

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Who is the GSA?

For most, what purpose the General Services Administration serves for the community is confusing. To provide a brief history GSA is a government agency that was established in 1949 to help support the acquisition and management of government resources. In combining the National Archives Establishment, the Federal Works Agency, Public Buildings Administration, and the Bureau of Federal Supply War Assets GSA was created. Today the agency is largely known for the Multiple Award Schedules Program (MAS), Federal Supply Schedules Program (FSS), and more recently the Veterans Affairs Schedules Program (VA). GSA provides innovative solutions to procure, manage, and support a wide range of supplies, services, and policies that are provided to local and state governments as well as the U.S. Military.

What Is A GSA Schedule

A GSA Schedule provides pre negotiated priced products and services to government agencies. This process saves well needed time for the contractor to manage the contract in addition to saving cost to the agency. A GSA Schedule is considered a Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) federal contract. The contract is sometimes referred to as a Federal Supply Schedule (FSS), schedule contract, multiple award schedule.

Market Research

In making a decision to submit a proposal it is best that you decide which schedule suits your needs before submitting an application. A list of schedules that are currently being offered and the applicable solicitation numbers are available in this workbook.

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

To view what type of sales your competitors have been making under their GSA contract can be found at the GSA sales query. You will also be able to look at the competition's GSA Schedule pricelist as well as determine if the GSA program works for you.

A GSA contract can be lucrative to your business if used properly, but one of the first steps in the schedule process is finding out if the program is the right fit for you. First you need to visit GSA E Library at <http://www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov/ElibMain/home.do> then follow the steps below:

- Enter a keyword in the search engine that best describes your commodity. This will bring up a list of schedules and its Special Item Numbers (SIN's) relating to that category.
- Read the description of the schedule so that you will be able to make a definite decision on which one suits your business best.
- Once you have made your decision on which schedule you would like to submit an offer for you will be able to locate other contractors who currently have GSA contracts under that schedule.
- Click on the SIN number (number in red to the left of the page that looks something like this xx-xxx) listed under the category and a list of all the contractors under that schedule will appear. You are now able to see your competitors. Be sure to take note of their GSA Schedule number, contact information, discounts offered, and pricing.

Jot that information down because you will need it when you create a sales query report.

To view what type of sales your competitors have been making under their GSA contract can be found at the GSA sales query. You can find the sales query site at <http://ssq.gsa.gov>, follow the steps below to get started:

- Register your information... don't worry it's free.
- Once you have registered you will be prompted to another screen that list at least 12 report formats, you may search by SIN, schedule, contractor and so on make a selection and proceed.
- Take the information that you jotted down from GSA E Library and enter it.

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

- You will be prompted to create a report.

Why Do I Need A GSA Contract?

There are many reasons to having a GSA contract. The first is because 23% of awards are extended to small business. So if you're a small business a GSA contract is a good place to get started with growing your business in the federal market.

Another reason would be there is a short lead time for your business in making a sale and that sale can turn into repeat revenue. The way the program is put together is in quick and easy steps for you to make a sale. They want you to make a sale because if you don't get paid they don't get paid. It's what they call streamlined once you have negotiated and agreed upon the rates, terms, and conditions of your contract that's it. You don't have the stress of having to renegotiate price each time you submit a solicitation to an agency you have already done that within your GSA contract.

Question #1:

Does your company have the time and resources to maintain a GSA contract?

Answer:

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Advantages of a GSA Schedule

Federal agencies worldwide purchase from GSA although they are not obligated to do so many agencies use GSA's process of obtaining their product or service because it's streamlined. Currently there is no other federal agency that has those capabilities. For example if you sell to the Department of Energy then DOE is the only place that you may use your awarded contract, that is not the case with a GSA contract.

The process works for all participants it supplies the end user with the product or service, while paying the contractor for supplying the product or service, and GSA gets a small cut for bringing together the sale. Since GSA has made their program into a one stop shop for all federal agencies the contractor doesn't need to go through the process of changing terms, conditions, or pricing. It is already set in stone once you have a GSA contract. The whole process is a quick way to close a federal sale and stay in compliance with federal rules and regulations. Some advantages of having the GSA contract are:

- Short lead time that provides a streamlined process in getting products or services sold.
- You have the flexibility to renew the contract up to twenty years. The contract is originally awarded in five year increments and can be renewed up to three times which amounts to twenty years.
- Save you a lot of extra time by setting rates and terms early in the game that extra time can be directed to other needs within your business.
- Repeat business to grow in the federal market

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Question #2

Do you want the help in getting a GSA contract?

