

DATA INSIGHT

Are your stakeholders ready for eSourcing?

This is a key question for procurement teams as they consider streamlining their process with eSourcing software — and for good reason! Stakeholder adoption can make or break an eSourcing implementation.

To better understand the stakeholder mindset, we analysed the data from over 4,000 stakeholder surveys conducted between 2014 and 2018. These insights, from vendors and evaluators across North America, dispel common myths and uncover how stakeholders *really* feel about eSourcing.

01

MYTH:

My stakeholders are resistant to eSourcing.

FACT:

False

In fact, our research shows:



of evaluators want to use digital sourcing for their next RFP



of vendors wish more organizations used a digital sourcing platform.

Consider that over 96% of American hospitals now use an electronic records system,¹ and over 66% of American cities have invested in smart city technology.²

Clearly, digital transformation is well underway throughout the public sector, bringing process improvements, time-savings, and better customer service to various functions across the organization.

As our research shows, vendors and evaluators demonstrate a high willingness to adopt digital tools in the RFP process as well — a positive sign for procurement teams who are planning to move from a paper-based process to an online platform.

¹ [The Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology](#)

² [Tech Republic](#)

02

MYTH:

Most vendors do not have experience with digital submissions.

FACT:

False

In 2018, 57% of vendor respondents reported previous experience using an eSourcing platform for digital submission.

One of the chief concerns that procurement teams have when it comes to eSourcing is the impact on their vendor community: namely, will vendors get on board with a new process and new technology?

But our research shows that as more and more organizations retire their rubber stamps and bid boxes in favour of online submissions, eSourcing is no longer 'new' for many vendors.



Not only have the majority of vendors already used a digital platform, the number of vendors who have prior experience with digital platforms is accelerating year over year. This bodes well for a smooth and stress-free transition from physical to online submissions.



03

MYTH:

My vendors would find digital submission too difficult.

FACT:

False

55% of vendors reported that the easier submission process (vs physical submission) is the chief benefit of eSourcing platforms.

The other benefits reported by vendors? Immediate confirmation of submission receipt, lower costs, and reduced environmental impact of digital submission.

Modern eSubmission platforms make the submission process easier for vendors by providing a single online location for bid submission, removing the effort of printing, copying, collating, and shipping bid responses.

An easier process for vendors is a win-win for procurement teams too, as it removes barriers to entry for vendors and ensures structured, complete submissions every time—ultimately helping procurement teams drive a better outcome.



IT TAKES AN AVERAGE OF EIGHT MINUTES FOR VENDORS TO MAKE THEIR FIRST SUBMISSION ON THE BONFIRE PLATFORM.

04

MYTH:

My evaluators don't have time to use a new digital sourcing platform.

FACT:

False

80% of evaluators reported that they could complete their evaluation faster using an eSourcing platform (vs. manual process).

You already know that your evaluators are busy, and our research confirms it. We've seen that evaluators are often struggling to get their scores completed on time, with nearly 30% of scoring done in the last three days of the evaluation period, and one quarter of scores recorded outside of regular business hours.³

With this in mind, procurement teams are right to be concerned about any additional demands on their evaluators' time.

However, our research shows that eSourcing actually saves evaluators time. With modern eSourcing platforms, evaluators are able to access and score documents in one online location, compare responses side-by-side, and spend fewer hours in consensus meetings, making the process more pleasant for everyone.

³ [State of the RFP Study](#)

05

MYTH:

Adopting an eSourcing tool will cause disruption and confusion for my evaluators.

FACT:

False

84% of evaluators feel more organized after using a digital sourcing platform.

It's natural for procurement teams to be wary of any change that disrupt or complicate their process. However, increasingly, it is the status quo that is the greater risk to your stakeholder relationships.



eSourcing platforms brings simplicity and order to the evaluation process. The mixture of email, paper, and Excel files is replaced by a single online platform that centralizes all communications, documents, and scorecards. The risk of lost documents and miscommunication decreases, giving evaluators the ability to focus on the task at hand: drawing on their subject matter expertise to select the best vendor for the job.

The benefits go beyond time-savings and improved organization: investing in a better evaluator experience strengthens the relationship between internal clients and procurement and paves the way for more meaningful collaboration.

Conclusion

This study provides many positive indications of stakeholders' readiness for eSourcing. However, statistics are no substitute for real conversation and consultation with your own vendor and evaluator communities.

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AN IMPORTANT PART OF UNDERSTANDING JUST HOW 'READY AND WILLING' YOUR CONSTITUENTS ARE IS TO START SEEING WHAT THESE TOOLS LOOK LIKE—WHETHER THAT'S THROUGH A DEMO OR A SHORT PROOF-OF-CONCEPT. BASED ON THE DATA ACROSS HUNDREDS OF ORGANIZATIONS, WE CAN SEE THAT WHEN YOU DO SCRATCH THE SURFACE AND START INVESTIGATING, YOU ARE GOING TO FIND ENTHUSIASM.”

CORRY FLATT, CEO, BONFIRE

When evaluating eSourcing tools, consider your stakeholders' use case with careful attention to the platform's user experience, the training requirements, and the level of support offered by the provider. Keeping your stakeholders top-of-mind throughout the selection process will help to ensure a successful launch of eSourcing in your organization and pave the way for deeper collaboration in your decision-making process.



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