



April - May 2012 CIPMM Conference

This Ottawa-based procurement organization held its annual conference in May. This article focuses on one session – software procurements, and on one keynote – Grant Westcott on Shared Services Canada.

by Summit staff

IN MAY 2012 THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF PROCUREMENT AND MATERIEL MANAGEMENT (CIPMM) held its annual forum in Ottawa at the newly renovated Congress Centre.

Several members of the organization – predominantly public sector – were in attendance from various parts of the country and from various federal departments. The trade fair area was front and centre and visited by many of the attendees.

Among the many professional development sessions was one on buying software, specifically focusing on the Software Licensing Supply Arrangement (SLSA). All previous standing offers had expired in December 2011 and the SLSA was now available for use by multiple departments when buying COTS (off the shelf) software products. A catalogue of products and pre-qualified suppliers has been developed and buyers are encouraged to not do “one-off” negotiated

contracts unless absolutely necessary, but to look to creating multi-department contracts in an effort to be more efficient and achieve volume discounts.

The Government of Canada is also consolidating its software licensing in order to obtain volume pricing and a clear picture of what it owns in order to manage its assets better. Software assets are being critically examined – how many copies are owned; how many are needed; how many can be redeployed; can licensing be reduced; can maintenance costs be reduced? Software has become a pillar of necessity for functionality in government and is widely distributed, but over the years it has been purchased more on a unit basis rather than government-wide leading to duplication, interconnectivity issues and redundancy. Software asset management is becoming a key aspect to streamlining government and reducing costs.

The government must use its software as intended by the End User Licence Agreement (EULA) and there are many kinds of licences available. When buying through the SLSA and negotiated under a multi-department or government-wide contract the EULAs and attendant liabilities are standard. When software is purchased with an acquisition card the buyer accepts the vendor EULA attached to that purchase.

Another step in streamlining government was to create a new department – Shared Services Canada, whose minister is Rona Ambrose, Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada. Grant Westcott, one of the keynote speakers at the forum, was asked to head the new department, which took a slice out of 43 different departments.

His ‘to-do list’ includes maintaining services, creating savings, creating further savings for investment and rebuild the Government of Canada infrastructure.

Westcott was excited by the rare opportunity to develop a new department from the ground up. According to him, the most important thing to think about was ‘culture’ and so he examined other organizations in order to learn and possibly imitate. He examined the Google model, that of Steve Jobs at Apple and also IBM and Johnson and Johnson searching out why they were successful and how they have matured in the market. He looked at who is innovative – Bell Lab, the Xerox Park in Palo Alto, California, MIT – and intends to seek out Canadian innovation and collaborate. In his research he discovered an article by Harvard Business Review that found that teams that talk together in person are far more effective

than teams that rely on other media for communication. Westcott says SSC will be:

- highly productive in the management of IT;
- nimble and innovative to respond to government changes and also to provide some leadership;
- the employer of choice now and in the future; and
- focused on its people developing a team from the staff that have come from various departments.

Westcott has no small task ahead and listed some of the priorities his organization will be thinking about:

- high-density data centres;
- how to make science-based technology work across the board;
- how to bring video, voice and data together (travel savings);
- how to advance the privacy world;
- security;
- how to organize ‘big’ data;
- how to work with social media;
- transforming the email systems into a more unified approach;
- updating the government portal and GEDS system;
- modernizing data centre facilities and creating fewer of them; and
- network restructure and design.

All are complex challenges, but it appears that there is a mandate, and a will, to make the changes. *MM*

SUMMIT
CANADA'S MAGAZINE ON PUBLIC SECTOR PURCHASING

2012 READER SURVEY

YOUR OPINION MATTERS!

Help us deliver more of what you want to see.

It's fast.

It's easy.

➔ It's a click away.

You could WIN!

1st PRIZE

a Bulova watch
(App. retail value \$500)

BULOVA
SINCE 1875
DESIGNED TO BE NOTICED

2nd PRIZE

a GRAND & TOY
gift basket
(App. retail value \$150)

G&T
GRAND & TOY
Performance Enhancing Offices™

Go to www.summitconnects.com to have your say from November 12 to December 3, 2012.