Answer:

How Is A Schedule Categorized?

Each contract is broken down by special item numbers or what the government calls a SIN. A SIN is a group of numbers that fall under the main contract. For example schedule 58 has the numbers listed in chronological order under it such as 58-1, 58-2, 58-3 and so on. Those numbers are what is known as the special item numbers. Each SIN has a description of duties that are performed under the main contract. This way you will be able locate easier which schedule relates to your specific product or service.

How To Apply For A GSA Schedule

To apply for a GSA Schedule you can go to federal business opportunities at www.fbo.gov and type in the schedule number or solicitation number. The solicitation itself is intimidating for someone who has never attempted the federal market and a lot of information about the contract and the required regulations are within the solicitation. You can refer to the Federal Acquisition Regulations for a better understanding of clauses listed in the solicitation or of course you can contact me for assistance at 800-267-7640.

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Question #3

Do you have a basic understanding of the federal market?

Answer:

GSA Schedule Process

The schedule process is not a single application process. When applying you need to be brief and to the point by keeping your responses to a minimum of 1.5 to two pages. Fancy fonts and designs are not needed, just keep your responses short, sweet, and simple.

The full and complete process is from three to nine months this does not include proposal preparation, composition and so forth. It takes a little while for the agency to complete the review process. There are three phases in the schedule process the first phase involves market research, strategizing, and schedule preparation. The second phase is going to involve you submitting the proposal and making any changes per the agency request, and any negotiations if needed.

You may move on to the final stage after all modifications have been made. The final stage involves you agreeing to the final proposal revision letter.

Requirements

GSA has strict requirements in order to qualify for a contract. I have been asked if there are ways around the contractor requirements and my answer is "NO". The contractor requirements are upheld for every vendor that submits a proposal. The first thing you need to get a GSA contract is get all of your required federal

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

registrations and that includes a DUNS number. For some of you that don't know what a DUNS number is a DUNS Number is a nine digit number that refers to your business or entity.

This number is also used to monitor your company's credit in order to mitigate supplier risk. A fee is not assessed to obtain a DUNS Number so it is free so don't allow them to charge you.

The next thing you need to do is get registered in system for award management or SAM. The government maintains specific databases that validate, store, and disseminate information in support of agency acquisitions. A contractor must obtain and maintain their registration with SAM if you want to continue to do business with the government, so keep your registrations updated. This service is also free and you can register with SAM at <https://www.sam.gov/>.

Hopefully you already have a tax ID number, if not you need to get one. To get one immediately you can call the IRS and register on the phone, or online. This is a free service.

Once you have completed your registrations you can move to the next step of requirements, take a look at what they are:

- Maintain revenue of 25k the previous 2 years.
- Two years of work in the labor category of interest must be performed.
- Products are required to be compliance with the Trade Agreements Act, and in some cases the Buy American Act. (See FAR 52.225)
- All products and services offered must be commercially available.

Once you have made the decision to move forward in your process be sure to obtain the assistance of a qualified, knowledgeable consultant to further your goals and help you to effectively market your product or service.

A GSA contract is a direct federal contract so no more subcontracts for you, be the leader in your field.

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Once you become a GSA contract holder your information is submitted into their data base called GSA E-Library, GSA Advantage, and GSA E-Buy. The E library is meant for research say for example if a federal agency is looking for widgets and they want to see if a company has a GSA contract for widgets then they would go to E-Library and look up widgets and your company name may come up. That contracting officer will be able to click on your particular contract and see what pricing that you offer for widgets. GSA Advantage is created for quick one time direct buy for the federal government.

GSA EBuy is a different type of database. Ebuy is a way for federal agencies to invite contractors to participate in their solicitations, let's go back to widgets. Let's say widgets fall under GSA Schedule Number 58, the contracting officer will go to GSA Ebuy select schedule 58 for widgets. A list of companies under schedule 58 for widgets will come up.

