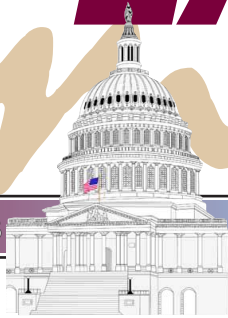


# The Executive

VOL. IX NO. 4 NOV/DEC 2003



A BIMONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE APMP\* NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA (NCA) CHAPTER

\*Association of Proposal Management Professionals

## The Proposal Market in the Twenty-First Century, 2000–2004

BY RUSSELL SMITH

During the first four years of the twenty-first century, the proposal market has experienced probably the highest peak and lowest valley within memory. Most proposal departments and consultant groups experienced brisk activity during the year 2000. This was followed by a roller



### IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 The Proposal Market in the Twenty-First Century, 2000-2004**
- 2 President's Corner**
- 3 November Roundtable**
- 6 Larger Companies Seek More Small Business Participation**

coaster ride when proposal activity stalled in 2001, decreased dramatically in 2002, and then climbed to new heights in 2003. Most observers predict the present upswing will continue into 2004.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the changes in the volume of proposal business during the period 2000–2004. An attempt is made to answer the question, why has there been such a radical change in the volume of proposal activity? Also, the article examines the role of Perfor-

mance Based Service Contracting (PBSC) as a new paradigm in proposal development requirements. Finally, the article assesses what qualified observers predict will be the level of activity in 2004

The research for this article was completed through an opinion survey method. During the past two weeks, the author contacted most of the better-known proposal consulting companies as well as proposal center directors, senior proposal consultants, and APMP

*Continued on page 4*

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## President's Corner by Betsy Blakney

# EXTREME MAKEOVER or SURVIVOR: Going Global

BY BETSY BLAKNEY

Back in June quite a stir was made about a study conducted by the Center for Information Technology and the Global Economy at the Kogod School of Business at American University. The study, "A Report Card on the Washington DC Metropolitan Area DC Tech Community," was featured in The Washington Post. The report suggests that despite growth in the private sector and an effective business development infrastructure, the D.C. region's economy is too dependent on government contracts and is characterized by a relatively risk-averse business culture. The report goes on to say that the local tech area (compared to Silicon Valley and Boston) lacks a strong entrepreneurial atmosphere where high-tech companies can compete successfully in the global market.

While not all of us work for high-tech companies, many of us do play or have explored playing in the global market. Whether you compete in the government or private sector, chances are your firm has considered or even dabbled in the multi-national marketplace. Just pick up a newspaper or turn on the nightly news, more and more the world cries for economic interdependence.

What does it take to "Go Global?" Will it require that your business perform an Extreme Makeover or did you jump on the bandwagon early (for those of you who have given up on the Redskins-different bandwagon) and are already experiencing increased profits due to success in the global business environment? Like most companies who turn on the Survivor mode during tough times, you might find yourself making significant changes in the way you con-

duct business.

Perhaps this paradigm shift has got you thinking-*Globally*. This characteristic may not only be critical to your business' success (spelled SURVIVAL) in the future, but it may be one of the premiere ways to grow if your industry is in a slump on the domestic front.

If you are not sure your company's Capture Management Life-Cycle is geared up for this change, this would be the perfect time to attend our next APMP-NCA Roundtable. In addition to the networking opportunities, you will have a chance to hear from an expert on Going Global. Gregory A. Garrett, a noted author, respected international educator, consultant, and industry executive will be featured. Aside from offering an explanation of his comprehensive Capture Management Life-Cycle Model, he will be available to discuss the challenges and opportunities that go along with doing business internationally.

Join us on Wednesday, November 19 for a first-hand look at how to win more business in the new supply environment. Each attendee will receive a complimentary copy of his book, "The Capture Management Life-Cycle: Winning More Business." This would be a great opportunity to invite your entire Business Development Team and walk away with a set of tools to help you improve your individual and company's performance. ■

Betsy Blakney  
APMP-NCA President

The articles presented in this newsletter are for information purposes only.

