

How To Approach U.S. Federal Government Procurement

Commercial opportunities are among the most exciting and important focus areas of government affairs, and the effort of selling products and services to the government – known formally as procurement – is both an enticing yet daunting revenue stream opportunity for most companies. Poligage is pleased to share the insights of Poligage Expert and Advisor [Joe Jordan](#) on how companies should think about, plan for, and engage effectively on procurement efforts with the U.S. federal government.

Are there any “benchmarks” that might help company know if they are a candidate to sell their products or services through a government channel?

In FY2022, the US Federal Government spent over \$1 trillion on contractual services and supplies. It issued over 5.5 million contract actions to get those goods and services that agencies needed to fulfill their mission. So it is honestly hard to find a company who sells something that the Government doesn't buy. No matter who you are, I bet it would be a wise use of time and possibly resources to ascertain what your Federal contracting opportunity might look like.

How should a company go about assessing their options for government procurement?

As you can imagine, while the overall U.S. Federal contracting spend is enormous, it can be hard to parse through those millions of contracts and trillions of dollars in spend to figure out what might be a realistic opportunity for your business. The award data is publicly available at [usaspending.gov](https://www.usaspending.gov) and live contracting opportunities are often listed in the System for Award Management, but many businesses have drowned in that sea of information. That is why it can be a huge time and cost savings to engage a sherpa to help you navigate the best route to the mountaintop.

What are the biggest mistakes you've seen made by companies entering the government procurement realm?

The two biggest mistakes that I see companies make in trying to pursue Federal opportunities are: one, trying to figure it out themselves, despite having limited or no experience navigating the Federal contracting ecosystem, and two, going to the other extreme and hiring “gold tooth bob” to “walk the halls of the Pentagon” and win them contracts. Both of these approaches almost universally fail and lead to significant frustrations and wasted time and money.

What is the typical timeline and cadence for a company getting involved in federal government procurement?

Companies can become registered to do business with the government in a matter of days typically, but it can take much longer than that to win your first contract award. Just like selling in the private sector, you will need to convince a potential buyer to choose your product or service. This takes time and effort, and while blue birds can certainly fly in, the process usually takes about one year before a company wins their first Federal contract.



[Joe Jordan](#)

President and CEO of Actuparo

Joe Jordan is an expert on U.S. government procurement accessibility, rules, and growth strategy. Among many distinguished positions, Joe has served as Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy within the White House Office of Management and Budget and Associate Administrator of the U.S. Small Business Administration through which he led the SBA's Office of Government Contracting and Business Development.

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