



Administrative Office of the Courts

Operations Division

Questions/Responses No. 1 to the Request for Proposals (RFP) K19-0094-29

On-line Access to Research and Advisory Services

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The following questions for the above referenced RFP were received by e-mail and are answered and posted for all prospective Offerors. The statements and interpretations contained in the following responses to questions are not binding on the Maryland Judiciary unless the RFP is expressly amended. Nothing in the Maryland Judiciary's response to these questions is to be construed as agreement to or acceptance by the Maryland Judiciary of any statement or interpretation on the part of the Offeror asking the question.

1) Question:

1. In reference to Section 2.1 of the Statement of Work, "The Administrative Office of the Courts is seeking on-line access to research and **advice** services...". As such, is it therefore a requirement that the responding Contractor provide access to unlimited Analyst inquiries covering the information technology industry and the functional responsibilities of specific information technology roles?

Response: We want to be able to ask questions and look at research done on the topics we are interested in. I am not sure that would be in the form of "unlimited Analyst inquiries" which implies contacting a person for every question we have.

2. In order to meet the demands of a dynamic technological landscape and evolving Government environment, is it a requirement that the Contractor provide a pool of at least 400 full-time analysts on staff to provide maximum coverage for topics and roles required by the AOC?

Response: No

3. As part of the "advice services" provided, is it a requirement for the Contractor to provide unmetered access to Contract and Document review services conducted by subject matter experts? The rigors and regulations of public sector agencies often complex information technology-related contracts and documents, and many similar

government organizations utilize contract and document review services when accessing research and advice services.

Response: We do not expect that we would submit contracts for review if that is the question

4. In reference to Requirements 2.2.2.1, 2.2.2.2 and 2.2.2.3, the AOC requires access to published research, vendor and product ratings, and special reports.
 - a. As the AOC requires these written research reports to provide holistic views of IT vendors and cover companies, products, markets and related trends, is it a requirement that the Contractor offer objective and unsponsored information technology research reports?

Response: We would expect objective reports

- i. Should the contractors verify that they have not published any research on a “sponsored” basis within the past 24 months?
 - b. Given the rate of technology change and the fluidity of functional responsibilities of AOC’s specific information technology roles, is it a requirement for the Contractor to publish a minimum of 4,500 new, timely and relevant written research reports and toolkits annually?

Response: No

5. In reference to Requirement 2.2.3, the AOC requires access to “a secure online network of information technology professionals who can access and leverage the collective experience of their peers”. As such, is it a requirement this online network of relevant peers, be a **private**, online community, closed off to technology providers or other vendors? The inclusion of technology providers or vendors dilutes the process of leveraging independent, unbiased, collective experiences of AOC’s peers.

Response: No, we expect that forums or other communication tools will meet this requirement.

- 2) **Question:** Attachment D asks for pricing for 1 user at the Advisor level and 1 user at the Reference level. Can you please confirm that an Advisor level license would include access to research and access to analysts; whereas, a Reference level license would include access to primarily research only? Please identify any additional service expectations between these two levels.

Response: We think that is a satisfactory way to describe differences

- 3) **Question:** Can you please identify the roles of the Advisor/Reference users respectively (ex. CIO, Head of Security, Business Analyst, etc.)? This will help us target analysts and resources that best meet their needs.

Response: Senior Analysts of varying roles

- 4) **Question:** Would the Administrative Office of the Courts be open to alternative licensing models that may include increased number of users and varying levels of access to provide options and budget flexibility?

Response: Yes

- 5) **Question:** Can you provide details regarding the IT Department's previous usage of IT research services, if applicable?

Response: Sporadic use. Looking to balance cost and value.

Issued by: Karen Hoang
Procurement Officer
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