

Bid Management – The Practice of Benchmarking to Win Major Bids

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Abstract:

The two primary components of the business process, aside from the Project Management tasks, are Marketing and Sales. Because they are essential components of the company, these two phrases are often used across industries. Promotional activities are a part of Marketing, and they help to create possibilities by widening the market. However, Sales activity is crucial in securing these opportunities. Nevertheless, the amount of breakdown for sales activity can be increased.

Pre-Sales activity and Post-Sale activity are the two primary channels into which sales activity might be split. The pre-sale activity of bid management entails the bid manager helping front-end sales managers' close deals by offering them sales support services. Bid managers will be a key player in this project selection process. They support Sales Managers in understanding the unique demands of each customer, help to maximize corporate profitability by customizing the solutions, and support in recognizing business risks in order to boost sales for the organization.

Top-tier individuals who are knowledgeable about the company's objectives, strategies, and capabilities are bid managers. As a result, inside an organization, there is a single point of contact and one stop shop for all types of inquiries. While putting up the best solution in accordance with the unique requirements of each customer, bid managers will need to consult internal stake holders. Bid managers are punctual in maintaining the bid diaries and are skilled communicators and coordinators.

Bid management is more than just copying and pasting; it's a means to customize the solution to meet the unique demands of the customer. Before the proposal is sent to the customer, many steps must be taken. The upkeep of the document repository and prompt submission of the proposal to the customer are the primary goals of bid management.

Keywords: Bid Management, Bid Managers, Tender Management, Proposal Writers, Pursuit Managers

Introduction:**Bid Management – The practice of benchmarking to win major bids.**

Yes, bid management is a benchmark procedure for obtaining significant contracts. It is one of the aspects of pre-sale activity where the front end sales managers are assisted in closing the recognized prospects by the highly qualified individuals known as bid managers. A bid manager's main responsibility is to carefully review the customer's "Request for Proposal (RFP)" document and to prepare a response for each and every area that is included in the RFP. There are different kind of requests the customer can raise, they are mentioned below

1. **PQQ's: Pre-Qualification Questionnaire** – In this kind of request, the consumer makes an inquiry to learn more about the service providers in the industry. Finding vendors that can deliver the goods or services that an organization requires is the goal of a PQQ.
2. **RFP's: Request for Proposal:** In this type of request, the customer would like to know the technical capabilities in depth and the cost-effective solution to his demand after identifying possible providers. After that, the client circulates this requirement document among the suppliers eligible to take part in this inquiry.
3. **ITT's: Invitation to Tenders:** The demand must be floated in the form of tenders if the client is a government agency. Various Terms & Conditions, Legal Clauses, Technical Requirements, and Commercial Requirements are included in the tender.
4. **RFI: Request for Information:** Request for Information is also called as PQQ's when a buyer shows a desire to learn about possible market sellers who can meet his needs.

Responding to a request made by the client is the process of bid management. Since the phrase "Customer is King" is commonly known, it is expected that all of the customer's demands be fulfilled in a respectful manner in order to turn opportunity into order. In order to meet the objectives of the client, bid management is a process-oriented profile that must be handled correctly.

Bid managers should be capable of understanding client requirements and matching the best solution to those requirements. The decision-making process for this project will heavily include bid managers. They do a variety of tasks, such as assisting the Sales Managers in comprehending the particular requirements of each client, assisting in maximizing corporate profitability by tailoring the solutions, and assisting in identifying business hazards in order to increase sales for the company.

Considering that this is a process-oriented profile, the bid manager should abide by the governance established by the business, follow the procedure for creating the proposal, and deliver it to the client before the deadline laid forth in the RFP document.

Why is bid management so significant?

Bid management covers a number of procedures. These procedures are intricate and time-consuming, therefore one needs patience and good bid management abilities to make sure the bidding process goes successfully. Due to the overwhelming nature of the procedure, there is a jeopardy that important information may be missed, leaving the opportunity to win contracts in the rubble.

It is the responsibility of bid managers to communicate with different organizational stakeholders. Ineffective communication with these stakeholders might agitate the participants and cause incorrect comprehension. The inability of the bid managers to tolerate the stakeholders, along with a misinterpretation of the business necessity and poor communication, might result in a loss.

Throughout the sales process, bid management plays a crucial role. since such, bid managers cannot afford to disregard the terms and conditions, legal provisions, and other necessary requirements, since they are the crucial factors that influence the client's decision to offer a business. Therefore, in order to perform the bid management role and win the contracts, bid managers need to be professional, detail-oriented, and a competent proofreader.

In order to secure more contracts, the response to the need must be carefully crafted, since the techno-commercial solution is the decisive element. Consequently, throughout the sales process, bid management plays a very important role.

