

Advertising & Integrated Marketing Solutions (AIMS)



Schedule 541

Make Certain Your Message Is Heard!



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Targeted Marketing Communications through AIMS

You've just received word that your agency would like to redesign its website or maybe your agency has a requirement for the development and placement of advertising initiatives to boost recruitment. Perhaps your agency plans to host a conference or tradeshow and needs help with project management and coordination for the event. Or maybe you require commercial art and graphic design services to prepare signage for these events. What if you and your agency just don't have the time or man-power to complete these requirements? That's where GSA can help.

The search for quality advertising and marketing services begins with GSA's Advertising and Integrated Marketing Solutions (AIMS), Schedule 541. This schedule was designed to hit the mark by keeping your communication needs in mind. It's never been easier to procure expert help in the advertising, marketing and related communications fields; because with the multiple award schedules, like AIMS, all contractors have already been pre-approved to do business with you. In addition, all the services offered under the AIMS schedule are also included under the GSA Consolidated Products and Services schedule. See page 7 for more information on CPSS.

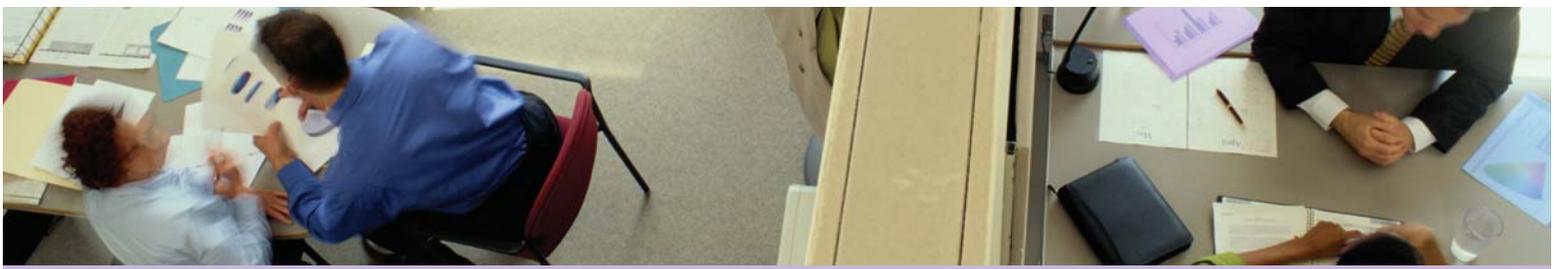
Contractors under the AIMS schedule can help you reach your desired outcome no matter how big or small your project. From start to finish, AIMS is here to help you meet your agency's needs with the following special item numbers (SINs):

■ Advertising Services	SIN 541-1
■ Public Relations Services	SIN 541-2
■ Web Based Marketing Services*	SIN 541-3
Specialized Marketing Services	
■ Market Research and Analysis Services	SIN 541-4A
■ Video/Film Production Services	SIN 541-4B
■ Exhibit Design and Implementation Services	SIN 541-4C
■ Conference, Events and Tradeshow Planning Services*	SIN 541-4D
■ Commercial Photography Services*	SIN 541-4E
■ Commercial Art and Graphic Design Services*	SIN 541-4F
■ Integrated Marketing Services	SIN 541-5
■ Other Direct Costs (ODCs)	SIN 541-1000

Please Note: Many different tasks can be performed under each special item number. Although the success stories used for each SIN are real life examples of how other agencies used the schedule, they are only provided as illustrations to describe each SIN. Your agency can obtain a wide range of communications-related services under this schedule! Let's see how you can make sure your message is heard.

* indicates a small business set-aside





Advertising and Integrated Marketing Solutions

Services Offered and Success Stories

SIN 541-1 **Advertising Services**

Contractors under this SIN are available to help you promote public awareness of your agency's mission and initiatives, enable public understanding of complex technical and social issues, and disseminate information to industry and consumer advocacy groups.

Typical tasks cover the full spectrum of an advertising campaign, and include:

- Advertising objective determination:
 - Identify the direct objectives and develop strategies for conducting the advertising campaign in order to provide the best methods of public education. Typical tasks associated with this phase include the identification of the target market, the target response and target frequency to align with available budget.
- Message decision/creation:
 - Develop the advertising message and corresponding brochures/ collateral materials to accomplish the advertising objectives
- Media development and selection:
 - Conduct market research to identify the appropriate media vehicle (print, radio, television, etc.) to promote the agency's message. These services include providing recommendations as to the best mix, frequency of advertising and vehicles to track performance of advertising, and then acquiring the necessary media spots (radio, television, print, etc.) in order to place

the agency's advertising campaign. Some examples of the types of media that may be considered include, but are not limited to:

- Direct mail services
- Outdoor marketing and media services
- Broadcast media
- Advertising evaluation:
 - Provide services that effectively measure the success of the advertising campaign through various methods which may include advertising pre & post-testing
- Activities related to advertising services

Success Story:

A large agency used this SIN to develop a new media plan. Included in the plan were recommendations on which media to utilize (i.e. direct mail, print advertising or web banner advertising). Once the agency examined the contractor's recommendations and made a final decision on the proposed media plan, the contractor developed a new advertising concept that aligned with the agency's current branding initiative and progressed from its former advertising campaign. The contractor also recommended various avenues to track the awareness of the campaign by creating ad specific web addresses and phone numbers. The end result was an effective advertising concept placed in various media that generated a large interest (based on phone calls and web hits).





SIN 541-2 **Public Relations Services**

Contractors can provide you with customized media and public relations services such as: development of media messages and strategies; recommendations of media sources for placement of campaigns; preparation of media materials such as background materials, press releases, speeches, presentations and press kits; and execution of media programs such as press conferences, distribution of press materials and management of broadcast and print interviews.

Typical tasks include:

- Press, public relations and crisis communications
- Media training: training of agency personnel to deal with media and media responses
- Media alerts
- Press clipping services
- Activities related to public relations services

Success Story:

A small federal agency realized it had a need for the creation of a video news release campaign to publicize a new exhibition opening later that year. After researching different procurement methods, the agency opted to use SIN 541-2 to meet its public relations needs. The agency researched different vendors and awarded the task order to a small firm. The scope of the work included: developing, producing and distributing a video news release to television stations across the United States; developing news feed press releases with an editorial focus; conducting telephone campaigns to solicit interest before and after the exhibit opening and submission of a comprehensive market analysis report of nationwide story placement based on survey demographics.

