



**Government Contracting & Business Development
Office of Government Contracting
Area Office VI**

“Twelve Steps to Success”

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO
DOING BUSINESS WITH THE
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**



Service Areas

Alaska
Arizona
California
Hawaii
Idaho
Nevada
Oregon
Washington
Guam

*This guide is developed and maintained by
SBA's Government Contracting Area VI Office*

Message from the Area Director-

In fiscal year (FY) 2016, the Federal Government purchased approximately **\$375 Billion** in goods and services, ranging from paper clips and janitorial services to next-generation space shuttles and advanced scientific research - and pretty much everything in between. Once the final FY 2016 procurement dollars are calculated, it's expected that small businesses will have received nearly **\$88 Billion** of Federal contract dollar awards.

While dealing with the Federal Government can be a formidable task at times, the Small Business Administration (SBA), through our Office of Government Contracting (GC) and our many Resource Partners, can assist you to get 'contract-ready' and then to market your firm's products and services to Federal customers.

Knowledge is power! We hope this guide and directory will help you overcome any uncertainties that you may have and be a useful tool for you.

Best wishes and Good Luck!

Nicholas L. Manalisay
Area Director

Area Office VI -

Providing Small Business with the Competitive Edge!

“Twelve Steps to Success”

A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO DOING BUSINESS WITH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

Doing business with the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world can be challenging. One of the biggest challenges that small businesses face in doing business with the government is discovering the right opportunities – ones that match their capabilities and growth plans.

Unlike dealing with your typical customer, doing business with the government, at times, seems cumbersome and difficult. But, if you are willing to learn the system, demonstrate patience and assertiveness, doing business with the federal government can be a steady source of growth and income for both new and established businesses.

To assist you in pursuing federal contracting opportunities, we have developed a 12 step procedural guide that will enhance your potential for success in government contracting.

Step 1: Become familiar with SBA’s Online Resources, especially the Office of Government Contracting Resources

Office of Government Contracting (GC)

- The [Office of Government Contracting](#) (GC) works to create an environment for maximum participation by small businesses in federal government contract awards and large prime subcontract awards. GC administers [programs and services](#) that assist small businesses in meeting the requirements to receive government contracts, either as prime contractors or subcontractors.
- [Directory of GC Field Staff](#) provides contact information for contracting experts who may serve as a resource to you, whether you are new to government contracting or are currently doing business with the government and are seeking advice on how to deal with a particular issue.

SBA Online Resources

- Please visit the SBA website to access a wide array of programs and available resources to provide assistance to small businesses considering the federal marketplace. SBA’s [Online Resources](#) provide information on getting started as a contractor, finding government customers, government contracting programs, [proposal preparation](#), and other resources for small business. Introductory information is also available on the [System for Award Management](#), [Dynamic Small Business Searches](#), [Federal Business Opportunities](#), [GSA Schedules](#), [Federal Procurement Data System](#), and, [USASpending.Gov](#)
- SBA has created a series of free online contracting courses designed to help prospective and existing small businesses understand the basics about contracting with government agencies. So whether you’re just getting started or looking for ways to compete more successfully in the government contracting marketplace, please visit SBA’s website for [Government Contracting Classroom](#). The SBA also offers a spectrum of self-paced, online courses and training resources through our [Small Business Learning Center](#) (SBLC).

SBLC is a virtual campus providing quality and targeted online training to meet the information needs of prospective and existing small business owners.

Step 2: Obtain a DUNS Number

Before you can bid on government contracts, you need to obtain a Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) or D-U-N-S Number, a unique nine-digit identification number for each physical location of your business. D-U-N-S Number assignment is free for all businesses required to register with the federal government for contracts or grants. Do not pay for a D-U-N-S Number to register for government contracts. Once D&B has assigned your firm a DUNS number, you are ready for the next step.

Step 3: Product/Service Identification, System for Award Management (SAM) and Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS) Registration

Prior to starting the System for Award Management (SAM) registration, you will need to determine the Federal Procurement Data System Product Service Codes (PSC) and North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Codes that apply to your business. Please note, as your firm expands and develops its presence in other markets, you are encouraged to continually update your SAM profile to add or delete NACIS codes, as appropriate, in your registration.

