Please note: The information provided reflects communications the IT Schedule Center held with industry. In addition to vetting questions and answers, the IT Schedule Center is diligent in providing content that does not conflict or supersede established guidance, policy, or regulations prescribed in Federal statutes, the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), or GSAM. When such ambiguity does occur, the existing Federal statutes, the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), or GSAM prevails.

Contract Administration

1. Your mission is to deliver best value. So you do not use Low Price Technically Acceptable when evaluating proposals?

   When IT Schedule 70 refers to "best value", we are referring to delivering best value to our customers, which is broader and does not refer to solely how the proposals are evaluated.

   Our solicitation contains evaluation criteria which includes, but is certainly not limited to pricing. From a Schedule program perspective, we do not operate on a low price technically acceptable basis. We do look at best value given the criteria outlined in the solicitation.

   At the discretion of the ordering activity, task orders may be evaluated using the Low Price Technically Acceptable approach.

2. I have been told by several contracting officials that "Services" are not allowed to be subcontract[ed]. That seems in direct conflict to the direction given in a recent Contractor Teaming presentation where subcontracting services was encouraged. Please advise.

   Schedule Contractors are permitted to subcontract for services. The only restriction is that we do not allow Schedule Contractors to resell services. Please reference the notes under SIN 132-51 in the IT Schedule 70 Solicitation.

3. Adding a product to our GSA Schedule seems to require a lot of documents and [elapsed] time. Are you going to speed this up and simplify this?

   One of the ways we are working to improve the efficiency of contract administration is by mandating the use of eOffer/eMod. On average it takes up to 17 days to award a modification, sometimes sooner, based on the type of modification that is submitted. However, it is important to note that the documentation that is required is a very important part of the process. It is critical that we have the documentation that we need to make an informed decision and to manage these contracts.

4. How easy is it to add products to an already existing GSA Schedule 70 contract? For example, we are an IT company, and our contract mostly covers IT staffing services, and we've developed a product to automatically convert legacy systems. Can this be added to our original contract?

   You may modify your contract by submitting a modification request through the eOffer/eMod system, to add a product and even to add a new Special Item Number (SIN). Your GSA contracting officer will work with you to ensure that you submit all required documentation.

5. There are a lot of data center consolidations going on. We provide technical service to deinstall, move and reinstall enterprise data center computers, storage and networking. Which SIN would this be under and are [there] any guidelines for adding these service SKUs?

   Please contact your assigned contract specialist or contracting officer so they can assist you in ensuring your offering is within scope of the Schedule, making a technical determination of the appropriate SIN for your offerings.

6. [Can] a product be on a GSA schedule contract that's not defined by GSA? IT products are often innovative, and thus don't have a precedent or competition for the product. Is there a way to sell such products through GSA?

   Yes, as long the product is within the scope of the IT Schedule itself. The Schedule's Special Item Number (SIN) descriptions are broad and cover much of what you would find from a service and product perspective in the IT industry; however if what you're offering is not able to be defined within that broad description, we do have an additional SIN (132-99) that allows for products not previously defined within our existing SINs.

   SIN 132-99 is geared toward new commercial services or product offerings within the scope of IT Schedule 70, that are not currently available under any Federal Supply Service contract. The offering must be a commercial IT service or product that exists in the commercial market, but has not yet been introduced to the federal government.

7. In the spirit of "making it as easy as possible" to do business with GSA. Will you be looking at standardizing the documentation required for each modification action?

   As part of the MAS Modernization initiative, we will be working to standardize the documentation required for post-award actions as well as pre-award actions.

8. Does GSA support adding the latest technology to contract? We often run into the roadblock of the requirement for invoices for items to be added to contract. For specific reference, if HP for example comes out with new products to replace older technology, there won't be invoices. Does GSA believe that in order for a product to be defined as "commercially available" it must have been sold by the contractor?

   GSA encourages all contractors to provide the latest IT offerings on their Schedule contracts. Per the definition of "Commercial Item" in FAR part 2, the item must be available to commercial market place to be a commercial item. For pricing analysis, GSA Contracting Officers (COs) analyze documentation including invoices, pricelists, market data, etc. to determine fair and reasonable pricing. In the case of a new offering, not previously sold, the CO evaluates all available documentation. The addition of new offerings will not be rejected solely on the absence of an invoice.

9. My Schedule 70 contract has been subject to 2 GSA IG Audits in the past 4 years. Each Audit lasted in excess of 1 year which resulted in pricing issues as the schedule cannot be extended until audit reports are completed and negotiated. Are there any plans to streamline this audit process?

   We are dedicated to our partnership with the Inspector General's Office; the information garnered from their reviews plays a very important part in IT Schedule 70's continued success as a premier contracting vehicle. Having said that, we also recognize these thorough reviews may cause delays and subsequent challenges for our Schedule Contractors.

   We are meeting regularly with the Inspector General's Office to discuss specific contract issues, overall process improvements, and opportunities to streamline the audit process.

