



## Removing Barriers to Bids

**Top 5 Reasons Suppliers Aren't  
Responding to Your Solicitations**



# Today's Speaker



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*Solutions Engineer*

# Today's Game Plan

**Assemble solicitations to ensure the highest probability of successfully reading, understanding, and responding (and still get home at a decent hour!)**

- Why are we here, what is the problem?
- Identify common barriers to entry faced by suppliers (there are more than you think)
- Learn proactive ways to reach out to new prospective vendors
- Learn about new technology that enhances transparency and accessibility to empower your supplier community
- Q&A

## Level Set: why do we do this?

To partner with suppliers (vendors/contractors/private sector) who can meet or exceed the expectations, goals, and objectives set forth by the agency.

# From the Desk of Procurement Leaders

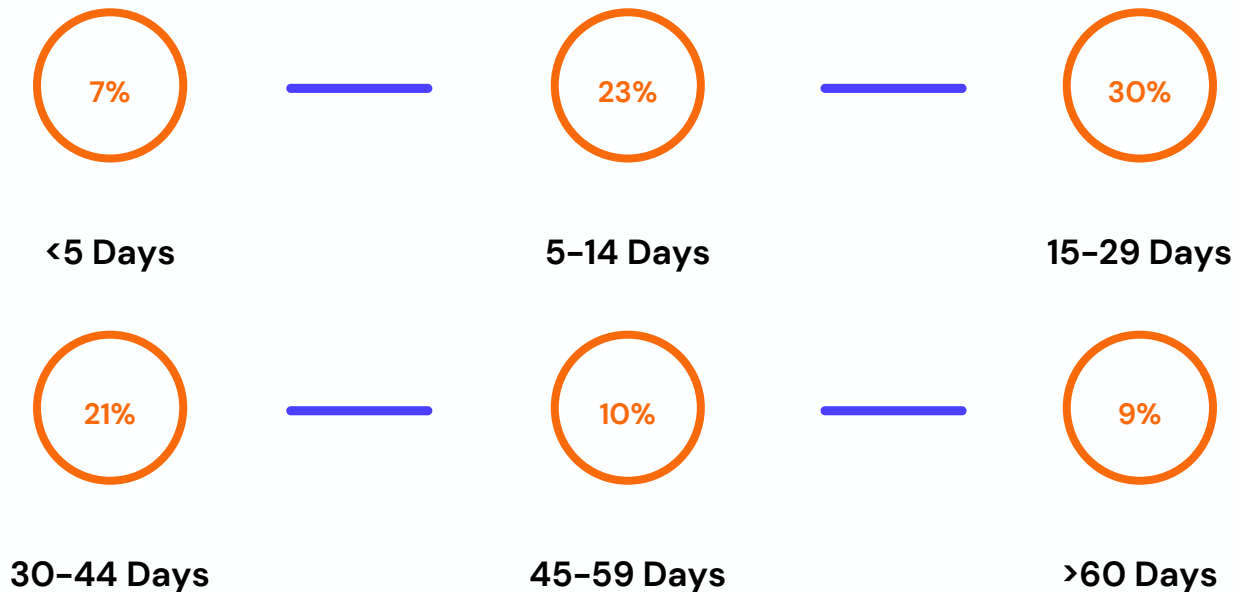
## State of Local Government Survey (2024)

42%

of other departments are only  
**somewhat** or **not at all**  
satisfied with the procurement  
process

(2023: 39%)

# What is the average time from purchase request to released solicitation?



# Roadblock #1

## Pay-to-Play Vendor Accounts

- Free registration and bid alerts from selected agencies
- Cost of premium alters between \$350-\$1,800 per year
- Usually 3-6 bid networks (you can do the math)

### Recommendation:

- Use a network that never charges vendors to get alerts from multiple agencies
- Can see 2-4X increase in supplier engagement
- Can improve equity and accessibility and help meet DBE goals and capture federal funding

### Impact:

- Opens doors to DBE opportunities by removing financial barriers to participation

# Roadblock #2

## Unique Vendor Logins for Every Agency's Bid Portal

- Bid networks require vendors to provide a unique login to access bids
- **Example:** Construction contractor wants to view bids from every jurisdiction within the county. There are 15 jurisdictions. Contractor must create 15 unique logins with 15 unique passwords and monitor email alerts from 15 accounts.
- How many logins and passwords would you want to manage?

### Recommendation:

- Use a bid network with free universal login
- Never charge vendors to receive alerts from more than one government entity

# Roadblock #3



## Support

- Does your bid network offer support to agency users?
- Do they have a dedicated customer service representative, email support, or special number?
- Do vendors get the same level of support?

