

PURCHASING POWER

A publication of DAS Procurement Services

GOOD STUFF CHEAP • Vol. ii, No. 8

September 2001

DAS Procurement Services wins top national award

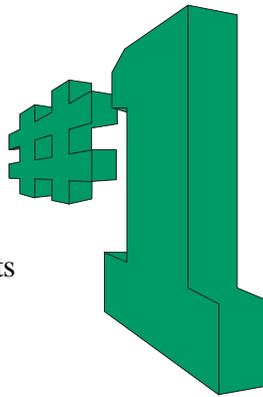
DAS's e-commerce program, *CTGovCenter*, was among the projects receiving national acclaim for innovative public information technology by *Civic.Com* magazine's "Civic 50 Awards."

Selected by a prestigious panel of judges, DAS was honored in this national competition for its electronic procurement system, which according to *Civic.Com*, has made buying easier and quicker, creating more time to focus on strategic purchasing initiatives.

CTGovCenter is designed so that state agencies, municipalities, and schools can search and buy products and services online from pre-negotiated state contracts, increasing the volume of money-saving cooperative purchasing.

"DAS has been a leader in e-procurement, with one of the few operational e-commerce systems in the country. It is such an honor to be publicly recognized by experts in the field for our achievements," said Commissioner Barbara Waters.

"It was no small feat, but Jim Passier and his team have transformed an antiquated, bureaucratic purchasing system into a nationally acclaimed e-commerce model," Waters emphasized.



In announcing the winners, *Civic.Com* praised their contributions to government:

"Together, the 50 honorees convey a strong message: Technology and the Internet in particular has great potential to improve the way the government does business. It's clear that technology has a place in nearly every facet of public life, and it's making jobs easier and lives better. We congratulate the winners, hope others can learn from them and look forward to the innovation next year will surely bring."

Schools Save Big Bucks

Purchasing quality school supplies at a fair price is essential to the financial health of a school district. This is especially true when funds are scarce and what resources are available are essential to providing quality education.

Recognizing that the state can play a significant role in helping school districts

See Success Story, page 2

In This Issue

DAS Procurement takes home national honors

1

Success Story The way is paved for schools to save

1

Towns get some cool tools

2

Penny Wise Jim Passier on the year in review

3

Police supplies made easy

4

continued from pg. 1

make the most of their supplies allocation, DAS has established contracts with several school supply vendors, as well as contracts with suppliers of athletic equipment, art supplies, audiovisual equipment, copiers, office supplies, and a host of other items used by schools everyday.

Why did DAS elect to extend the expertise of its 30 purchasing professionals to help Connecticut's towns and schools?

\$UCCESS \$TORY

Basically, it was a decision driven by DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters, who is committed to helping the public sector get quality merchandise at a reasonable price.

"When Robert Ficeto, Director of Business Services for the Hartford School Board, approached DAS with a proposal to issue bids and award contracts for school supplies for the Big Cities Consortium, we responded enthusiastically," said Waters.

Not only did DAS make merchandise available to Connecticut's largest schools, but to smaller school districts as well.

"This contract allows the Prospects, the Watertowns and the Cheshires to pay the same price as the Hartfords, New Havens, and Bridgeports," Ficeto remarked.

DAS is leveraging the purchasing power of the state and all local school districts, while providing the vendor community with a single interface to a consolidated statewide market. Such economies of scale will lower prices and improve service for schools while also lowering marketing, shipping, and administrative costs for suppliers.

The Internet-based electronic ordering system is another big benefit to schools; it brings contract merchandise to the desktops of teachers, staff, and school administrators. Reduced costs, staff time savings, and improved controls are

immediately apparent to *CTGovCenter* users.

So far, over 130 contracts containing hundreds of thousands of items on *CTGovCenter* are available electronically statewide, at absolutely no cost or obligation on the part of school districts.

All a school needs is Internet access and a desire to purchase quality merchandise at a fair price. DAS even provides orientation, training, and support.

We're eager to begin working with your school district on this exciting and creative approach to public procurement!

Start saving money today with *CTGovCenter*! Contact: vince.mcmahon@po.state.ct.us or lydia.rosario@po.state.ct.us or call them at (860)713-5081 or (860) 713-5087 respectively.



Is your town green getting a little overgrown? Grass need cutting, scrubs need pruning, or fences need mending?

DAS has just the equipment and tools you need to do these jobs and hundreds of others. We recently awarded a contract for grounds maintenance equipment, chain saws, snow blowers, turf tractors, utility vehicles, gang mowers, and lawn renovation equipment.