10. My schedule is not compliant in sales and pricing; I want to save it; where do I start?

    Contact your assigned GSA Contracting Officer for guidance on developing a plan for your company to become compliant with the terms and conditions of your Schedule contract. In addition, please reference the Vendor Support Center (vsc.gsa.gov) on tips for being a successful GSA Schedule contractor.

11. We've had modifications take up 3 months also. We were not able to contact our CO.

   If you are unable to reach your assigned GSA Contracting Officer, please send your name, contract number and question to IT.Center@gsa.gov.

12. For purposes of the "17 day turnaround" does GSA track the action taken? We are also seeing an increase in 'rejections' for invalid reasons, specifically that my CO was going to be out of the office for a week. Please advise.

   Management reviews modification reports and trends on weekly basis. If you feel your requirements are not being met in a satisfactory way, please send your name, contract number and question to IT.Center@gsa.gov.

13. Is it acceptable to pay a resource more than you bill the GSA for their services?

   Beyond requiring GSA Schedule holders to have an adequate compensation plan for both professional and non-professional employees, GSA does not dictate or manage the Schedule holder's compensation rates.

"Evergreen", Expiring Contracts, and New Offers

1. My Schedule 70 Contract expires in 4 years. This has caused issues with new [Blanket Purchase Agreement] (BPA) [Requests for Proposals] (RFPs) requiring a Schedule with at least 5 years [period of performance] remaining on contract. What is [the General Services Administration] (GSA) policy regarding the large number of expiring Schedules over the next 5 years and when can a new Schedule be put into place? My [Procuring Contracting Officer] (PCO) says at least 1-2 years out. Please advise. Thanks.

   IT Schedule 70 Contractors are able to submit a new offer for a new schedule contract as early as their 14th year (one year prior to the final option period). You are able to simultaneously maintain your original, expiring contract and be awarded a new contract, which will allow you the opportunity to bid on new five year requirements.

2. Will both the current Schedule 70 contract and submission for the new Schedule 70 contract run simultaneously or will the new contract not be awarded until the current contract expires?

   The contracts will run simultaneously. It is preferable that if you are approaching your final option period, you submit the new offer in the 14th year of your current contract.

eTools (eOffer/eMod, GSA *Advantage!*, eBUY, SIP)

1. In order to make it easier for us to do business with you, will you please drop the digital certificate requirement? And, drop as many of the requirements and clauses that implement those requirements, from the schedule contract.

   As we evolve, we want to embrace <u>more</u> eContracting. To best support you, we use digital certificates to ensure secure transactions.

2. [Do] Schedule 70 awards on eBuy utilize self certification of size of business or other means of validation?

   E-buy relies on the size status at the time of award of the Schedule Contract. There is an opportunity for recertification at 60 days prior to each option period. For more information on recertification, please reference FAR part 19.3.

3. Can we lift the time restriction on how long a modification can stay in eMod? We have been asked to send all mods into the eMod system, but they keep getting rejected due to a "time limit" that the GSA has set causing extra work on both ends.

   There is no restriction on how long a modification may stay in the eOffer/eMod system. For additional information on the system and the modification process, refer to the eOffer/eMod User Guide at eoffer.gsa.gov. If you have an issue regarding your contract or a specific modification, please first contact your Contract Specialist, or you may send your question to IT.Center@gsa.gov.

4. Will [Schedules Input Program] (SIP) upload program be updated?

   Currently, GSA Schedule 520 and GSA Schedule 599 have moved to a formatted price list where all of the pricing information is submitted with your offer and modification and is posted to GSA Advantage! real-time. Currently GSA is evaluating this program and we'll be assessing how to expand the formatted price list across the Schedules program, to include Schedule 70.

5. eBuy currently does not allow multiple users with different access rights on a single contract. For example, not everyone in a large company should have the privilege to submit quotes and commit the company. Can GSA revisit the possibility of allowing multiple log-ins for one contract that offer "read only" access [privileges]?

   Currently there are no plans to change the existing log in and access rights policies in eBuy.

IT Schedule 70 Solicitation

1. Are Voice Services now allowed on Schedule 70?

   At this time, voice services and landline telephone services are not covered under IT Schedule 70; however the Schedule does address wireless services.

2. Do you anticipate creating some additional language in the SINs to cover Cloud Computing?

   At this time, we do not anticipate including additional language specific to Cloud Computing. We do have more in-depth language in our strategic solution vehicles that ITS offers, as they pertain to cloud computing. We have several strategic BPAs for customers to use that go into greater detail in terms of cloud computing requirements, but at the schedule level we do not foresee including additional requirements.

3. Roughly when do you anticipate the next refresh will occur?

   In general, we try to refresh the schedule at least twice a year – usually in the Spring and again in the Fall; however, as the Schedules program becomes more integrated into GSA solutions for customer agencies, requirements may emerge that cause a Solicitation refresh off-cycle.

