

CASE STUDY

In the City of Huntington, Paper Has No Place

CHALLENGE

“I was swimming in paper.”

That quote is the best summary of the challenges Kim Bailey faced when she took over as Purchasing Director for the City of Huntington, West Virginia. Other issues included outdated bid lists, expensive bid notices, and cumbersome bid setup, but all led back to the paper-based process that was limiting efficiency.

SOLUTION

Relying on electronic bidding experience from her previous work, Bailey vetted several online procurement options and landed on Bid Express® - Infotech's secure online bidding platform.

“I did some research and did probably six online demos. Bid Express just presented itself as intuitive and easy-to-use.”

RESULTS

By using Bid Express to manage solicitations, Bailey saves big on time, money, and space.

90% Reduction in
Bid Prep Time

95% Reduction in
Bid Ad Costs

80% Less Filing
Cabinets

The Challenges of Paper-Based Bidding

With over 30 years of experience as a bidding manager, it's safe to say Kim Bailey is an expert on procurement. So when she walked into her new office at the City of Huntington several years ago and found 11 filing cabinets plus a basement full of ancient bids, she knew something would have to change. Aside from the claustrophobic space created by the physical archives of decades of bids, Bailey had a laundry list of other issues caused by the outdated process.

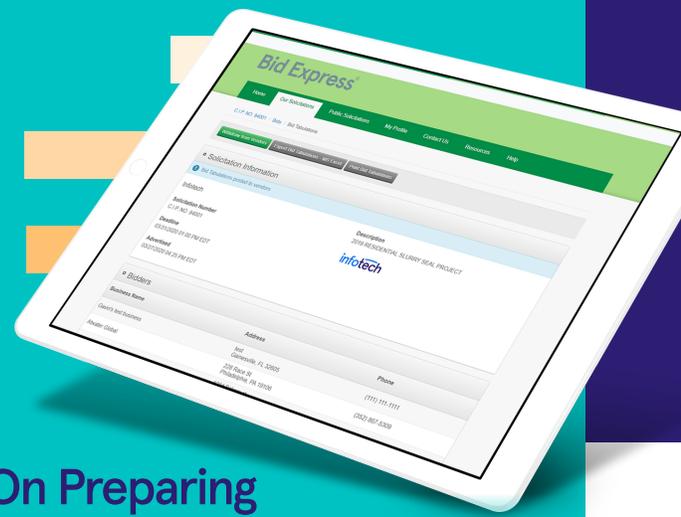
On Heavy Office Traffic:

"I had vendors randomly coming all day long wanting to pick up a copy of a bid and that made it difficult for me to block out 2 hours to do something else. I don't keep vendor hours, I have an open-door policy - and it was open a lot."

Reducing Costs Associated with Paper-Based Bidding

"The money that I've saved in trees, I can't even put a dollar amount on that."

When talking with Bailey, it doesn't take long to realize that she's a very organized person with little patience for inefficiency and clutter. So after implementing Bid Express, naturally, the 11 filing cabinets stuffed inside her office were the first thing to go. The paper - and all the associated costs of printing and shipping with the USPS - went with it. Bailey is also required to put bid notices in the newspaper. **In the past, the cost of putting all the essential information in the ad amounted to \$400 per bid. Now that these notices simply direct bidders to Bid Express, the cost is down to \$20 per bid.**



On Preparing Complex Bids:

"It took a minimum of 4 hours - plus getting them in the mail. You had to rely on your word processing software, making sure all the information was in it, zipping it, and printing it."

Suffice to say, she had a lot on her plate. And since Judge Dredd is to the law what Kim Bailey is to the purchasing department, it was on her to facilitate change. Relying on her experience with electronic bidding from her previous jobs with Marshall University and the University of Colorado, she began vetting different platforms and landed on Bid Express.

Expediting Bid Set-Up with Templates

“Probably about 60% of the bids I’ve done, I’ve templated somehow. Ammunition, road slips, retaining walls, all of those I’ve templated. My bids take me 15 minutes max.”

Bid Express allows users to build out bid templates with Smart Forms and then replicate them for future solicitations. This function is especially useful for complex bids, like the kind Bailey sets up for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Federal money means bureaucracy - and all the forms that come with it. Bailey is able to attach those forms once and copy them to the next bid. Previously, setting up each bid individually took

“a minimum of 4 hours.” The ability for Bailey to return to a bid draft also enables a greater level of organization and control over the bidding process.

“The fact that you can just save the bid as a draft and come back to it tomorrow is key because you almost never have everything you need beforehand.”

Accommodating the Bidding Community

Getting a bidding community that’s used to operating one way to embrace new technology can be one of the most difficult aspects of implementing a platform like Bid Express. After some initial friction, the bidders in Bailey’s region have grown to appreciate the flexibility the platform offers.

“That community really likes it now. It was a struggle to get them there the first couple of months, but they do like it, because once they hit ‘submit’ they get a message that everything is okay, they know it’s done, and they don’t have to worry about it.”

Of course, moving things online has taken a little of the fanfare out of bid openings, but Bailey certainly doesn’t mind.

“I no longer get papercuts. I don’t have to dig through the bid to find the submission sheet or the pricing sheet. The bid summary page on Bid Express is amazing, you just tell it to export and it’s done.”

Bid Better with Bid Express

Amplify the quality and quantity of your bid submissions with the e-Bidding platform that streamlines the solicitation process for agencies and vendors everywhere.

- + Minimize discarded low bids with error checks and omission alerts
- + Reduce paper waste from printed bid packets and plans
- + Get instant bid tabs with ranked and exportable results