SIN 541-3 **Web-Based Marketing Services** **(Small Business Set-Aside)**

You can use schedule contractors to develop strategies to maximize the use of your Internet capabilities. Media will be provided in a format that is compatible with your agency's software requirements. Continual website updates and maintenance are also available.

Typical tasks may involve consultation, development and implementation for:

- Website design and maintenance services
- Search engine development
- E-mail marketing
- Interactive marketing
- Online media management
- Web-based training
- Web casting
- Video conferencing via the web
- Section 508 compliance, including captioning services
- Activities related to electronic marketing services

Success Story:

This SIN was used by a high profile federal agency to fulfill a requirement for web branding and website development. The goal of the requirement was to successfully recruit students into the agency using web-based marketing and communications. In order to successfully complete the task, the federal agency contracted with a leading higher-education marketing and communications firm. The firm first developed a branding image used to market the agency. Then they incorporated the new agency image into the website development, online admissions processing, sales training for employees and a direct e-mail campaign.



Specialized Marketing Services

The services offered under this series enable you to selectively choose specialized marketing and media services on an as needed basis. To assist you in finding exactly what you need, we have created the following SINs:

SIN 541-4A Market Research and Analysis Services

Take advantage of experts who can:

- Develop or enhance customized strategic marketing plans
- Create branding initiatives
- Create public awareness of products, services, and issues
- Identify and analyze target markets
- Establish measurable marketing objectives; determine market trends and conditions; identify and implement appropriate strategies
- Conduct focus groups, telemarketing, and individual interviews; prepare/distribute surveys, and compile/analyze results
- Manage call centers (in relation to services provided under this schedule)



Success Story:

A small federal agency needed to develop a strategic plan for the implementation of its new identity package. Instead of stretching the agency's internal resources, the agency decided to compete the requirement by using SIN 541-4A of the AIMS schedule. In order to accomplish this, the firm was directed to gather information and assess brand audits using internal and external research; develop the identity strategy based on the agency's existing marketing plan; develop a plan for the agency to execute the brand strategy; and propose metrics and measurements for the strategy once implemented. The agency launched its new identity and was able to effectively roll its new branding initiatives into a seamless effort due to the support provided by the firm.

SIN 541-4B Video/Film Production Services

With these services, you will be able to inform the public and other government agencies about the latest products, services or issues in various outputs such as: standard formats, CD-ROM, DVD and video streaming development. Filming may be in studios, on location, at live shows, or events. Examples of services include:

- Writing
- Directing
- Shooting
- Arranging for talent/ animation
- Narration
- Music and sound effects
- Duplication
- Distribution
- Video scoring
- Editing

Success Story:

A small federal agency awarded a task order to a production firm in order to drive traffic to the agency's new website, which serves as the gateway to the federal government. The project included: writing and directing and shooting television, radio and print advertisements. The firm also handled the distribution of the finished materials to stations and print outlets. The agency has been so pleased with the results that they have exercised the first of four option years with the firm.



SIN 541-4C **Exhibit Design and Implementation Services**

Under this SIN, you will find assistance conceptualizing, designing, and producing exhibits and their accompanying materials, including making all necessary arrangements for exhibits in various venues (museums, malls, tradeshows, etc.). Media and Exhibit Illumination services are also available. Support services may include:

- Set-up and dismantling of exhibit property
- Shipping and storage of exhibit property

Success Story:

A national museum needed to develop a welcome center exhibit with a lighting and sound concept to greet visitors as they entered the museum. The museum used SIN 541-4C to contract with an exhibit design firm to produce the results they needed. The firm worked to develop a wall of large High Definition (HD) projection displays as the focal point. The firm then researched and utilized various iconic images that represented the purpose of the museum and included different languages that said "welcome" to be broadcast through the projection display. The result was a spectacular and high-tech way to welcome visitors to the museum.

SIN 541-4D **Conference, Events and Tradeshow Planning Services (Small Business Set-Aside)**

Industry experts can make arrangements for conferences, events, seminars and tradeshows providing:

- Project management
- Coordination and implementation of third party participation
- Collection management of third party payment for participation
- Ceremonial events
- Audiovisual and information technology support

- Topic and speaker identification
- Site location research
- Facility reservations
- On-site meeting and registration support
- Editorial services
- Automation and telecommunications support
- Design and editing productions
- Mailing and other communication with attendees including pre/post meeting mailings, travel support and computer database creation

Success Story:

A prominent agency program office needed conference planning services. The agency opted to use SIN 541-4D to raise public awareness of their mission, services and challenges through a conference setting. The requirement was competed among several of the contractors under this SIN and awarded to a woman-owned small business firm. The firm was tasked with using a measured approach to research potential conference locations, conduct market research and perform media analysis to assist the agency with making pre-event, on-site and post-event decisions. Throughout the process of planning for the conference, the firm's staff was responsible for branding the event to potential attendees through print media such as posters, newsletters, newspaper and trade journal advertisements and brochures. A direct mail campaign was also used to inform potential attendees and exhibitors of the event. Photographic services were used on-site and the firm videotaped many of the sessions to be used in future agency videos. Graphic design services were used to create the conference logo, name badges, handouts and exhibit booths. A website was set up by the firm to market the event and allowed attendees to register online for training sessions and tracks. Additional web services included: lodging information, payment processing, booth locations and transportation arrangements. This firm was also present at the conference to provide on-site meeting and registration support.

SIN 541-4E Commercial Photography Services (Small Business Set-Aside)

If you need black and white, color or digital photographs for use in commercial advertisements or illustrations that will appear in books, magazines, or other media, AIMS can help. Available photographers have expertise in:

- Aerial photography
- Architectural photography
- Digital photography
- Still/field photography
- Studio photography
- Related services such as photo editing and high-resolution scans

Success Story:

A large agency used SIN 541-4E to obtain aerial photography services in order to place photographic images in flight brochures. The requirements called for 1:15, 840 scale and 8-1/4" camera focal length. The photographs were to be submitted in a 9"X 9" format of color negative film. The project was completed with time to spare and pilots had user-friendly brochures for the flying season.