# Roundtable Announcement

Wednesday, November 19, 2003

## The Capture Management Life-Cycle: Winning More Business

Winning more business is all about changing potential opportunities into business reality—through proven professional and ethical business practices.

One of the key ingredients to capturing a customer's business and achieving loyalty is having a well defined capture management system in place. As the government and commercial contracting environments become more sophisticated, meeting your customers' objectives as well as your company's requirements for profitability and risk will depend on having a structured approach to winning and on how well you execute your plans.

On November 19, APMP-NCA will feature a presentation by Mr. Gregory A. Garrett, CPCPM, PMP, an international educator, author, consultant, and industry leader. He will talk about what it takes to win more business throughout the Capture Management Life-Cycle. He will share practical insights, tools, techniques, and best practices from both government and commercial markets.

Learn what it takes to win in today's highly competitive business environment. Discover whether or not your company is on the right track for building trust, setting expectations, and delivering on commitments. Learn how to prioritize and focus scarce resources to maximize win rates. Spend an evening with a dynamic high-profile speaker and receive a complimentary copy of his best-selling book!

### The Speaker

Gregory A. Garrett is Vice President & General Manager of U.S. Federal Government Programs at Lucent Technologies - Bell Labs Solutions. Prior to Lucent, Mr. Garrett served as a Partner and Executive Director of Global Business for ESI International, where he led the sales, marketing, negotiation, and implementation of global business management, bid/proposal management, commercial contracting, and government contract management training and consulting programs for numerous Fortune 100 multinational corporations. He has

served as a lecturer for The George Washington University Law School and the School of Business and Public Management. He has personally taught and consulted in bid/proposal management, contract, and project management to more than 15,000 people from over 40 countries.

### The Sponsor

Privia, Inc. a leading provider of Enterprise Applications for Capturing, Proposing, and Delivering winning solutions for companies doing business in the government and/or commercial markets is sponsoring this event. Privia will provide every attendee a copy of Mr. Garrett's new book "The Capture Management Life-Cycle: Winning More Business."



### Who May Attend?

Anyone interested in the topic is invited to attend. You do not have to be an APMP member to attend an NCA roundtable. You don't even have to be a proposal specialist. If you are interested in proposals, business development, or are looking for networking and professional development opportunities, we'd like for you to join us! Please refer anyone else in your organization that might be interested and encourage him or her to attend.

### Location:

Tysons Corner Holiday Inn on International Drive in McLean, Virginia

### Agenda:

5:30pm Networking

6:30pm Buffet Dinner

7:15pm Announcements, Featured Presentation

Cost: \$35—Payment received in advance, \$55—Pay at the door.

### IF YOU PLAN TO ATTEND...

Please RSVP to Dennis Doubroff via email at [apmp-doubroff@aol.com](mailto:apmp-doubroff@aol.com) and mail your check to: APMP-NCA, PO Box 3063, McLean, VA 22103-3063. RSVP and send check by Friday, November 14. The earlier the better to reserve your seat. ■

## Calendar of Events

The purpose of the calendar is to apprise NCA members of upcoming events of interest to proposal professionals.

For information on board activities or to become involved call Lou Robinson at 703-533-2102.

**NOV**

4

APMP-NCA Board Meeting

• Teleconference

19

APMP Roundtable

• Gregory A. Garrett, Lucent Technologies

**DEC**

2

APMP-NCA Board Meeting

• Advantage Consulting



## The Proposal Market in the Twenty-First Century, 2000-2004 ▼ ... Continued from page 1

officials. The survey revealed a consensus of opinion on most questions, and the results of the survey are presented in the narrative report below.

### The Proposal Market, 2000-2003

For most proposal organizations, the year 2000 was a normal business year with lots of activity. Then came 2001, which one commentator called "the most abnormal year in living memory for proposal work." The industry was rocked that year by the combined effects of the change in administration, the economic slowdown, and the 9-11 tragedy. These challenges forced many programs in new directions and slowed down the proposal release process.