## Recommendation:

- Use a bid network with support features and services
- Guide vendors through the bidding process with intuitive workflows and automation
- Include error checking
- Offer live chat support

# Roadblock #4

## Hunting & Pecking for Bid Details

- How easily can suppliers view bid details?
- Typical for vendors to have to log-in to see details, download large PDFs, and rifle through dozens of pages to find sections of interest
- Leads to frustration and slower response rates

### Recommendation:

- Take a walk in your supplier's shoes to find pain points
- Make adjustments to your process
- Modernize the process

# Roadblock #5

## Readability

- Complex compliance requirements and excessive documentation
- Unclear specifications and requirements
- Having Proposal Instructions and forms spread out across the document

### Recommendation:

- Keep compliance requirements straightforward and simple
- Limit documentation requirements
- Clearly written specifications and requirements

# Roadblock #?

But wait, there's more...

- Long payment cycles
- Limited communication during bidding
- Low probability of winning

# Closing the Loop: 5 Tangible Takeaways

- Public Vendor Portal
- Simplify Vendor Registration
- Use Category Codes to Target Notifications
- Invite Vendors by Location
- Host “Doing Business With Us” Info Sessions

# The Pitch for Automation

## Solicitation Development & Assembly

# Trouble with Legacy Procurement Systems

## Word Processor Files

Internal teams are piecing together scattered document versions manually just to create a single solicitation.



## Multiple Data Entry

Starting with a word processor instead of a system means you're already falling behind.



## No Room for Collaboration

Without centralized software, teams rely on calls, meetings, document swaps, and binders to stay connected.



# Negative Effects of Underwhelming Tools



## Vendor Engagement & Reporting

Communication gaps and entry hurdles lead to missed opportunities and flawed vendor insights.

## Collaboration & Alignment

Poor communication and misaligned expectations create disjointed, inefficient processes for everyone involved.

## Workforce Challenges & Tools

Overwhelming workloads, outdated tech, error-prone clerical work lead to human resource challenges.

## Intake & Solicitation Building

Lack of automation and errors in scope or versioning slow down procurement and risk noncompliance.

# Practical Uses of AI in Procurement



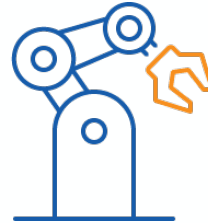
## Voluminous Data Analysis

Engage with AI to review documents for content, analysis and quality control.



## Anticipating Questions

AI adopting the persona of a vendor can provide you with possible barriers to competition and questions it has.



## Scope Development

Engage with AI to review and develop documents based on the structure you specify



## Business Communication

Quickly tell an AI what you want to say and what tone you want it to adopt and it can help you write content on the fly.

# Solicitation Development

Research



Collaborate



Compliance



Assembly



Publishing



Guide

Collect



The industry's intelligent boilerplate automation solution

**LESS**

- ⊘ Hunting for scope terms
- ⊘ Copying/pasting
- ⊘ Training
- ⊘ "He said, she said"
- ⊘ Guesswork + errors
- ⊘ Workflow challenges

**MORE**

- ✓ Accurate scopes
- ✓ Team alignment
- ✓ Audit-trail transparency
- ✓ Time to work strategically
- ✓ Workflow automation
- ✓ Efficient onboarding

# Why does automation *really* matter?



**Before:** Endless hours Googling specs and reworking outdated templates.

**After:** Instantly access 28,000+ ready-to-use scopes from other agencies—no guesswork, no reinvention.

**Before:** Painstaking manual drafting and editing.

**After:** AI delivers a scope draft in 15 seconds, so procurement can review and amend for accuracy.

**Before:** Back-and-forth feedback lost in email threads.

**After:** Collaborate seamlessly with in-platform review and approvals.

**Before:** No clear documentation or transparency.

**After:** Built-in audit trails provide accountability and clarity at every step.

# “My favorite part of my job is....

“

*...typing in bid sheets from contractors into excel.*

*...merging evaluator scores into a single spreadsheet.*

*...Not finding all the places where the bid opening date and time changes.*

*...people pointing fingers at me all day.*

”

# Procurement Maturity Model

01

## Initial

Passes documents between departments

Leverages paper: spreadsheets, scorecards, file folders, and 3-ring binders

Uses manual notifications, tabulations, evaluations, and submissions

Advertises bids using local papers, posters, listings, etc.

02

## Managed

Dedicated procurement professional on staff

Uses a local bid network to connect with suppliers

Posts solicitations to website

Leverages contract management software

03

## Strategically Managed

Uses cooperatives and newer generation bid networks

Has some digital audit trail features

Uses software purpose-built for public procurement

Sends solicitations and receives responses using a dedicated portal

04

## Optimized

Leverages cloud software connected to financial systems

Builds solicitations using automated intelligent boilerplates

Automates full workflows, alerts, and reminders for internal teams and vendors

Offers a transparent, public-access portal for vendors and residents

# Poll #2



Would you like to learn more about how OpenGov Procurement & Contract Management can take your scope builds to the next level?

- **Yes**, I'd like to be contacted about learning more!
- **No**, not at this time.

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