SIN 541-4F Commercial Art and Graphic Design Services (Small Business Set-Aside)

Get the design help you need to catch your target market's eye and educate them about your product or service. The experts under this SIN can help you update, rewrite, edit and even create new printed materials. Contractors will:

- Develop conceptual designs and layouts for publications
- Provide copywriting and technical writing services
- Create sketches, drawings, publication designs and typographic layouts
- Furnish custom or stock artwork (including electronic artwork)

Success Story:

A military agency awarded a task order to a small graphic arts firm for the production of graphic products including publications, digital presentations and web pages. The contractor was responsible for designing and producing digital drawings, layouts and web pages for submission to the agency. Additional services included providing technical assistance to the agency staff in matters of design and production, as well as recording all designs to digital media. With the help of this small graphic arts firm and the AIMS schedule, this military agency was able to produce professional looking collateral without taking away from their mission-critical activities.





SIN 541-5 Integrated Marketing Services†

This SIN enables you to obtain a complete solution that integrates various services found under other SINs of this schedule. Contractors have the capabilities to provide comprehensive solutions including services available separately under 541-1 Advertising, 541-2 Public Relations, 541-3 Web-Based Marketing, and 541-4 Specialized Marketing. This one-stop shopping SIN provides an avenue for you to implement a seamless marketing campaign. From niche marketing services to broad reaching campaigns, let the experts under this SIN pull it together for you.

Success Story:

This SIN was used to satisfy a federal agency's need for a nationwide registry list to limit the number of telemarketing calls consumers receive. The agency had three objectives to accomplish in order to fully meet the requirement. These included introducing the American public to the idea of a nationwide list, promoting the new list functionality and generating a response to the new registry list online or via a 1-800 call center. Using SIN 541-5, the agency competed the requirement and awarded to a small business firm. With the help of top notch advertising professionals, the idea of reaching out to every American adult with a home phone or cell phone who no longer wanted to receive telemarketing calls was within reach. The campaign developed under this SIN encompassed the development of brand awareness (i.e. the new registry list), use of a website for online registration or a 1-800 call center, streaming videos for website interaction, media kits for journalists writing about the new list, print public service announcements (PSAs) in English and Spanish, and giveaway items such as magnets, door hangers and website banner ads.

† This SIN should only be utilized for complex projects when requirements encompass services covered by a majority of the SINs offered under the AIMS schedule. It should not be utilized for requirements that can be met solely by utilizing services available under an individual SIN.

SIN 541-1000 Other Direct Costs (ODCs)

Other Direct Costs, also known as “contract support items”, consist of those services and products (other than labor hours) needed to complete a project under the schedule. These items were previously listed under each of the SINs, but are now broken out to make it easier for both companies and customers to determine price reasonableness for ODCs. See page 14 for more details on ODCs.

AIMS Consolidates!

To provide you a single storefront for all products and services under all Multiple Award Schedules, GSA introduced the Consolidated Products and Services Schedule (CPSS). It provides you with a single entryway to the commercial marketplace—no more searching through various schedules to find needed items—and reduces your administrative work! Advertising and Integrated Marketing Solutions services are also available through the CPSS. Under a single contract, a contractor can offer its entire business line including AIMS services. For further information on the AIMS SINs under the CPSS (SINs C R422, C R701 and C R708), please visit Schedules e-Library at www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov. Remember, total solutions for customer requirements are available, easily accessible and at competitive prices through the CPSS.





Using GSA Schedules Is Simple

The Multiple Award Schedule (MAS)

An MAS, also known as a Federal Supply schedule or GSA schedule, is one of the most powerful procurement tools available. It is essentially a listing of awarded contractors that can be used by all federal entities to achieve their missions. GSA awards contracts to responsible companies that offer commercial items falling within the general descriptions of the schedules. Contracting Officers determine that prices are fair and reasonable by comparing the prices or discounts that a company offers the

government with the prices or discounts that the company offers to its commercial customers. This negotiation objective is commonly known as “most favored customer” pricing.

You and other interested ordering agencies simply develop a task order request outlining the scope of work to be performed and invite schedule contractors to respond with a quote. The contractors’ responses are usually split into two parts: technical and price.

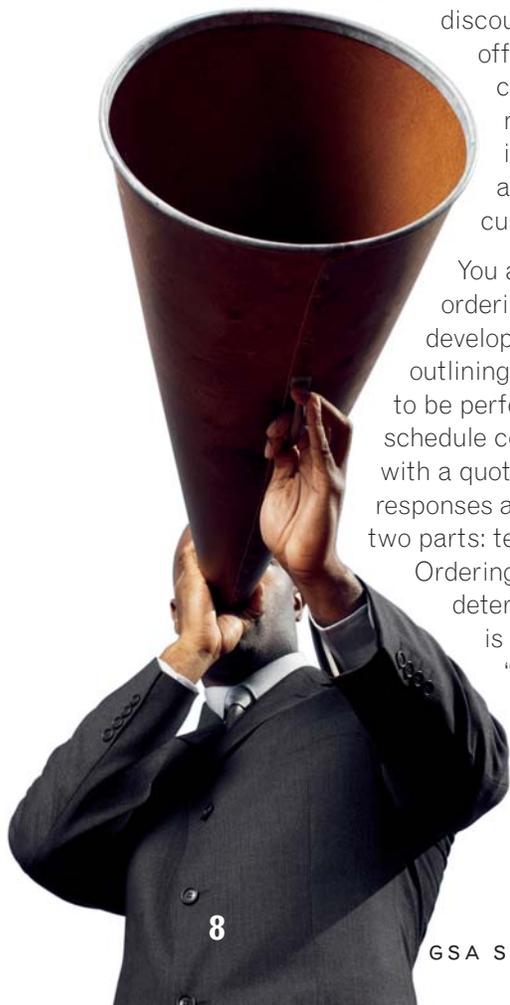
Ordering agencies then determine which contractor is the best value (see “Placing Your Order” on page 10).

It’s That Easy

The MAS program mirrors commercial buying practices more than any other procurement process in the federal government. GSA provides customers access to professional services at volume discount pricing on a direct delivery basis. This means you’ll experience shorter procurement lead-times, lower administrative costs, and reduced internal staff hours devoted to obtaining these services. The MAS program was designed with you and all our federal customers in mind. It provides a vast array of commercial items and services that can be purchased quickly and easily. Not only does your agency receive fast, direct access to industry leaders in the area of advertising and marketing services, but you can also obtain many other services and products through other schedules as well.

Cutting the Red Tape

When placing orders under an MAS, you do not need to synopsise your requirements, set aside for small business, or make a separate determination of fair and reasonable pricing. GSA has already complied with these requirements and determined that prices are fair and reasonable. By utilizing our schedules, you can avoid the stress and work normally associated with conducting your own procurement.





