



Customer Source

OFFICE OF IT SCHEDULE PROGRAMS

3RD QUARTER, FY12

We're IT!



Welcome to our first "Customer Source", GSA IT Schedule 70's quarterly customer newsletter. We have

created "Customer Source" just for you to help keep you aware of important developments within the IT and acquisition communities. From IT Schedule 70 webinar training and outreach events, to policy updates, we're here to help keep you informed.

Our primary goal within IT Schedule 70 is to offer you streamlined acquisition of best-value, innovative, commercial IT products, services and solutions that allow you to focus on your core mission. We simplify the acquisition process by providing pre-vetted contractors, including small and disadvantaged businesses. We've pre-negotiated ceiling prices that can be further discounted through competition and negotiations. In addition, we provide access to

eTools such as GSA *Advantage!*, eLibrary and eBuy, all of which streamline acquisition planning and execution, saving you time and money. Our GSA technical professionals provide aids like acquisition templates to assist you with developing your requirements, and will collaborate with you to create best-practice IT solutions. We do this so you can focus on your core mission and save taxpayer dollars!

IT Schedule 70 is comprised of approximately 5,000 industry partners of varying socioeconomic status that offer a wide range of commercial IT products, services, and solutions such as hardware, software, cloud computing options, and data center consolidation. This wide selection of industry partners enhances competition and ensures you're getting best-value pricing.

IT Schedule 70 continues to focus on being even more customer-centric. We watch industry trends to ensure we offer the latest commercial IT products and services. We continually update our website,

<http://www.gsa.gov/itschedule70>, to ensure relevant information is readily available. We've also enhanced our social media efforts by creating *Interact*, <http://www.interact.gsa.gov>, a site where you can engage with experts across GSA on various topics. We are enhancing our engagement with you to better understand your needs and develop timely solutions to meet them. We are happy to come to your site and present free training on topics such as ordering from Schedule 70, creating blanket purchase agreements (BPAs), and contractor teaming arrangements, just to name a few. We want to offer you strategies for the most efficient use of Schedule 70.

Thank you for your support and for choosing to do business with GSA. We appreciate all you do to make Schedule 70 the most widely used acquisition vehicle in the Federal government. Again, welcome to "Customer Source"!

- The Schedule 70 Team

A New Director



Kay Ely joined the GSA's IT Schedule 70's leadership team on Monday, September 26, 2011 as the Director for the Office of IT Schedule Programs. Kay has an extensive background in Federal IT acquisition, including policy and operations, through both private and public sector positions. Kay comes to GSA from the Office of Personnel

Management (OPM) where she most recently served as the Chief Learning Officer.

Some highlights of Kay's career in government and private sector include:

- Deputy Associate Director for Contracting, Facilities

and Administrative Services at OPM

- Senior Principal at Acquisition Solutions where she led the federal civilian acquisition consulting practice
- Associate Administrator for Acquisition Implementation at the Office of Federal Procurement Policy
- Director of Acquisition Resources Services at the Department of Veterans Affairs

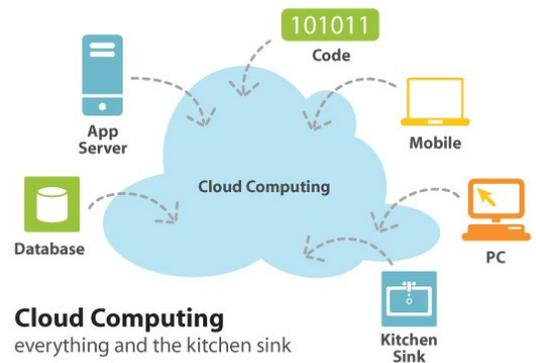
During her career, Kay has held a contracting officer's warrant at the IRS and DoD. Kay's experience in IT acquisition and leadership positions across government gives her a unique perspective adding value to the IT Schedule 70 Program.



"The great thing about a computer notebook is that no matter how much you stuff into it, it doesn't get bigger or heavier." Bill Gates

Move to the Cloud

"Move to the cloud", as one actor says in a TV advertisement. What does it mean, and what is cloud computing? The federal CIO's *25 Point Implementation Plan to Reform Federal Information Technology Management*, published in 2010, mandated the shift to "Cloud First" policy. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has defined cloud computing as "a model for enabling convenient, on-demand network access to a shared pool of configurable computing resources that can be rapidly provisioned and released with minimal management effort or service provider interaction." Essentially, cloud computing provides scalable IT capabilities that are offered as a service over the internet to multiple users. Cloud computing solutions are delivered through the Internet in a pay-per-use or subscription model. Cloud computing solutions allow agencies to better fulfill their missions and deliver on the commitment to provide better value for the American taxpayer by making government more efficient. Government agencies look to cloud computing to cut costs and solve many of the problems that have plagued IT deployment for decades.



