

Chapter 1

GUIDE TO DoD CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES

A Step by Step Approach to the DoD Marketplace

Step 1: Identify your product or service.

It is very important that you first know the product or service you are selling to the DoD. There are different marketing strategies and different customers within the Department for each product or service. It is helpful to know your Federal Supply Classification Code (FSC). Many government product/service listings and future procurements are broken down by [NAICS](#), [FSC](#), or [SIC](#) codes. Alternate websites for coding information are: <http://www.dlis.dla.mil/PDFs/h2.pdf> and http://www.fpdsg.com/downloads/service_product_codes.pdf

Step 2: Obtain your CAGE Code and DUNS Number

If you have not already done so, contact the [Defense Logistics Services Center](#) to request a CAGE Code. You will also need a DUNS Number which is available from [Dun and Bradstreet](#).

Step 3: Identify which DoD organizations buy your product or service.

By searching the [DoD database of contracts awarded](#), you will find out which DoD activities purchased your product or service in the past. This is your primary market for prime contracts within DoD. Marketing within DoD for smaller dollar value requirements, usually products which may be used by any command, is conducted best on a regional basis. Identify your market geographically and then contact each of the small business specialists at the DoD activities within your region. They usually buy most of the products/service required for use at the base/station level. Be prepared to provide them with a brief written summary of your products/services. They may provide you with additional information regarding how to market within their activity. You can identify the small business specialist at these activities by accessing the DoD listing of [Small Business Specialists](#). This lists the small business specialist at each DoD buying activity. You may call these individuals and request information or arrange for an appointment. They can provide helpful information on how to market your product/service within their activity.

Step 4: Can you accept our purchase card?

More and more of DoD's smaller dollar requirements are being purchased via [government purchase cards \(GPC\)](#). If you can accept a purchase card, please let your DoD customers know. If you can't you may want to investigate this option. Some activities may provide you with a listing of the purchase card holders to whom you can directly market your products or services.

Step 5: Research your customer.

As with any customer it is best to do some research about the activity before calling them. Many DoD activities maintain their own web sites. Links to most DoD related web-sites are available through [DefenseLink](#). This information may be helpful in identifying the primary mission of that command. You may also want to check the [Federal Business Opportunities \(FedBizOpps\)](#) to identify purchases that activity has made in the past or procurement it is currently advertising.

Step 6: Investigate Electronic Commerce.

We in DoD are moving more and more toward Electronic Commerce. Regardless of your product or service we recommend that you view the [EC/EDI information website](#) for information on how to do business electronically in the paperless DoD environment. While you are visiting their website, be sure to register in the [Centralized Contractor Registration system](#), if you have not already done so.

Step 7: Seek additional assistance in the DoD marketplace.

We realize that doing business with an organization as large as DoD can be daunting. Our [Procurement Technical Assistance Centers](#) can be another important resource. These Centers are located in most states and partially funded by DoD to provide small business concerns information on how to do business with the Department of Defense. They provide in depth counseling on marketing, financial and contracting issues to small business concerns at minimal or no cost.

Step 8: Register on PRONET and investigate other Small Business Administration (SBA) resources.

The [SBA](#) managed [PRONET](#) has been integrated into the [Centralized Contractor Registration system](#). This is a database of small businesses that is available to government contracting personnel as well as large DoD prime contractors as a resource for seeking potential small business sources. In addition the SBA offers assistance through their [Small Business Development Centers](#), [Service Corps of Retired Executives](#), and [regional SBA offices](#) which can provide information on loan programs, government procurements, and the Section 8(a) program.

Don't forget to check out the [SBA's Office of Women's Business Ownership](#), as well as the [Online Women's Business Center](#). These are special resources developed specifically to meet the needs of WOSB concerns.

Step 9: Look into subcontracting opportunities.

Regardless of your product or service it is important that you not neglect our very large secondary market. [Subcontracting Opportunities with DoD Prime Contractors](#) and [DOD Prime Contractors](#) list all of our major DoD prime contractors by state and provides a point of contact (Small Business Liaison Officer) within each firm. These firms negotiate goals with the DoD for subcontracting to women-owned small business concerns. This

is a multi-billion dollar market. We encourage you to investigate potential opportunities with our large DoD prime contractors, some of which have web-sites. Many of DoD's requirements may be beyond the scope of a single small business. We encourage our prime contractors to subcontract and team with small business concerns.

Step 10: Investigate GSA schedule contracts

As we downsize our acquisition workforce within DoD, more and more of our products/services are being purchased from [General Services Administration](#) (GSA) schedules. If you are interested in obtaining information about [GSA schedules](#), please contact:

General Services Administration
FSS Schedule Information Center (FM)
Washington, D.C. 20406
(703)305-6477

Step 11: Look into other DoD programs.

In addition to the foregoing resources, there are several DoD programs which may be of interest to you. Information on all of these programs is available via our SADBUs website:

- [Small Business Innovation Research Program](#)
- [DoD Mentor-Protégé Program](#)

Step 12: Familiarize yourself with DoD contracting procedures.

It is important that you are familiar with DoD contracting procedures and regulations. The [Defense Federal Acquisition Regulations Supplement](#) (DFARS) and [Federal Acquisition Regulations](#) (FAR) are available online.

Step 13: Market your firm well.

After you have identified your customers, researched their requirements, and familiarized yourself with DoD procurement regulations and strategies, it is time to market your product or service directly. Present your capabilities clearly and cogently to the DoD activities and prime contractors to whom you are marketing. Realize that, like you, their time is valuable and if the match is a good one, you can provide them with a cost-effective, quality solution to their requirements.

Source: http://www.usamraa.army.mil/pages/business/Procurement_resource_pro.htm