

Marketing is Key to the Government Marketplace

By Max Franks

Perception is reality, in the 21st century and in the government contracting world. Every day we see flashing bill boards, magazine ads, banners on our internet searches. Yet what we all know is that, what we see is not always what we get. I bring this topic up to remind small businesses that all a contracting officer has is what we give them and they must decide from that information who will win a contract or project.

Small Business contractors must take the time to make sure the image that their company projects is competent and professional in nature. This does not mean you need fancy uniforms or trucks with logo's going down the highway. This means that what you turn in to the contracting officer is complete and your federal or state registrations and supplemental information is current. I was working with a small business just last week that had been working hard to win his first federal contracting award and he felt that small businesses could not win in the current federal or state marketplace. When we reviewed his marketing information in the Small Business Administration Supplemental page of his federal Vendor Registration SAM it was empty. No capabilities narrative keys words, or references were listed. So, no matter how good he was in the commercial marketplace, in the federal marketplace- he was perceived as incomplete. Meanwhile, other small businesses in the same field had completed the supplemental pages explaining their capabilities and were given a second look for bid opportunities under \$25,000.

Lastly, when given the opportunity to write a proposal for a solicitation or opportunity take the time to explain how you will accomplish the task at hand, the contracting officer must decide the best value for the project he has been given to procure. The last thing he wants to think about is if your company will complete the project, ship on time, or meet the services that you have promised. So take the time to review government bids, fill out the requested information and ask those questions that you need to be the best value for the project. Contact Arkansas Procurement Assistance Center and let us review your federal registrations and update your bid matching opportunities so that you can be the next award winner.

As a reminder, we are now in the 4th quarter of the federal government contracting year so federal agency's must spend or obligate their funds before September 30 or send them back to the treasury. The turnaround time for some bid opportunities due dates will be very short so, if an opportunity should come your way be ready and be prepared to submit quickly.

