

# Marketing to the Government

You may want to market your small business directly to a government agency or prime contractor. You can do that by learning what agencies or prime contractors need, and then showing them how your business can fulfill that need.

## 10 Tips for Marketing to DoD

1. Follow the money.
2. Arm yourself with information and facts, not emotion.
3. Find your niche. Don't try to be everything to everybody.
4. Target your market and understand your prospective customer's mission, environment, challenges and hot buttons.
5. Meet with Small Business Professionals.
6. Don't provide a standard, canned presentation to potential customers. Research their requirements and understand their challenges.
7. Explain how your service or product has a positive impact on a project's cost, schedule and performance.
8. Identify your differentiators—what separates you from other great performers?
9. Translate the relevancy of your past performance; don't expect a prospective customer to do it for you.
10. When you meet with Program Managers and Contracting Officers, be prepared to discuss a real requirement, not your generic capabilities.

## SAM.gov

The System for Award Management on SAM.gov contains a repository of all federal contracting data for contracts over \$25,000. With this system, you can see which agencies have contracts and with whom they have the contracts, what agencies buy, and which contractors have contracts. Save your searches and receive emails when new opportunities come up within those search parameters. Become an Interested Vendor to follow opportunities.

## USASpending.gov

USASpending.gov tracks government spending through contracts awarded. This searchable database contains information for each federal contract. You can use this information to help identify procurement trends within the government and potential opportunities.

## Small Business Offices

Many federal agencies have what is called an Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization (OSDBU) or an Office of Small Business Programs (OSBP). These offices work to identify opportunities to contract with small businesses.

Each agency releases a procurement forecast that includes contracting opportunities for small and disadvantaged businesses. Once you've reviewed an agency forecast and used systems like SAM.gov and USASpending.gov to identify opportunities at a specific agency, you can contact that agency's small business office. Also, each office hosts training and networking events to help small businesses identify contract opportunities.

## Subcontracting Opportunities

SubNet, ([https://eweb1.sba.gov/subnet/client/dsp\\_Landing.cfm](https://eweb1.sba.gov/subnet/client/dsp_Landing.cfm)), located on the Small Business Administration's website (SBA.gov), is a database of subcontracting opportunities posted by large contractors looking for small businesses to serve as subcontractors.

The SBA maintains a directory of federal government prime contractors with subcontracting plans.

The General Services Administration (GSA) publishes a subcontracting directory for small businesses that are looking for subcontracting opportunities with prime contractors. The directory lists large business prime contractors that are required to establish plans and goals for subcontracting with small businesses.

The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) maintains a similar directory of large prime contractors that small businesses can use to find subcontracting opportunities.

## How To Win Contracts

*You can increase your chance of winning a government contract by researching the federal marketplace and taking advantage of SBA resources.*

### Find Contracts

There are several databases you can use to find federal contracts to bid on. Similarly, there are multiple databases that government agencies use to find contractors.

### **Dynamic Small Business Search**

The Dynamic Small Business Search (DSBS) is a database that government agencies use to find small business contractors for upcoming contracts. Small businesses can also use DSBS to find other small businesses to work with.

The SBA maintains the DSBS database. The information you provide when you register your business in SAM.gov is used to populate DSBS, so you should create a comprehensive business profile.

### **GSA Schedules**

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) is a government agency that connects government buyers with contractors. If you want to sell to the government, securing a contract with GSA is a great way to start. Securing a contract with the GSA is also called, "getting onto the GSA Schedule", which means you've been approved to do business with the government.

If you're interested in getting on the GSA Schedule, you will need to be ready to provide one of the following:

1. CPARS Requirement- Three CPARS (Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting System) reports that represent:
  - Contracts or orders completed within three years of the date you submit your offer

- At least three distinct contracts or orders
- Work similar in scope to the products/services included in the solicitation

**OR**

2. **Past Performance Narrative-** Three to five relevant customer references for work completed within three years of the date you submit your offer.
  - Customer name
  - Customer point of contact (name, phone, email)
  - Brief description of work performed and your role
  - Dollar value of project
  - Period of performance

## **Information for companies selling IT products/services or Innovative Solutions:**

### **IT Companies:**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Information Technology (IT) hardware and Commercial Off-The-Shelf (COTS) software purchases are made through the Army Computer Hardware, Enterprise Software and Solutions ([CHES](#)) program. When procuring IT Services under [CHES](#), consideration must be given to setting aside requirements for small businesses and other small business categories.

All Army personnel are required to utilize CHES for all COTS Purchases

USACE Enterprise-wide IT related services are contracted and administered as a large overarching IT service contract, executed through GSA FEDSIM <https://fedsim.gsa.gov/> Industry can learn more about the program and engagement for potential opportunities through the "Industry" menu. All smaller IT-related contracts not included in the large service contract is executed through USACE, Humphrey's Engineer Center Support Activity (HECSA) <https://www.usace.army.mil/HECSA/HECSA-Small-Business/>

While IT is not a main area of procurements to support our mission, you can also review the top 5 NAICS for each district/center for the past 2 fiscal years and identify any potential opportunities. [Top NAICS for districts FY20-FY21](#)

### **Companies with Innovative Solutions:**

Please research and explore opportunities through Broad Agency Announcements and other avenues for innovative solutions (products/services) that support the USACE mission. A few recommendations are as follows:

- [Information for Inventors](#)
- [Engineering Research and Development Center \(ERDC\)](#)
- [Army Geospatial Center](#)
- [Other Centers of Expertise](#)
- [General Research and Development Information \(includes Unsolicited Proposals and SBIR Information\)](#)

Best of luck to your Small Business, and, as always, we are here to help in any way we can.

Office of Small Business Programs- New Orleans District