

How Healthy is Your GSA Schedule Contract?

## 12 TIPS FOR BOOSTING YOUR GSA SUCCESS RATE

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Owning a GSA Schedule contract is a competitive advantage for any business, large or small, but it's only a foot in the door to federal contracting. You must have a post-award action plan for federal customer acquisition, contract management, GSA audits and contract renewals to minimize compliance hassles and maintain a healthy revenue stream. It is important to improve your sales and marketing techniques to federal clients and focus on planning ahead for the renewal process. Are you outselling your numerous competitors, or does your contract need a vitality boost?

GSA procurement accounts for the majority of all federal spending on commercial-off-the-shelf products and services - that's about \$50 billion a year. So what can you do, starting today, to improve the profitability of your MAS contact and get a bigger piece of the pie? Focus on three critical Schedule components that every GSA contractor should be continuously maintaining and optimizing:

- Contract Management
- Federal Sales & Marketing Strategy
- Schedule Contract Renewal

Keep up with your responsibilities to federal agencies and maintain FAR compliance, all while choosing which federal buyers to focus your sales efforts. Here are 12 tips for boosting your federal sales and your bottom line.

# CONTRACT MANAGEMENT TIPS

Without a solid foundation for your GSA Schedule contract you may find yourself in some undesirable situations, such as facing a negative audit right before your 1st year renewal or receiving complaints from agencies because you are not honoring the outlined terms of your contract. Murphy's Law applies to all federal acquisition vehicles, so be sure to prepare accordingly.

## Tips for Managing Your GSA Schedule Contract

- **Keep contracts up-to-date.** At least twice during each five-year term of your schedule, you will be visited by a GSA Industrial Operations Analyst (IOA) to make sure that your contracts are up-to-date and compliant. This requires following the requirements of both the FAR and the terms and conditions of your schedule contract and all of the orders it supports.
- **Have an experienced, knowledgeable GSA expert supporting your schedule.** In your zeal to keep your customers happy, sometimes it's easy to convince ourselves that our contract allows something other than what it says. Sometimes it just takes another person who can check over the rules to ensure that you are in compliance with the expectations of government agencies and federal regulations. True GSA experts are hard to find, and expensive to keep in-house full-time, so use highly-seasoned outside experts to guide you, as needed, at a fraction of the cost.
- **Work on your public relations.** Public relations with federal government clients has to be approached differently than when dealing with private enterprise. By attending the right trade shows and knowing the proper channels to go through, such as who to contact, you can increase your understanding of federal agencies and their needs.
- **Be aware of changes to your commercial sales practices and contract modifications.** When there are price changes or other changes in your procedures, it is important to make sure that your schedule reflects those changes. You may need to file administrative, technical or price modifications, and only after they are approved, upload your new price lists to keep your changing commercial pricing and practices, GSA pricing, contract and regulations continuously harmonized.



## FEDERAL SALES & MARKETING TIPS

Another way to guard the health of your GSA contracts is to concentrate on the most effective federal sales and marketing strategies available to you. Your federal sales and marketing strategies will be different than the methods you usually employ for your commercial customer base.

When you are developing relationships with federal agencies, precision is the key. When dealing with federal agencies, your success depends upon your ability to speak the same language and offer your products and services in a way that cuts through the red tape and is easy to understand.

### Tips for Your Federal Sales & Marketing Strategies

- **Evaluate your government sales process.** By analyzing what you do in relation to the standards upheld by federal agencies, you will be able to increase your chances of gaining and keeping federal government customers.
- **Develop a specific plan for dealing with your federal government clientele.** Your GSA contract should be considered separate and apart from private clients, since the rules of doing business with them are also different. Being able to meet your federal customers on the same level helps you to bring more to the table that will appeal to them and increase your chances of success.
- **Educate your sales and marketing team** about how to deal with government agencies, identifying the best people to contact and the resources they will need to successfully make the sale.
- **Have a strategy for capture management and revenue growth.** Develop a plan for increasing your customer base by acquiring new customers and maintaining key relationships with agency buyers and decision makers.
- **Know the terminology and verbiage used by the federal government.** If you can speak the same language as your client, you are more likely to earn their trust and enjoy a mutually beneficial long-term business relationship. Learn the language federal agencies use when negotiating contracts, and you increase your ability to win contracts.



# GSA SCHEDULE CONTRACT RENEWAL TIPS

Renewing your GSA Schedule contract, a task federal contractors face every 5 years, can either be a painful process or a fairly straightforward one, depending upon your experience and who you have in your corner. Remember that GSA Schedule contract renewals involve abiding by a track record of compliance, which auditors and contracting officers will look for to determine if your business is suitable to continue as GSA schedule contractor.

## Tips for Renewing Your GSA Schedule Contract

- **Know who your internal contact person is at GSA.** Watch for an email alerting you your renewal is coming up. If you do not receive this communication at least six months before your scheduled renewal date, you will need to contact your contracting officer immediately.
- **Make sure all contract and FAR procedures are followed.** All activity contract activity is properly identified, monitored and documented. The GSA Schedule contract renewal process involves scrutiny of your past transactions, compliance and commercial sales practices, so make sure any discrepancies are properly documented.
- **Embrace change.** Keep in mind that, while it is critical to follow the rules and to be compliant with federal regulations, it is equally important to remain open and flexible to change so that you can seize the opportunities when they present themselves. There are endless requirements, but that does not mean that you cannot be creative in your approach.



# About EZGSA - Gateway to Government Sales and Your Success

## Fast Facts

- Based in Bethesda, MD, inside the Beltway, just up the road from GSA headquarters.
- 20+ years of experience
- Rated [A+ by the BBB](#)
- Over [1600 GSA Schedule Awards](#)

Since 1992, EZGSA has helped thousands of businesses make their products and services more accessible to government buyers and the federal marketplace via GSA Schedule contracts. We can assist you with your GSA Schedule proposal, aid you in improving your GSA contract pricing strategy, ensure you are compliant with federal and agency guidelines, help you with GSA Schedule contract renewal, and assist you in your federal customer acquisition and marketing efforts.

It is possible to improve your relations in the federal marketplace if you clearly outline your strategy. This requires extensive planning, which often is best served in the capacity of award-winning consultancy. EZGSA has 20+ years of experience in GSA contract management as well as federal sales and marketing strategies. We are here to help you win and improve your GSA contracts, ensure that you are in compliance with federal guidelines, help you with your contract renewals, and assist in your customer acquisition and marketing efforts, all so that you can follow your passion and grow your business -- without government distraction or drama.

Together, we can help you construct a plan that not only follows the letter of the law when it comes to federal contracts, but also lays the groundwork for building a successful business around serving some of the most lucrative clientele in the global marketplace -- federal agencies. We make the process of doing business with the government easier and provide a one-on-one consultation when you need it most -- one step ahead of your competitor. We are in the business of helping your business grow and prosper as you serve your federal clients and cut through the red tape to success. Contact us today.

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