The System for Acquisition Management (SAM) is the main database for the U.S. Federal Government to collect, validate and store data from suppliers and then make that data available to various government agencies. Both civilian and military agencies use the database in addition to some state and local governments. It is a requirement and essential to be registered on SAM, especially if you'll be pursuing government contracts as a prime or subcontractor. In order to receive federal payments and disbursements from contracts and/or grants, the business or non-profit must have an active registration in SAM. There is NO FEE to register or maintain your SAM registration. ***Please note: If you get an email, text, or phone call from a company asking you to contact them right away about your SAM registration, be cautious as it may be a scam.***

Register to do business with the U.S. government and create a SAM account by going directly to <https://www.sam.gov> and clicking on the "create account" or "register" buttons.

You should approach and treat your SAM profile as you would a resume, i.e., review and update it regularly to ensure that it best describes your firm and its capabilities. To register your firm in SAM, follow these steps:

Step 1: Collect all of your pertinent documents and information required for registration

Step 2: Access the SAM online registration at <https://www.sam.gov>

Step 3: Create User Account, select "Create User Account" tab from navigation pane

Step 4: Log into new account to register entity, Click on the "Register/Update Entity" navigation pane

Step 5: Complete and submit the online registration

[Quick-User Guides](#) and training for SAM are available by visiting at <https://www.sam.gov>. Additional online assistance is also available from the [Federal Service Help Desk](#).

Your local Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) and Small Business Development Centers (SBDC) (links are shown in Step 8 below) can provide you with “hands-on” assistance with SAM.

NOTE: Upon SAM registration, you will be directed to the Small Business Administration’s [Dynamic Small Business Search](#) (DSBS) profile registration and update page. DSBS registration can only be accessed through SAM. Once you have registered in SAM and are determined to be a small business by your NAICS code(s), you will be invited to submit additional information for your SBA Profile. Click the icon titled “SBA – Register or Update your SBA Profile” on the screen. Much of the information submitted in SAM will carry over to your SBA Profile so you will not have to re-enter everything. Be certain to add key words and a capabilities narrative to make your company easier to find. Based on the information you enter into DSBS, the SBA’s small business size logic application will populate fields indicating if a firm is self-certified as small. Only SBA can enter information with regard to a firm’s certification as 8(a) Business Development or Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) program participant. DSBS is the Small Business Administration’s Internet-based Procurement Marketing and Access Network for small businesses. It is an electronic search engine for *contracting officers* and a *marketing tool* for small firms. The database includes electronic profiles also known as SBA Profiles of small businesses. Each SBA Profile includes the firm’s products and services, its history, its business references, etc. Firms can update their profiles and link their websites to their [Dynamic Small Business Search](#) record.

Think of your company DSBS profile as a *marketing tool*. Your DSBS profile:

- Confirms your eligibility for small business set asides
- Makes clear that your business is small and/or owned by a minority group
- Gives information about your company to prime vendors looking for subcontractors
- Distinguishes government certifications
- Identifies bonding levels,
- Gives bonding levels, quality assurance standards
- Make clear your firms nature of business and
- Provides a capabilities narrative

Step 4: Determine if Your Firm Qualifies for one of SBA’s Certification Programs

Qualifying as "small" may allow your business to take advantage of valuable government contracting opportunities reserved for small businesses. To be eligible as a small business concern, your business must satisfy the SBA’s size standard for your industry, be operated for profit, be independently owned and operated, and be based in the U.S., making significant contributions to the U.S. economy. Formal certifications by *small business* concerns are not required to bid on federal contracts. Firms self-certify that they are small at the time of bid/proposal submission. The contracting officer will generally verify the firm’s size in the SAM database (see Step 3 above for information regarding SAM).

SBA uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes as the basis for its size standards. NAICS codes are numerical codes used to classify business activities in various economic sectors and industries. A NAICS code has six digits. The first two digits indicate the economic Sector, the third the Subsector, the fourth the Industry Group, the fifth the Industry, and the sixth the U.S. Industry.

SBA currently has **three** contracts-related certification programs: 8(a) Business Development (8(a)), Historically Underutilized Business Zones (HUBZone) and Women-Owned Small Business Programs (WOSB).

- [8\(a\) Business Development \(BD\) Program](#) is structured to assist eligible small businesses to compete by providing them with business development assistance. Although primarily a business development program, there are certain contracts “restricted” to certified 8(a) concerns (i.e. competitive and sole-source).
- [HUBZone Program](#) entitles qualified and certified firms to special bidding benefits; including set-asides, sole-source awards and a price evaluation preference (PEP) for unrestricted procurements, in the federal contracting arena.
- [WOSB Program](#) ensures that Women-Owned Small Businesses (WOSBs) and Economically Disadvantaged Women-Owned Small Businesses (EDWOSBs) have an equal opportunity to participate in federal contracting and expands the number of industries where WOSB/EDWOSB is able to compete for business with the federal government. SBA has designated industries according to [North American Industry Classification System](#) (NAICS) codes for use under the WOSB Program; this Program is limited to ONLY those industries that have been authorized for the program. WOSB Program authorizes contracting officers to set aside federal contracts for eligible WOSBs.

