Commonwealth of Virginia

eVA Mobile4Business

Groundbreaking mobile e-procurement app benefits small businesses and vendors of all sizes.

THE CHALLENGE

While all bid opportunities and solicitations with the Commonwealth of Virginia are publicly posted on its award-winning e-procurement system, eVA, built by CGI and the Commonwealth, Virginia wanted to make it even easier for businesses – especially small, woman and minority-owned businesses – to identify and bid on these opportunities. Given the on-the-go nature of professionals involved in such bids, the Commonwealth sought to provide complete access to all bid opportunities through an innovative mobile application. It was essential that the mobile offering show all of the solicitation information that existed in the full web version.

HOW CGI HELPED

CGI developed the *eVA Mobile 4 Business* app for any Internet-enabled mobile device (iPhone, iPad, Android, Blackberry, etc.). The app provides real-time access to all bid opportunities and solicitations published on eVA's *Virginia Business Opportunities (VBO)* page.

From the office or on-the-go, the app delivers critical information that empowers businesses to keep abreast of what Virginia government entities – including state agencies, universities, colleges and local governments – are looking to buy. The app is available in the Apple and Android app stores by searching for *eVA Mobile 4 Business* or by using a mobile browser to access the web version at http://eva.virginia.gov/pages/eva-4-business-app.htm

Key features include:

- Chronological list of active solicitations, beginning with the most recent posting
- One-touch access to all solicitation details, including attachments and award decisions
- Integrated calendar feature allows one-touch save for important events, such as deadlines and award dates, which can then be viewed in the device's regular calendar along with all other appointments and reminders (IOS only at this time)
- Ability to easily add contact information from *eVA Mobile 4 Business* directly to the mobile device's contact list (IOS only at this time)
- Ability to access and track progress of current and past solicitations

About CGI and eVA

Prior to 2001, the Commonwealth of Virginia's procurement process was fragmented across more than 170 autonomous agencies, institutions of higher education and local governments. In this disparate environment, Virginia had virtually no enterprise visibility over its annual procurement budget, and suppliers had to register and receive information through different systems and agencies. The net impact for Virginia was higher operating costs and an inability to leverage its combined purchasing power.

CGI partnered with the Commonwealth to develop an end-to-end, government-to-business, e-procurement solution delivering comprehensive procurement lifecycle management to all state agencies, localities, universities and colleges.

It is the largest state e-procurement application in operation, with more than 5 million products and services available through online catalogs, more than $5 billion annual spend and $32 billion total spend since 2001. The solution also levelled the playing field for small, women and minority-owned businesses, increasing participation by 30 percent.

- Access to view solicitations to which registered vendors are invited to participate
- Ability to create a personalized "Watch List" to follow specific opportunities
- "E-mail to a friend" feature to send links to a specific solicitation to anyone
- Advanced search by keyword, status, agency, closing date and bid category

KEY TECHNOLOGIES USED

Native IOS and Android code were created to support the mobile app functionality. CGI also leveraged the eVA mobile-ready website presentation to provide a consistent look for the web views shown from within the apps.

A significant achievement was the layout and design of the details page and the ability to easily view and download attachments. The CGI team reused content from the eVA mobile web offering to deliver the data and data layout within the *eVA Mobile 4 Business* app. This hybrid approach allows updates to be pushed through the mobile web offering so that changes also are reflected for *eVA Mobile 4 Business* app users without requiring them to download an update.

Open source tools were used for the mobile website:

- JQuery Mobile was used for presentation within the custom JSP Application
- The mobile website is deployed on Apache Tomcat.