The five essential characteristics of cloud computing are: On-Demand Self service; Broad Network Access; Resource Pooling; Rapid Elasticity; and Measured Service and are delivered in three service lines:

- **Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)** – uses the cloud to replace hardware
- **Software as a Service (SaaS)** – replaces the purchase and installation of software with a subscription
- **Platform as a Service (PaaS)** – a pre-integrated, standardized middleware stack to replace or better leverage licensing, installation, integration and operation of such software

GSA offers the ability to quickly procure cloud based services today through the Infrastructure As A Service (IaaS) Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA). If you would like more information on Schedule 70 cloud computing offerings, please contact Marcelo Olascoaga at (703) 306-6653 or via email at marcelo.olascoaga@gsa.gov

Useful eTools



Did you know that GSA has online resources to help you with placing orders, getting quotes, researching products and services, finding Energy Star compliant products, and much more? Our online resources are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Each resource provides helpful information to streamline your procurement processes, reduce your purchasing time, and connect you with qualified IT industry partners that can fulfill your IT requirements. Federal, state, and local agencies are eligible to use eTools.

- **GSA Advantage!** - GSA's online shopping and ordering system for access to thousands of industry part-

ners and millions of products and services. www.gsaadvantage.gov

- **GSA eBuy** - eBay is designed to facilitate the request for submission of quotations for commercial products and services. www.ebuy.gsa.gov
- **GSA eLibrary** - eLibrary is the online source for the latest contract award information. www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov
- **GSA Carbon Footprint Tool** - assists agencies in managing their Greenhouse Gas Emissions as required by Executive Order 13514 and recent energy laws. www.carbonfootprint.gsa.gov

We hope these online resources will help facilitate your IT procurement processes.



"A fundamental rule in technology says that whatever can be done will be done." Andrew Grove

RFQs for Orders Over \$150K

The FAR was amended to implement section 863 of the Duncan Hunter National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009. Section 863, entitled "Requirements for Purchase of Property and Services Pursuant to Multiple-Award Contracts," mandates enhanced competition for orders placed under multiple-award contracts, including GSA's Federal Supply Schedules (FSS).

If an individual order over the simplified acquisition threshold (\$150,000) does not follow the section 863 competitive procedures, section 863 requires that a notice of the order, and the determination to waive competition, be published in FedBizOpps within 14 days after award. The rule requires that for all orders exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold (\$150,000), the ordering activity contracting office must post a Request for Quotes (RFQ) on eBuy in order to afford all schedule contractors offering the required products or services under the

appropriate schedules an opportunity to submit a quote. eBuy is GSA's electronic request for quote (RFQ) system, and it is specifically identified in the rule as one method to provide notice to all schedule contractors offering the required products or services. See FAR 8.402(d)(1).

Alternatively, the contracting office may provide the RFQ to as many schedule contractors as practicable, consistent with market research appropriate to the circumstances, to reasonably ensure receipt of at least three quotes. If three quotes are not received, the contracting officer must prepare a written determination explaining that no additional contractors capable of fulfilling the requirement could be identified despite reasonable efforts to do so. See generally FAR 8.405-1 and 8.405-2. These FAR changes support the Administration's commitment to strengthened competition and increased transparency.

Small Business Set-Asides

Section 1331 of the Small Business Jobs Act of 2010 authorized discretionary use of set-asides against multiple award contracts (i.e. Multiple Award Schedules). This includes setting-aside orders to 8(a) contractors. **The provision did not authorize the use of sole-sourcing under the various small business programs.**

Section 1331 was implemented in the FAR through [Interim Rule 2011-024](#). According to the FAR language in Subpart 8.4, Contracting Officers still have to follow the ordering procedures in [8.405-1](#), [8.405-2](#), and [8.405-3](#) when setting aside orders or BPAs under the Schedules Program. In addition, Contracting Officers have to ensure their order/BPA meets the eligibility requirements of a particular small business program before setting aside the order/BPA under that program.