Benefits for You

GSA uses its aggregate purchasing power to obtain goods and services at the best value and passes these savings on to our customers.

Flexibility

- A wide selection of service providers
- Contractors on schedule have diverse varieties of specialization

Cost and Time Savings

- Drastically reduced procurement lead-times and administrative costs
- Reduced internal manpower to obtain the services you need
- Pre-negotiated fair and reasonable pricing
- The ability to negotiate additional discounts during task order placements
- Streamlined ordering procedures
- There is **NOT** a maximum order limitation on any GSA Multiple Award Schedule
- The Maximum Order (MO) Threshold was created to notify customers to ask for even greater discounts when their schedule order exceeds the MO amount

Peace of Mind

- Compliance with all applicable regulations and competition requirements, including the Competition in Contracting Act and *FAR Part 6*
- All contractors are determined to be technically qualified
- Task Orders may count towards the ordering agency's socio-economic goals

Control

- Direct relationship between the ordering agency and the contractor
- Total marketing solutions provided by experts to meet the customer's various needs



Ordering Information

Authorized Users

Agencies and activities named below may use contracts established under GSA's Multiple Award Schedules:

- All federal agencies and activities in the executive, legislative and judicial branches;
- Mixed ownership government corporations (as defined in the Government Corporation Control Act);
- The government of the District of Columbia;
- Government contractors authorized in writing by a federal agency pursuant to 48 CFR 51.1; and
- Other activities and organizations authorized by statute or regulation to use GSA as a source of supply.

Geographic Coverage

All Multiple Award Schedules provide contractors the opportunity to offer worldwide coverage. MAS contractors have three categories of geographic coverage to offer:

- 1) Domestic, which covers the 48 contiguous states; Washington, DC; Alaska; Hawaii and Puerto Rico
- 2) Overseas only, which covers overseas destinations other than Alaska, Hawaii and Puerto Rico, and
- 3) Worldwide, which covers delivery domestically AND overseas.

Finding Available Contractors

For more information about the GSA MAS program and awarded contractors, you can access our Schedules e-Library website on www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov or visit GSA's online shopping site for e-business at

GSA Advantage![®] www.gsaAdvantage.gov. Also, don't forget to utilize GSA e-Buy to post your Request for Quotes to contractors who are listed on GSA Advantage![®].

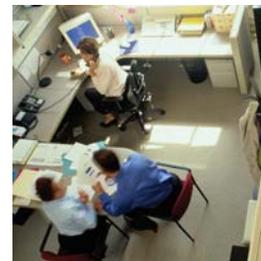
Placing Your Order

FAR 8.403(b) contemplates that GSA may establish special ordering procedures for individual GSA Multiple Award Schedules or for some Special Item Numbers (SINs) within a schedule. In the case of a conflict between these special ordering procedures and *FAR 8.405* prescribed procedures, these special ordering procedures take precedence over the procedures at *FAR 8.405*. *FAR 8.405-2* provides ordering procedures for services that require a statement of work.

The contracting officer, when placing an order or establishing a BPA, is responsible for applying the regulatory and statutory requirements applicable to the agency for which the order is placed or the BPA is established. The requiring agency shall provide the information on the applicable regulatory and statutory requirements to the contracting officer responsible for placing the order. *FAR 8.404(b)*

In particular, when ordering services over \$100,000, Department of Defense (DoD) ordering offices and non-DoD agencies placing orders on behalf of DoD must follow the policies and procedures in the *Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) 208.404-70* – Additional ordering procedures for services. When *DFARS 208.404-70* is applicable and there is a conflict between the ordering procedures contained in this clause and the additional ordering procedures for services in *DFARS 208.404-70*, the DFARS procedures take precedence.





GSA has determined that the prices for services contained in the contractor's price list applicable to this schedule are fair and reasonable. However, the ordering office using this contract is responsible for considering the level of effort and mix of labor proposed to perform a specific task being ordered and for making a determination that the total firm-fixed price or ceiling price is fair and reasonable. For additional guidance, review the "A Word about Price" section on page 15.

A. When ordering services, ordering offices shall—

1. Prepare a Request (Request for Quote or other communication tool):

- a.) Provide a statement of work (a performance-based statement of work is preferred) that outlines, at a minimum, the work to be performed, location of work, period of performance, deliverable schedule, applicable standards, acceptance criteria, any special requirements (i.e., security clearances, travel, special knowledge, etc.), and offer evaluation criteria.
- b.) The request shall include the statement of work and request the contractors to submit a price to provide the services outlined in the statement of work. A firm-fixed price order shall be requested, unless the ordering office makes a determination that it is not possible at the time of placing the order to estimate accurately the extent or duration of the work or to anticipate cost with any reasonable degree of confidence. When such a determination is made, a labor-hours or time-and-materials quote may be requested. For information on using labor-hours or time-and-materials contracts for commercial acquisitions, see the Services Acquisition Reform Act of 2003, Public Law 108-136, section 1432.

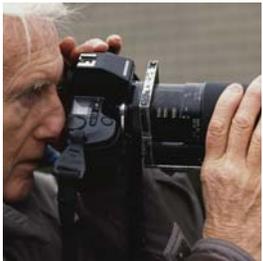
Note: The contractor's firm-fixed price should be based on the prices in the schedule contract and should consider the mix of labor categories and level of effort required to perform the services as described in the statement of work. The firm-fixed price of the order should also include any travel costs or other direct charges related to performance of the services ordered, unless the order provides for reimbursement of travel costs at the rates provided in the Federal Travel or Joint Travel Regulations. A ceiling price must be established for labor-hour and time-and-materials orders.

- c.) The request shall include evaluation criteria (e.g. experience and past performance) that effectively notify the contractors what basis will be used for selecting the contractor to receive the order. The notice shall include the basis for determining whether the contractors are technically qualified and provide an explanation regarding the intended use of any experience and/or past performance information in determining technical qualification of responses. *FAR 8.405-2*
- d.) The request may ask the contractors, if necessary or appropriate, to submit a project plan for performing the task, and information on the contractors' experience and/or past performance performing similar tasks.

2. Transmit the Request to Contractors:

Based upon an initial evaluation of catalogs and price lists, the ordering office should identify the contractors that appear to offer the best value (considering the scope of services offered, pricing and other factors such as contractors' locations, as appropriate).

