

Commerce Decisions and AWARD® support J+S Ltd with their successful bid for a major MOD services contract

Use of AWARD® and Commerce Decisions support ensures the submission of a clear and coherent bid for a complex UK Ministry of Defence sonar in-service support contract.



Customer profile

J+S Ltd has been providing independent engineering and equipment support solutions to the defence market for more than 50 years. Its business is based around a combination of engineering solutions, the in-service support of military equipment and the low volume manufacture of specialist products. J+S customers include major defence prime contractors, the UK MOD and overseas customers such as the Canadian Department of National Defence, and the Chilean and Brazilian navies.

J+S's system, mechanical, software, electronic and acoustic engineering skills are applied to provide innovative solutions to a range of naval sensor, weapon system, communication, test and simulation requirements. The core of its business is supporting naval equipment from traditional post-design support and repair contracts, to availability-based Contractor Logistics Support arrangements.

Project overview

The UK Ministry of Defence planned to award a contract for the in-service support of a range of miscellaneous sonar equipments (MSE). Under the terms of the contract, support was required for a range of naval assets including intercept sonars, echo sounders, underwater telephones, oceanography sensors and hull vibration monitoring equipment.

The support service was to be provided under a Contracting For Availability (CFA)

arrangement whereby the winning contractor would undertake all responsibility for the availability and maintenance of the assets under contract. J+S was one of six bidders hoping to secure the contract. This contract will run until the end of March 2019 and has a value of approximately £14 million.

Key challenges of the bid

As the incumbent, this was a key contract for J+S Ltd to retain. The complex nature of the bid involving multiple pieces of equipment meant that J+S Ltd had to co-ordinate a number of sub-contractors to fulfil the contract requirements. The key challenges for the bid team were:

- the complexity of the bid itself, which incorporated a broad set of technical requirements
- gathering sufficient quality information to answer the requirements
- identifying and managing a number of

specialist subcontractors, J+S Ltd being the prime contractor in the bid

- time pressures on the bid team to complete their response
- responding to the bid in a format that met the MOD requirements
- effectively managing a significant number of documents and data that needed to be accessed easily and rapidly

Role and value of Commerce Decisions

J+S contacted Commerce Decisions at the start of the bid process as the MOD had decided to use AWARD® to evaluate the tenders for this contract. Given the strategic importance of the contract, J+S Ltd opted to coordinate the response using AWARD® to ensure that it was presented in a consistent manner.

“Commerce Decisions presented us with the options available to us for using AWARD® and their services to support our bid submission.



We wanted to ensure that we covered all the key themes and delivered our response in the format required by the MOD.”

Andy Toms, Sales and Marketing Director, J+S Ltd.

One of the Commerce Decisions’ Professional Services team kicked off the bid preparation process by helping J+S to build an internal review process using AWARD®. This enabled J+S to create a self-scoring scheme that used the criteria set published by the MOD and that would be used to score the bids. This ensured that the bid entered by J+S was presented in an optimal way, enabling the MOD evaluators to find easily all the information provided for each of the bid criteria.

Once the bid response had been completed, the consultant assessed the draft against the MOD requirement in order to provide an impartial outside view of the state of the bid. By evaluating the bid using a MOD assessment approach and AWARD®, the consultant was able to advise J+S on the areas requiring focus.

“Using AWARD® to prepare our bid gave us real confidence that our proposal would be a good fit in terms of meeting the requirements of the MOD and the Commerce Decisions consultant gave us excellent value in steering our response. It was very good to have a third-party review of our proposal to ensure it was focused.”

Andy Toms, J+S Ltd.

As the bid developed, the Professional Services team was able to provide impartial advice ensuring that the MOD requirements were fully addressed within the content of the bid. At the final stage, before submitting the response, J+S Ltd was able to carry out a dummy run by populating its answers and responses to the tender in AWARD®. This enabled J+S to score the overall response, to identify weaknesses and then to enhance the response.

“Using AWARD® definitely improved the quality of our bid and helped us to win this important contract. AWARD® did what we wanted it to do and gave us a great deal of reassurance with regard to the quality of our response. This was reflected in the fact that we won the contract.”

Andy Toms, J+S Ltd.

All this preparation resulted in a successful outcome for J+S who secured the contract.

Summary of the benefits of AWARD® for bidders

- AWARD® allows bidders to focus on what is important to the buyer/ customer
- AWARD® is easy to use and provides transparency to internal bidder review teams
- AWARD®’s intuitive web forms facilitate the compiling of the bid, and the performance of bid reviews
- AWARD® simulates how your bid will be seen and evaluated by the customer, modelling the buyer’s evaluation process and determining its competitiveness
- AWARD® supports the implementation of a consistent, robust bid process that instils the importance of proposal management within the overall opportunity capture cycle

“Feedback from the MOD indicated that we had clearly understood their requirements and had submitted a clear and coherent bid. We are of the firm belief that the use of AWARD® enhanced the quality of our bid and made it easier for the MOD to evaluate our submission.”

Andy Toms, J+S Ltd.

