

# Better-Faster-Cheaper –Green

## Contractor Marketing Strategies and Tactics to Reach Government Decision Makers

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# Learning Objectives-Three P's

## **Plan:** Market Research

- Identifying targets

## **Position:** How to get noticed – positively!

- Relationship-based market

## **Pursue:**

- Layers of decision-makers
- Mitigating Risk
- Tools required to get noticed
- Mistakes to avoid

*Win!*



# Insider's View: What Works

## What Really Works:

- Market Research, Business & Financial Plan
- Network, Communication, & Relationships
- Past Performance & Continuous Marketing
- Being Prepared, Patient, & Persistent

## Small Businesses:

- Create Jobs
- Are Leaders of Innovations & Technology
- Increase Competition – Decrease Costs

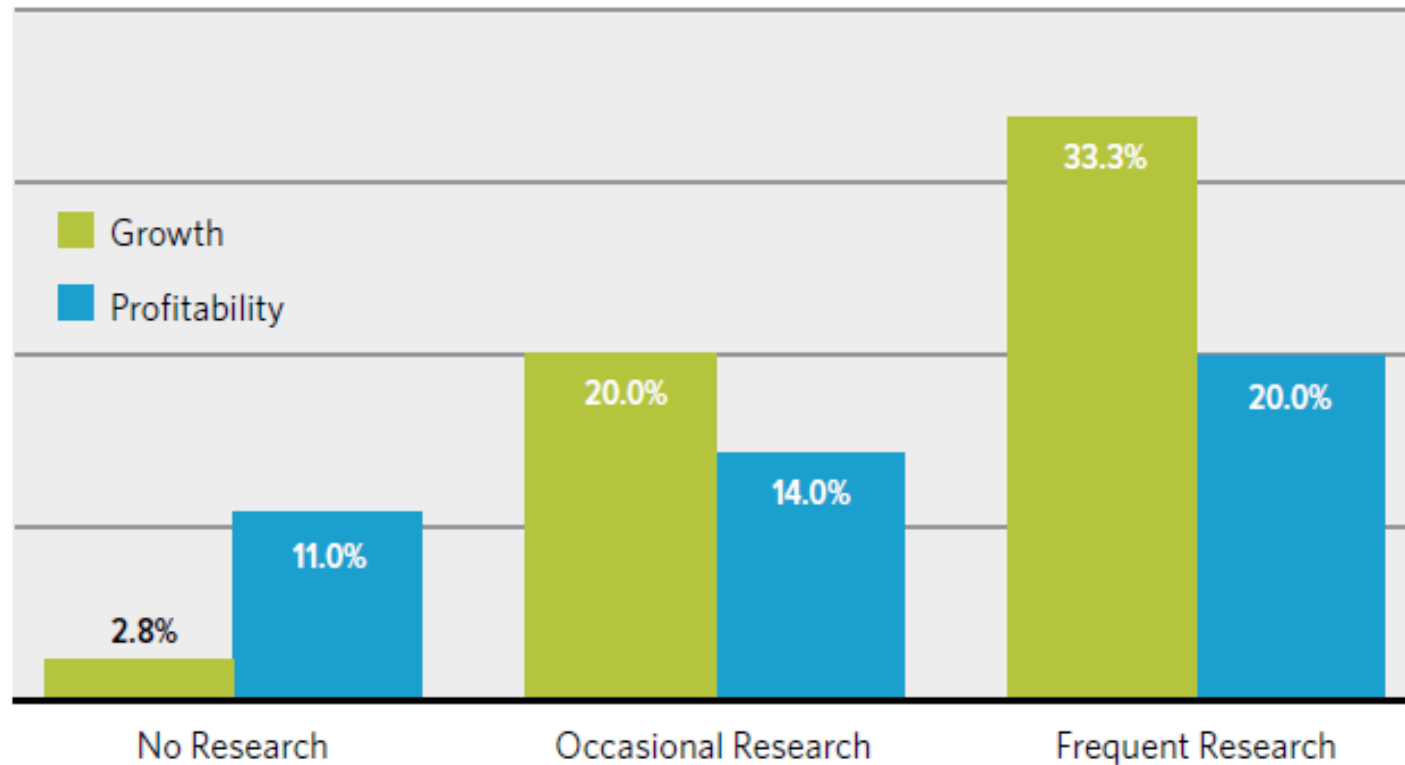
## Large Businesses:

- Important Partners of the Equation



# The Impact of Customer- Based Research

**Figure 1.1.** The Impact of Research on Firm Growth and Profitability



Source: *"Inside the Buyers Brain"*, Gloria Larkin President, TargetGov - Published by Hinge Research Institute



# Market Research

- Past: FPDS.gov at fpds.gov



- Present: FedBizOpps fbo.gov



- Future: Agency Forecasts  
[acquisition.gov/comp/procurement\\_forecasts](http://acquisition.gov/comp/procurement_forecasts)



- Competition: USASpending.gov
  - Primes: USASpending.gov
  - Teaming: Small Business Dynamic Search [dsbs.sba.gov](http://dsbs.sba.gov)



# Research Resources to Identify Targets

- o Agency Forecasts
- o NAICS Code Searches (Identify Top Agency Targets)
  - o Federal Procurement Data System (<https://www.fpds.gov>)
- o Identify Appropriate Programs
  - o Agency Strategic Plan
  - o Exhibit 300's
  - o OMB Watch list
- o Research Tools
  - o Subscription based
    - o GovWin, Bgov, Onvia, Set-Aside Alert, etc.

# Good Research Yields Substantive Conversation!





# Marketing Hot Buttons

- o Does contractor have Agency **Past Performance**?
- o Does contractor have the **proven Capacity**?
- o Does contractor have **Teaming Partners** (with Agency Past Performance)?
- o Does contractor have **Simplified Acquisition** access?
- o Does contractor have **Set-Asides** that assist the Agency?



# Identify Opportunities

## **Under \$25K** (not publically advertised):

- o Market to each agency
- o Market to each base
- o Market to each office, decision makers!

## **Over \$25K** (publically advertised):

- o FedBizOpps.gov



- o Sources Sought Notices (1,100+ in last 30 days!)
- o FedConnect.net
- o Army Single Face to Industry and other agency- specific sites

# Key to Great Relationships

- o Consider the specific audience with every communication
- o Government contacts have different roles, concerns, areas of responsibility
- o Market to the audience's agenda—not your own



# How to Get Noticed

- o Be professional
  - o Ex: email, web site, dress the part
- o Know specific niche!
- o Do not try to be all things
- o Lead with expertise
- o Prove it!
- o Address **capacity**
- o **Mitigate risk**





# Key Marketing Terms

## Existing Capacity vs. Potential Capacity



ASSISTANCE FOR SMALL BUSINESS

**Strategies for Response to  
Sources Sought Notices**

*The concept of "**potential capability**" greatly improves a Small Business' chances of being found "**capable**," so Small Businesses need to take full advantage of this development.*

- (1) The contractor's **ability to manage**, as prime contractor, the types and magnitude of tasking in the Performance Work Statement (PWS); and
- (2) The contractor's **technical ability**, or potential approach to achieving technical ability, to perform at least 50% of the cost of the contract/task order incurred for personnel with its own employees; and
- (3) The contractor's **capacity**, or potential approach to achieving capacity, to conduct the requirements of the PWS. For the purposes of this Capability Statement, **capacity** shall refer to matters such as the magnitude of the tasking, the amount of equipment or facilities involved, and the size of the staff needed.

# Where to Get Noticed

- o Person to person
  - o Conferences
  - o Vendor outreach sessions
  - o Agency and base events
  - o Matchmaking
  - o Associations, social events
- o Referral
  - o From decision-makers
- o Virtual
  - o Email, blog, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+





# Identifying The Real Decision Makers

- o Government Contracting: Strict Process as per the Federal Acquisition Regulations
- o NOT Top-Down
- o Three layers of decision makers
- o Size of purchase determines decision makers
- o Each layer has different purpose and responsibility



# Three Layers of Decision Makers

- o **Small Business Representatives (OSDBU, SBR, OSBP)**

- o **Purpose:** Help agency meet SB Goals: 23%
- o Agency web site: search for OSDBU or OSBP

- o **Contracting Officers (CO or KO)**

- o **Purpose:** Make legal purchase, provide government with appropriate services and products; total responsibility
- o [www.FedBizOpps.gov](http://www.FedBizOpps.gov) or other opportunity posting site

- o **Program managers (PM), technical representatives**

- o **Purpose:** Technical expertise, end-users, can make tech or vendor recommendations
- o The most difficult to locate, use OSDBU & CO to refer you, a relationship is required!

