

Bidmatch Profiles - New Resource? Time to Update?



NH PTAC

Introduction and Participant Guide

- ▶ Muting
- ▶ Chat function
- ▶ Recorded Webinar and Slides will be posted at www.NHEconomy.com/ptac under Training Presentations

What is Our Goal Today?

- ▶ Not to make you experts – that's our job.
- ▶ To deepen your understanding of the BidMatch capabilities –
- ▶ In the hope that you will push the limits of the BidMatch tools and get the most that it has to offer.

NH PTAC Bidmatch Service

NH PTAC offers a free “Bidmatch” service to automate your daily search for government bid opportunities and market intelligence. This webinar will provide an understanding of what the service searches, and how search “profiles” are designed to produce individualized results. Many years’ experience has taught us that the best way to build an effective search profile is to work in close collaboration with clients who have some understanding of the process. Here’s your chance to peek behind the curtain

Sample

<u>FSG Title</u>	<u>Keywords</u>
Y <u>West Shore Lake Pontchartrain, Louisiana Hurricane and Storm Dam...</u>	naics!237990;
Z <u>Ventilation Renovations - Saco Middle School</u>	renovat*; ventilation;
Z <u>RFP 202210170 - Home Heating Oil Tank Replacements</u>	heating;
Z <u>6917 Abatement & Demolition of the Hunt Center at 39 Courtland ...</u>	construction; manager?;
Z <u>Seeking qualified bidders to submit bids for Plumbing Maintenanc</u>	plumbing;
Z <u>Boston Public Schools (BPS) Office of Career and Technical Educa</u>	renovat*;
Z <u>Replacement of police station roof</u>	ti:roof?;
Z <u>Minor Roofing Services 2023-2025 (School Department)</u>	roofing;
Y <u>Minor Electrical Services 2023-2025 (School Department)</u>	ti:electrical;
Y <u>Minor Plumbing Services 2023-2025 (School Department)</u>	plumbing;

Key Features of a Bid Searching Tool

- ▶ Comprehensive – must cover a very broad array of probable sources of bids
<https://www.outreachsystems.com/index.php/products-en/bid-match>
- ▶ Accuracy – must have a high probability of finding bids of interest
- ▶ Selectivity – must not capture too much extraneous material

Comprehensive – Federal Sources

- ▶ SAM Contract Opportunities <https://sam.gov/content/opportunities>
- ▶ DIBBS [DLA Internet Bid Board System \(DIBBS\)](#)
- ▶ FedConnect <https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/Default.htm>
- ▶ Unison Global Marketplace [Unison Marketplace | Unison \(unisonglobal.com\)](#)
- ▶ Individual Agency Websites
 - ▶ USACE <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Business-With-Us/Contracting/>
 - ▶ US Navy [Solicitation Search Page \(navy.mil\)](#)
 - ▶ USDA Agricultural Marketing Service [Open Purchase Requests | Agricultural Marketing Service \(usda.gov\)](#)

NH State & Local Opportunities

▶ State Opportunities

▶ **Commodities** [Statewide Bids and Proposals | Procurement and Support Services | NH Department of Administrative Services](#)

▶ **Construction** [Invitation to Bid | Finance and Contracts | NH Department of Transportation](#)

▶ Other/Agency-specific

▶ Local Governments

▶ NH Bidmatch is restricted to Concord, Dover, Laconia, Manchester, Nashua, Portsmouth, CCSNH, USNH, NH Local Government Center, NH Public Notices

▶ You can opt in for however many states you want

Accuracy – Developing a Selective Profile:

- ▶ **NAICS codes: North American Industry Classification System (federal opportunities)**
 - ▶ Codes that are very specific can result in a good Match.
Examples: 332710 – Machine Shops; 238130 - Framing Contractor
 - ▶ Codes that are too broad or general will work against you!
Example: 541330 – Engineering Services includes 28 subcategories of engineering services, including traffic, heating, erosion control, electrical engineering...

**Takeaway: don't rely on NAICS codes alone! Combine with strong keywords*

Accuracy – Developing a Selective Profile:

- ▶ **NAICS codes: North American Industry Classification System**
- ▶ Different Contracting Officers may assign different codes.
- ▶ Do your research in SAM to understand code usage.
 - ▶ Snowplowing services may be assigned NAICS codes for 'Landscaping Services', or for 'Facilities Support Services', or for 'Other Services to Buildings and Dwellings'
 - ▶ To include all of the potential NAICS for your product/service would result in far too many 'false positives' matches for the daily federal notices. <https://www.census.gov/naics/>

**Takeaway: don't rely on NAICS codes alone! Combine with strong keywords*

Accuracy – Developing a Selective Profile:

- ▶ **FSG codes: Federal Supply Group (federal opportunities)**
- ▶ Product Service Codes and Federal Supply Codes
 - ▶ FSC/PSC – codes are much more specific than NAICS, but may not always fit
 - ▶ <http://support.outreachsystems.com/resources/tables/pscs/>
- ▶ FSG Codes can be used to preclude inappropriate notices by allowing only those notices with the appropriate FSG code to come through.
 - ▶ “Education”
 - ▶ Education/training: Vocational – FSG Group U
 - ▶ Lease/rental of Educational Building – FSG Group X
 - ▶ Maintenance of Educational Buildings – FSG Group Z

**Takeaway: there are ~300,000 bid notices per day; you only want the suitable ones*

Geographic Selectivity

- ▶ Know your geographic service area
 - ▶ In-state
 - ▶ Multi-state/regional
 - ▶ National (CONUS)
- ▶ You can opt in to see International Opportunities (which are outside the scope of NH PTAC)
- ▶ Understand usage of contracting office vs. place of performance (POP)

Keywords

- ▶ Some keywords are powerful. Take “plasma” for example:
 - ▶ Can refer to blood products, or
 - ▶ Plasma cutting, or
 - ▶ ICAP or ICP-MS trace metals analysis, or
 - ▶ a very few other things.
- ▶ While the word “plasma” is used in several different contexts, they are easy to sort out.
- ▶ Some obvious weak keywords:
 - ▶ design, manage, engineer, quality, information, technology

Phrases are Better than Words

- ▶ “Plasma Cutting”
- ▶ “Marine Engineering”
- ▶ “Graphic Design”
- ▶ “Patent leather”
- ▶ “Household goods”

Selectivity – How do we Screen out the Junk?

- ▶ Some junk is inevitable
- ▶ A moderate amount of junk is ok. The human brain is very good at making quick, fairly accurate determinations as to what interests us and what doesn't. We can easily ignore some junk.
- ▶ Too much junk makes our results too frustrating to be useful.
- ▶ If it's too frustrating, or doesn't deliver any reward, we give up.
- ▶ The right amount of junk filtering can be critically important

Boolean Logic

- ▶ We can use Boolean Logic to create complex search terms. These are by far the most powerful tools that we have in BidMatch to obtain accurate results and reduce junk.

- ▶ A simple example: Let's say we are interested in bids related to the eyes of hurricanes. We might code: `eye<3u>hurricane`

By requiring "hurricane" to be found within three words, in any order, we can eliminate virtually all references to other meanings of "eye". We simultaneously only capture references to hurricanes when the word eye is also present.

- ▶ Another example: `fire<>extinguisher` and not `halon<>gas`
- ▶ More complex multilevel searches can be developed to increase specificity

`computer<2>training` and `(state!ky or state!tn or state!mi)`

Understanding Boolean Operators in your BidMatch results

- ▶ The * (asterisk) wildcard character is used to substitute for any combination of characters at the end of a term in your keyword or agency search string, letting you search for variations of a particular word without searching for each variation separately. For example, the search term "extinguish*" would match on extinguish, extinguishing, extinguisher, and so on.
- ▶ The ? (question mark) wildcard is used to substitute for any *single* character at the end of a term. For example, the search term "fold?" would match on "fold" and "folds" but not "folding" or "folder."
- ▶ **Note:** You may see the * or ? wildcard at the end of *any* keyword that has at least 3 characters or more. You cannot, however, use a wildcard in front of or in the middle of a word.

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Tools for developing your codes, keywords, phrases & Boolean Logic

- ▶ We develop search profiles using an iterative approach. This is essentially a way of saying “informed trial & error.”
- ▶ Critical Concept: It doesn't matter what you call your services or products. What's important is what your customer will call them.
- ▶ 1st Corollary to the Critical Concept: Only the Contracting Officer's choice of NAICS and FSC/PSC Codes matter.
- ▶ Use historical and competitor research in www.SAM.gov, www.USASpending.gov and/or www.FPDS.gov to tweak your code and keyword lists.
- ▶ Use iSearch to test your keywords
<https://isearch.outreachsystems.com//>



Use historical and competitor research in www.SAM.gov, www.USASpending.gov and/or www.FPDS.gov to tweak your code and keyword lists.

- ▶ Use these tools to find historical or contemporary contracts & solicitations that might be of interest to you.
- ▶ When you narrow down to a good result, download to a spreadsheet
- ▶ Sort by NAICS and/or FSC/PSC codes. Use this data to inform your code choices.
- ▶ Check out the titles and Product Description fields – scour them for keywords.
- ▶ **Tip: Searches on successful competitors can expedite this process.**

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Happy Holidays!



Thank you!

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