

Locating Main Points of Contact Within Targeted Agencies

Once you have identified the federal agencies that represent your potential federal customers, you must locate the individuals within those agencies that you will market and sell to. There are two groups of government decision-makers that you should target. They are the government *users* (i.e. Program Managers, Information Resource Managers or IRMs, and end-users) and the government *purchasers* (i.e. Contracting Officers) of your company's products and services. The *users* are responsible for determining when there is a need for a certain product or service. They are also responsible for determining the exact specifications that a purchased product or service should have. The *purchasers* are responsible for managing the actual purchase; ensuring that the government receives products and services of a satisfactory quality at a reasonable price. This usually involves managing an open competition for the government contract, but not always. Special cases, including contracts that are set-aside for 8(a) firms, GSA schedule purchases, and contracts that are sole-sourced (all explained below) do not involve a competitive procurement.

By effectively marketing to government users, you can:

- find out about upcoming contracting opportunities;
- convince the users of their need for your product or service; and
- influence the stated specifications of required products or services to match the specifications of your company's products or services.

By effectively marketing to government purchasers, you can:

- find out about upcoming contracting opportunities;
- locate government users of your company's products or services; and
- ensure that the government purchasers are familiar with your company and the products or services it provides.

There are many resources that can help you locate the government users and purchasers of your company's products or services.

Directories

The *Canadian Embassy, Washington, DC* can provide you with a "Federal IRM Directory" that lists point of contact information for every Information Resource Manager in the U.S. federal government. This is an excellent resource for locating important government personnel that make decisions regarding the procurement of IT. Call (202) 682-7746 (see "Miscellaneous Assistance," Appendix A).

The *U.S. Government Purchasing and Sales Directory*, available from the Government Printing Office for only about US\$24, lists the address and phone number for every purchasing office in the federal government. The directory is organised so that you can easily find all the purchasing agencies that procure a certain good or service (i.e. "Personal Computers," "Workstations," "Software," "Programming"). No other resource is as inexpensive and effective at locating government purchasers. Call (202) 512-1800 (see "Publications," Appendix A).

The *Federal Yellow Book* is a directory that provides point of contact information for the more than 39,000 top personnel in the Executive Branch of the federal government. The directory costs about US\$250 and is very useful for locating key government decision-makers that use and purchase your company's products or services. Call (212) 627-4140 (see "Publications," Appendix A).

Offices of Small and Disadvantaged Business (OSDBUs)

The *Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilisation (OSDBU)* at each federal agency can help you locate government users and purchasers of your company's products and services within their respective agency. As noted