# Size Matters to Decision Makers

- o Under \$3,000 per transaction
  - o Immediate credit card sale (anyone)
- o Under \$25,000 per transaction
  - o 3 bids, same day decision (CO)
- o Between \$25,000 and \$150,000
  - o Advertised, best value (CO & PM)
- o Over \$150,000
  - o Competitive bid, 3-6+ months (CO & PM, entire team)

# Targeted Marketing to Specific People

Give each contact what they need to help!





# Targeted-Message-Tool

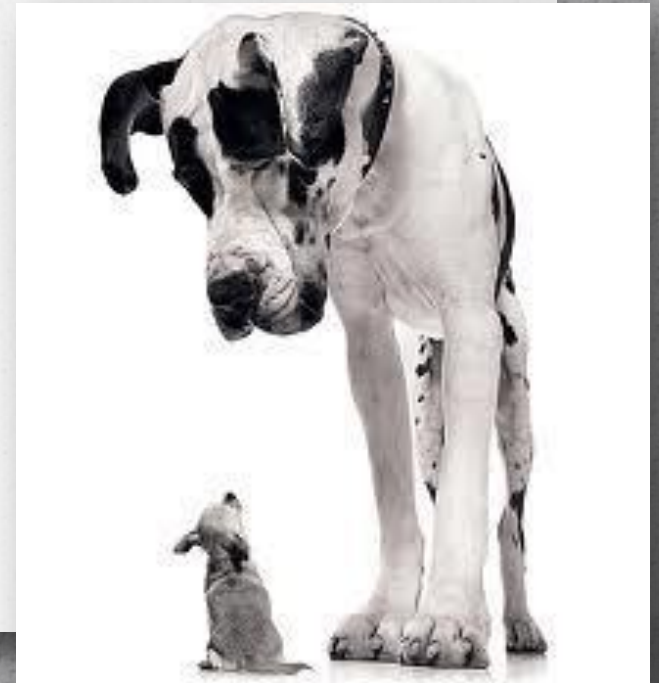
Target	Message	Tool
OSDBU	We're a Credible Vendor	Cap Statement
Contracting Officer	We're a Credible Bidder	Entry Email Cap Statement PowerPoint
Program Manager	We're Experts	Entry Email PowerPoint Case Study
End User	We Can Help	Phone Call – Followed By: Cap Statement (copies) Case Study

# Position

o You as the **Prime Contractor**

o •You as the **Subcontractor**

o •You as the **Teaming Partner**



# Marketing that Mitigates Risk

- o Create a strong niche statement
- o Practice a 20 second matchmaking pitch
- o Use a powerful Capability Statement
- o Past performance is king!
- o Financial stability
- o Capacity
- o Partners
- o Craft strong RFP responses
- o Debriefing-- win or lose



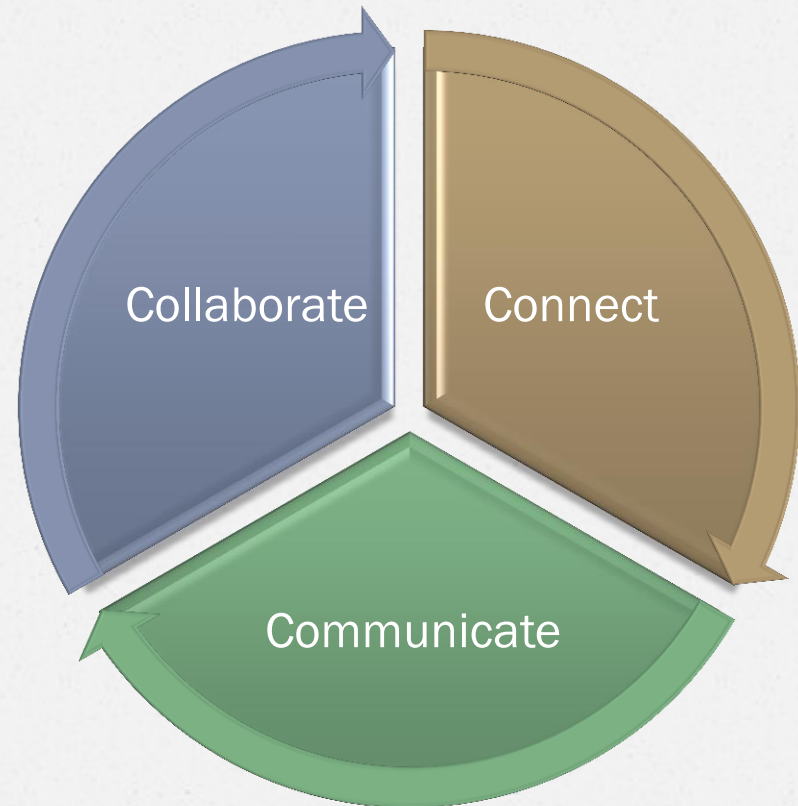


# Positioning Tools Required

- o **Opportunity identifier:** Past, present, future
- o 1 page **Capability Statement** to identify:
  - o Core Competencies
  - o Past Performance
  - o Differentiators
  - o Company Data
- o **Bid-no-bid process**
- o Quickly identify the **decision-maker**, her/his responsibility & level of interest in the business
- o **Contract vehicle**
- o **CRM system**

