



Project Summary

Organization:

Cornell University

Location:

Ithaca, New York, United States

Project Objective:

- Reduce administrative time through online bid submissions
- Build a database of qualified suppliers
- Save time in the evaluation process by inviting only qualified suppliers to the bid event
- Conduct procurement according to industry best practices

Products Used:

Bentley Procurement Software

Fast Facts

- Bentley procurement software encourages transparency and best practices by logging transactions, enforcing deadlines, and sealing bids to prevent premature disclosure of information.
- Vendors can now self-register and manage their own accounts, while procurement staff members have the ability to qualify suppliers and invite them to relevant bid events.
- The Cornell procurement team saves time evaluating bid responses with the software's automatic bid tabulation and side-by-side comparison features.

ROI

- The new software eliminated manual data entry steps—for example, now eight agents can complete close to 90 solicitations per year.
- The Q&A process and messaging templates save time and ensures accuracy.
- The new system is easy for vendors to understand, allowing them to navigate the software independently and submit fewer support requests to the procurement team.

Cornell University Ensures Accurate Vendor Information with Bentley Procurement Software

Digital Strategy Positions the University as a Procurement Leader in Academia

University Seeks e-Procurement Master Plan

Cornell University is among the country's oldest and most elite universities. Founded in 1865, this Ivy League school consistently ranks in the top 15 nationally for its academic reputation. It has approximately 21,904 students, 1,648 professors, and produced 54 Nobel laureates.

and 2011. While these software products provided an improvement over manual processes, they were not user friendly and many common tasks required too many steps. This became problematic because vendors struggled to submit bids and regularly required assistance from procurement staff.

It was time to find a more efficient software. While evaluating a new system, the university hoped to find technology that would accommodate its unique business needs. The team wanted a system that could be easy to use for the suppliers, and support the sealed bidding process as well as provide other functions such as supplier prequalification and approval.

"[Bentley procurement software] is 100 percent easier to use than our previous systems. I used to dread when a new solicitation needed to be bid. Now it is no big deal."

— Melinda Sweazy, Purchasing Agent,
Cornell University

Customized Portal Ensures up-to-date, Accurate Vendor Information

After an extensive evaluation of e-procurement options, Cornell University determined Bentley procurement software was the best product for its needs. Staff members and selected vendors tested the software and found it user friendly and efficient.

The university led many other institutions of its kind by implementing e-procurement bidding systems in 2004



View of the Cornell campus from McGraw Tower with Barnes Hall in the center and Sage Hall to the left.

"It is important that I have oversight into the sourcing process to ensure we are competing major procurements according to industry best practices."

*– Cindy Jefferson,
Director of Strategic Sourcing,
Cornell University*

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Key functionality elements of the new system, such as online bid submissions, allowed Cornell to reduce administrative time in the procurement process. By receiving vendor pricing and answers to questions in forms tailored for each solicitation, bids could be automatically tabulated and responses easily compared side by side. "The new system eliminates manual data entry steps and allows us to easily compare bid responses," said Jay Porter, strategic sourcing manager at Cornell University.

Bentley's supplier management portal, which is accessible via a university website link provides online supplier registration, posting of solicitations, and allows online bid submission, eliminating paper and postal costs from the sourcing process.

Understanding that evaluating bids will always be a time-consuming process, Cornell uses an "invite-only" approach and is selective in the potential vendors that are invited to bid. "Some companies offered us a big database of prospective suppliers and promoted that we would see a big increase of responses by sending it out to their database,"

said Porter. "We did not see the benefit of getting lots of responses from unqualified suppliers. We love that [Bentley procurement software] lets us build our own database of highly qualified suppliers." With their new platform, Cornell utilizes self-managed vendor accounts, which ensures up-to-date, accurate vendor information.

While Cornell is a private university, the ability to audit sourcing activities is very important to the university. According to Cindy Jefferson, director of strategic sourcing at Cornell University, "It is important that I have oversight into the sourcing process to ensure we are competing major procurements according to industry best practices." The Bentley procurement software platform logs transactions, enforces deadlines, and can seal bids to prevent premature disclosure of information. The flexibility of Bentley software helped Cornell seamlessly implement efficient sourcing, reduce manual processes, and realize the full potential of e-procurement in an academic environment.



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