



# Marketing your Business to the Public Sector

Fall, 2019

# Welcome

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# How to play this Webinar

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Once you have completed this webinar, click on *Menu* to reflect the course in a non-linear fashion.

This *Menu* tab allows you return or advance to any slide by clicking on the slide title listed in this Table of Contents.

Click on *Resources* for a PDF version of this presentation, and other useful links.

You have control of the audio-volume.

This button allows you to 'pause-play' each slide.

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Marketing Your Business To the Public Sector  
the Public Sector  
Fall, 2019  
NOVA SCOTIA

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# Agenda

This presentation, will focus on the following business preparation techniques to help your organization make meaningful business relationships with the public sector in Nova Scotia:

- Who is the Public Sector in Nova Scotia?
- Creating business relationships.
- Elevator pitch development and execution.
- Etiquette and networking.
- Participating in trade shows.
- Post-meeting follow up.
- What we're hearing from public sector purchasers.
- Tips to get started.

# The Public Sector in Nova Scotia

- The Public Sector in Nova Scotia is made up of:
  - Government Departments and Units.
  - Agencies, Boards and Commissions (the ABCs).
  - Municipalities.
  - Academic Institutions.
  - Schools.
  - Health Authorities.
- Collectively, the public sector spends approximately 2 billion dollars on goods, services, and construction each year.
- More than 80% of this purchasing is made locally.

# Government of Nova Scotia

DEPARTMENTS

19

BOARDS AND  
COMMISSIONS

(e.g., NSLC, Water Commission, WCB)

100+

# Who is the MASH Sector ?

Municipalities & Towns

54

Academic Institutions

14

School Districts  
(440 Schools)

8

Health Authorities  
(40 Hospitals)

2

## Procurement Thresholds for Provincial Government Departments\*

Type of Purchase	Applicable Threshold	Purchasing Instructions (Tender)
Goods and Services	Under \$2,500	Purchase direct from vendor. <i>Quotes not required, but recommended for obtaining best value.</i>
Goods	Under \$10,000	Three (3) quotes are required.
Services	Under \$50,000	Three (3) quotes are required.
Goods	Over \$10,000	This is the public tender threshold. Purchases over this value must be tendered.
Services	Over \$50,000	This is the public tender threshold. Purchases over this value must be tendered.

**\*Note:** MASH and other public sector entities may have different thresholds based on their own procurement policies. Refer to the procurement policy of the MASH sector entity that you are interested in doing business with.

# Low Value Purchases VS Tenders

Some things to consider:

- Government departments and public sector entities must operate within their policy thresholds.
- Keep these dollar amounts in mind when thinking about potential purchasers you wish to sell to. Align your business strategy with what and how much you will be selling to these organizations.
- Become knowledgeable about the quantity and price range purchasers purchase at. Low value purchases can come from many areas within a public entity – not just the purchasing department.
- Do your homework prior to contacting a potential purchaser. This allows you to be prepared, and will help get your business relationships off to a strong start.

# Creating Business Relationships

- Creating business relationships is an integral part of expanding your company or organization's capacity and operations, and can lead to a vast number of future opportunities in the public sector and business world.
- Proper preparation is key in the lead-up to consulting with individuals who can help expand your operations. After you are prepared to meet, you must gain and retain the interest and attention of potential business leads. This is the first step in creating a business relationship, and sets the bar for how the rest of your relationship with this individual or organization will look.
- Lastly, an effective follow-up after the initial point of communication is crucial to keeping a strong relationship with an individual or organization.

# Developing Your Elevator Pitch

An elevator pitch is a short (*15-30 second, approximately 150 words*) sound bite used to introduce yourself and your company to new contacts.

## Why is it important?

- It highlights your unique value proposition.
- It is an effective tool for business networking.
- It makes a lasting first impression.
- It gets your organizations name and reputation into conversations.

