



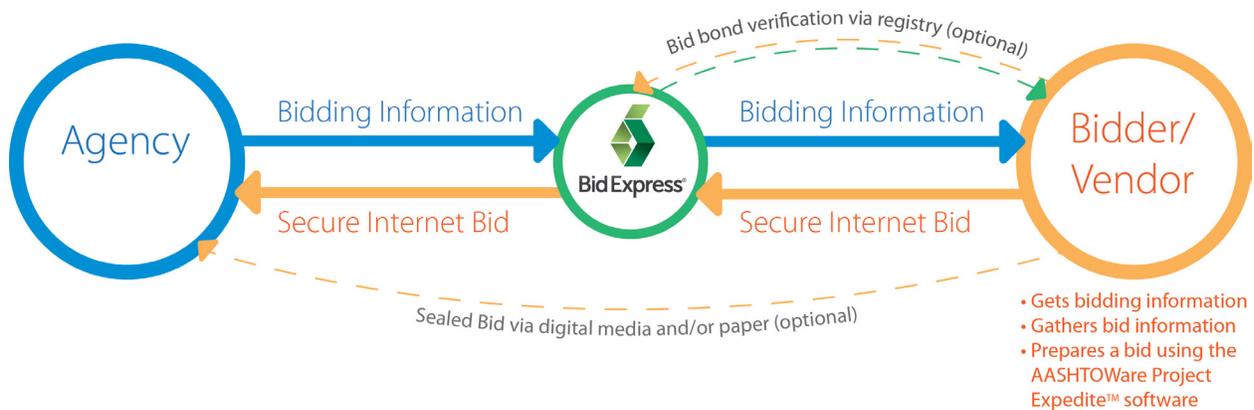
### An executive overview for agencies

The Bid Express Internet bidding service provides a reliable, collaborative Internet bidding community between an agency and its bidders, and an effective sealed repository for bids that is inaccessible to any parties prior to the public bid opening. This online solution has served clients for more than 15 years and has processed more than 269,000 bids with contracts valued at more than \$735 billion.

The Bid Express service provides administrative functions accessible by the agency to post messages, notices to bidders, bid documents, addenda, plan sheets, and other bid-related information. For bidders, the service allows secure Internet bid submission and bid bond validation back to the agency using digital signature technology and a public key infrastructure for security. It also provides access to bid documents online. Up until the time of the opening of bids, all bids are encrypted on a server housed in a secure facility. No bid information can be seen by the agency until the time of the letting, thus maintaining the sealed bid process.

The service is available 24 hours per day, seven days a week, every day of the year. The Bid Express service has had 99.97% actual up-time over its 15+ year history. It uses secure encryption and lockbox technology to ensure bids are safe.

### Bid Express Internet Bidding Process



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Figure 1: An overview of the bidding process.

### **Paper Based Sealed Bidding Inefficiencies for Agencies**

*Additional costs due to bidder error-* Purchasing agencies of all sizes and budgets lose thousands, hundreds of thousands, and in some cases, millions of dollars annually due to paper bid submission errors. Sealed bidding opportunities require that several terms and conditions are recognized by the bidder, that simple math be performed if a quantity extension of a per-item price is required, and that the bid be signed by the bidder. Often, a bidder's signature is required on multiple supplemental documents that must be included with the bid. In attempts to comply with all of these requirements, the apparent low bidder is apt to omit an occasional checkmark, forget to carry the two, or to overlook signing on the dotted line. The result for the agency is that they must reject the low bid and default to the second low bid. At times, the additional cost to the agency can be extremely damaging.

*Project delays-* When a bidder is deemed non-responsive, there can be an occasion when that bidder will dispute the decision and take action against the successful bidder and/or the agency. This often delays the purchase for the agency and can put the agency behind schedule should the purchase be for a service or construction related contract.

*Paper management administrative costs-* For an agency, the paper sealed bid process causes labor inefficiencies. After a bid package has been finalized, the agency must produce several copies of the package for interested bidders to pickup and/or purchase from the agency. The agency must also provide paper copies of supplemental information that is crucial to the bidder, such as plan sheets for a construction project. Agencies spend large amounts of budgeted dollars for staff and supplies to perform these printing and purchasing tasks.

