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U.S. General Services Administration

GSA Commercial Platforms Program: A Managed Purchasing Channel for Routine Commercial Product Spend

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Agenda

- What is the Commercial Platforms program?
- Program benefits and differentiators
- Awarded platforms
- Agency and buyer feedback
- Next steps

The **Commercial Platforms** vision:

Modern, streamlined, mission-focused purchasing

Modern and streamlined buying experience for routine items with the ability to **influence future platform features** based on feedback from agency cardholders.

Time savings and best value purchasing designed to meet buyer purchasing needs, freeing up time to **focus on mission-oriented work**.

Critical insights into an agency's online spend with features and management controls to **mitigate supply chain risks**, promote purchasing from mandatory sources (e.g., AbilityOne), and **collect small business credit** for eligible purchases.

Key areas of program support

Mandatory and preferred sources

AbilityOne, "green" and Small Business filters available for ease of use. Small business credit provided for eligible small business spend.

Data dashboards

Customized agency dashboards provide valuable spend data and insights.

Operational spend

Category spend

Supply chain risk management

Section 889, SCRM and counterfeit protection are built into each platform and category offering, allowing purchasers to shop and purchase with confidence.

Contract basics

Parameters

5-year contract

Awarded **March 2024 to eight platforms**, available to more than 35 agencies and 40,000+ cardholders

No cost contracts for access to the platforms

Platform providers are **Section 889** certified

Requirements

More robust **AbilityOne** features

Automatic **tax exemption**

Dynamic, real-time pricing with **no minimum order quantities**

In-stock availability for products

Filters available for small businesses and green products

Data

Monthly **data reporting** (20+ elements) for upload to D2D dashboards, with the addition of Mfr Part Number, Platform Part Number, and Agency Hierarchy Data (TDR)

SBA can use platform data to approve **small business credit**

Key differentiators for the CP program

Small business credit

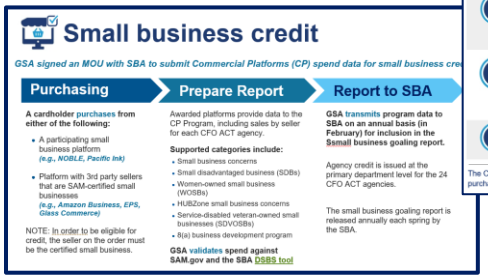
GSA signed an MOU with SBA to submit program spend data at the department level for small business credit when eligible purchases are made with certified small businesses.

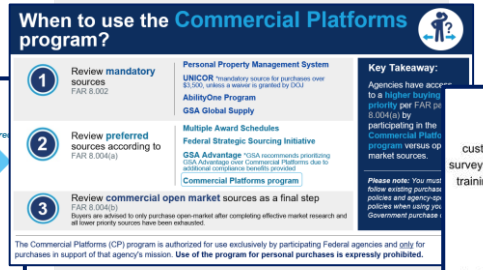
Higher FAR priority versus open-market

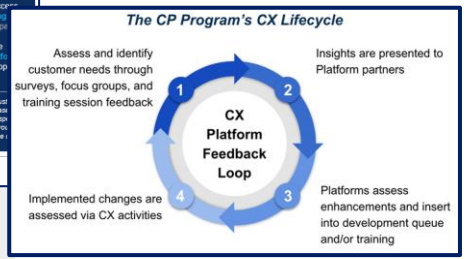
As a competitively awarded, multi-agency contract, the CP program offers participating agencies a higher buying priority across the eight awarded commercial platforms per FAR 8.004.

Customer experience (CX) feedback loop

Insights collected from surveys, focus groups, and training demos inform future platform features and provide a window into an agency's use of the program.







Small business credit

GSA signed an MOU with SBA to submit Commercial Platforms (CP) spend data for small business credit.

Purchasing

A cardholder purchases from either of the following:

- A participating small business platform
  (e.g., NOBLE, Pacific Ink)
- Platform with 3rd party sellers that are SAM-certified small businesses
  (e.g., Amazon Business, EPS, Glass Commerce)

NOTE: In order to be eligible for credit, the seller on the order must be the certified small business.