The contracting officer has the capability to select all companies to participate in the solicitation. That way every company that has been selected will be invited to submit a proposal. GSA E buy is looked upon as a perk for the contractor because it limits the competition to only GSA Schedule holders. This can save money and valuable time for both the agency and the contractor and gives your company an edge by building revenue and cutting down on competition.

GSA contracts are not meant for every business so it is your responsibility as a vendor to find out where you fit in in the federal market or at least consult someone who can provide guidance before pursuing the schedules program or any program in the federal market.

Small businesses have the misconception that their business is too small to do business with the federal government and this is not true so get out and get educated. GSA works with all business sizes especially small business so long as you qualify within the agency guidelines so don't count yourself out. Get out and build relationships and get a better understanding of where you fit in.

Even if you are able to obtain a government contract it does not guarantee that you will make lots of money, you have to be able to market your contract. A GSA

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

contract proves that you are a determined vendor that is willing to put forth the effort in helping your business grow.

It is important that you follow through with your market research to determine if a GSA contract works for you. You should also build a marketing strategy after you have made the determination to move forward. This way you have a foundation to build on and you will be able to modify your strategy throughout the contract.

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

GSA Schedules Offered

<u>Schedule No.</u>	<u>Schedule Name</u>	<u>Solicitation</u>
GSA 00CORP	The Consolidated Schedule	FCO-00-CORP-0000C
GSA 03FAC	Facilities Maintenance & Management	6FEC-E6-030292-B
GSA 23 V	Automotive Superstore (formerly VMAS)	FFAH-C2-990235-B
GSA 36	Office, Imaging, & Document Management Solutions	3FNJ-C1-000001-B
GSA 48	Transportation, Delivery & Relocation Solutions	FBGT-GG-050001-B
GSA 51 V	Hardware Superstore	6FEC-E6-060173-B
GSA 56	Buildings & Building Materials/Industrial Services & Supplies	7FCI-F8-030056-B
GSA 58 I	Professional Audio/Video, Telecommunications, & Security Solutions	3FNG-RG-020001-B
VA 65 I B	Pharmaceuticals & Drugs	M5-Q50A-03-R2
VA 65 II A	Medical Equipment & Supplies	797-FSS-99-0025-R6
VA 65 II C	Dental Equipment & Supplies	797-652C-04-0001
VA 65 II F	Patient Mobility Devices (Wheelchairs, Scooters, & Walkers)	797-652F-05-0001-R1
VA 65 V A	X-Ray Equipment and Supplies	797-655A-03-0001
VA 65 VII	Invitro Diagnostics, Reagents, Test Kits & Test Sets	M5-Q52A-04-R1
GSA 66	Scientific Equipment & Services	7FCB-C4-070066-B
VA 66 III	Clinical Analyzers, Laboratory, Cost-Per-Test	797-FSS-03-0001-R1
GSA 67	Photographic Equipment	2FYB-BJ-030001-B
GSA 70	Information Technology Equipment, Software & Services	FCIS-JB-980001-B
GSA 71	Furniture	3QSA-JB-100001-B
GSA 71 II K	Comprehensive Furniture Management Services (CFMS)	3FNC-B3-003001-B
GSA 72	Furnishing & Floor Coverings	3QSA-LV-100002-B
GSA 73	Food Service, Hospitality, Cleaning, Equip & Supplies	7FCM-C4-030073-B
GSA 75	Office Products & Supplies	2FYB-BU-050001-B
GSA 76	Publication Media	2FYA-JD-060001-B
GSA 78	Sports, Promotional, Outdoor, Recreation, Trophies & Signs (SPORTS)	3FNG-MG-060002-B
GSA 81 I B	Shipping, Packaging and Packing Supplies	2FYB-DJ-050008-B
GSA 84	Total Solutions for Law Enforcement, Security, Facilities Management, Fire, Rescue, Clothing, Marine Craft & Emergency/Disaster Response	7FCI-L3-030084-B
GSA 520	Financial & Business Solutions (FABS)	FCXB-F4-020002-B