4. Instead of multiple refreshes per year, could you make the schedule more stable and do it less often?

   GSA must stay up-to-date with all emerging acquisition regulations and guidance throughout the year. Periodic solicitation refreshes help to ensure that these requirements are incorporated into our solicitation and Schedule contracts.

Sustainability (Telework, Mobility, Digitization, etc.)

1. What is "1800 F"?

   We frequently reference GSA's move to "1800 F"; this is the location (1800 F Street, NW, Washington, DC) of GSA's Headquarters, and has been there for many years. GSA is completing substantial renovation and remodeling so that it is outfitted for the new mobile work environment and reduced carbon footprint. A lot of work has gone into this new innovative location for us to work.

2. How can I bid on your structured cabling scope of work for your move to 18th & F?

   GSA's Public Building Services (PBS) manages GSA's real property holdings.

3. IT Schedule 70 seems to be behind MOBIS in digitizing Contract files - specifically those files related to Contract awards made a number of years ago. Will GSA be making an effort to posting old Vendor files related to original contract awards online?

IT Schedule 70 has been 100% eContracting since October 1, 2011. We are in the process of digitizing older paper-based contracts for internal use only; however all Schedule contractors' terms and conditions are posted to "Contracts Online" and eLibrary, both part of GSA Advantage!.

4. Do you have any wifi installations within GSA and Wireless security to support mobility

Yes, we do. We have secure Wi-Fi to support our staff as they become mobile. Once we transition to GSA Headquarters at 1800 F Street, NW, we will be implementing a hoteling environment. Secure Wi-Fi supports this practice.

Small Business

1. Can you go over FAR 52.232-99 accelerated payments to small businesses?

This clause implements the temporary policy provided by OMB Policy Memorandum M-12-16, Providing Prompt Payment to Small Business Subcontractors, dated July 11, 2012.

   a) *Upon receipt of accelerated payments from the Government, the contractor is required to make accelerated payments to small business subcontractors to the maximum extent practicable after receipt of a proper invoice and all proper documentation from the small business subcontractor.*

   b) *Include the substance of this clause, including this paragraph (b), in all subcontracts with small business concerns.*

   c) *The acceleration of payments under this clause does not provide any new rights under the Prompt Payment Act.*

2. Can a [ordering activity] CO award a direct GSA award to Schedule 70 SDVOSB prime?

Under FAR part 8.405-6, the ordering activity has the discretion of completing a limited source justification, where they may award an order directly to an IT Schedule 70 service-disabled veteran owned business (SDVOSB) prime.

Training and Online Resources

1. As a new addition to the IT schedule 70, I have a very short timeline to become an expert on GSA, are there any onsite training sessions to get me up to speed?

   Please check out the listing of all upcoming GSA Events and Training by going to www.gsa.gov, and selecting "GSA Events" from the left navigation. This listing is searchable by audience (Small Business, IT and Telecom, etc…).

   We encourage you to join the GSA Interact community (https://interact.gsa.gov/), which is an online forum with groups ranging from State and Local Government to Strategic Sourcing, as well as Sustainability, Training, and more! Also, if you search "contractor success" in the Interact search box, you will find a four part video series that will assist you in understanding how to best market your new schedule contract.

   There are monthly webinars on various topics around the Multiple Award Schedules (MAS) program. Consult the calendar of events at www.gsa.gov/masnews.

   Another excellent resource is the Vendor Support Center (https://vsc.gsa.gov/) where there are many training resources, including the "Pathways to Success".

2. Will you be providing webinars to train contractors on how to use the IT 70 schedule?

   Yes, we will. Please consult our training schedule, which is updated regularly, on our website www.GSA.gov/schedule70. Also, please visit www.gsa.gov/masnews for webinars on the schedules program.

3. [Our company] never received a welcome package when we got our GSA schedule last [year].

   To request a New Vendor Welcome Package, please send your request to IT.Center@gsa.gov.

4. Is mentor/protégé info in the [welcome] package?

   Yes, it is. Also, for more information, please view our website at www.gsa.gov/mentorprotege.

5. Can a company that is not yet on schedule join the Interact group?

   Yes! Interact is a public forum for customers and for vendors, so please go, sign up, login, and join the conversation. https://interact.gsa.gov/

6. What procurement website do Schedule 70 holders use to find State and Local opportunities that can be ran through our GSA Schedules?

There are many ways to research potential state and local opportunities. One example is to go to the State (or County or City) website, look at their strategic plan and look at upcoming initiatives. Also, please join our Interact Community at https://interact.gsa.gov/. This is GSA's online forum for Customers and Vendors; there is a group dedicated to the State and Local market. In addition, you may want to reach out to one or more of the following organizations:

- *National Association of State Procurement Officials: www.naspo.org*
- *National Association of Counties: www.naco.org*
- *International City/County Management Association: www.icma.org*
- *National Association of State Chief Information Officers: www.nascio.org*