The change of administration may have been the most important factor slowing down the proposal business. First of all, the new administration was the slowest in the past 50 years in getting the senior executives who release

the programs for bid nominated and approved by Congress. Second, the administration put in place a review process designed to ensure that programs, particularly that Information Technology programs, were well conceived, were efficient, and did not cause duplication. This review process included: (1) Defense Secretary Rumsfeld's well-known assessment of proposed automation programs at DoD; and (2) the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) requirement that solid Business Case studies be completed before civilian agency programs move forward.

The economic slowdown played an insidious role in the slowdown of bidding activity. Many companies that needed to bid more programs instead prepared fewer proposals, because of their lack of confidence in the economy. Some large businesses even held back bid activity in their profitable federal divisions, to maintain budgets when

there was weaker business in their commercial divisions.

The start of the war on terrorism/Afghanistan following 9/11 was a further factor contributing to the slowdown in proposal releases. Urgent and immediate spending was channeled through existing contracts, simple proposals, and quotes, while the government formulated its strategy and plans. Meanwhile, the release of new DoD programs generally slowed down because of the confusion and indecision accompanying the change from peacetime to wartime priorities.

The net effect of these challenges caused proposal activity to stall in 2001. Some proposal departments and consultant groups experienced more activity than in 2000, and but most experienced less activity. And, overall, activity was flat.

The present survey of proposal consultant companies suggests that proposal activity in 2002 was about 25% less than in 2001, on the average. A very few companies experienced an increase in business, not because of the market,

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but because of increased marketing. Activity at nearly all companies declined. Rick Lee, Vice President of proposal services at Shipley Associates, could have been speaking for nearly any company in the industry when he said the following: "The year 2002 seemed to be the worst yet, in terms of activity. Many of the projects that were expected either rolled to the right or didn't occur."

During late 2001 and all of 2002, proposal professionals frequently asked the question, "When is the 'dam burst' coming? They were asking, when is the pent-up demand for contracts in Government agencies going to cause a flood in the release of new RFPs? They were destined to be disappointed for 18 months, because the slowdown starting in late 2001 would last through all of 2002, and the dam burst would not come until early 2003.

Although there were specific reasons for the recent slowdown in proposal activity, one should note that there are always cycles in the level of proposal activity. As national APMP board member Eric Gregory points out, "Cycles

in proposal activity tend to have 3-year periods. They are caused by factors such as a change in administration or a change in the way the Government does business. Slowdowns usually last maybe 6 or 12 months. This one lasted 18 months, because that is how long it took for the administration to put the new program review processes in place."

The flood gates finally opened in 2003. Nearly every entity relating to the proposal business saw greater activity starting in 2003. This includes company proposal departments, proposal services providers, and independent proposal consultants. The proposal service companies noted increases in business of 15%-50%, with the median being about 25%. There was a consensus that, the primary reason for the increase in proposal activity was the fact that, the government had gotten its senior personnel appointed and had put its review processes in place. Thus the latent demand in the agencies for contracts finally burst through the chains of the program reviews, and the RFPs poured forth.

## The Position of Performance Based Service Contracting (PBSC)

The survey research addressed not only the level in general proposal activity but also the level of activity in Performance Based Service Contracting (PBSC). Commentators in the trade literature agree that, about 20% of the contracts competed in 2003 are performance based, and 80% of contracts will be performance based by 2006.

Participants in the survey were asked, what kind and what level of activity have you seen in performance based contracting? With one or two exceptions, proposal services vendors had not received many orders to provide specialized assistance with PBSC programs. Joe Nocerino of Century Planning said, "When oral proposals started, there was a lot of new activity. We have not seen much activity at all in performance based contracting."

APMP official Eric Gregory predicted that, "there will be a significant increase in procurements called performance based. In most agencies, there is clearly

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not a solid understanding of what it is or what it should be. So the ramp-up to PBSB will be largely in name only." In looking at the more distant future, Shipley Vice President Rick Lee added that, "the PBSC evaluation areas are not internally settled by government agencies. As soon as there is a consensus, you will see a wave of activity."