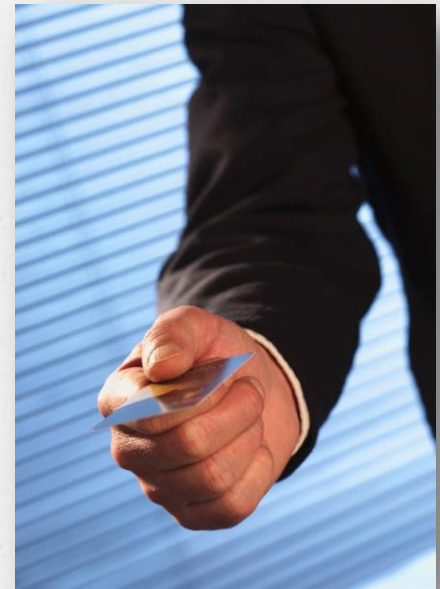
# Marketing Tools to Reach Decision Makers

- o Government registrations
  - o SAM, SBDS, Agencies
- o Business card
- o Matchmaking pitch
- o Editable Capability Statement
- o Government-focused web site
- o Contract vehicle
- o White papers
- o Case studies
- o Public relations
- o CRM system
- o Advertising\*



## Business Card

- Use both sides
- Not coated paper
- Company Name, Name, Title
- All contact information: phones, address
- What Does Contractor do? Is it clear?
- DUNs
- NAICS
- Certifications
- Contract vehicles





# Matchmaking Pitch

- o Develop a focused “Matchmaking Pitch” to communicate *specific* offerings *matching their current needs*
- o No company does “Everything”
- o An example of “Reverse Pyramid” Matchmaking Pitch:
  - o We provide \_\_\_\_\_
  - o Our core competencies are \_\_\_\_\_
  - o We are the absolute best at \_\_\_\_\_
  - o We are different because \_\_\_\_\_
  - o We can help your agency/office by \_\_\_\_\_

# Entry Email

- o Get to the point! Start in Subject line, use the company name!
- o Compelling Reason
  - o Safety
  - o Financial Savings
  - o Regulatory Compliance . . . Etc.
- o Clear Request (every communication – ask something)
- o Open door for future contact (See Tip)

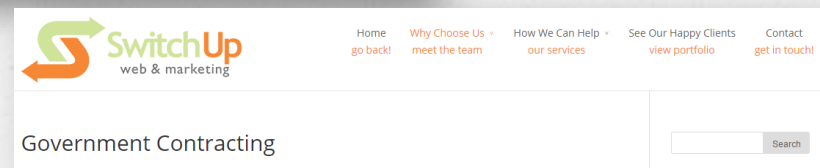
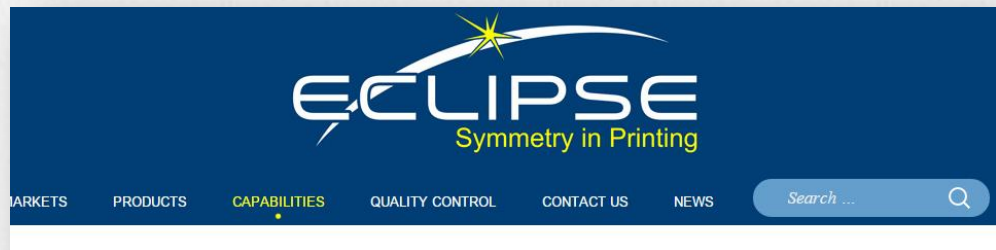
## TargetGov Email Tips

- o Never say “introduce”
- o Add this line to every email:  
“In the event you don’t have an opportunity to respond sooner, I will contact you to follow-up on Thursday, (Date), at 9:30 a.m. (Time)”
- o Always include personal contact info and credentials in every communication, especially replies.