[8\(a\) BD](#) and [HUBZone Program Certification](#): SBA offers an online application process that makes it easier, faster and less expensive for small firms to apply for 8(a) Business Development and HUBZone certifications directly from SBA’s website, eliminating the need to download and complete paper applications. SBA’s online [General Login System](#) (GLS) is the online portal for application to the 8(a) Business Development and HUBZone Programs that is integrated with the System for Award Management (SAM) and Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS) databases. *Formal certification process.*

[Women-Owned Small Business Program Certification](#): There are currently two ways to demonstrate eligibility for the WOSB program: Self Certification with supporting documents and Third Party Certification with supporting documents.

Self-Certification: WOSBs and EDWOSBs will self-certify their status in the System for Award Management (SAM) and the Online Representations and Certifications within SAM, as other small businesses do. WOSBs or EDWOSBs are also required to compile and upload required documents to the WOSB Program Repository at <https://certify.sba.gov>.

Third-Party Certification: WOSBs or EDWOSBs may be certified by an SBA approved Third Party Certifier. SBA will accept certifications from the El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; National Women Business Owners Council (NWBOC); US Women’s Chamber of Commerce, and Women’s

Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC). WOSBs or EDWOSBs are also required to compile and upload required documents to the WOSB Program Repository at <https://certify.sba.gov>.

Certify.sba.gov is the online portal that allows WOSB business owners to manage their documents, complete forms online, and receive notices of upcoming deadlines. Note, as self-certification is still permitted while SBA develops new criteria, this modernized site provides a platform for businesses to self-certify as a WOSB or EDWOSB. Please visit the SBA website to view more information and guidance on [WOSB](#) Program eligibility, program certification process, as well as access to the Certify.sba.gov User guide and Power Point presentation outlining the program certification process.

[Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Program](#) (SDVOSB) was established by Public Law 108-183 dated Dec 16, 2003 to increase federal contract opportunities for SDVOSB concerns. This procurement program provides that federal contracting officers may restrict competition to SDVOSBs and award a sole source or set-aside contract where certain criteria are met. Contracting officers may restrict contract awards to SDVOSBs where there is a reasonable expectation that two or more SDVOSB concerns will submit bids at a fair market price; allow for a sole-source award, if there is not a reasonable expectation of competitive bids/offers from two or more SDVOSB concerns. There is no formal government-wide certification; SDVOSB concerns self-certify. However, specific to the Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) [Vets First Verification Program](#), in order to qualify for participation in the VA Veterans First Contracting Program, eligible VOSB owners must first be [verified](#).

Step 5 Identify Federal Procurement Opportunities

Now it's time to get strategic. Every agency and department has a unique mission or goal. Identifying these can help you target a niche or opportunity for your products or services. The good news is that the government offers potential contractors something that no other sector does – an insight into its budgetary priorities. What the government intends to buy and how much it has to spend is all in the public domain. These budgets (actually they read more like mission strategy papers than budgets) offer sufficient context for savvy small businesses to identify opportunities and focus their contracting sales and marketing strategy. Each federal agency or department budget is listed on the [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\)](#) website.

You can identify current opportunities on the [Federal Business Opportunities \(FedBizOps\)](#) that is the designated government-wide point of entry and the exclusive official source for public access to notices of federal contracting actions over \$25,000. (Agencies are also encouraged to use FedBizOpps to provide notices for actions of \$25,000 or less.) Once you identify those agencies and buying offices that purchase your products and services, it's a good idea to contact them directly to learn more about upcoming procurements. FedBizOps allows businesses to sign up for automatic e-mail notifications of open and upcoming contract actions. Go to the FedBizOpps website for guidance.

Federal Agencies also publishes "[Agency Recurring Procurement Forecasts](#)" that project potential agency procurement opportunities. Please note Forecast data is for planning purposes only and is not a commitment by the government to purchase the described products and services; all forecasts are for projected procurements and subject to revision or cancellation. Final decisions on the extent of competition, small business participation, estimated value, or any aspect of the procurement action will not be made until each procurement is posted to Federal Business Opportunities. The Agency Recurring

Procurement Forecast is an excellent tool to target federal procurement opportunities.

The government is encouraging agencies to utilize environmentally-friendly oriented products and services (Buy Green). To learn more about the government's Buy Green/Comprehensive Procurement Guideline, log onto <https://www.sba.gov/content/green-marketing>.

