
News Release



UNITED
STATES
GOVERNMENT
PRINTING
OFFICE

Office of Congressional and Public Affairs 202-512-1991 <http://www.gpo.gov>

For Release: IMMEDIATE
June 28, 2002

Contact: Andrew M. Sherman
202-512-1991
asherman@gpo.gov
No. 02-18

GPO'S PRINTING PROCUREMENT PROGRAM SAVES TAXPAYERS BIG \$\$\$

One of the Federal Government's most efficient examples of public-private partnership is the Printing Procurement Program run by the Government Printing Office (GPO).

From its office in Washington, DC, and from 20 regional and satellite offices nationwide, GPO buys approximately 75 percent of all Federal printing orders from private sector printers in one of the Government's most competitive, most successful purchasing programs ever.

GPO's Printing Procurement Program deals with more than 10,000 printing firms across the country to get the best possible price for the Government's printing dollar. Government books, pamphlets, forms, and other printed items – all these and more are purchased by GPO on behalf of Federal agencies every day from private sector printers.

More than 70% of all the orders GPO buys are from printers classified as small businesses, some of which are small disadvantaged businesses.

With its centralized purchasing power, GPO achieves prices that most observers agree are "rock bottom" in the printing trade. Here's a small sample of some recent GPO procurement success stories:

- A Federal agency had been given an estimate of \$20,000 for 2,000 copies of an 8-page, saddle stitched pamphlet, printing 4-color process but using non-standard paper. GPO recommended changing to a standard paper that met their requirements, then procured the job for \$2,650, **saving \$17,350, or 86%**, from the original estimate.
- A quick-turnaround job for another agency had been bid at \$5,772 and \$6,663 by two local copy shops. GPO procured the job for delivery within the agency's tight deadline for \$1,938, **saving \$3,834, or 66%**.
- GPO took a requirement for 3 million copies of a 2 sided, 2 color card that had been estimated at \$25,000 and procured the job for \$9,943, **saving \$15,057 or 60%**.
- GPO suggested splitting a direct mail piece for an agency into two separate jobs, so that each could go to printers best suited to the type of work, **saving \$68,309 or nearly 50%**.

No funds are appropriated by Congress to GPO's Printing Procurement Program. Instead, Federal agencies pay GPO a nominal fee for a comprehensive package of procurement support services.

With this package of services, GPO experts review agency printing orders and offer suggestions for economizing; develop specifications; compete, award, and administer contracts; perform press inspections; conduct quality control reviews; provide voucher examination, payment, and audit services; and make available legal advice on contracting as well as a dispute resolution service through GPO's Board of Contract Appeals.

Observers have noted that for every Federal agency to provide the same range of services, the cost to the taxpayers would be enormous. Instead, GPO combines print orders together from multiple Federal agencies, applying its support services efficiently and maximizing the Government's buying power to get the best possible prices.

During FY 2001, GPO procured approximately 148,000 printing orders valued at \$425 million from private sector printers nationwide – that's nearly 600 orders valued at \$1.7 million per day!

GPO's Printing Procurement Program generates employment and tax revenues in one of the major sectors of U.S. manufacturing. The firms GPO deals with represent more than 200,000 printing industry employees.

The Program offers private sector printers lots of advantages: an open competitive procurement system, one-stop shopping for Government printing contracts, standardized bidding for printing contracts regardless of which agency the printing is for, and quick-turnaround payment for printing services.

And it is appreciated by its customers in the Federal Government. In a 1998 review by Booz-Allen & Hamilton, Inc., GPO's Printing Procurement Program was characterized as an example of "Government at its best." The review also quoted Federal agency printing managers as saying that "none of them felt that they wanted to or could do this function better than GPO."

More information on GPO's Printing Procurement Program is available on our Web site, at www.gpo.gov/procurement. Printers interested in doing business with GPO should call (202) 512-0526 for a bidder's kit.

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