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

GSA 541	Advertising & Integrated Marketing Solutions (AIMS)	<u>7FCB-H2-070541-B</u>
GSA 599	Travel Services Solutions	<u>QMAD-CY-090001-B</u>
VA <u>621 I</u>	Professional & Allied Healthcare Staffing Services	<u>797-FSS-00-0115-R3</u>
VA <u>621 II</u>	Medical Laboratory Testing & Analysis Services	<u>797-FSS-04-0001</u>
GSA 736	Temporary Administrative & Professional Staffing (TAPS)	<u>7FCM-N6-030736-B</u>
GSA <u>738 II</u>	Language Services	<u>TFTP-GC-017382-B</u>
GSA <u>738 X</u>	Human Resources & EEO Services	<u>2FYA-AR-060004-B</u>
GSA 751	Leasing of Automobiles & Light Trucks	<u>FFAP-P4-000768-B</u>
GSA 871	Professional Engineering Services	<u>TFTP-MC-990871-B</u>
GSA 874	Mission Oriented Business Integrated Services (MOBIS)	<u>TFTP-MC-000874-B</u>
GSA <u>874 V</u>	Logistics Worldwide (LOGWORLD)	<u>TFTP-MB-008745-B</u>
GSA 899	Environmental Services	<u>TFTP-EW-990899-B</u>

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Mission Oriented Business Integrated Services (MOBIS) Solicitation TFTP-MC-000874-B (Refresh #18) Document 8											←.....Don't forget to change this to fit your schedule
Your Company Name											
Revised 5/3/12											←---Date pricelist was issued
SIN(s) PROPOSE D	SERVICE PROPOSE D	MINIMUM EDUCATIO N CERTIFIC ATION LEVEL	MINIMUM YEARS OF EXPERIEN CE	COMMERCIAL PRICE LIST (CPL) OR MARKET PRICES	UNIT OF ISSUE (Hour)	MFC PRICE	DISCOUNT OFFERED TO GSA (off CPL or Market Prices) (%)	PRICE OFFERED TO GSA (excluding IFF)	PRICE OFFERED TO GSA (including IFF)		
											←---adjust
											←---adjust
											←---adjust

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Important Links

Federal Acquisition Regulation <http://www.acquisition.gov/far/>

GSAM <http://www.acquisition.gov/gsam/gsam.html>

Federal Business Opportunities www.fbo.gov

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Contractor Checklist

Step One: Market Research

	Yes	No	Comments
1. GSA Schedule in your commodity			
2. Applicable SIN #(s)_____			

Step Two: Registrations and Certifications

	Yes	No	Comments
1. SAM			
2. DUNS			
3. DUNS #_____			
4. Tax ID#_____			

Step Three: Preliminary Requirements

	Yes	No	N/A
1. Financial Capability -\$25k yearly			
2. 2 Yr. Company Experience			
3. TAA Compliant (applies to products)			
4. Commodity commercially available			

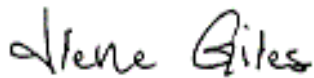
Warning: If you answered “NO” to any of these questions you should **STOP HERE** you cannot proceed. All requirements are mandatory in order to obtain a GSA contract. Contact my office for alternative government contracting options. If your answers are yes please see below.

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

Congratulations! If you have checked yes for all of the previous questions you are well on your way to submitting a proposal to GSA! These are just basic steps to guide and prequalify you for the GSA schedules program.

I want to take you to the next level and get that contract awarded. Schedule an appointment with me now by calling 800-267-7640 x 101

Talk to you soon!



Ilene Giles, CEO
GSA Proposal Maven
Procurement Source Solutions

~Your Guide to GSA Proposal Services~

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

FEDERAL GLOSSARY

72a- GSA's quarterly sales reports that should be processed by the contractor January 1, April 1, July 1, October 1 of each year.

8(a) - A status issued to a business that specifies them as socially or economically disadvantaged.

ACO- Administrative Contracting Officer; government agency personnel that is assigned to administer the contract and ensure the contractor adheres to the terms and conditions of the contract.

ARO- After Receipt of Order; a term used in the capacity of payment of services. Ex: "Net 30 ARO".

Award- Act by which the federal agency approves and signs the contractor's proposal submission.