Methods followed in Bid Management Process

Through marketing initiatives, the sales potential market will be expanded. The lead must be handled by the bid managers after it has been found. Bid managers must thoroughly review all of the RFP's requirements and identify any possible risks before the discovered lead is turned into an opportunity.

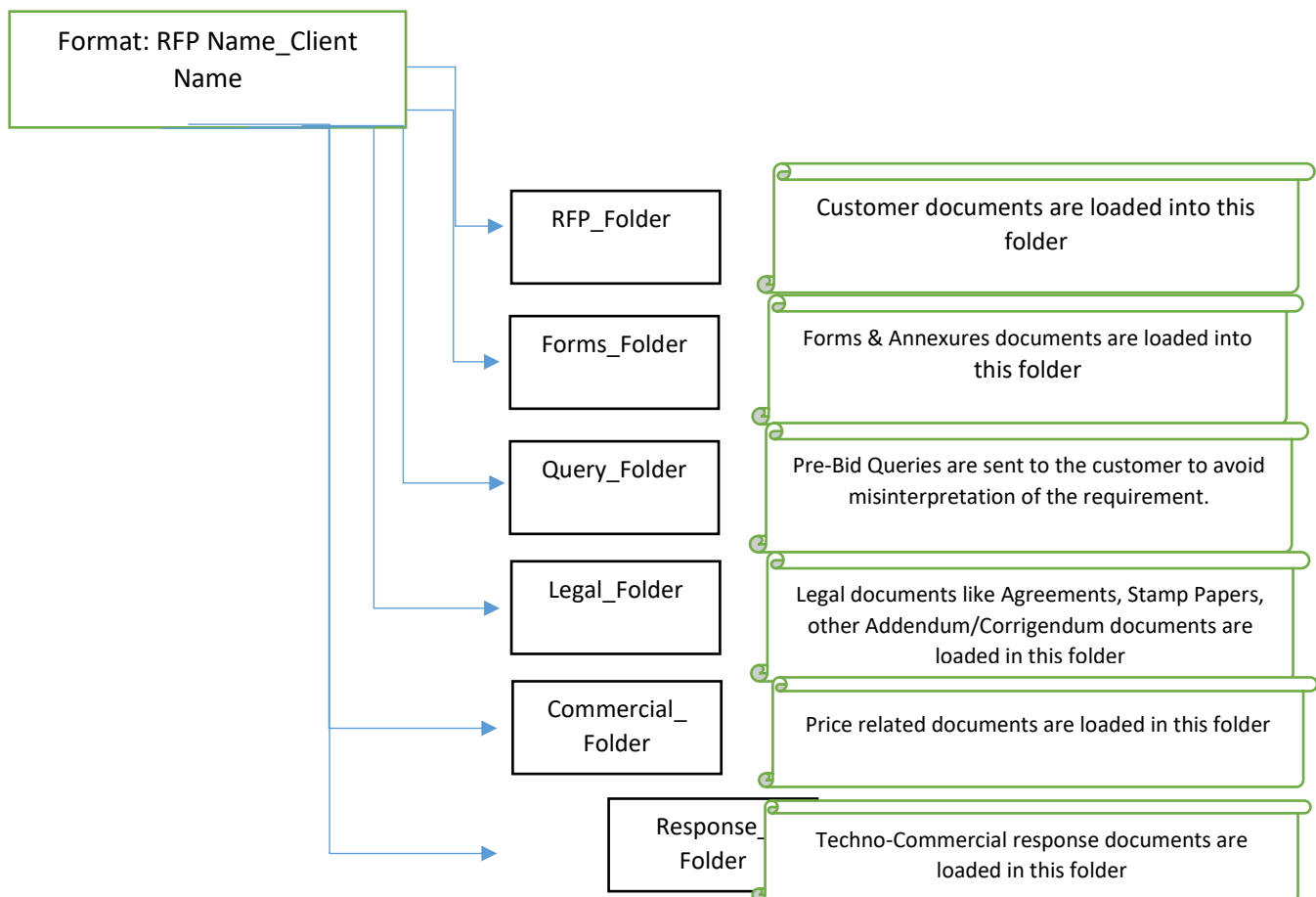
The "Tender Study" document must be created by the bid manager using a spreadsheet or power presentation, and it must then be presented to the decision-making authority for approval before moving further. Vice President of Sales, Legal Expert, Commercial Architect, and Technical Architect make up the deciding power.

The decision to move forward or stop will be made by this group. To prevent implications in the latter phases of the project management activities, this choice is crucial. The committee will talk further in this group discussion about the project's potential risks and its capacity to alleviate consumer pain points. If the group decides it is more

practical to move forward, consent is distributed to the RFP owner, who will subsequently relay this information to the bid manager.