Prepare Report

Awarded platforms provide data to the CP Program, including sales by seller for each CFO ACT agency.

Supported categories include:

- Small business concerns
- Small disadvantaged business (SDBs)
- Women-owned small business (WOSBs)
- HUBZone small business concerns
- Service-disabled veteran-owned small businesses (SDVOSBs)
- 8(a) business development program

GSA validates spend against SAM.gov and the SBA DSBS tool

Report to SBA

GSA transmits program data to SBA on an annual basis (in February) for inclusion in the Ssmall business goaling report.

Agency credit is issued at the primary department level for the 24 CFO ACT agencies.

The small business goaling report is released annually each spring by the SBA.

When to use the Commercial Platforms program?

1 Review **mandatory** sources
FAR 8.002

- **Personal Property Management System**
- **UNICOR** *mandatory source for purchases over $3,500, unless a waiver is granted by DOJ
- **AbilityOne Program**
- **GSA Global Supply**

2 Review **preferred** sources according to
FAR 8.004(a)

- **Multiple Award Schedules**
- **Federal Strategic Sourcing Initiative**
- **GSA Advantage** *GSA recommends prioritizing GSA Advantage over Commercial Platforms due to additional compliance benefits provided
- **Commercial Platforms program**

3 Review **commercial open market** sources as a final step
FAR 8.004(b)
Buyers are advised to only purchase open-market after completing effective market research and all lower priority sources have been exhausted.

Key Takeaway:

Agencies have access to a **higher buying priority** per FAR part 8.004(a) by participating in the **Commercial Platforms program** versus open-market sources.

Please note: *You must follow existing purchase card policies and agency-specific policies when using your Government purchase card.*

The Commercial Platforms (CP) program is authorized for use exclusively by participating Federal agencies and only for purchases in support of that agency's mission. **Use of the program for personal purchases is expressly prohibited.**

Your voice, your program

How we gain feedback:

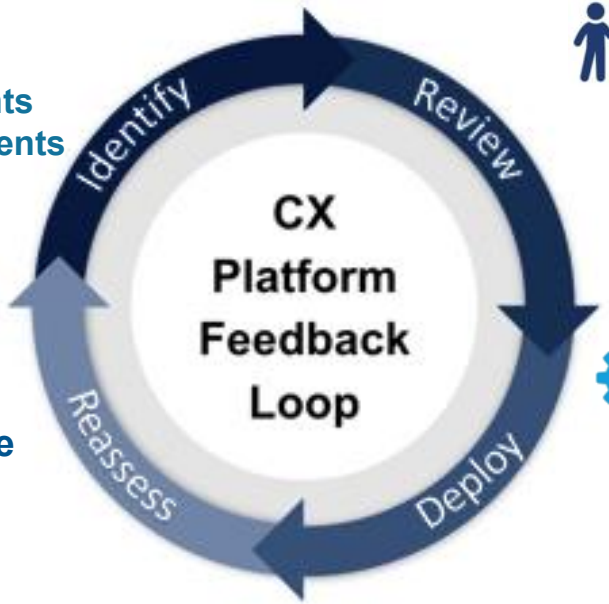
Focus groups **16 hosted**
Buyer surveys **6,300+ respondents**
Training surveys **3,100+ respondents**

Implementation Results:

9.1 Overall program satisfaction
8.1 Overall training satisfaction

Satisfaction by journey stage

Market research **89 percent**
Purchase **91 percent**
Post-purchase **91 percent**
Satisfaction with 889 adherence **88 percent**



Information presented:

Buyer-led **improvement opportunities**
Uniqueness of the Government buyer journey
- Market research
- Internal approval process
- Reconciliation process

Training enhancements

Refinements made:

Easy access to **889 certifications**
AbilityOne search
Program **filters**
Onboarding process
Training materials
Product delivery modifications

