

Committed to growing small business.

SILNER
LINING

citi

hp

ROGERS

STAPLES
that was easy.

intuit

Procurement

The Canadian Coalition Committed to Growing Small Business has been created to help big and small business work together better. Four times a year we gather entrepreneurs and executives from corporations to talk about a specific topic, looking for ideas and common ground to create stronger collaboration opportunities between big and small business.

In June of 2009 we held a Conversation on Finance that focused around Procurement. It became clear that as small businesses trying to approach big business to do business together that entrepreneurs are often hitting a wall. Our conversation resulted in bringing awareness to the key factors around procurement big businesses have to manage when forming partnerships with small businesses. Below we've compiled a series of questions that our Committed partners have provided answers to, in order to help more small businesses come to the table prepared.

Procurement Q&A:

1. Q: What are the maximum spends you can make without having to go to senior team members for final approval?

A: On average from \$5000 - \$20,000.

2. Q: What kinds of jobs have you hired small business for in the past?

A: Trade shows events (set up & provide booths), marketing (creative, prepare microsites and print materials), public relations, packaging design, printing, web design, translation, SEO, catering, event planning, event research and organization, video shoots, radio spots, copywriting, training.

3. Q: What are the standard payment terms and is there flexibility?

A: Standard payment times are any where from 30 to 90days from invoice approval. Projects can be broken down into 2 or 3 stages to allow for approval on segments of the project but the terms remain the same.

SILNER^{LTD}
LINING

Committed

 to growing small business.

SILNER
LINING

citi

hp

ROGERS

STAPLES
that was easy.

intuit

4. **Q: In addition to quality, cost and capability, do you have any specific requirements that guide the selection of your vendors that small businesses should be aware of (environment, working with local businesses etc)?**

A: Accepted payment methods, response time, drive to deliver, shipping/delivery process, like-minded organizations with a commitment to community, new businesses are a priority when possible, information security, financial feasibility, competitive clients, references/testimonials, and willingness to start small.

5. **Q: On average how long does it take for a business to become an approved vendor?**

A: On average two weeks to six months.

6. **Q: Is your procurement process managed internally or by an outside company and how does having it managed externally affect small business vendors in any way.**

A: On average most companies manage procurement internally. A key tip is to make sure you have a sponsor from the department that ultimately uses your services – they can help position your bid with vendor management. Don't go direct to the procurement department unless you are low cost supplier and can meet all the standards in question 4 above.

7. **Q: When you think about the most successful partnerships you've had with small business vendors what key elements defined the experience of working with them?**

A: Professional, on top of things and always ready with unique ideas, quick response times with deliverables, convenient payment methods, high quality of work, versatility, flexibility, creativity, they are patient with internal processes, understood they get the same treatment as all other vendors, provide outstanding service, work hard to learn the way our business works, value, and speed to market.

8. **Q: What one essential piece of advice would you give entrepreneurs who are approaching your company to do business for the first time?**

A: Offer a clear value proposition, define and be aware of timelines, define the cost structure, have a portfolio, have a GST number, do your homework, always ask for a vendor invoicing/process guide so you can provide your paperwork in the right way and avoid any snags in the timing, build relationships with our agencies – they can pass through pieces of work, offer ideas via email, mail, web and be patient – if ideas are good and you are professional in your approach, have references and testimonials, then when the need arise you may get a call (remember “no” means “not at this time”).

SILNER
LINING LTD