- a.) Ordering activities may place orders at, or below, the micro-purchase threshold with any Federal Supply Schedule contractor that can meet the agency's needs. The ordering activity should attempt to distribute orders among contractors. *FAR 8.405-2(c)(1)*
- b.) For orders exceeding the micro-purchase threshold, but not exceeding the maximum order threshold; the request shall include a statement of work, as described on page 11, shall be provided to three (3) schedule contractors, and should request that contractors submit firm-fixed prices to perform the anticipated work. *FAR 8.405-2(c)(2)*
- c.) For proposed orders exceeding the maximum order threshold, the request shall be provided to additional schedule contractors that offer services that will meet the agency's needs. When determining the appropriate number of additional schedule contractors, the ordering activity may consider, among other factors; the complexity, scope and estimated value of the requirement and the results of market research. *FAR 8.405-2(c)(3)*
- d.) In addition, the request shall be provided to any contractor who specifically requests a copy of the request for quote. *FAR 8.405-2(c)(4)*



- e.) Ordering offices should strive to minimize the contractors' costs associated with responding to requests for quotes for specific orders. Requests should be tailored to the minimum level necessary for adequate evaluation and selection for order placement. Oral presentations should be considered, when possible.

3. Evaluate Responses and Select the Contractor to Receive the Order:

The ordering office shall evaluate all responses received using the evaluation criteria identified in the request. The ordering office is responsible for considering the level of effort and the mix of labor proposed to perform a specific task being ordered, and for determining the total price is fair and reasonable. The order should then be placed with the schedule contractor that represents the best value. *FAR 8.405-2(d)*

B. Blanket Purchase Agreements

The establishment of GSA Multiple Award Schedule Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) for recurring services is permitted when the procedures outlined herein are followed. All BPAs for services shall address the frequency of ordering and invoicing, available discounts, a description of requirements (e.g. estimated quantities, work to be performed), delivery locations, and time frames - *FAR 8.405-3*. The potential volume of orders under BPAs, regardless of the size of individual orders, may offer the ordering office the opportunity to secure volume discounts. When establishing BPAs ordering offices shall—

1. Inform contractors in the request (based on the agency's requirement) if a single BPA or multiple BPAs



will be established, and indicate the basis that will be used for selecting the contractors to be awarded the BPAs.

- a.) SINGLE BPA: Generally, a single BPA should be established when the ordering office can define the tasks to be ordered under the BPA and establish a firm-fixed price or ceiling price for individual tasks or services to be ordered. When this occurs, authorized users may place the order directly under the established BPA when the need for service arises. The schedule contractor that represents the best value should be awarded the BPA. *FAR 8.404(d)*
- b.) MULTIPLE BPAs: When the ordering office determines multiple BPAs are needed to meet its requirements, the ordering office should determine which contractors can meet any technical qualifications before establishing the BPAs. When multiple BPAs are established, the authorized users must follow the procedures in (A)(2) on page 11 and then place the order with the schedule contractor that represents the best value.

2. Review BPAs periodically: Such reviews shall be conducted at least annually. The purpose of the review is to determine whether — the schedule contract, upon which the BPA was established, is still in effect; the BPA still represents the best value for the government- *FAR 8.405-3(d)*; and estimated quantities/amounts have been exceeded and additional price reductions can be obtained - *FAR 8.404(d)(1)*. Finally, the ordering activity shall document the results of its review - *FAR 8.405-3(d)(2)*.

- C. Although the mandatory preference programs of *FAR Part 19* do not apply, orders placed against schedule contracts may be credited toward the ordering activity's small business goals - *FAR 8.405-5(a)*. Therefore, the ordering office should give preference to small business concerns when two or more schedule contractors can provide the services at the same firm-fixed price or ceiling price. At a minimum, ordering activities should consider, if available, at least one small business, veteran-owned small business, service disabled veteran-owned small business, HUBZone small business, woman-owned small business, or small disadvantaged business schedule contractor - *FAR 8.405-5(b)*.

- D. When the ordering office's requirement involves both products as well as executive, administrative and/or professional services, the ordering office should total the prices for the products and the firm-fixed price for the services and select the contractor that represents the best value - *FAR 8.404(d)*.

E. Documentation

The ordering office, at a minimum, shall document the contractor from which the services were purchased, a description of the services purchased, the amount paid, and if applicable, the circumstances and rationale for restricting consideration of schedule contractors to fewer than that required in *FAR 8.405-1* or *8.405-2*.

The ordering office shall also document the evaluation methodology used in selecting the contractor to receive the order, the rationale for any tradeoffs in making the selection, the price reasonableness determination required by *FAR 8.405-2(d)*, and the rationale for using other than a firm-fixed price order or a performance-based order - *FAR 8.405-7*.





Other Direct Costs and GSA MAS

Other Direct Costs (ODCs) are charges for items utilized in conjunction with direct support of a service. Use of the three categories of ODCs is acceptable for task orders placed against GSA MAS contracts if certain procedures are followed. The three types of ODCs and their corresponding guidelines are listed as follows:

1. Contract Support Items (CSIs): Refer to *FSS Supply Operations Handbook, Volume 2, Procurement (FSS P 2901.2A)*. For more information on the *FSS Supply Operations Handbook, Volume 2, Procurement*, please call (703) 305-6658.
2. Incidentals: Refer to *FAR 8.402(f)*
3. Travel: Refer to *41 C.F.R. Chaps. 300-304 (Federal Travel Regulation)* and *10 U.S.C. Chap. 7 (Joint Federal Travel Regulation)*

Best Value

Customers are to make the best value selections. Best Value is a process used to select services or products to meet your needs. Best Value determinations ensure good business decisions by the use of factors other than price. A good way to determine your Best Value requirements is to evaluate what is most important to your agency and organization other than price. Some factors might be:

- Administrative costs
- Corporate experience
- Delivery
- Environmental and energy efficiency considerations
- Maintenance availability
- Past performance

- Probable life of the item selected
- Technical qualifications/solutions
- Trade-in considerations
- Training
- Warranty

For further guidance, or to attend an online class at our FSS Center for Acquisition Excellence, please visit our schedules website: www.fsstraining.gsa.gov. Additional guidance can also be obtained by reviewing/using the "Best Value Determination" insert in the back pocket of this folder.



A Word about Price

Although GSA has made the determination that the price awarded on a service schedule is a fair and reasonable one, GSA has not determined that the level of effort or mix of labor proposed in response to any specific requirement is in itself, fair and reasonable. When buying services that require a statement of work, only you can make a determination that the task or delivery order price is reasonable and represents best value.

