

Texas Department of Transportation



SYNOPSIS

The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT), with an annual road and bridge construction budget between 4 and 6 billion dollars, expends significant resources each month in letting construction projects. In their ongoing effort to maximize budget resources and improve the efficiency of internal processes, TxDOT undertook an initiative to improve the interaction between the state DOT and its contractors for bid submission.

Errors in contractor-submitted bids were among the challenges with the current letting process, resulting in lost competition when submitted bids were declared "non-responsive". Mathematical miscalculations were also common leading to a number of non responsive bids for each letting.

TxDOT's estimating, construction management, and electronic bidding systems were mainframe applications that were sufficient to meet the current needs. The bid submission process however, was in need of an overhaul and was the emphasis of the new initiative. In December 2005, TxDOT called for proposals designed to improve the bidding process in three key areas:

- Simplify the bid creation and submission process
- Improve the bid response rate
- Eliminate non-responsive bids

ExeVision's proposal included the Contractor's Desktop Application (CDA) and the *iPD SecureVault*™. The CDA provides a structured, computer-based environment where contractors prepare their bids, automatically receive updated addenda on projects and are assured that only "responsive" bids will be submitted. Contractors download the CDA free-of-charge from the TxDOT or ExeVision website with updates to the CDA automatically received via the internet. The *iPD SecureVault*™ provides a third-party, secure solution to

receive and hold bids until the date and time of bid opening. At the time of bid opening, all bids are delivered via a secure encrypted connection to the State for review, tabulation, and award.

An important feature in the CDA is the ability for contractors to use three commercial heavy highway and construction estimating software companies used by TxDOT contractors. Contractors can export a compatible bid item file, import the file into their estimating software, prepare their bid and import the bid item prices back into the CDA.



ExeVision also coordinated with the electronic bid bond clearing houses used by TxDOT contractors to obtain electronic bid bonds. After acquiring an electronic bid bond, contractors are required to validate the bid bond using the CDA before the final bid can be submitted.

In March 2007, after a competitive bid process, TxDOT awarded ExeVision a contract for the development and implementation of the *iPD Contractor's Desktop Application* and the *iPD SecureVault*. The solution went into live production in April of 2009, with just-in-time training of 2000 contractors at 6 locations statewide.

The success of the project and implementation at TxDOT is evidenced by the fact that after the first 10 months in production and having processed close to \$4 billion in bids, the *iPD* solution required fewer than ten hours of total support from ExeVision. In the most recent bid letting of \$158 million, NO technical support was required by ExeVision in support of the letting.

When asked by other DOTs about the *iPD* solution, Scott Nichols, Manager of Construction and Electronic bids for TxDOT commented that "The solution speaks for itself." Tim West, Business Area Specialist, further commented that "The contractors currently using the CDA love it!"

"After nearly \$4 billion in bids over a 10 month period, the iPD bidding system required fewer than ten hours of support from ExeVision, the developer, and required NO technical support for our most recent bid letting of \$158 million."

- **Scott Nichols, TxDOT**
Manager, Construction & Electronic Bids



Contractor's Desktop Application (CDA)

As a part of the iPD system, the Contractor's Desktop Application simplifies the bidding process for contractors, facilitates the communication between the bidders and the state DOT, and ensures the creation of responsive bids. The CDA was designed to minimize the instances of "non-responsive" bids by checking for errors prior to bid submission and making recommendations for correcting the problem(s).

Using this software, bidders prepare a complete electronic bid package including bid bonds, DBE commitments or Good Faith efforts. The completed bid package is digitally signed and transmitted via the internet to the iPD SecureVault™ and held until the time specified for bid opening when the bids are transmitted to TxDOT's bid opening application. Bidders can submit their encrypted bid to the vault as many times as they wish up to the time of bid opening. The last bid submitted prior to the time of bid opening is the bid that will be opened.

TxDOT System Requirements

- Obtain bid item data
- Save bid item data on the bidder's computer.
- Verify information is properly entered
- Digitally sign and submit bid item data to TxDOT
- Withdraw a bid previously submitted
- Receive electronic notification of addenda and obtain addenda data
- Submit a proposal guaranty or bid bond to TxDOT.
- Submit required Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) commitment or Good Faith Effort documentation
- Obtain assistance using EBS via a helpdesk
- Host the bidder's bid item data at the SecureVault until the time of bid opening
- Maintain a copy of the bid form signed by the contractor for non-repudiation purposes
- Verify the proposal guarantys

For more information or a live demonstration at your location:

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