For 8(a) set-asides, this means that your requirement has to be over \$6.5 million, if it is for manufacturing, or over \$4 million for all other requirements (see [FAR 19.805-1\(a\)\(2\)](#)). The FAR does not currently provide any guidance on how to set-aside Schedule orders and BPAs for 8(a); for example, there is no regulation on whether the "offer and acceptance" process with the SBA applies to set-aside Schedule orders. This necessary guidance is expected in a forthcoming SBA Proposed Rule (which will become a SBA Final Rule which will then be codified into the FAR through a FAR Final Rule).

In the meantime, **we recommend ordering agencies work closely with their Office of Small Business Utilization (OSBU), and the local SBA Procurement Center Representative (PCR) when setting-aside Schedule orders or BPAs.** This should ensure that even in the absence of regulation and guidance, the procurement is done right. **An additional resource is your local GSA Customer Service Director (CSD) who can reach back to procurement staff within GSA for additional guidance and assistance.** Please see www.gsa.gov/csd for more information.

Another important point to consider involves the credit issue. **Should you decide to pursue an 8(a) set-aside, you will not receive 8(a) credit for that order. You will instead be credited towards your (SDB) goals since 8(a)s are by definition SDBs.** For most agencies this lack of 8(a) credit may not be an issue because there are currently no government-wide goals for the 8(a) socioeconomic category; however, every agency has SDB goals and these 8(a) orders will count towards those goals. If you do have an agency, bureau or local 8(a) goal this may be of concern. As stated above, we highly encourage you to work with your local OSBU/PCR staff during the planning phase of your acquisition.

For more information on small business set-asides, please see the FAQs at <http://www.gsa.gov/schedules>



"Do you want to know who you are? Don't ask. Act! Action will delineate and define you." Thomas Jefferson

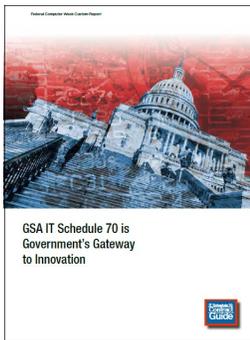
Just Released: IT Schedule 70 Contract Guide



We are very excited to share with you an electronic copy of the 2012 IT Schedule 70 Contract Guide. This was published in collaboration with the 1105 Government Information Group. This year's contract guide's theme is "GSA IT Schedule 70 is Government's Gateway to Innovation."

The insert includes interviews with GSA officials on the following topics:

- Gateway to Innovation -- Agencies tap IT Schedule 70 for cloud, mobility, cybersecurity, and other emerging technology needs
- What are the Advantages of IT Schedule 70?
- New Director Sets Strategic Agenda for IT Schedule 70
- IT Schedule 70 Steps Up Its Game -- New programs and services provide easier access to latest technologies
- Tailored Customer Training
- State and Local Sales Jump in 2011



A special page is devoted to our Director Kay Ely who shares insight on her strategic direction in moving the program forward. Various leaders in the areas of Cloud Computing, Data Center Consolidation, Green IT, Mobility Solutions, Small Business Utilization, and IT Schedule 70 were interviewed for this insert. Each provided a unique view of IT Schedule 70 and the many ways it can benefit federal, state, and local government agency customers and industry partners organizations.

The insert can be accessed at:

<http://fcw.com/microsites/2012/gsa-schedule-70/index.aspx>

If you have feedback regarding this publication, please contact Sharon Cooper at sharon.cooper@gsa.gov.

2012 GSA Expo

GSA hosted the 2012 Expo, May 15-17, 2012, at the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center in San Antonio, Texas. During Expo, GSA associates offered over 200 free classes and trained more than 2,500 federal, state, and local contracting officers. There were nearly 3,000 attendees the private sector, representing more than 700 businesses. Expo provided a forum for these attendees to grow their customer base; linking America's business community to government buyers allowed our industry partners to showcase their innovative goods and services.

During Expo, associates from the GSA's Integrated Technology Service (ITS) convened industry and customer panels that allowed attendees to hear first-hand from senior leaders within ITS regarding various IT initiatives designed to assist customers meet their IT needs and focus on their core missions. ITS associates also presented seven training sessions geared towards educating customers and industry partners on the many acquisition vehicles available for use within ITS.

We provide our customers with free on-site training specifically tailored to address their needs. Please contact Antoinette Scott, antoinette.scott@gsa.gov, (703) 605-0526, for more information.

National Customer Helpline

In an effort to provide customers with outstanding customer assistance, we have implemented an IT Schedule 70 Helpline. Calls are filtered through a three-tier system in which each caller's needs are specifically addressed by subject matter experts (SMEs). The Helpline is available Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 5:00pm EST at (877) 446-4870.