The General Service Administration (GSA) manages [Acquisition Gateway](#) an online resource intended as the acquisition professional's desktop, providing the resources, tools, and community needed to create successful acquisitions. [As a "Non-Federal Government & Public User"](#), you can access the Acquisition Gateway to view the Forecast of Contracting Opportunities for GSA and other federal agencies. The Forecast of Contracting Opportunities is an excellent tool to target federal procurement opportunities.

Step 6 Familiarize Yourself with the Government's Contracting Procedures

Become familiar with [Federal Acquisition Regulation](#) (FAR), [Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement](#) (DFARS) and [Procedures, Guidance, and Information](#) (PGI). You may also gain access to other federal agency's FAR supplements at <http://farsite.hill.af.mil/>. It is recommended that you be familiar with Title 13, Chapter 1, Part 125 of the [Code of Federal Regulations](#) that outlines Government Contracting Programs.

[Acquisition.gov](#) is an E-Gov Initiative that aggregates federal acquisition content by providing one website for regulations, acquisition systems, resources, opportunities, and training. This website provides for "ease of use navigation" in mind that translates efficient and transparent practices through better use of information, people, processes and technology.

To obtain information on prevailing wage rates associated with federal service and construction contracts, the [Department of Labor](#) (DOL) provides a single location for identifying the appropriate Service Contract Act (SCA) and Davis-Bacon Act (DBA) wage determinations (WDs) for each official contract action. Guidance in selecting WDs is provided in the WDOL.gov [User's Guide](#). Search engines such as "Google", "Bing", or "Yahoo" can also be useful in searches for contracting information.

[Regulations.gov](#) is your source for information on the development of Federal regulations, including those that affect contracting matters and other related documents issued by the U.S. government. Through this site, you can find, read, and comment on regulatory issues that are important to you.

Step 7 Investigate Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) contracts

The US General Services Administration (GSA) manages Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contracts, also referred to as GSA Schedules and [Federal Supply Schedule](#) (FSS) contracts. FSS are government wide indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts with commercial firms to provide over 11 million commercial supplies and services at pre-negotiated prices, terms and conditions. The [MAS Program](#) provides a fast, flexible, cost-effective procurement solution that allows customers to meet acquisition challenges while achieving their missions. Agencies' federal contracting officers and other authorized users place orders directly with FSS contractors; contracting officers may, at their discretion,

[set-aside](#) orders or blanket purchase agreements for exclusive competitive participation by [small business](#), 8(a) business development participants, HUBZone small business concerns, service-disabled veteran-owned small business concerns, and economically disadvantaged women-owned small business (EDWOSB) concerns and women-owned small business (WOSB) concerns eligible under the WOSB Program.

[eBuy](#), a component of [GSA Advantage!®](#), is an online Request for Quotation (RFQ) tool. eBuy is designed to facilitate the request for submission of quotations for a wide range of commercial supplies (products) and services under the following acquisition vehicles:

- [GSA Schedules](#)
- Technology contracts; i.e., GSA [Schedule 70 \(Information Technology\)](#), Government wide Acquisition Contracts (GWACs), and Network Services and Telecommunications contracts

For federal, state, and local government agencies (buyers), eBuy maximizes their buying power. By leveraging the power of the Internet, eBuy increases contractor participation to obtain quotations that result in best value purchase decisions. Buyers can also use eBuy to request information and find sources to fulfill their requirements.

Federal government agencies can use eBuy to post Request for Quotations (RFQs) for supplies and services under both GSA Schedules and Technology contracts. If a Federal buying office decides to set-aside a requirement, then the RFQ will be “viewable” only by eligible Schedule contractors. For example, only HUBZone Schedule contractors could view a RFQ set-aside for HUBZone small business concerns, etc.

Step 8 Seek Additional Assistance as Needed in the Federal Marketplace

There are a number of important resources that are available to provide you with hands-on assistance in the federal marketplace:

- ***SBA Procurement Center Representatives (PCRs) and Commercial Market Representatives (CMRs):*** SBA has a nationwide cadre of procurement professionals who are charged with assisting small businesses and acting as their advocates at both the prime and subcontracting levels. PCRs assist small firms interested in doing business as prime contractors directly with federal agency procurement centers. CMRs work with those small firms interested in identifying subcontracting opportunities with large businesses that have been awarded a federal contract. Please visit the SBA website to identify the [PCR or CMR](#) located nearest to you.
- ***Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC):*** [PTACs](#) are located in most states. PTACs, funded by the Department of Defense, provide “hands-on” technical contracting and marketing assistance to small businesses wishing to do business with any federal agency. They provide training and counseling on marketing, financial, and contracting issues at minimal or no cost. Please visit the SBA website to identify a [PTAC](#) located nearest you.
- ***Small Business Development Centers (SBDC)*** offer training and counseling services to small businesses and would-be entrepreneurs. They offer free, one-on-one consulting, and training programs on a variety of issues, including marketing, regulatory compliance and international trade.

