



July 13, 2009

Department of General Services  
Attn: Erikka J. Veney, VCA  
eCommerce Analyst/Vendor Support Manager  
eVA Project Team

Dear Erikka:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter regarding my experience with eVA. Superior Global Solutions has been a vendor with eVA since October of 2003. We have enjoyed the new process whereby SWAM vendors have an opportunity to compete with other businesses to provide services to the Commonwealth of Virginia. eVA is a very useful system, in that it has allowed our business to make contact with several agencies in order for us to promote our goods and services.

When we first became aware of the eVA system, we knew that eVA is a "tool" for marketing ourselves to the agencies. The certification process did not guarantee us any business, and it was our responsibility to utilize the features of the eVA system. Therefore, we put together a plan to market ourselves with the system below.

1. Run reports to determine which agencies purchased the services we offer. We were able to scope down by code or keyword.
2. Categorize this list first by target market (education, health care, corrections, transportation, etc.).
3. Send out a blast email informing the selected contacts of our status as a SWAM vendor, and offer to meet in person, or by phone for a formal introduction.
4. Follow-up with a letter of introduction and request for formal meet and greet.
5. Request an opportunity to quote on product(s) for the agency we met with.

We did this on numerous occasions, and each time would find at least one or two responders. The buyers accepted our request to provide a quote, and begin a new relationship. This was our foot in the door, and we began to establish a relationship to get a greater understanding of the needs of our clients.



As we have repeated this over and over, we have become a vendor of choice with many of agencies. I want to make it clear, however, that at no time did we expect the eVA system to bring business to us – we did what it takes to get business from the agencies. Our success has been accomplished by the outstanding service we provide to our clients. I am very grateful to have such a tool, and hope that it will be utilized by other SWAM vendors.

I'd like to say that doing away with eVA would be a mistake. Taking away the SWAM initiative would also be a mistake. Not only would it eliminate opportunities for SWAM vendors to be of service to The Commonwealth, it would also eliminate jobs and affect a great deal of small-business owners.

How can eVA be improved? The main focus should be to make it user-friendly for the vendors and buyers alike. Have standard procedures that would make the experience of using eVA a pleasurable one. I have heard from buyers and vendors alike as to the difficulty involved in using eVA. I have a technology background and did not find eVA that difficult. For the vendors, the Department of General Services should establish a relationship with successful vendors to help train new vendors as to how to utilize the system and better market themselves.

Let me make it clear, however, that eVA is not a problem. There must be a concerted effort on the part of every agency to work with SWAM vendors. There is still resistance on the part of some in The Commonwealth to utilize the services/goods of SWAM vendors, and that is the main reason some SWAM vendors are not successful.

My staff and I are very grateful to the Department of General Services for their efforts behind the eVA system. While it has been a life-changing system, it has done more good than harm. I hope to have the opportunity to help improve the system in the years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Cordially,

  
Sandra B. Sylvester  
President/CEO  
Superior Global Solutions, Inc.