### **Paper Based Sealed Bidding Inefficiencies for Bidders**

*Jobs lost due to avoidable errors-* Nothing is more upsetting to a bidder than hearing from an agency that his or her sealed bid is deemed non-responsive due to a clerical error. The larger the loss of possible income, the more likely the bidder will be to fight the decision. At times, non-responsive bidders will dispute the award of the successful bidder and/or the agency. The result can be lengthy, time consuming litigious situations that put awarded bidders behind schedule and causing extra expenditures for legal fees. The Bid Express service virtually eliminates these occurrences.

*Paper bidding costs-* For a bidder, many labor hours are spent finding sealed bid advertisements, picking up the proper documentation, compiling hand-written bids, ensuring that the bids are error free, and delivering sealed paper bids to the agency. These costs are built into bids and thus are ultimately paid by the agency.

*Travel costs-* Bidders incur travel costs to pick up bid packages and return sealed bids to agency bid centers. Reducing these travel costs allow more bidders to participate with your agencies/buyers thus expanding and improving your competitive pricing.

## Return on Investment

Numerous agencies have already implemented the Bid Express service, and through their experiences some have identified significant efficiencies and realized savings:

- An Iowa state agency estimates that it saves 1.5 data processing days with each bid letting/opening administered via the Bid Express service. Typically agencies can see a 36-48 man-hour savings vs. manual processing for each bid.
- From the expanded bidder marketplace and competition, the same Iowa agency realized \$8 million in savings in one bid opening.
  - *"We had a situation where a bidder at the letting hotel determined he would be the only bidder on a project. He submitted a bid, which he thought to be close enough to the state's estimate so a contract would be awarded. An unexpected bidder stayed at home and submitted a bid over the Internet for \$8 million less and 'stole' the contract." -Roger Bierbaum, Contracts Engineer (retired), Iowa DOT*
- In 2007, an Indiana state agency performed and documented a cost benefit analysis of using Bid Express Internet bidding (they implemented it in early summer 2007). An impetus behind the implementation was to reduce irregular bids which they indicated cost them nearly \$2.9 million in fiscal year 2006. In the study, the agency estimated an annual savings of \$163,563 in decreased expenditures, which include printing costs, shipping and time spent compiling bid tabs.
- A Wisconsin state agency client typically receives 92% of its bids electronically through the Bid Express service. The agency reports that 48 man-hours are saved each letting/bid opening through streamlined Internet bidding processes that the system allows (in comparison to their former manual processes).
- Prior to using the Bid Express service, a New Jersey state agency contracted for a full-time person to make paper copies of plan sets for contractors. This was the sole function of the contracted employee. They began offering plan sheets online and thus eliminated the need for the contracted staff. Plan sets are online and can be downloaded or sent to a printing company for paper copies.
- ROI is further evidenced by the fact that several agencies, including large state agencies, have mandated that they receive all bids from their bidding community via the Bid Express service.

## **Reducing Your Carbon Footprint**

The Bid Express service also makes a positive environmental impact. Agencies and bidders using this bidding solution have reduced their carbon footprint by 8.13 million pounds of CO2 emissions, and saved nearly 9,000 trees from becoming needless paper documents. Over the past 13 years, the service is estimated to have saved bidders more than 8.3 million travel miles, which translates to 418,950 fewer gallons of gas used.

## **Customer Support**

Customer support is provided by Info Tech, Inc. (and therefore not the responsibility of the agency). Info Tech is committed to providing the highest quality customer support possible, undertaking all reasonable and necessary efforts to resolve an incoming issue quickly and professionally. Below is a summary of the support resources available to customers in a post-implementation, production environment:

- Highly specialized technicians available
- Customer support hours 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM (Eastern) business days
- Phone #: 352-381-4400 or toll free 888-352-BIDX (2439)
- Fax #: 352-381-4444
- Email: [customer.support@bidx.com](mailto:customer.support@bidx.com) or [support@bidexpress.com](mailto:support@bidexpress.com)

## **Two websites for Internet bidding**

Info Tech, Inc. offers two websites to access the Bid Express service. Those seeking information on our service primarily designed to integrate with the Expedite™ software should visit [www.bidx.com](http://www.bidx.com). Those seeking information on our service primarily designed for local agencies, educational institutions, state facilities construction, healthcare, and private industry should visit [www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com).

## **Contact Information**

Please call us at 352-381-4400, or send e-mail to [sales@infotechfl.com](mailto:sales@infotechfl.com) if you have any questions or require additional information.