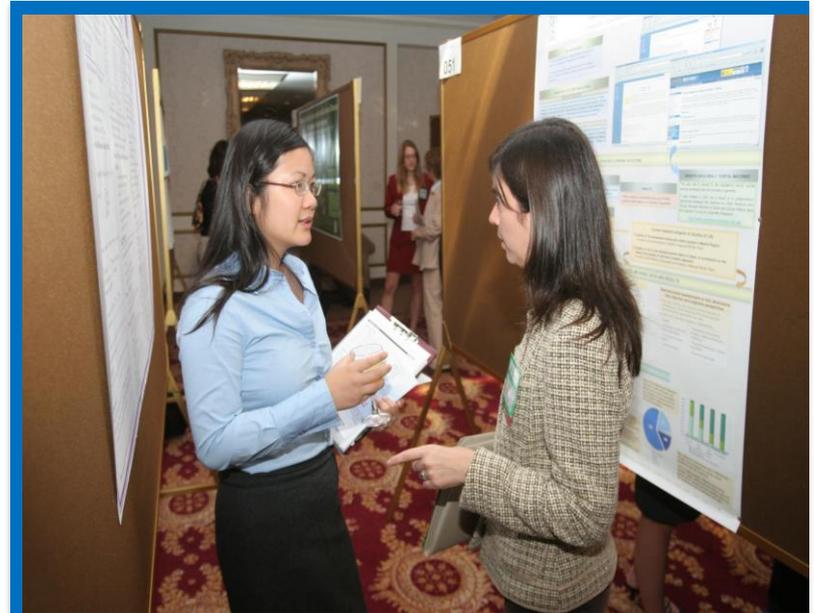
# Pitch Preparation

- Prepare your pitch prior meeting with potential clients.
- Briefly describe an overview of your organization, and the goods and services that you offer in a sales pitch to purchasers.
- Practice enough (with family, friends, coworkers etc.) so you feel confident and comfortable with explaining what your business can offer to purchasers.
- Remember, this time is used to gain interest, without overwhelming them with too much information.

**Think of your pitch as what you would say on a short elevator ride: when the person leaves the elevator what are the main things you'd like them to know?**

# Networking

- Networking is an integral part in creating potential business relationships for your organization.
- Make sure employees that will be consulting business leads are prepped on how to network, and what message you want them to send when speaking with potential clients.



# Networking Tips

- Use positive body language that is open and welcoming, yet professional.
- Initiate eye contact with each potential client.
- Smiling encourages people to come over and talk to you.
- Initiate conversation once you make eye contact.
- Greet visitors politely.
- Ask for a business card of each potential client to follow up later.

# Conversation Starters

Ask open ended questions. For example, asking questions that require more than a “yes or no” answer will help foster conversations. Also, be prepared with follow up questions.

**Consider questions and follow-ups like these:**

- Where are your organizations current needs?  
**Follow-up:** Is this consistently a need for your organization?
- Are there any goods or services that you are having problems purchasing?  
**Follow-up:** What do you think is contributing to those issues?

# Business Cards

- Collecting business cards from potential purchasers can be one of the initial steps in creating a business relationship.
- It is useful to write where and when you met someone on their business card for reference.
- This will allow you to obtain contact information to start communicating with potential purchasers or business partners.



# After the Introduction

Timely, meaningful follow-up is key to maintaining the connection with potential new customers.

## Why is it Important?

- A well executed follow-up to reconnect with potential business partners is a crucial part of the continuous process of building a strong relationship.
- This will get the business relationship off to a strong start by showing interest, and respect to your potential purchaser or business lead.

# Follow-Up

- Plan to follow-up should in a timely, professional manner.
- You should follow-up within 10 working days; (email is preferred).
- Poor planning results in 70% of missed follow-up opportunities
- When reaching out to the organizations you met with, thank them for taking the time to talk with you, reference a point of your conversation if you can remember, and remind them again what your organization does and can provide for them.
- Be polite, to-the-point and keep in mind you're trying to discover what working relationship you can build.