“Be a yardstick of quality. Some people aren’t used to an environment where excellence is expected.” Steve Jobs

Customer Loyalty Survey

Last year the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) Office of IT Schedule Programs fielded a Customer Loyalty survey to gather customer input on IT Schedule 70 product offerings, services, and customer assistance. The results from the survey allowed us to better understand what is important to our customers and provided us valuable and constructive feedback so that we can take proper steps to better meet your needs. We appreciate our customers’ responses and would like to share with you a brief overview of what we learned last year and how we are applying it to our operations.

1

You spoke

We learned:

- There is a high degree of loyalty to IT Schedule 70 as a majority of your customers reported that they intend to use Schedule 70 in the future.
- A majority of our customers reported encouraging others to use IT Schedule 70 to fulfill their IT requirements and that our customers were satisfied with our streamlined acquisition processes and the ability to procure from a single source.

2

We listened

In the past year, we began incorporating customers’ feedback into our operations and have implemented operational changes to our programs including:

- Implementing guidance on the use of small business set-asides in IT Schedule 70 contracts.
- Enhancing the content and usability on the IT Schedule 70 web site.
- Enhancing support on our IT Schedule 70 Helpline to address customers questions and concerns.
- Increasing our social media presence via GSA’s Interact (<http://interact.gsa.gov>)
- Enhancing training and outreach via webinars and on-site training

3

Our Next Steps

In July, we will again be administering our annual Customer Loyalty survey. As was the case last year, it should take less than 10 minutes to complete. We’re working closely with an independent research and consulting firm, and they will be conducting the survey evaluation on our behalf. And as always, customers’ responses will remain strictly confidential and anonymous.

For more information on the Survey, please contact Angela D. Jones, angelad.jones@gsa.gov, (703) 605-2896.

Pricing on IT Schedule 70 May Be Negotiable

Did you know that industry partners may provide discounts off of their GSA rates to ordering activities? The pricing identified on the industry partner’s IT Schedule 70 pricelist is the *maximum* pricing offered to customer agencies; discounted prices may be offered to the ordering activity as part of the negotiation process. In accordance with clause 552.238-75, Price Reductions (May 2004) (Alternate I-May2003) 438.273(b)(2) of the IT Schedule 70 Solicitation, it may be possible to obtain an even lower price on products and services offered via IT Schedule 70. In an effort to save taxpayers’ dollars, agencies are authorized and encouraged to negotiate directly with industry partners to obtain further pricing discounts. For more information you can review the Solicitation on our website or contact us with additional questions or concerns.

What Matters to You?

Feedback

We value your feedback on this newsletter and input into subsequent issues. If you would like to comment on this newsletter, please send your feedback to it.center@gsa.gov. Additionally, if there are topics you would like to see included in subsequent newsletters, please contact Angela D. Jones via email at angelad.jones@gsa.gov or via telephone at (703) 605-2896.



"It has become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity." ~Albert Einstein



**One Country.
One Mission.
One Source.**

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Stay connected with
IT Schedule 70 through
Facebook, Twitter, and GovLoop.



Mark your Calendars

GSA's IT Schedule 70 Program associates invite you to visit us at the upcoming conferences.

Start Date	Name	Location
July 9, 2012	TechNet Land Forces South – Joint and Coalition 2012	Tampa, FL
July 29, 2012	NCMA World Congress 2012	Boston, MA
August 16, 2012	NIGP Annual Forum & Procurement Expo	Seattle, WA
August 19, 2012	GovEnergy	St. Louis, MO

Is your agency in need of **on-site training**? Our dedicated trainers are here to provide complimentary acquisition training. Contact us to arrange a session.

Great Strides in Training



IT Schedule 70 associates provided an overview of recent changes to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) and an overview of the benefits of IT Schedule 70 to National Institute of Health (NIH) acquisition, purchasing and other professionals within NIH's Division of Simplified Acquisition Policy and Services, in Bethesda, MD. During the training, there was a live demonstration on how to use GSA's eTools to simplify and make the acquisition process more efficient. Feedback was extremely positive and subsequent training is planned for NIH associates. For more information on arranging training at your site, please contact Antoinette Scott at (703) 605-0526 or via email, antoinette.scott@gsa.gov.



One of our goals is to ensure our Federal, state and local customer agencies know how to effectively use IT Schedule 70 to acquire IT products, services, and solutions. We're also engaging in efforts to enhance sustainability throughout the government and reduce our environmental footprint by offering virtual web-based training sessions. If you have topics you would like us to present virtually, please contact Tamika Coleman, (703) 605-3672, or via email, tamika.coleman@gsa.gov.