Please visit the SBA website to identify a [SBDC](#) located nearest you.

- ***Small Business Specialists (SBS)*** are designated for each agency's local contracting activity (buying office) level. SBSs act as small business advocates and provide advice to small business owners on individual procurement opportunities and guidance on how to do business with their individual component. SBSs support small businesses in preparing to successfully integrate themselves into the contracting process and obtain awards with their respective organizations; they should be considered a good point for initial contact with an agency and a valuable resource in identifying your target market (i.e. procurement centers that may need your products and services). To market your firm to a particular procurement center, we suggest that you identify the SBS assigned to that procurement center and contact that individual directly to discuss your capabilities and product lines. They can help you identify Program/Project Managers and others within the organization with responsibility for buying the types of goods and services you are seeking to sell to the Government. Please visit agencies' website to obtain a listing of SBSs assigned to their location.
- ***Directors of Federal Agency Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU):*** OSDBU pursuant to Public Law 95-507, is tasked with fostering the use of small businesses as Federal contractors, and ensuring that small businesses are afforded an equitable opportunity to compete for prime contracting opportunities. OSDBU develops and implements appropriate outreach programs aimed at heightening the awareness of the small business community to the contracting opportunities available within the Department. Outreach efforts include activities such as sponsoring small business fairs and procurement conferences as well as participating in trade group seminars, conventions, and other forums that promote the utilization of small business as contractors. Another excellent way of getting in front of government buyers is to take advantage of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) outreach events and expos. Please visit each agency's website to obtain contact information for their Director of the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization.
- ***SBA's [Women Business Centers \(WBCs\)](#)*** represent a national network of nearly 100 educational centers throughout the United States and its territories, which are designed to assist women in starting and growing small businesses. WBCs seek to "level the playing field" for women entrepreneurs, who face unique obstacles in the business world.
- ***[Service Corp of Retired Executive \(SCORE\)](#)*** is a nonprofit association dedicated to educating entrepreneurs and the formation, growth and success of small businesses. SCORE provides mentoring to both start-up and existing small businesses through face-to-face and email counseling as well as educational workshops. All counseling is provided free of charge. Explore the [SCORE](#) website to find a chapter and counselor near you. "***SCORE - Counselors to American's Small Business***"
- ***[Veterans Business Outreach Center \(VBOC\)](#)*** Program is designed to provide entrepreneurial development services such as business training, counseling and resource partner referrals to transitioning service members, veterans, National Guard & Reserve members and military spouses interested in starting or growing a small business. The SBA has 20 organizations participating in this cooperative agreement and serving as Veterans Business Outreach Centers. Visit the VBOC website to find the Center locations serving your area.

- [Minority Business Development Agency](#) (MBDA) is an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce that helps to create and sustain U.S. jobs by promoting the growth and global competitiveness of businesses owned and operated by minority entrepreneurs. MBDA works throughout the Nation to link minority-owned businesses with the capital, contracts, and markets they need to grow. MBDA advocates and promotes minority-owned business with elected officials, policy makers, and business leaders. MBDA serves as subject matter experts and advocates for the minority business community.

Step 9 Explore subcontracting opportunities

Subcontracting opportunities with federal prime contractors is a large secondary market that should not be overlooked and is an excellent introduction into federal contracting. SBA's [Subcontracting Opportunities Directory](#) lists, by state, large business federal prime contractors along with contact information for each firm's Small Business Liaison. We encourage you to investigate potential subcontracting and teaming opportunities with these firms.

SBA's [SUB-Net](#) database is a listing of subcontracting solicitations and opportunities posted by large prime contractors and other non-federal agencies. SUB-Net is used by many large prime contractors, as well as state and local governments, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, and even foreign governments to post solicitations and identify small businesses.

[Supplier Connection](#) is an initiative to grow small businesses and create jobs in the United States. Powered by IBM, it is a free, cloud-based business-to-business community. This online portal enables collaboration between small businesses and the supply chains of Fortune 500 corporations, mid-market firms, and other enterprises; small businesses selling to large business is made easier. Supplier Connection is a network that provides its participating Buying Members access to a broad group of small business suppliers. By creating a profile for your company, not only do you increase your visibility with Buying Members, you will also be visible to other small businesses. Visit the [Supplier Connection](#) website to find out how to register.

