

Marketing to Government Agencies

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In business, one of the most basic elements is marketing - making your buyers aware of what you are offering. In government contracting, marketing is no different. How do you find opportunities and how do you make contracting officers aware of what you can provide?

Contracting Officers adhere to the **Federal Acquisitions Regulations (FAR)** to use specific ways to provide market research. These procurement regulations state they have to make competition the major focus of each procurement. Far 19.201 states *“(a) It is the policy of the Government to provide maximum practicable opportunities in its acquisitions to small business, veteran-owned small business, service-disabled veteran-owned small business, HUBZone small business, small disadvantaged business, and women-owned small business concerns.”*

Since the policy is to use small businesses, how do you market so that you can be part of this process for small business? First, for all federal opportunities over \$3,500 you must be registered as a federal vendor in the **Systems for Award Management (SAM)**. You must update this system annually so you may be awarded a federal contract. Secondly, attached to SAM is the **SBA Supplemental** page. This page allows vendors to enter a capabilities narrative to market your business and show how your firm can meet the needs of the agencies seeking your type of products or services. This is the most under used area of small business marketing, make sure that you are using this free marketing platform to your company's advantage.

Now that you are a federal vendor and have added the free marketing information, how do you find opportunities for federal projects? For bid opportunities over \$25,000 the government has a bid board called **Federal Business Opportunities** or www.fbo.gov. This allows government vendors to find and bid on projects. Also, many firms will provide bid matching services so that opportunities in your product or services can be sent to you via e-mail. What about bids under \$25,000? These also require competition. The government agencies use the **Small Business Administration's Dynamic Small Business Search (SBA DSBS)** for market research to find at least 3 companies to send bid packages to. If you filled out the capabilities narrative as part of your registration in SAM, then you will be ready if you are chosen. Let's review.

- To find opportunities you must first be a registered federal vendor in the SAM vendor systems at <https://www.sam.gov/portal/SAM/#1>,
- Then you enter your companies marketing information, the company's capabilities narrative in the SAM SBA Supplemental pages for bids under \$25,000.
- Now your company may begin to bid on opportunities in the FBO online database.
- To market your companies further, review the four subsets of small business 8a, WOSB, HUBZone, and SDVOSB to see if you qualify for these areas. This can make your business more valuable to government agencies in meeting their goals for small businesses.

Now you are prepared to enter the federal government market place and market to government agencies for part of the 400 billion dollars in small business procurement award.

Is your business ready for a federal contracting opportunity? Call APAC and let us show you the government market place.