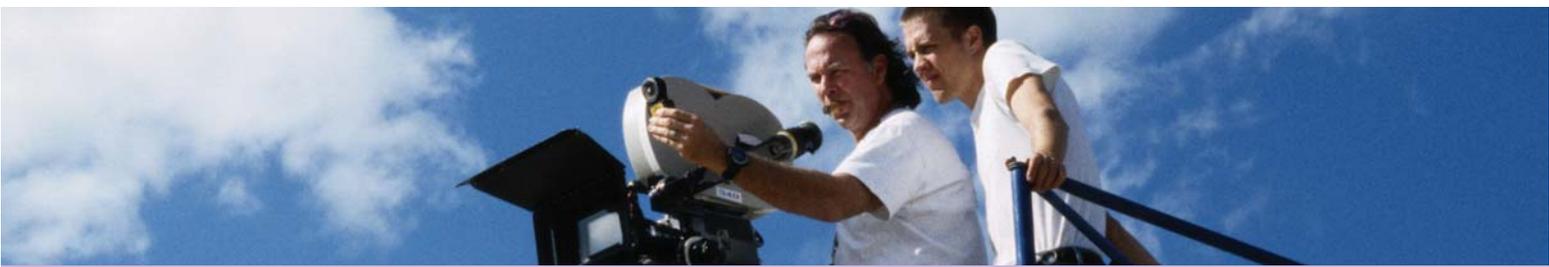
It is a proven best practice that ordering offices should seek additional price reductions/increased discounts and/or concessions when placing an order under a GSA Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contract. Contractors will often “sharpen their pencils” to obtain a large MAS contract order. GSA MAS contractors are not required to pass on to all MAS users a price reduction extended only to an individual customer for a specific order.

You are encouraged to seek further price reductions as requirements may warrant! Price reductions allow agencies to take advantage of the flexible and dynamic commercial market-pricing environment that is the hallmark of MAS. When you ask for price reductions, it can maximize your use of MAS by taking advantage of competitive forces, technological changes, labor conditions, supply and demand, industry sales goals, inventory reductions and more!

The ability to seek additional price reductions and concessions allows the government to not only leverage its combined requirement to obtain favorable terms, conditions, and pricing, but to also leverage agency requirements that take advantage of quantity or spot discounts available in a fluid, commercial pricing atmosphere!

Reasons to seek price reductions include instances where you have determined that a service or product is available elsewhere at a lower price, or when establishing blanket purchase agreements (BPAs) to fill recurring requirements. BPAs offer an easy-to-use, flexible purchasing option that allows you to take advantage of quantity discounts, save administrative time and reduce paperwork. The potential volume of orders under BPAs offers the opportunity to secure price reductions/increased discounts, regardless of the size of individual orders. If you are interested in setting up a BPA with a GSA Multiple Award Schedule contractor, take a look at our suggested BPA format on page 17 for guidance.

While ordering offices are encouraged to seek price reductions for any size MAS contract order, they are **required** to seek price reductions if a requirement exceeds a MAS contract’s maximum order (MO) threshold. The MO under a GSA MAS contract is the dollar value threshold at which the ordering office must seek additional price reductions for its requirement. The MO threshold varies from schedule to schedule and sometimes even from SIN to SIN. The MO threshold for the AIMS schedule is \$1,000,000 per SIN. In addition, the MO threshold is listed in every GSA MAS contractor’s price list and in GSA *Advantage!*®. In response to the ordering office’s request for a price reduction, the contractor may offer a lower price, offer the current schedule contract price, or decline the order. If further price reductions are not offered, the order may still be placed if the ordering office determines that it is appropriate, since GSA has already determined the contract prices to be fair and reasonable.



Purchasing Options

GSA has a variety of purchasing options available to you. So whether your needs range from addressing small business goals and repetitive buys to creating your own total solution or having GSA do it for you, the purchasing options offered give you the flexibility you need. Let's take a more in depth look at each of the different options.

Small Business Means Big Business

The General Services Administration and the Small Business Administration (SBA) strongly support the participation of small business concerns in the Multiple Award Schedules program. To enhance small business participation, SBA policy requires agencies to include in their procurement base and goals the dollar value of orders expected to be placed against the Multiple Award Schedules, and to report accomplishments against these goals. For more details, please visit www.sba.gov.

The GSA Schedules e-Library website contains information on business size and socio-economic status. This information should be used as a tool to assist ordering activities in meeting or exceeding established small business goals. By utilizing the information found on this website, you are also encouraged to consider small, small disadvantaged, 8(a) firms, veteran owned, disabled veteran owned and women-owned small businesses when making a best value determination. To visit GSA Schedules e-Library, go to www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov.

Blanket Purchase Agreements

If you are dealing with repetitive buys, Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs) are for you!

A BPA is a simplified method of filling recurring needs for services and products, while leveraging your buying power by taking advantage of quantity discounts, saving administrative time and reducing paperwork. Think of the BPA as an "account" established between you (the customer) and a schedule contractor. By setting up a BPA, you save time and resources. Simplify your ordering by processing a BPA once and then use it as your agency's needs occur.

With an MAS BPA, you can order as little as you want, as much as you want, and as often as you want. You are not restricted by any dollar limitations when placing orders under an MAS BPA. A BPA can be set up for your field offices across the nation to use, thus allowing them to participate in your BPA and place orders directly with schedule contractors. By doing so, your entire agency reaps the benefits of additional discounts negotiated into your own BPA.

A BPA cannot exceed the contractor's schedule contract period. You should always perform an annual review of your BPA to determine whether it is still a "best value." Agencies can locate the guidelines for establishing a BPA in the section titled "Placing Your Order" on page 10. For your convenience, we have also included a sample BPA. For further guidance on establishing a BPA, visit our online FSS Center for Acquisition Excellence at www.gsa.gov/schedules.



SAMPLE BPA

BPA NUMBER _____

(CUSTOMER NAME) _____

BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENT

Pursuant to GSA Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contract number(s) _____, Blanket Purchase Agreements, the Contractor agrees to the following terms of a Blanket Purchase Agreement (BPA) EXCLUSIVELY WITH (Ordering Agency):

(1) The following contract services/products can be ordered under this BPA. All orders placed against this BPA are subject to the terms and conditions of the contract, except as noted below:

ITEM (Special Item Number or Type of Service)	SPECIAL BPA DISCOUNT/ PRICE
---	-----------------------------

_____	_____
_____	_____

(2) Delivery:

DESTINATION	DELIVERY SCHEDULE/DATES
-------------	-------------------------

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(3) The Government estimates, but does not guarantee, that the volume of purchases through this agreement will be _____.