# Web Site

- Is it clear that the company supports the government market?
- *Action Step:* review and update



# Website Do's and Don'ts

## **DO:**

- o Have a “Government” tab or button
- o Use government verbiage, terminology
- o Include case studies
- o Be as specific as possible regarding customer benefits
- o Include metrics
- o Include differentiators

## **Don't:**

- o Use music or videos
- o Use industry jargon
- o Hide personal contact info!

# Government and Social Media

Health and Human Services:



**Facebook**

View directory of official HHS Facebook accounts



**Twitter**

View directory of official HHS Twitter accounts

Army:



GSA:





# Social Media Marketing

- o Tailor it to target agencies, primes, teaming partners
- o Commit to keeping it active
- o Blogs
- o LinkedIn – professional, groups, never sell!
- o Twitter – keep the conversation going
- o Facebook – highlight employees, community involvement, special projects
- o Pinterest – graphics
- o News Feeds – hot off the presses!

# White Papers

- o To state an organization's policy, position, or philosophy about a subject;
- o To present a not-too-detailed technical explanation of an architecture, framework, or product technology; or
- o To pose a technology-oriented problem or question and then answer that question with information or a proposed solution
- o The terms *policy paper* or *position paper*, *technology paper* or *product paper*, and *issue paper* are often used in place of *white paper*

# News Releases

- o Not a typical press release sent to the papers
- o It IS targeted to government contacts
- o It IS real news
- o It is sent via email to specific people and posted online where it can go viral
- o Topics: contract wins, completions, new hires, awards, new services or products, certifications, branded services or products



# Marketing Should Clearly Indicate: How the Government Buys

- o Purchase Vehicles
- o *Make it easy to do business with the contractor!*
- o Credit Card: P-card, purchase card
- o GSA Schedule
- o GWACs
- o BPA
- o IDIQ
- o HUBZone, 8(a), SDVOB Certifications

# Best Tool: Capability Statements

- o **Door-opener**, used to begin relationship-building process
  - o Obtain decision-maker meeting
  - o Tool to use during meetings
- o Requested as part of a **Sources Sought** or RFI response
- o **Required in a RFP response**

# Position: Five Key Elements Needed to Get Noticed

1. Call it a Capability Statement
2. Core Competencies
3. Past Performance
4. Differentiators
5. Company Data



# Audiences: Capability Statement

## Targets:

- o Agency
- o Prime Contractor
- o Teaming Partner
- o Joint Venture
- o To obtain decision-maker meetings!

# Best Uses of the Capability Statement

- o Door opener
- o Relationship building
- o Email introduction
- o Procurement conferences
  - o Leave behind (Paper)
  - o Follow-up (PDF)
- o Industry days
- o Services update
- o In-person briefings

# PowerPoint Presentations

- o Printed
- o Who We Are/Contact info
- o What We Do
- o Where We've Done It
- o Key Specialized Services
- o How We Can Help
- o Why Us? Discussion
- o Rule of Thumb: 1 slide/5min
  - o *6 slides = 30 min briefing!*





# Sources and Citations

TargetGov, Helping You See What the Government Buys

Gloria Larkin

President, TargetGov

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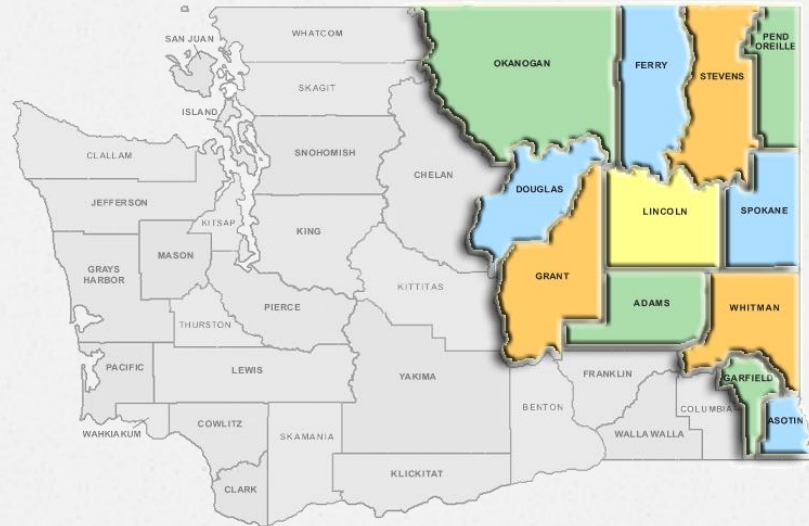
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