

Research your selling options

A guide on how to research contracts in industry to decide if federal selling is right for you and to shape your proposal.

Introduction

Winning a contract with a federal opportunity can be a big opportunity, and a big investment. A solid first step is to research the contracting landscape in your industry.

This guide will help you collect the information to answer key questions about your...

- **Audience:** What agencies are buying your product or service?
- **Potential sales:** How much do agencies spend on the service or product you sell? How often do they buy?
- **Advantages:** Do these contracts use set asides that you qualify for?
- **Competitors:** Who holds the current contract?
- **Timing:** What contracts expire soon that you'd want to compete for?

Step 1: Categorize your business

You'll want to narrow your search to opportunities within your industry. Depending on the tool you use, there are different ways to refine your search.

NAICS code

The North American Industry Classification System (NAICS, pronounced Nakes) puts industries into broad categories, and is used often in federal contracting. You can think of this code as what your business does.

You can find your NAICS code through a keyword search on census.gov/naics. [Here's guidance on how to look your code up.](#)

PSC code

Product and Service (PSC) codes are four-digit codes that are used by federal buyers to locate specific products, services and research and development (R&D). You can think of this code as how your business delivers services.

You can find your PSC codes in the [PSC manual on acquisition.gov](https://www.acquisition.gov/psc/manual).

Which Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) category best fits your business?

MAS is a buying tool that's used often by federal agencies.

- ☐ Office Management
- ☐ Facilities
- ☐ Furniture & Furnishing
- ☐ Human Capital
- ☐ Industrial Products & Services
- ☐ Information Technology
- ☐ Miscellaneous
- ☐ Professional Services
- ☐ Scientific Management and Solutions
- ☐ Security & Protection
- ☐ Transportation and Logistics Services
- ☐ Travel

Step 2: Understand the competition

Investigate who's selling similar services in the federal marketplace and their pricing.

GSA eLibrary

- Where to search: <https://www.gsaelibrary.gsa.gov/ElibMain/home.do>
- This is helpful to learn: Who's currently on the MAS schedule, and their pricing.
You may need to download files for this information.
- How to search: Search by MAS category.

Notes and urls

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GSA Advantage

- Where to search:
https://www.gsaadvantage.gov/advantage/ws/main/start_page?store=ADVANTAGE
- This is helpful to learn: What agencies see when they're looking up prices for products and services.
- How to search: Search by keyword.

Notes and urls

GSA Schedule Sales Query Plus (SSQ+)

- Where to search: <https://d2d.gsa.gov/report/fas-schedule-sales-query-plus-ssq>
- This is helpful to learn: The overall sales and number of contracts for a given industry.
- How to search: Search by PSC

Notes and urls

Step 3: Investigate contracts

Use the [SAM.gov search](#) to find current contracts and how they've been awarded.

- You can search by your business's PSC or NACIS code

Notice ID	Purchasing agency	Award amount	Set asides?	Current vendor	Contract expiration
Example 36C24822Q0658	Example Dept of Veteran's Affairs	Example \$8,000,000	Example Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business	Example No vendor	Example Active