BPA- Blanket Purchase Agreement; contract between the government and the contractor that provides repetitive purchases.

CAGE- Commercial and Government Entity Code; code assigned to contractors that supply goods and services to the federal government. The code identifies the business at its specific location.

Commodity- A product or service that is marketable and available to everyone.

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

CLIN- Contract Line Item Number; a number that identifies each supply or service within an awarded contract.

CO- Contracting Officer; federal agency personnel that reviews, manages, and awards contracts.

COB- close of business; acronym.

Commercial pricelist- a visible written list of prices for a company's product or services.

Commodity- A product or service that is available for everyone to purchase.

Contract- A written agreement that binds the buyer and supplier for a set amount of time.

Contractor- A company that provides supplies or services to the federal government.

DUNS- Data Universal Numbering System; abbreviated as DUNS or D-U-N-S, is a proprietary system developed and regulated by Dun & Bradstreet that assigns a unique numeric identifier, referred to as a "DUNS number" to a single business entity.

EFT- electronic fund transfer; an electronic system that is used to provide payment.

EPLS- excluded parties list system; a list of suspended or debarred vendors that are unable to do business with the federal government.

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

FAR- federal acquisition regulation; a list of rules that apply and are used for all executive agency acquisitions.

FBO- federal business opportunities; a system that is used to solicit federal acquisitions that are twenty five thousand dollars or more.

FFP- Firm fixed price; a price that is set for a contract and cannot be changed.

FOB- freight on board; term meaning that the buyer pays for the transportation of goods.

FPDS- federal procurement data system; a system that maintains government wide procurement data.

FSS- Federal Supply Schedule; see GSA schedule.

GSA- general services administration; a federal agency that manages and supports purchases government wide.

GSA advantage- One stop shop portal for government agencies.

GSA E library- An online tool invented by GSA that maintains information about GSA contract holders.

GSA Schedule- GSA's terminology for a federal contract.

GSAM- general services administration

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

acquisition manual; GSA's internal rules for managing procurements.

GWAC- government wide acquisition contract; a contract between a commercial IT vendor and the federal government.

IDIQ- indefinite delivery indefinite quantity; acronym used to describe a federal contract that does not specify a set quantity or time period to deliver the commodity.

IFF- industrial Funding Fee; fee that is incorporated into a contractor's offered pricing and is payable to the government.

MAS- Multiple Award Schedule; a federal contract that has more than one vendor supplying products or services.

NAICS- North American Industry Classification; a number assigned to a business that classifies their business establishment.

Open market- term used to define when a product or service is not on contract.

PO- purchase order; document that the federal government issues specifying the purchase of a supply or service.

Proposal- A written document that a contractor submits to the federal agency in response to their advertised solicitation.

PPIRS- Past performance information retrieval system; system that maintains contractors past performance information.

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

PTAC- Procurement Technical Assistance Center; center that provides contractors free government contract assistance.

PWS- performance work statement; a document detailing the needs that are to be performed for a requirement.

RFI- request for information; a federal document that is issued by the government to gather information and locate qualified vendors for a requirement.

RFP- request for proposal; technical document that federal agencies issue to interested vendors to bring structure to the risk and benefits of a requirement.

RFQ- request for quotation; document that federal agencies issue to interested vendors to request pricing for a requirement.

SBA- small business administration; federal agency that provides support to small businesses in the United States.

Schedule- A terminology GSA uses to describe a federal contract.

SDVOSB- service disabled veteran owned small business; a class of a small business set aside that is owned by a disabled veteran.

Solicitation- A document that is issued by the federal government to qualified

Copyright 2012 GSA Proposal Maven, LLC All Rights Reserved

www.gsaproposalmaven.com

1-800-267-7640

Understanding GSA Contracts Workbook

contractors in fulfilling a requirement.

SOW- A document that becomes part of a solicitation that describes in great detail the services that are required by the federal agency.

Vendor- See Contractor

VSC- Vendor Support Center; Resource center supplied by GSA to assist current and potential contract holders with questions of concerns.
suppliers with GSA contract. <https://vsc.gsa.gov/>

WOSB- Woman Owned Small Business; A small business set aside that is 51% owned by a woman owner.