

So, You Want to do Business with the Government?

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What is APEX Accelerators

- Department of Defense (DoD)–funded program
- Free government contracting assistance
- One-on-one counseling and training
- Support from registration through contract award

Session Objectives

- What it really means to “do business with the government”
- The different levels of government contracting
- How to decide which level fits your business best
- Basics of market research
- How to start registration and positioning
- What APEX can help you with next

Is Government Contracting Right for Your Business?

- Are you prepared for longer sales cycles?
- Can you meet compliance and documentation requirements?
- Are your prices competitive and defensible?
- Can you deliver consistently and on time?
- • Are you looking for stable, recurring customers?
- The government is stable money, not fast money!

Understanding the Government Marketplace

- Government is not just one customer
- Federal government
- State of Ohio
- Cities, counties, and local agencies
- Transit authorities
- Airports and port authorities
- Schools, universities, hospitals

Federal Government Contracting (High-Level)

- Who buys at the federal level?
 - Department of Defense
 - GSA and civilian agencies
 - VA, DHS, DOT, USDA, EPA, etc.
 - Purchases range from toiletries and office supplies to advanced machining
- Contracts can be
 - Small purchases
 - Long term IDIQ's
 - Set aside opportunities

State of Ohio Contracting (OhioBuys)

- How the state of Ohio buys goods and services
 - Centralized procurement system managed by Ohio Department of Admin. Services (DAS)
 - All state solicitations are posted on OhioBuys
- Vendors must register in OhioBuys to
 - Submit Bids
 - Receive contract awards
- What do they buy?
 - Professional services
 - IT and Technology
 - Construction and trades
 - Supplies and Equipment

Local Government (Columbus & Central Ohio)

- Local governments buy every day
 - City of Columbus
 - Franklin County
 - Surrounding cities and townships
 - Local school districts or agencies (zoo, hospitals)
- What do they buy?
 - Construction and Maintenance
 - Professional Services
 - IT Support
 - Specialized trades
 - Janitorial
- Easier entry than federal, but less money

Transit Authorities in Central Ohio

- Transit agencies are major buyers
 - Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA)
 - Regional transit authorities across Ohio
 - Funded by federal, state, and local dollars
- What do they Buy?
 - Vehicles and Parts
 - Construction, facility maintenance
 - IT systems
 - Professional and operational services

Airports & Port Authorities

- Airports operate like independent governments
 - John Glenn Columbus International Airport (CMH)
 - Rickenbacker International Airport
- What do they buy?
 - Construction and engineering
 - Maintenance and facilities
 - Security and IT
 - Concessions and services

Comparing the Levels of Government

- Federal
 - Larger contracts
 - More compliance and regulations
 - Longer timelines (generally)
- State & Local
 - Faster entry
 - Smaller contracts
 - Easier relationships
- Transit & Airports
 - Specialized Needs
 - Long term vendor relationships
 - Strong local presence valued

Market Research Basics

- What to look for
 - Your NAICS codes
 - Product Service Codes (PSC)
 - Past Contract awards
 - Current Active solicitations
 - Incumbent vendors
 - Buying Agencies and locations

Demo-Federal Market Research

Market Research at the State & Local Level

- How it differs from federal
 - No single portal/database
 - Each state or city has it's own system
 - More Relationship driven
 - Past contract information isn't always available

Demo-Ohio & Columbus Procurement

Registration Basics Across All Levels

- Why registration matters
 - Required to bid or receive payments
 - Used to verify eligibility
 - Controls how buyers find you
 - Should be done before an opportunity appears
 - Waiting period for registrations to go through

Federal Registration Overview

- [Sam.gov](https://sam.gov) (mandatory)
- Entity information & Banking Information
- Establish your NAICS codes
- Representations and Certifications
- Time to complete: 30 minutes- 1 hour
- Waiting period 3-5 business days
 - (Accuracy is crucial! Errors prolong the process)

Ohio & Local Registration

- [OhioBuys](#)
 - Tax and Business Information
 - Uses OHID (May have one due to tax purposes already)
- [City of Columbus Procurement Portal](#)
- [Franklin County Bid Board](#)
- [COTA Procurement Portal](#)
- [CMH Procurement](#)
- [Ohio State University Purchasing](#)
- [Ohio Health Hospitals Procurement](#)

Positioning Your Business to Bid

- Registration alone is not enough
- How to set yourself apart from the competitors:
 - Clear and concise capability statement
 - Relevant NAICS and PSC codes
 - Competitive pricing strategy
 - Understanding solicitations and how to read them
 - Past performance (commercial at the beginning)

Common Mistakes New Vendors Make

- Registering everywhere with no strategy
 - (While important! Need direction)
- Too many NAICS codes
- Bidding too early or blindly
- Ignoring subcontracting opportunities
 - (Subcontracting counts as past performance)
- Not asking questions (APEX or contracting officers)

Demo-Vendor Positioning Capability Statements

How APEX Accelerators Help

- Market research assistance
- Registration guidance
- Bid review and strategy
- Subcontracting connections
- One on One counseling
- Did I mention it's free?

Key Takeaways

- Decide which level of government fits your business
 - (Can always change later, or you can be involved in all levels)
- Identify 2-3 Target Agencies
- Begin registrations
- Reach out to your local [APEX Accelerator](#)

Questions?

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