(4) This BPA does not obligate any funds.

(5) This BPA expires on _____ or at the end of the contract period, whichever is earlier.

(6) The following office(s) is hereby authorized to place orders under this BPA.

POINT OF CONTACT

_____	_____
_____	_____

(7) Orders will be placed against this BPA via Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), FAX, paper, or oral communications.

(8) Unless otherwise agreed to, all deliveries under this BPA must be accompanied by delivery tickets or sales slips that must contain the following information as a minimum:

- (a) Name of Contractor;
- (b) Contract Number;
- (c) BPA Number;
- (d) Special Item Number (SIN);
- (e) Task Order Number;
- (f) Date of Purchase;
- (g) Quantity, Unit Price, and Extension of Each Item (unit prices and extensions need not be shown when incompatible with the use of automated systems; provided, that the invoice is itemized to show the information); and
- (h) Date of Delivery.

(9) The requirements of a proper invoice are as specified in the GSA MAS contract. Invoices will be submitted to the address specified within the task order transmission issued against this BPA.

(10) The terms and conditions included in this BPA apply to all purchases made pursuant to it. In the event of an inconsistency between the provisions of this BPA and the Contractor's invoice, the provisions of this BPA will take precedence.

***IMPORTANT — The GSA Multiple Award Schedules program permits contractors to offer price reductions in accordance with commercial practice. Contractor Team Arrangements are permitted with GSA MAS contractors in accordance with FAR Subpart 9.6.**

Total Solutions through Contractor Teaming Arrangements

For complex tasks, Contractor Teaming Arrangements (CTAs) may be desirable from both a government and industry perspective. A Contractor Teaming Arrangement allows two or more GSA schedule contractors to work together to meet agency requirements, allowing them to compete for orders for which they may not qualify independently. Contractors on the same schedule or across multiple schedules can team. By using CTAs, contractors can complement each other's unique capabilities while offering government agencies the best turnkey solutions based on a combination of performance, cost and delivery of acquired services. You can benefit from using CTAs by buying a solution rather than making separate buys from various contractors. See *FAR 9.6* for more information or visit www.gsa.gov/schedules.

GSA e-Buy, an Electronic Way to Order Services

e-Buy, a component of GSA *Advantage!*[®], is an online Request for Quote (RFQ) tool designed to facilitate the request for submission of quotes for a wide range of commercial services and products that are offered by GSA Multiple Award Schedule contractors who are on GSA *Advantage!*[®].

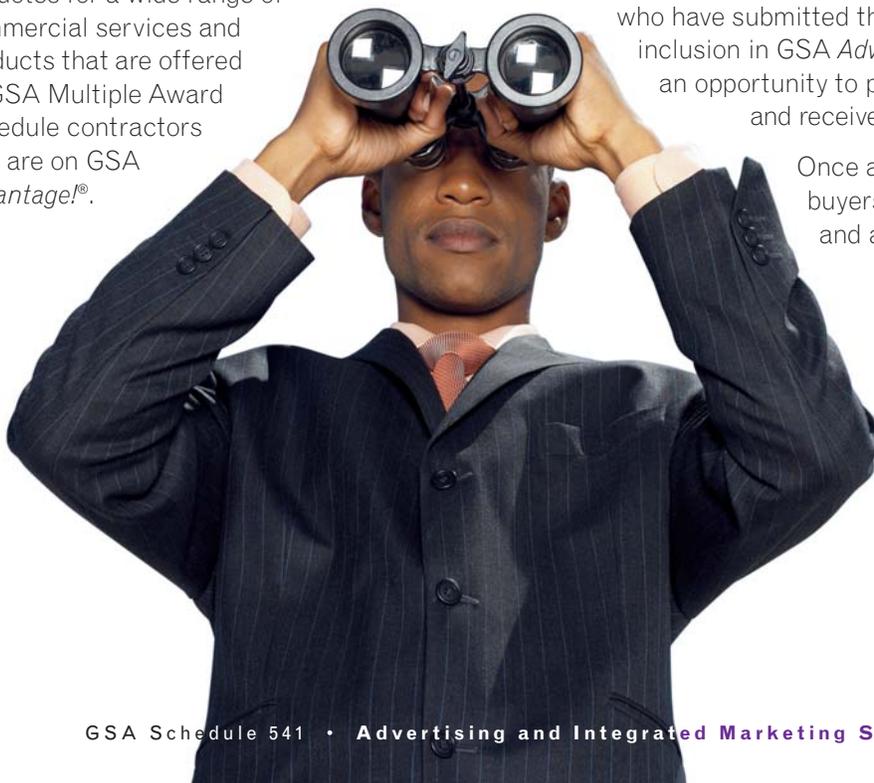
e-Buy allows federal agencies (buyers) to maximize their buying power by leveraging the power of the Internet to increase schedule contractor participation in order to obtain quotes which will result in a best value purchase decision. e-Buy provides agencies with a tool that will result in savings in both time and money.

Using the e-Buy system, buyers may prepare and post an RFQ for specific services and products for a designated period of time. Each RFQ is assigned to a GSA Multiple Award Schedule, Special Item Number (SIN) category by the buyer.

The category assignment determines which sellers may receive the e-mail notice to quote. Sellers are automatically listed under their awarded SIN categories. Buyers may notify all sellers listed under a particular SIN category or may choose to notify a lesser number of sellers. (*FAR 8.4* and the Ordering Procedures for Services Requiring a Statement of Work stipulate that buyers must submit their RFQ to three or more sellers for purchases over the micro-purchase threshold.) Sellers not notified may still submit a quote for an RFQ placed under their awarded SIN.

Contractors who wish to quote must do so at the e-Buy website. Only those contractors who have submitted their catalogs for inclusion in GSA *Advantage!*[®] will have an opportunity to participate in e-Buy and receive requests for quotes.

Once an RFQ has closed, buyers may then evaluate and accept the quote





that represents the best value. Buyers may then issue an order to any contractor whose quote was accepted. To visit GSA e-Buy, go to www.ebuy.gsa.gov.