The "Bid Plan" is to be created by the bid manager once the RFP owner has given their approval. Some of the key components of an RFP are included in a bid plan, including the due date, eligibility requirements, undertakings, declarations, information on the resumes of technical and commercial specialists, payment terms, delivery terms, penalty clauses, and other legal compliances needed to meet the RFP's terms.

The order in which the folder structure should be created in the repository by the bid manager is indicated below.



After the folder structure has been established, bid managers are required to include the stakeholders in the group for their input. Depending on the size and kind of the industry, each will have a unique repository management system, such as "G-Suite, Microsoft Teams," etc.

Bid managers are in charge of explaining the customer requirements and the submission timeline to the team after creating the folder structure and forming the team. He is also expected to create the "Responsibility Matrix" to outline the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder.

The deadline stated in the RFP document is expected to be followed by bid managers. He is in responsible of working cross-functionally with internal stakeholders to ensure that the right answer is obtained well in advance of the submission deadline and is in line with the customer's requirements.

Bid managers are required to proofread, do a sanity check, and arrange the text to make the answer look acceptable after receiving responses from the contributors. The collated format of the answer should be provided to the "Review Committee" for a complete verification of the contents that are added in all the required sections after the content has been compiled with reference to the requirements sought in the RFP.

As soon as the committee's "Approval to Proceed" is confirmed. The final material must be put in the "Template" or "Customer Specific Template" designated by the organization, and access must be granted to the Sales Managers for the client's final submission.

It is the duty of the bid manager to follow up with the customer on the completion of the RFP. If the client is happy with the offered solution, he can request a demonstration of the proposed solution. The customer will make a call to begin the commercial discussion when the solution demonstration is over. The "Tender Inviting Authority" gives control to the deciding authorities for the "Award of Contract".

It is necessary to transfer control to the project management team to start the work after receiving the Award of Contract notice and communicating it internally. In order to create a content library and other case studies for hassle-free use of the documents while preparing the answers, the repository administration is the responsibility of the bid manager.

Qualities of Bid Managers:

- Since there are so many RFPs to work on, bid managers are expected to be tenacious enough to handle the burden.
- Without bid managers, who are also known as strategists, bids cannot be presented to the client within the allotted time limit.
- While reading the contents of the RFP, bid managers should pay close attention because it is crucial to highlight the needs and any possible risks associated with the project.
- The timeframe needs to be adhered to, according to bid managers. With several stages and deadlines to meet, the tender process is a time-sensitive one by nature.
- Bid Managers must effectively communicate the needs and work well with others in order to gather input from various stakeholders and submit the completed bid.

- There will be a lot of repetitious duties to complete before the proposal is filed, thus bid managers need to be competent administrators.
- The sole point of contact for all information inside an organization is the bid manager. He must thus update any information that is shared inside an organization and keep the information library updated. Information Manager is another name for the bid manager.
- Legal, commercial, and technical compliances should be known to bid managers so that the early risks may be quickly detected.

Bid Management Best Practices:

- The most appropriate tenders need to be found in order to obtain more contracts. In order to solve the customer's pain areas, it is crucial to map out the highly capable resources and skills available.
- One of the key components to successfully completing the bid cycle is repository management.
- Determining whether to participate in the specified RFP depends heavily on the bid go/no go decision.
- It is crucial to provide informative and high-quality content to meet client requests.
- Hire Bid Managers, Subject Matter Experts to prepare the optimized solution for the customer inquiries.
- Preparation of more granular level Bid Plans is very much required to understand the demands of customer in depth.
- Bid Managers must schedule daily cadence calls with the stakeholders after receiving RFPs in order to check the progress of the corresponding materials.
- Implement the sophisticated tools to track the progress of content creation and other administrative tasks.
- It's crucial to create a list of consumer requirements and carefully go over the right stuff.
- Make sure the consumer thinks that the given solution is within their budget by carefully reviewing the costs associated with the solution.
- To deliver the best suited solution, a competitor analysis should be performed.
- Win-Loss Analysis is a useful tool for determining one's position in the market. The team will benefit much from this analysis as it will prepare them to comprehend the goals of client needs.
- Preparing a Responsibility Matrix, effective team collaboration, deadline awareness, and integrating Subject Matter Experts throughout the Bid Life Cycle will all assist to acquire large contracts.

Conclusion:

In order to suit the specific needs of the client, bid management involves more than merely copying and pasting. Numerous processes must be done before the proposal is given to the client. The main objectives of bid management are to maintain the document repository and submit the proposal to the client on time. It contributes significantly to an organization's success by helping to create winning bids during the sales cycle.

Through effective management abilities, Bid Manager offers value to the company's success rate. No matter the industry vertical or the goods, bid management is extremely important in enhancing the value of the organization.