Step 10 Investigate other federal, state and local programs

There are several other programs that may be of interest to you, such as SBA's [All Small Mentor-Protégé Program](#); [8\(a\) Business Development \(8\(a\) BD Mentor-Protégé Program\)](#); [Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\) Program](#) and the [Small Business Technology Transfer \(STTR\) Program](#).

[All Small Mentor-Protégé Program](#) is to develop strong protégé firms through mentor-provided business development assistance, and to help protégés successfully compete for government contracts. Rather than creating separate programs for each constituency: Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Businesses, Women-Owned Small Businesses, [Historically Underutilized Business Zones](#), the SBA chose to create a single, all-inclusive mentor-protégé program modeled on the successful mentor-protégé program available to participants in its 8(a) BD program. Visit the SBA website to learn more about the [Eligibility Requirements for the Protégé](#) and [How to Apply](#) to the program.

[8\(a\) Business Development \(8\(a\) BD Mentor-Protégé Program\)](#) is to enhance the capability of [8\(a\)](#)

[Program Participants](#) to be competitive, achieve entrepreneurial success, and contribute to the strength and vigor of our economy. Visit the SBA website to learn more about the [Eligibility and How to Enter the 8\(a\) BD Mentor-Protégé Program](#).

[Small Business Innovation Research \(SBIR\)](#); and [Program and the Small Business Technology Transfer \(STTR\) Program](#) are two highly competitive programs that encourage our nation's small, high-tech, innovative businesses to explore their technological potential and provide the incentive to profit from commercialization opportunities. By including qualified small businesses in the nation's Research & Development arena, high-tech innovation is stimulated and the United States gains entrepreneurial spirit as it meets its specific research and development needs. Visit the SBA website to learn more about the [Eligibility Requirements](#) for the programs. Please visit SBA's online [Resources for Small Businesses](#) to obtain more information these and other federal programs.

Step 11 Accept credit cards - SmartPay Program

The GSA SmartPay Program is the world's largest government charge card and commercial payment solutions program, providing services to more than 350 Federal agencies, organizations, and Native American tribal governments; totaling more than \$19 Billion in Fiscal Year 2016. As a vendor, you can *maximize* your ability to capture government sales by accepting credit cards (Visa, MasterCard and Voyager). Please visit GSA's online [SmartPay](#) to obtain more information on benefits of this program.

Step 12 Marketing: Ready, Aim, Fire - Contract!

The road to marketing to the federal government can be arduous, but diligence and determination play a significant role in your success in the Federal procurement arena.

The terms "Ready, Aim, and Fire" are symbolic of some of the steps it takes to get your firm "contract-ready." To do business with the federal government you must: be ready to develop your marketing strategy and plan of action; take aim at target agencies and refine your strategy to target a customer that has a need for your products/services; and fire your business marketing and capabilities.

"Ready":

- Knowledge and understanding of what an agency buys
- Acquisition history /Know how agencies previously purchased a product/service
- Understanding your company's value proposition
- Know your competitors
- Does your products/service help meet agencies objectives/goals
- Does the agency have a need for your products/service
- Knowledge and understanding of the federal procurement process

"Aim"

- Target the appropriate agency
- Research agencies' budget/spending
- Identify the right customer
- Make sure your product/service match agencies' needs

- Research agencies annual procurement forecasts
- “Fire”
- Marketing
 - Sell the benefits and value of your solutions
 - Demonstrate capability and credibility
 - Know your audience
 - Be focused and concise with marketing
 - Stand out from the crowd
 - Demonstrate how you can benefit the customer
 - Be a problem solver
 - Provide complete company and point of contact information
 - Identify appropriate NAICS codes
 - Highlight business status, classification, certifications
 - Identify any GSA/FSS contracts
 - Establish/maintain customer relationships

After you have identified your customers, researched their requirements, and familiarized yourself with the government’s procurement regulations and strategies, it is time to market your product or service. Present your capabilities directly to those buying offices that purchase your products or services. Realize that, like you, their time is valuable and if the match is a good one and you can provide them with a cost-effective, quality solution to their requirements.

Smart strategy, sufficient effort, and management commitment are essential for successfully selling to the federal market

Remember diligence, determination, capabilities, and relationships are key drivers in doing business with the federal government successfully.



