

How to do Business with the Government

First, you need to take an objective view of your firms' products, services, marketing and operational plans plus your strengths, weaknesses and staffing needs.

Second, you need to obtain a North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) number, which the government uses to categorize products and services. Go to <http://www.census.gov/eos/www/naics> and choose as many codes as fit your business.

Third, Federal agencies and Prime government contractors are required to place a significant percentage of their procurements to small businesses. Review the SBA's size standards at <http://www.sba.gov/contracting/contracting-officials/size/index.html>. You will need your NAICS numbers(s), number of employees and annual sales.

Fourth, get a D-U-N-S Number by calling 866-705-5711 (It's FREE).

Fifth, obtain a CAGE Code by downloading a form at <http://www.forms.gov/bgfPortal/docDetails.do?did=11327>.

Sixth, identify National Stock Number (NSN) for all items/services you sell. Call 877-352-2255 to obtain NSN's.

Seventh, register in Centralized Contractor Registration system (CCR). This is the main source used to find prospective suppliers. To register, go to <http://www.ccr.gov>. You will need your Taxpayer Identification Number, DUNS Number, NAICS Code(s), Bank Account information, capability statement, past performance summaries, Web site, email contact. Also, register with ORCA at <http://www.orca.gov>.

Eighth, determine if your principle place of business is located in a Hub zone and 35% of your employees live in the zone. Visit <http://www.sba.gov> to determine if your business qualifies.

Ninth, submit an Online Representations and Certifications (ORCA) at <http://www.orca.gov>.

Next, familiarize yourself with Federal Civilian and DOD contracting regulations that will be specified in any solicitations (FAR) at <http://www.arnet.gov/far>.

Check out Procurement forecasts maintained by OSDDBU at <http://www.firstgov.gov>. This will give you insight into contracting opportunities within the Federal Government.

Explore subcontracting opportunities at SUB-NET <http://www.sba.gov/category/navigation-structure/contracting/contracting-opportunities/sub-contracting>. DOD subcontracting opportunities and prime contracts at <http://www.acq.osd.mil/siadby>.

Marketing

Market your firms' products/services with the Small Business Liaison Office at most agencies and Prime contractors. Visit <http://fbo.gov> to find opportunities valued more than \$25M. You might want to register on the GSA Web site for commonly used products and services. First, contact Open Ratings <http://ppereports.com> and provide them with your D-U-N-S Number, 6-20 customer contacts. Once you Open Ratings evaluation go to <http://gsaeLibrary.gsa.gov> to view schedule contracts, choose a schedule that matches your products and services and submit the solicitation provided.

Also <http://www.fedbizopps.gov/>

Certifications

Most government agencies and Prime contractors reserve a portion of their procurements for certain types of small businesses, such as woman-owned businesses, disabled veterans, small disadvantaged business, Hub Zone, 8A businesses. Visit <http://www.sba.gov/8abd>;, <http://www.sba.gov/hubzone> to determine if your firm qualifies. These sites provide online forms for self certification.

Other Sources

Another free source is Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) <http://www.dla.mil/db/procurement.htm> or, PTAC – San Diego. These centers provide free contracting and marketing assistance to small businesses that want to do business with federal agencies. They also offer training and counseling at minimal or no cost.

Also, register your company with Connectory. Visit <http://www.connectory.com> to provide your complete business profile. This is a source that is used by local companies, local governments searching for small businesses and it's FREE. For more information call 619-258-3670.

Networking

The San Diego Supplier Development Council, <http://www.sdsdc.org>, meets monthly and provides you an opportunity to meet small business representatives from government primes, and government agencies. You can also get a list of member companies from the SDSDC Web site, and small business contacts, phone numbers and email addresses. You can also make a short presentation of your company's capabilities.

Google "Networking Events – San Diego" to review the monthly calendar for various organizations.

Most Chambers have monthly breakfasts, or evening events, which provide opportunities to market your company.

Note: Also review the Federal Procurement Directory section in the SCORE Business Library.