### Predicted Proposal Activity in 2004

This survey reveals that opinion across the industry is upbeat in regard to the level of proposal activity anticipated for 2004. Nearly everyone believes that proposal activity in 2004 will be at least as fast as it was in 2003, and probably faster. The median prediction is that activity in 2004 will be 10 – 15% faster than it was in 2003. The consensus view is that the push for both DoD and civilian agency programs will continue strong. Security programs from Homeland Defense will move forward, and significant increases in IT spending will be translated into more proposal activity. The result will be another year of fast activity for proposal professionals across the industry. ■

# LARGER COMPANIES SEEK MORE SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION

BY ZEBBA KHAN, PROPOSAL WRITER, ACS STATE & LOCAL SOLUTIONS, INC.

As the federal government steps up efforts to support small business participation, including minority and women-owned firms, larger companies are doing their part to create more opportunities for marketplace partnerships.

More large firms are actively pursuing involvement with the small business community through formalized programs. This past year, Dallas-based Affiliated Computer Services, Inc. (ACS) formed a small business advocacy office that has increased awareness of the need for smaller business participation within the company.

The office, managed by MacArthur DeShazer, vice president of small business advocacy at ACS, maintains a database of small businesses the company has worked with, tracking performance,

specialty areas and funding. "This last year, we subcontracted 282 contracts with 82 percent of them going to smaller businesses," DeShazer said. ACS' State and Local Solutions group is at a minimum, required to demonstrate good faith efforts in supporting minority business enterprise (MBE) participation. For its fiscal year 2003, ACS State and Local Solutions has spent more than \$31.5 million with small, women-owned, minority-owned, and disadvantaged businesses nationwide.

Under the shadow of changing federal contracting policies, ACS and many prime contractors are beginning to understand the need to develop partnerships with small businesses. Recently, the U.S. Small Business Administration announced a new regulation on contract unbundling to allow

## UPCOMING ELECTION

Ever consider joining the APMP-NCA Chapter board?

The year is almost over and nominations are open for board positions.

If you would like to discuss how you can be involved with our Chapter and the proposals community let us know.

**Think about it!**

**Contact Ms. Kate Rosengreen  
at 703-850-6150**

## SMALL BUSINESS STRATEGIES

Larger companies are beginning to understand the advantages of teaming with smaller businesses. Several companies, such as ACS, have even gone so far as to develop formal policies through which they will serve as subcontractors to small businesses pursuing set-aside contracts. If you are a small business seeking contracting opportunities, you can increase your chances of accessing the federal market with some proactive moves.

First, establish a business partnership with at least one or two prime contractors. When the prime contractor is writing a proposal under a tight deadline and needs a subcontractor to fulfill a niche requirement, you will be at the top of the call list if you have a pre-existing relationship. A prime contractor who is already familiar with your product or service will think of you first. The SBA's Web site, at [www.sba.gov/GC/allsubs.html](http://www.sba.gov/GC/allsubs.html), has a list of prime contractors with areas of business specialties and locations available to the public.

Second, collaborate with other small businesses within your technical arena. Combining your resources with complementary partners will greatly increase your competitive advantage and provide you with added visibility. PRO-Net, an online database maintained by the SBA at <http://pro-net.sba.gov>, is an excellent resource to search for small and disadvantaged companies with whom you can network or team up to bid on contracts. More than 195,000 small, disadvantaged, and woman-owned businesses maintain profiles in the database. Registration is open to all small firms seeking federal, state and private contracts.

small businesses to better compete for federal contracts. "Small business participation is necessary for innovation and cost savings, not to mention the benefits to our economy when small businesses are able to grow and create more jobs," Hector Barreto, SBA Director, said in a statement.

This new rule comes on the heels of several moves by the federal government in recent months aimed at supporting smaller businesses. Among them are bundling restrictions issued at the U.S. Department of Defense, a small business recertification rule for set-aside contracts, and an Office of Federal Procurement policy to analyze large company hiring plans.