USEFUL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTING WEBSITES

Small Business Administration	
Small Business Resource	http://www.sba.gov
8(a) Business Development Program	http://www.sba.gov/8abd
Historically Underutilized Business Zone Program	http://www.sba.gov/hubzone
Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business Procurement Program	https://www.sba.gov/contracting/government-contracting-programs/service-disabled-veteran-owned-businesses
Women-Owned Small Business Program	http://www.sba.gov/wosb
Small Business Goaling	http://www.sba.gov/goaling
Small Business Size Standards	http://www.sba.gov/content/small-business-size-standards
Office of Advocacy, Small Business Data Resources	www.sba.gov/advocacy/847/125821
Office of Women’s Business Ownership	http://www.sba.gov/about-offices-content/1/2895
Office of Veteran’s Business Development	https://www.sba.gov/offices/headquarters/ovbd
Small Business Jobs Act of 2010	http://www.sba.gov/jobsact
50+ Entrepreneurs – Information for entrepreneurs over the age of 50	http://www.sba.gov/content/50-entrepreneurs
ACQUISITION CENTRAL – Website for the federal acquisition community	https://www.acquisition.gov/
eSRS – The electronic Subcontracting Reporting System reports on small business subcontracting plans	www.esrs.gov
Small Business Resource Magazine – Help in identifying local SBA resources	http://www.smallbusiness3.com/

General Contracting Resources	
Government Accountability Office GAO Products Bid Protests Legal Decisions, Opinions, and Resources	http://www.gao.gov/about http://www.gao.gov/about/products http://www.gao.gov/legal/bid-protests/search http://www.gao.gov/legal
Where in Federal Contracting? (WIFCON)	http://www.wifcon.com
GovCon – Provides industry specific online sales and marketing products and services	http://www.govcon.com
U.S. Government Printing Office (GPO) - The GPO provides publishing & dissemination services for the official &	http://www.gpo.gov

authentic government publications to Congress, Federal agencies, Federal depository libraries, & the American public	
National Contract Management Association (NCMA) - NCMA is a membership-based, professional society for contracting professionals formed to foster the professional growth and educational advancement of its members.	http://www.ncmahq.org
FOREIGN TRADE is the official source for U.S. export and import statistics	http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/
FedWorld: The FedWorld.gov web site is a gateway to government information. This site is managed by the National Technical Information Service (NTIS).	http://fedworld.ntis.gov
Defense Acquisition University (DAU) – Acquipedia – Online encyclopedia that provides quick access to information on common acquisition topics.	https://dap.dau.mil/acquipedia/page/default.aspx
USA.gov - Official information and services from the U.S. government	http://www.usa.gov
Federal Procurement Data System – Government Procurement database	https://www.fpds.gov
Federal Contract Awards by State	http://www.fedspending.org
GSA Subcontracting Directory – A directory of large prime contractors	http://www.gsa.gov/subdirectory

Laws, Regulations, and Other Related Procurement Documents

United States Code (U.S.C.) - The codification by subject matter of the general and permanent laws of the United States	http://uscode.house.gov/
Legislative Information on the Internet: House & Senate bills, proceedings on the House and Senate Floors, digest of legislative history of bills & amendments, directory of House members & committees and much more Public and Private Laws	http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/ https://www.congress.gov/
Code of Federal Regulations (CFR): The codification of the general and permanent rules published in the Federal Register.	http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title13/13cfr124_main_02.tpl

Federal Register – Official daily publication for rules, proposed rules, and notices of Federal agencies and organizations, as well as executive orders and other presidential documents	http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/browse/collection.action?collectionCode=FR https://www.federalregister.gov/
Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) Alternate FAR website FAR FAQ	https://www.acquisition.gov/far/ http://farsite.hill.af.mil http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R42826.pdf
Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) Alternate DFARS website	http://www.acq.osd.mil/dpap/dars http://farsite.hill.af.mil/VDFDARA.HTM
ALL Federal Regulations – Online source for U.S. government regulations	http://www.regulations.gov
Information Technology Issues – U.S. General Services Administration (GSA)	http://www.gsa.gov/technologystategy
Uniform Commercial Code Locator – This locator links to state statutes that correspond to Articles of the Uniform Commercial Code.	http://www.law.cornell.edu/uniform/ucc.html
Defense Technical Information Center (DTIC®) – THE premier provider of DoD technical information	http://www.dtic.mil/
ISO Parts, Inc. – Stocking distributor for military and aviation parts	http://www.iso-parts.com

