

CASE STUDY: Government

State of Oklahoma streamlines procurement with Amazon Business

Overview

The State of Oklahoma provides state agencies with a simplified purchasing process, vast product selection and business-only pricing by implementing Amazon Business.



Streamline
the buying process



Steadily grow
user base



Easily meet **competition**
and **diversity** standards

It all started with bongo drums. After the State of Oklahoma officially implemented Amazon Business as a purchasing solution for all state agencies in January 2018, Statewide Procurement Manager Allen Cook was curious to see what the first official purchase would be. Printer paper? Office chairs? Lab supplies?

Actually, it was bongo drums, purchased for a state music program that serves adults with mental disabilities. "Our first official purchase was a good example of the breadth of products Oklahoma state agencies buy through Amazon Business," Cook says.

The challenge: streamline state spending

The Office of Management and Enterprise Services (OMES) is the administrator of financial services for Oklahoma state government. One of its core missions is to help the many different agencies that make up the state government better manage their spending.

From the Oklahoma Geological Survey to the Oklahoma Department of Transportation, agencies across the state purchase the supplies and equipment they need to ensure their specific needs are met. In order to make purchasing more consistent and manageable for 21,457 purchasing card holders, OMES needed to find a way to consolidate spend and streamline the

procurement process. Knowing that many state agencies were already using Amazon Business on their own, the OMES team decided it was time to adopt Amazon Business statewide.

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ALLEN COOK

Statewide Procurement Officer, Office of Management & Enterprise Services, State of Oklahoma

Rolling out Amazon Business across the state

OMES knew it had to introduce Amazon Business to purchasers in an organized, formal way in order to ensure adoption.

It created a rollout program which educated agency buyers about Amazon Business through a series of webinars and presentations. OMES identified and trained buyers within different agencies about how to use Amazon Business in accordance with state rules. These trained and motivated buyers then acted as key influencers within their respective agencies, which helped facilitate greater use of Amazon Business.

"We got a lot of early adoption thanks to our proactive communication, our staff advocates and just how easy Amazon Business is to use," says Cook. "Amazon Business is a great partner; our move to Amazon Business was handled well and adoption has been seamless."

Purchases with the click of a mouse

Now the procurement process for purchasing card holders is very similar to placing an order on Amazon.com. With this familiar, streamlined buying experience, authorized state buyers can find the specific products their agencies need as easily as they can shop for items in their personal lives. This digital buying experience is increasingly important to the State of Oklahoma, since many of the government agencies are located in the

Oklahoma City metro area and are increasingly staffed by tech-savvy workers.

On a given day, the organization may need to buy anything

from simple office supplies to cleaning products to playground equipment. According to Cook, Amazon Business is perfect for day-to-day purchases and spot buys. "Many P Card holders tend to buy just one or two items at a time, but make frequent purchases," he says.

But state purchasing on Amazon Business isn't limited to spot buys; many organizations look to Amazon to fulfill larger orders or planned spend—the Department of Corrections might place bulk orders for soap and shampoo, or the Department of Education may order textbooks and classroom supplies.

Procurement made easy

Most state governments have competition standards that require state agencies to consider offers from multiple vendors before making a purchase — and Oklahoma is no different. With Amazon Business, users can view numerous listings of a single



product at once, making it easy to evaluate their options. And because purchasers can search by diversity certifications, they can identify businesses owned by disabled veterans, which is one of the Oklahoma government's mandated diversity requirements.

The move to Amazon Business has also been beneficial to the school districts located in the state's more rural areas that may not have a purchasing department or the resources to put out their own bids. "For our rural schools, it's been really helpful to have the flexibility that comes with having so many individual user accounts," says Cook. Now, orders can be placed on an as-needed basis right from the front office or the classroom.

The analytics tools offered by Amazon Business facilitate strategic planning at the state level and give OMES a greater understanding of its spending. "We will now have increased visibility into purchasing data, which will give us a clearer picture of what is being spent and by whom," says Cook.

Allen Cook isn't the only state employee happy with Amazon Business, as the rate of adoption shows. When OMES first implemented Amazon Business in January 2018, Cook was asked to set a goal for the number of users he hoped to have statewide. With 1,200 Amazon Business users and counting, OMES has already shot past Cook's initial goal of 1,000 — and it all started with drums.



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