Federal requirements are not the only motivation for larger companies to team with smaller firms, DeShazer added. "Smaller businesses may have federal agency contacts and better networking resources that the larger companies simply don't possess," he said. "When smaller businesses team with the larger companies, they bring this invaluable knowledge to the table."

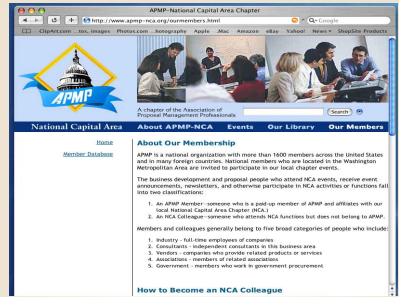
Smaller businesses provide other

types of unique expertise in subcontracting relationships. "In addition to innovative products and skill sets, smaller firms can often respond to requirements quicker than the larger companies," primarily as the result of smaller management, DeShazer said.

Small firms stand to benefit from subcontracting relationships as well. "Smaller businesses get access to the proposal writing process and methodologies," according to DeShazer. "Most small businesses don't have these types of resources."

Despite the obvious business advantages, some larger companies may be reluctant to team up with small businesses due to fears of dealing with an unknown firm. However, the federal government is creating more incentives to encourage industry to develop small business partnerships.

"Many federal agencies will cover or reimburse the costs incurred by the larger company, depending on contract provisions," DeShazer said. Mentor and protégé programs targeted at smaller businesses are growing in popularity, he said. ■



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# JOINT CHESAPEAKE—NCA ROUNDTABLE

On October 15th the joint meeting of these neighboring APMP chapters finally occurred. It was originally scheduled for September 17, but that was also the date of the arrival of Hurricane Isabel. The meeting was wisely postponed so that the lives of our beloved members would not be in danger.

The setting was the Conference Center of the Maritime Institute of Technology in Linthicum, MD. Getting there was a haul for the NCA people who had to battle the rush hour traffic to attend this 5:30 event. It turns out it was worth the battle and I think all who attended enjoyed it. The Conference Center provided a wonderful setting. It is an elegant building that includes a traditional bar room. Russell Smith picked up the tab on the drinks, so none of us were reluctant to partake of the beverages. It also has a large dining hall that featured an elaborate buffet dinner. Again, we all indulged heavily and thoroughly enjoyed the food.

The speaker was challenged at this point to arouse the attention of this

The speaker was Major Jim Ashworth who is a Professor of Systems Acquisition Management at the Defense Acquisition University (DAU) at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He spoke on the New 5000 Series Acquisition Regulations and the



grams to serve a variety of requirements from various government agencies. He described the process as being top-down where program definition comes from groups who oversee many agencies (congress, joint staff, etc). This method reduces the acquisition programs that are redundant or overlapping and allows more focus on a smaller number of large programs. Also the effort is making the acquisition process more efficient, meaning that things can happen faster with a smaller amount of manpower.

His presentation crammed a lot of detail into a very short window and required us to hang on his every word to follow the logic. He used a large number of acronyms that describe groups of people, documents and processes. He made many comparisons between the past acquisition system and the new way of acquiring things. The slides from his briefing are on our website <[www.apmp-nca.org](http://www.apmp-nca.org)> in the library section. It is in PowerPoint form and there is no restriction on copying and using any or all of the material. DoD is anxious to have the new proce-



audience who was full of food and drink and ready to take a nap. We were very fortunate to have a young dynamic speaker who roamed the room as he spoke, used a loud voice and gave a superb presentation on a subject that was of interest to all of us. He turned this group of dying proposal weenies into enthusiastic listeners.

Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System (JCIDS).

DoD is changing the way it acquires goods and services on large programs. Initial work in changing the Acquisition program has focused on the front end of the process where the requirement is developed and approved. The goal of the program is for acquired items/pro-

dures understood by as many as possible as soon as possible.

This is our second program with Chesapeake and both have been delightful. The first was an all day event on our turf (at TRW—now Northrop-Grumman). We look forward to future ventures with Chesapeake and possibly other chapters. ■