer focused solutions.
- « **Accountable** - to meet the prior commitments and respecting deadlines.
- « **Authoritative** - stating a concrete technical and management approach with highlighted selling points.



DONT's

You may lose bids if :

- « **No discernible value** proposition offered, or little value offered.
- « **Trying to sell** what government has not asked for. i.e. a good solution, but inappropriate to the specific need.
- « **Lack of leadership strength** - inefficient bid decisions leading to major deadline and budget issues.
- « **DO NOT jump directly** into writing proposal with no research beforehand and no attention given to WHAT should be
- « **Focusing more** on government's needs, rather than showcasing your own services instead.
- « **Use of unquantifiable terms** such as best practices, highly qualified, eminent approaches etc.

Let's talk

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Book a meeting