An Extra Tool for Your Acquisition Toolbox – GSA-Managed Acquisitions

Need additional contracting personnel, internal resources, or technical savvy to conduct your next procurement? GSA realizes that a “one size fits all” philosophy doesn’t work in the real world, so we make sure you have several tools to pick from in your acquisition toolbox to address these issues. Whether you decide to conduct your own procurement (customer-managed acquisition) or have us do some or all of it for you (GSA-Managed Acquisitions), GSA is here to help. Through GSA’s Office of Professional Services (a division of the Federal Technology Service – FTS), you can get the level of assistance you need on a fee basis in the areas of acquisition management, project management, procurement support, and financial management for IT and specific professional services from GSA schedules, including the AIMS schedule. We’ve already covered the benefits of doing the procurement yourself, so let’s take a look at your other option – GSA-Managed Acquisitions through GSA’s FTS.

In a GSA-Managed Acquisition, you can customize the solution to your requirements by using specific elements of GSA support, or by outsourcing the entire project for a turnkey solution. GSA works with you to understand your requirements and helps you choose, implement and manage the acquisition for the best solution to meet your needs. You define

the project and the budget. GSA does the rest to free up your valuable resources for other tasks. Benefits of GSA-Managed Acquisitions include:

■ **Acquisition Expertise**

GSA professionals will work with you to define your requirements, write statements of work, perform market surveys, develop acquisition strategies, run technical evaluation boards and evaluate “best value.”

■ **Professional Project Management**

Experienced professionals provide various levels of support that can encompass end-to-end project management of the acquisition. To demonstrate this commitment to end-to-end project management, the FTS professionals will manage the project after award to oversee scheduling and deliverables, accounts payable and financial oversight, all while keeping costs in check!

■ **Back-Up Support**

Even if you don’t need a total turnkey solution, but just need a little extra support for that large “needed it yesterday” procurement, you can still turn to GSA for support. Use GSA resources to complement your agency’s contracting capabilities on an “as needed” basis.

Look to GSA-Managed Acquisitions when you need your project done on time and on budget. For more information, contact the FTS Office of Professional Services at (703) 306-6140 or visit: www.gsa.gov/ps.





So, Now You Know

. . . that acquiring expert advertising and integrated marketing services need not be time consuming, costly, or intimidating. Thanks to GSA's Advertising and Integrated Marketing Solutions schedule, you can now obtain valuable expertise easily!

Need More Info?

For contract specific or technical information, visit the AIMS website:

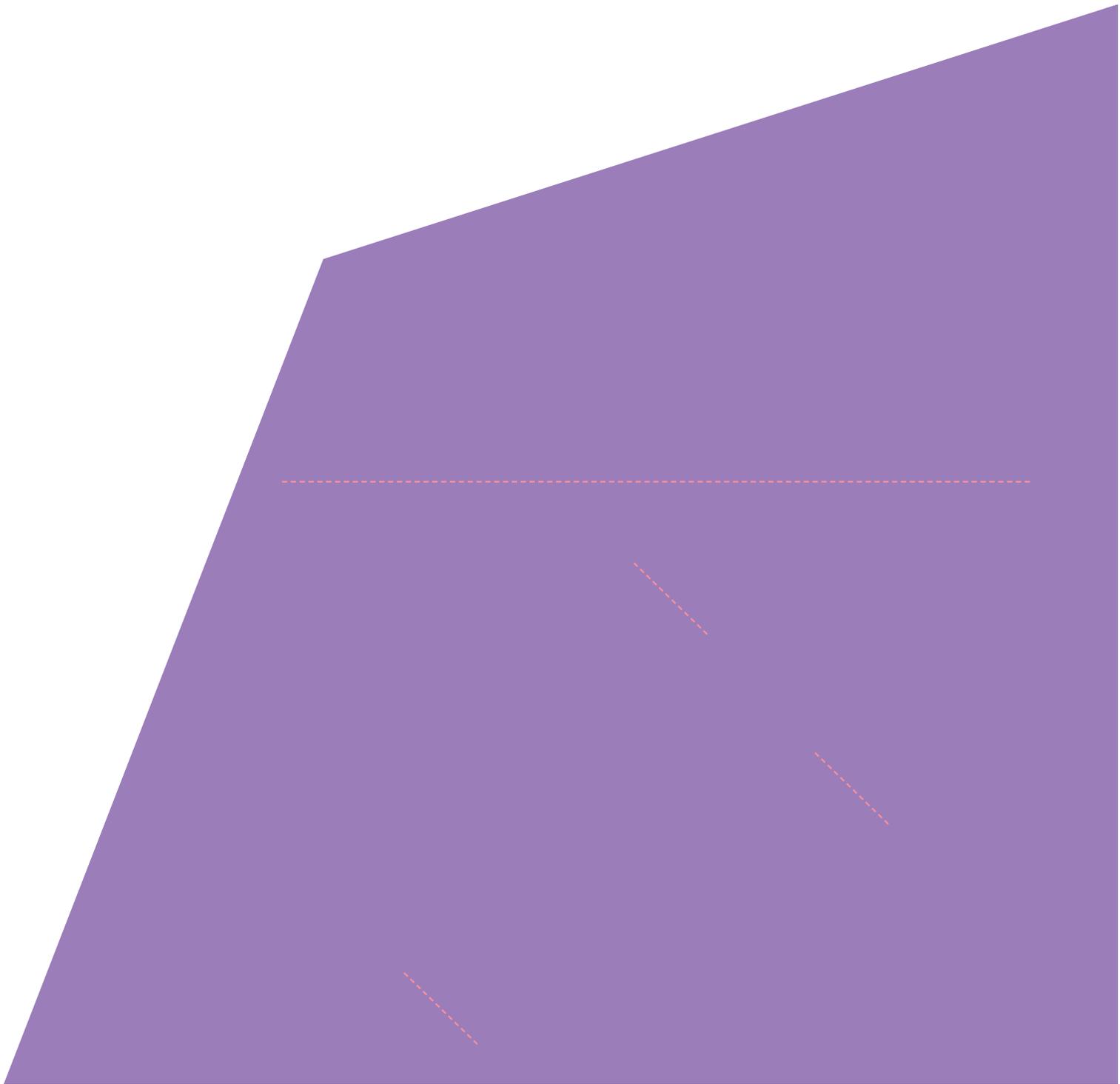
www.gsa.gov/marketing/services

. . . or visit the Services Acquisition Center's website for additional service offerings at: www.gsa.gov/servicesacquisitioncenter

Call us at: (703) 305-6658

For general information, contact the National Customer Services Center at (800) 488-3111 or e-mail NCSCCustomer.Service@gsa.gov.







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