



VIRGINIA'S
ENTERPRISE ELECTRONIC
PROCUREMENT SYSTEM

Small, Woman-owned, Minority-owned Business

Department of General Services
Serving Government. Serving Virginians



INTRODUCTION

The Commonwealth of Virginia seeks to maximize the participation of its citizens in the vast array of commercial opportunities in state procurement and increase the participation of small, woman-owned and minority-owned businesses (SWaM) in its purchases of products and services.

The eVA System supports this objective in two ways, (1) by enabling the procurement process through the use of technology to make procurement opportunities transparent and visible to SWaM businesses, and (2) by making the process more efficient through electronic instead of paper-based procurement processing thereby saving SWaM businesses time and money and making them more competitive.

eVA has directly contributed to the most significant increase in procurement awards to SWaM businesses in recent years. Between Fiscal Years 2004 to 2009, procurement awards to small, woman-owned, and minority-owned businesses increased by 181% to small businesses, 1,198% to woman-owned businesses, and 588% to minority-owned businesses.

HOW SWaM VENDORS BENEFIT AND SAVE

While not all benefits can be quantified, it should be obvious to the reader how SWaM vendors save from the following eVA benefits.

★ **Purchase Transparency — Business Opportunities**

Visible to SWaM Vendors At no cost to vendors, the *Virginia Business Opportunities (VBO)*, *Quick Quote*, and *Push Technology* tools help vendors instantly identify business opportunities at over 171 agencies and institutions of higher education and 575 local government entities at their desktop PC or fax machine without having to spend time and gas traveling and clearing security. These opportunities may never have been seen by the vendor in the past and as such would have been a missed opportunity. **As one supplier advised, "I would not have had an opportunity to bid if I had not seen the Hewlett-Packard procurement on eVA."** The VBO is now free in that the eVA electronic version replaced a \$75 annual subscription to a weekly paper version.

Quick Quote is a simple procurement tool for purchases less than \$50,000. More than 80% of the Commonwealth's purchases are below this threshold. Historically these procurement opportunities were not publicly posted (advertised) and therefore not visible to SWaM vendors. Introduction of the Quick Quote tool has given SWaM vendors access to these often missed business op-

portunities. eVA Quick Quote on average reaches 30% more SWaM suppliers than traditional purchasing methods and the number of SWaM orders have increased 26-51% each fiscal year.

Push Technology is a tool that saves vendors from having to search through volumes of business opportunities in the eVA data base to find specific opportunities of interest. eVA automatically sends the vendor an email or fax notice of any opportunity that falls in a category of interest identified by the vendor. In the past SWaM vendors had to visit individual procurement offices all over the Commonwealth to build personal relationships with individual buyers in hopes of getting access to business opportunities. Now these opportunities come directly to them as soon as they are posted on eVA. The eVA Quick Quote tool provides vendors access to previously unavailable business opportunities and saves them substantial time and money.

★ **Buyers Find/Identify SWaM Vendors** SWaM vendors are flagged in eVA providing a quick way for buyers to identify SWaM sources and open business opportunities to all SWaMs. Before eVA, buyers may not have even know of new and existing SWaM sources.

★ **Purchasing Data Warehouse — Information for Business Planning & Market Analysis** The eVA data warehouse now contains almost \$20 billion in state, institution of higher education and local government purchase transaction data. Vendors can run reports to review this information down to the purchase order line item level and use this data in their business strategic planning. Vendors can see who is buying their product, what they are paying for it, and who are their competitors. This market insight helps vendors adjust their pricing to become more competitive. **As one small supplier put it, "It no longer takes an act of Congress to obtain information on state purchases."**

★ **Register One Time** Instead of businesses having to register multiple times with many of the 171 agencies, institutions of higher education, and 575 local government entities to participate in procurements, they can register one time on eVA to do business with all of these organizations. eVA vendor registration can be completed electronically via the Internet. This saves businesses time and money.

★ **Postage and Express Mail Savings** eVA's online registration and online bidding features substantially reduce the requirement for vendors to send paper documents



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through the mail resulting in savings and mitigating lost opportunities resulting from late bids and proposals.

✦ **Electronic Storefront — Electronic Catalogs** A vendor can place an electronic catalog in eVA to put their products and services in front of more than 13,000 buyers in 171 agencies, institutions of higher education, and 575 local government entities. Previously vendors had to print these catalogs and travel to every agency to make distribution. Innovative vendors have found ways to use this catalog feature to market themselves to eVA buyers. eVA has saved vendors substantial time, travel and printing costs.

✦ **Electronic Order Efficiency** Independent studies by renowned organizations such as the IBM Endowment for The Business of Government have shown that a typical paper-based purchase costs a minimum of \$125 to process and this cost can be reduced to \$10 to \$15 through electronic processing. While these numbers reflect the government side, there are similar cost savings on the vendor side through processing orders electronically. Some of these savings are due to more accurate purchase orders and less rework, more timely receipt of purchase orders, and reduced mailing, travel and printing costs.

✦ **Faster to Point of Payment—Improved Cash Flow** Electronic ordering and receiving results in faster delivery of accurate documents to the Finance Department for invoice matching and payment. Although the Commonwealth pays in 30 days, getting accurate documentation quicker reduces rework and delay and vendors get their payments faster.

✦ **SWaM Reporting** Improving Small, Woman-owned and Minority-owned business participation in business opportunities is a major goal of Virginia's Governor and General Assembly. eVA allows reporting of SWaM purchases so that agencies, institutions of higher education and local governments can track their performance near real-time. The ability to track performance keeps attention on the goal and pays dividends for SWaM businesses through increased business opportunities.

INFORMATION

More information on eVA System functionality and the Commonwealth's purchasing environment Before and After eVA can be found at www.eva.virginia.gov under **eVA FACTS** or by contacting the Director, Division of Purchases and Supply/DGS at 804.786.3846

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