This equipment is available from a network of dealers strategically located around the state. In addition to our lawn maintenance contract, we have many other contracts for industrial supplies, police equipment, and a host of other items you need regularly.

continued on next page

A publication of
DAS Procurement Services

John G. Rowland
Governor

Barbara A. Waters
Commissioner

James Passier
Manager - Procurement Services

**Donna J. Micklus for
DAS Communications**
Editor and layout

For more information about any of the articles in
Purchasing Power, contact us at:

Phone: (860) 713-5095

Fax: (860) 713-7484

E-mail: Jim.Passier@po.state.ct.us

continued from previous page

“We brought together the expertise of my Team Leader Tina Costanzo, myself, and several potential customers to craft a contract that best serves the needs of our expanded customer base,” said Jim Gotta, the Contract Specialist responsible for the grounds maintenance contract.

Gotta’s words were echoed by Stanley Staron of the City of Hartford who termed the contract “absolutely a Godsend.”

Of course, the equipment on this contract is also available to state agencies. Several agencies have already taken advantage of its broad array of quality merchandise at reasonable prices.

Janice Snyder of the Department of Transportation said “In 2000/01 we purchased \$77,663 worth of mowing equipment and \$15,483 worth of ride-on mowers. The contract has been easy to administer, the vendors have been great, and there have been no problems with it at all.”

You will share that enthusiasm when you see what opportunities await you!

This contract represents another step forward in DAS’ determination to better serve our state agencies as well as our expanding customer base of municipalities, schools, and publicly funded nonprofit organizations.

Our revised business model includes issuing bids and awarding contracts for goods and services that DAS has not traditionally purchased. As always, your input is welcome.

Our plan is to add merchandise from our lawn maintenance equipment contract to merchandise from over one hundred existing contract postings on *CTGovCenter*, our online electronic catalog. ■



PENNY WISE

Well, another fiscal year has gone by. Like most folks, we tend to take stock of accomplishments and develop plans for the upcoming year.

During the past twelve months we have been working to improve our operation and value added to you through the use of technology, contracts of wider scope, and incorporating a broader customer base into our contract development.

This issue of *Purchasing Power* provides great examples of what we are trying to accomplish in key areas. Each of the articles mentions our *CTGovCenter* e-procurement system for ordering, highlighting our strong emphasis on the use of technology. We have, in fact, changed virtually every major business process by bringing new technology to bear. Our e-procurement system has processed nearly 30,000 orders so far and has won national acclaim for its use of technology in state government.

More importantly, this issue illustrates recognition of our expanding customer base. Each of the contracts mentioned was developed with customers’ participation and input. We have been particularly successful in recognizing the unique needs of public school systems. New legislation now allows private nonprofit institutions of higher education to use our contracts as well, opening up a whole new group of customers.

Of course, our motives are not purely altruistic; like all purchasing organizations we want to drive down costs. One way is to increase the volume and size of the contracts. If we can obtain better prices because of the participation of subdivisions, everyone benefits.

Finally, we are making our contracts more flexible and easier to use, allowing you to choose from multiple suppliers to get the materials that you need.

Coupling multiple suppliers with longer contract terms, use of e-commerce, and the ability to add new contract items at specified time periods makes our contracts more effective and usable.

During the coming year, we will continue concentrating on those same goals: technology; new customers; and improved contracts. We are also planning more “open houses” and will be rolling out our Procurement Learning Center programs.

By now you should have received our new email *Weekly Information Newsletters*, cleverly known as *WIN*. If you’re not on our mailing list, go to our website and email us at *WeServeYou*. Otherwise you’ll miss out on a lot of good stuff!

We are looking forward to supporting you, and as always the staff of Procurement Services is working to simplify your purchasing life.

Jim Passier

CONTRACTING OUR POLICE SUPPLIES

Our contract specialists are providing more customer- service focused results with forward-thinking contract solutions.

Tina Costanzo

Chalk up another victory for DAS Procurement with the new contract for police supplies.

Contract Specialist Jim Gotta consolidated fifteen separate one-year contracts into one RFP with a five-year lifespan.

"This saves the state money and simplifies our processes dramatically. We virtually eliminate redundant SP-10 requests, streamline and automate the contracting process significantly, and focus on ease-of-use for our customers," said Tina Costanzo of Procurement Services.

This \$900,000 contract is available to all using state agencies and political subdivisions for items ranging from firearm accessories to alcohol

sensing devices, and tear gas. There are eight vendors on the award, four of which are

certified Small Business Enterprises. There are over twenty different manufacturers' catalogs with discounts offered by

various vendors.

"This offers the customer maximum flexibility in that an agency can choose a vendor based on pricing, brands, delivery schedule, Set-Aside requirements, or a combination thereof," said Gotta.

Customers are offered even more flexibility with the contract's e-commerce element as well as the open enrollment clause allowing the state to add vendors should unmet needs arise during the life of the contract.

Gotta said that the contract is the result of interagency teamwork: Dawn Uaroco of the Department of Public Safety, Pat Fitzgerald of the Department of Motor Vehicles, Mike Schubert of the Department of Correction, and DAS' Tina Costanzo. **\$**



State of Connecticut
Procurement Services
165 Capitol Avenue
Box 150414
Hartford, CT 06115-0414

PRESORT STANDARD
US POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT #4313
HARTFORD, CT