

This is, by far, the most important step in your end-user strategy. It is at this stage that you actually create government demand for your company's products and services. Remember, without government demand, your channel strategy will be useless. Listed below, are many resources that you can utilise to create government demand:

### **Customer Calls**

Once you have identified specific contracting opportunities, customer calls are the best method of marketing. No other method is as effective at creating government demand. When making in-person and over-the-phone calls to your government end-users, determine their role in government, assess their needs, identify their current information systems, and then, explain to them how your products or services will help them do their job better, faster, easier, and/or cheaper. If you have marketed effectively, the contract specifications that are set should match the specifications of your products or services and the contracting officer should be familiar with your company.

### **Direct Mail**

Direct mail can be an effective and relatively inexpensive way to reach government end-users and is widely used. The *Amtower Database* (call 301-924-0058 and see "Miscellaneous Assistance" in Appendix A) is just one example of a federal personnel database that can help you accurately target your mail at the appropriate government end-users; avoiding the wasted expense of mail that never reaches its destination. However, direct mail is not an effective marketing tool unless it is followed up by customer calls.

### **Seminars**

The *Canadian Embassy, Washington, DC* (call 202-682-7746) will work with you to host carefully targeted capability seminars, product demonstrations, small meetings, and related marketing promotion at the Embassy. The seminars are an excellent way to create government demand for your company's products and services, establish contacts with government personnel, and meet with potential teaming partners. To benefit most from seminars, be sure to use direct mail, telemarketing, and advertising to promote the event and then, follow-up on leads.

### **Trade Shows**

Trade shows provide an excellent venue to get the attention of government end-users and potential teaming partners. Be sure to bring enough people to the show to both work the exhibit and the show (i.e. network). Also, similar to seminars, companies that benefit the most from trade shows invest in pre-show marketing and intensive follow-up, as on-site sales are rare. The following five trade shows are the most popular and are targeted directly at federal government IT end-users: *Federal Imaging*, *Fed-Unix*, *FITS (Federal Information Technology Showcases)*, *FOSE (Federal Office Systems Exposition)*, and *Tech Net*. To decide which show or shows best meet your needs, read the descriptions and use the point of contact information in the "Trade Shows" section of Appendix A for more information.

### **Trade Press**

*Government Computer News* (call 301-650-2000) and *Federal Computer Week* (call 703-876-5100) are the two most popular publications for federal IT decision-makers. Advertising in these two publications is an effective way to catch the attention of government end-users (see "Publications," Appendix A).

### **User Groups**

User groups in the Washington, DC area have many government members. Generally, they are not high-level decision-makers. Still, an effective marketing strategy must obtain the support of the technical users (*techies*) in the government. Three significant user groups in the DC area are the *Capital PC User Group* (PC users), *Washington Apple Pi* (Apple and Mac users), and the *Washington Area Computer User Group* (Amiga, and PC users). Direct mail or product demonstrations to their members can be used to gain the acceptance and support of government *techies*. The World Wide Web page of the *Melbourne PC User Group* (<http://koala.melbpc.org.au>) lists hundreds of user groups located across the United States. The WWW site provides an excellent way to target American user groups that use your company's products or services.