# Going to Trade Shows & Events

- Trade shows and events allow exhibitors to expand potential business opportunities and network with purchasers who may have interests in their organization, goods, or services.
- These shows provide a platform for producers and purchasers to make meaningful connections, learn from others, in addition to increasing their business capacity.



# Building Opportunities in Public Sector Purchasing

## ANNUAL REVERSE TRADE SHOW

Don't miss an opportunity to increase the awareness of public sector procurement opportunities for the local supplier community by bringing together all levels of government in Nova Scotia for a day of face-to-face networking.

### WHO PARTICIPATES?

#### SUPPLIERS

For suppliers, this event offers several channels for exploring opportunities & gaining valuable insight into the processes and systems of public procurement. In addition, improve access to more public sector business.

#### PUBLIC SECTOR

For exhibitors, the Reverse Trade Show offers an excellent introduction to a diverse group of companies and individuals offering goods and services that will enhance the delivery of services by public sector entities to all Nova Scotians.

#### STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders offer a variety of business service expertise, such as collaboration & networking opportunities, support when navigating the public sector, and information on various requirements for doing business with the public sector.

# What We're Hearing

- Low value purchases (under \$10,000) can be a great first step to doing business with the public sector and can help build your reputation as a supplier.
- Purchasers responsible for low value spend can come from all areas and departments of an organization, not just the procurement group. The Procurement Department of an organization may be able to help you identify these purchasers
- Public sector purchasers said they are primarily interested in getting purchasing information from a website. Do not rely on Facebook as your only selling tool.
- Purchasers said they would prefer to be in contact via email regarding quotes or low value (under \$10,000) purchases.
- Purchasers expect a response within 1 to 2 days when in communication via email or voicemail.

# How Purchasers Find Suppliers

Purchasers typically find their suppliers through;

- Past experiences.
- Word of mouth.
- Recommendations.
- Online searches.



# Conclusion

These business strategies and tips will help your organization and employees attract and retain potential public sector clients and help you organization to:

- Become more confident.
- Become more prepared.
- Attract more business.
- Expand your business.
- Increase awareness and reputation for your business.

# Where to go From Here

Connecting with public sector purchasers - getting started:

- Check out our website at <https://procurement.novascotia.ca/>
- Sign up for our Supplier Newsletter: *Growing Opportunities*.
- Watch for our Reverse Trade Show to meet public sector purchasers.

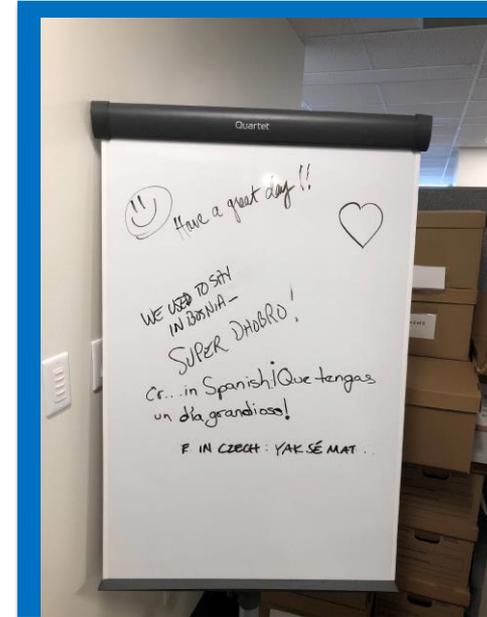
If you are interested in bidding on tenders:

- Follow us on Twitter @NS\_Procure
- Register for the [www.discovery.ariba.com](http://www.discovery.ariba.com)
- Register for our Tender Opportunities Notification Service (TONS).

# For More Information

email [supdev@novascotia.ca](mailto:supdev@novascotia.ca) to:

- submit questions and,
- sign up to receive updates on supplier events and other news related to the public procurement in Nova Scotia.



# Thank-you

If you have any comments or questions please contact [supdev@novascotia.ca](mailto:supdev@novascotia.ca)