Contracting Activities – Office of Small and Disadvantage Business Utilization

Department of Defense, Office of Small Business Programs	http://www.acq.osd.mil/sadbu
Department of Agriculture U.S. Forest Service	http://www.usda.gov/ http://www.fs.fed.us/business/
Department of the U.S. Air Force	http://ww3.safaq.hq.af.mil/
Department of the U.S. Army, Contracting Command	http://www.army.mil/info/organization/unitsandcommands/commandstructure/acc/
Defense Contract Management Agency	http://www.dcmsa.mil/
Defense Information Technology Contracting Organization	http://www.ditco.disa.mil
Defense Logistics Agency	http://www.dla.mil/
Department of Education	http://www.ed.gov/
Department of Energy	http://www.energy.gov/
Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Acquisition Management National Center For Environmental Research	http://www.epa.gov/oam http://www.epa.gov/ncer
Federal Aviation Administration Small Business Development Office	http://www.faa.gov/ http://www.sbo.faa.gov/sbo/

General Services Administration Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	http://www.gsa.gov http://www.gsa.gov/smallbizhelp
U.S. Geological Survey – Contracts and Grants Information	http://www.usgs.gov/contracts/index.html
Department of Health & Human Services National Institutes of Health – Grants & Funding Opportunities	http://www.hhs.gov/ http://grants.nih.gov/grants/oer.htm
Department of Housing and Urban Development – Contracting	http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpo/index.cfm
Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management	http://www.doi.gov http://www.blm.gov
Department of Labor	http://www.dol.gov/
National Aeronautics and Space Administration Office of Procurement	http://www.nasa.gov/ http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/procurement/
National Science Foundation National Science Foundation Funding	http://www.nsf.gov http://www.nsf.gov/funding/aboutfunding.jsp
Army Single Face to Industry	https://acquisition.army.mil/asfi/
Department of the Navy - Navy Electronic Commerce Online	https://www.neco.navy.mil/
Small Business Innovative Research/Technology Transfer NASA's SBIR/STTR Programs	http://www.sba.gov/content/small-business-innovation-research-program-sbir-0 http://www.sbir.nasa.gov/SBIR/front1.html
Social Security Administration	http://www.ssa.gov/
Department of State	http://www.state.gov/
Department of Transportation Acquisition and Financial Assistance Management	http://www.dot.gov http://www.dot.gov/ost/m60/
Department of the Treasury	http://www.treas.gov/procurement
Department of Veterans Affairs – Center for Veterans Enterprise Web Portal	http://www.vip.vetbiz.gov/
National Technology Transfer Center - Focuses on providing essential services nationwide for the commercialization of technologies developed by federal agencies and other clients	http://www.nttc.edu
State of California - Department of General Services State of Alaska, Division of General Services State of Arizona, Contracting State of Hawaii, State Procurement Office State of Idaho, Department of Administration State of Montana, OneStop Vendor Information State of Nevada, Department of Administration State of Oregon, Oregon Procurement Information Network State of Utah, Department of Administrative Services State of Washington, General Administration	http://www.dgs.ca.gov http://doa.alaska.gov/dgs/ http://www.spo.az.gov/ http://www.spo.hawaii.gov/ http://purchasing.idaho.gov/ http://vendor.mt.gov/ http://purchasing.state.nv.us/ http://orpin.oregon.gov http://www.purchasing.utah.gov/ http://www.ga.wa.gov/index.html

State of Wyoming, General Services Division	http://ai.state.wy.us/GeneralServices/Procurement
Department of the Navy, Office of Small Business Programs	http://www.secnav.navy.mil/smallbusiness/Pages/find-your-professional.aspx
Air Force, Office of Small Business Programs	http://www.airforcesmallbiz.org/
Army Corps of Engineers, Office of Small Business Programs	http://www.usace.army.mil/BusinessWithUs/SmallBusiness.aspx
Bureau of Reclamation, Small Business Program	http://www.usbr.gov/mso/aamd/downloads/BOR_SMALL_BUSINESS_PROGRAM%20March%202016.pdf
Department of Interior, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	https://www.doi.gov/pmb/osdbu
Bureau of Land Management, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	https://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/more/procurement/Procurement_SmallBusinessResources_Specialists.html
USDA, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	http://www.dm.usda.gov/osdbu/index.php
Energy, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	http://energy.gov/osdbu/small-business-services/small-business-points-contact
National Guard Bureau, Office of Small Business Programs	http://www.nationalguard.mil/Leadership/Joint-Staff/Special-Staff/Small-Business-Programs/
Other Defense Agencies Small Business Program Offices	http://www.acq.osd.mil/osbp/offices/index.shtml
Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	http://www.va.gov/osdbu/about/contact.s.asp
NASA, Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization	http://www.osbp.nasa.gov/map.html