Data from FY24 Buyer Surveys

Awarded platforms

Agencies can select from any of the platforms listed

amazon business

ePS *

fisher scientific part of Thermo Fisher Scientific

COMMERCE *

GRAINGER FOR THE ONES WHO GET IT DONE

NOBLE *

PACIFIC INK *

Staples

*Denotes a small business

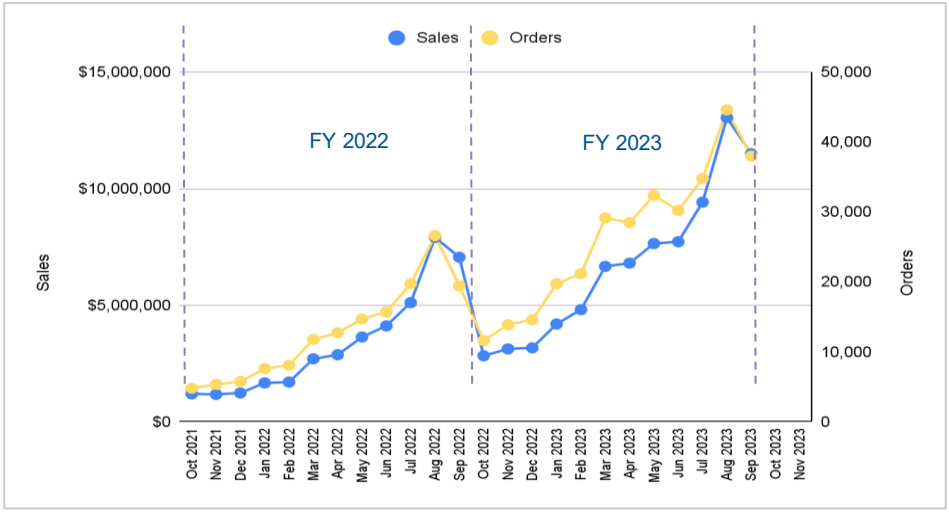
Current participating agencies

Administrative Conference of the U.S. (ACUS)
Bonneville Power Administration (DOE)
Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB)
Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Bd (DNFSB)
Department of Agriculture (USDA)
Department of Commerce (DOC)
Department of Defense (components & intel)
Department of Education (Ed)
Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
Department of Justice (DOJ)
Department of Labor (DOL)
Department of Treasury
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
Farm Credit System Insurance Corp. (FCSIC)
Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board (FRTIB)
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA/DOT)
Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA)
General Services Administration (GSA)
Government Accountability Office (GAO)
Health and Human Services (HHS)
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
National Aeronautics and Space Admin (NASA)
National Science Foundation (NSF)
Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)
Office of Governmentwide Ethics (OGE)
Peace Corps (USPC)
Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC)
Small Business Administration (SBA)
U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Veterans Affairs (VA)

Commercial Platforms – Growth and Trends

- Program spend/growth by FY: $80M, FY23 | $40M, FY22 | $12M, FY21
- Total orders: More than 500,000 orders since launch (~315K, FY23; ~155K, FY22; and 40K, FY21)

Spend Trends



Category Spend

Category	Top items within category	% of FY23 Spend	% of FY22 Spend	% of FY21 Spend
IT Broadcasting and Telecommunications	computer displays, phone headsets, LCD panels or monitors	22%	23%	14%
Office Supplies	printer, ink cartridges, folders, and boards	9%	8%	6%
Furniture and Furnishings	work chairs, office furniture, and desks	7%	7%	7%
Domestic Appliances and Supplies	televisions, audio and visual equipment, and earphones	6%	6%	8%
Apparel and Luggage	clothing, backpacks, bath and body, and boots	6%	6%	7%
Power Generation and Distribution Machinery	batteries and cell accessories, battery chargers, and power generators	6%	5%	4%
Published Products	printed publications, signage, and labels	4%	5%	6%
Laboratory and Measuring	measuring and observing instruments, laboratory and measuring testing equipment, and binoculars	4%	4%	5%

Mission-Focused Purchasing In Action

Best value

Best available price is one of the most frequently selected reasons for using Commercial Platforms

89/100 satisfaction score with fair and reasonable pricing

58 percent cited overall best value as a benefit

Mission enablement

91/100 satisfaction score with product inventory

88/100 satisfaction score with ensuring compliance with agency/Government priorities

Time savings

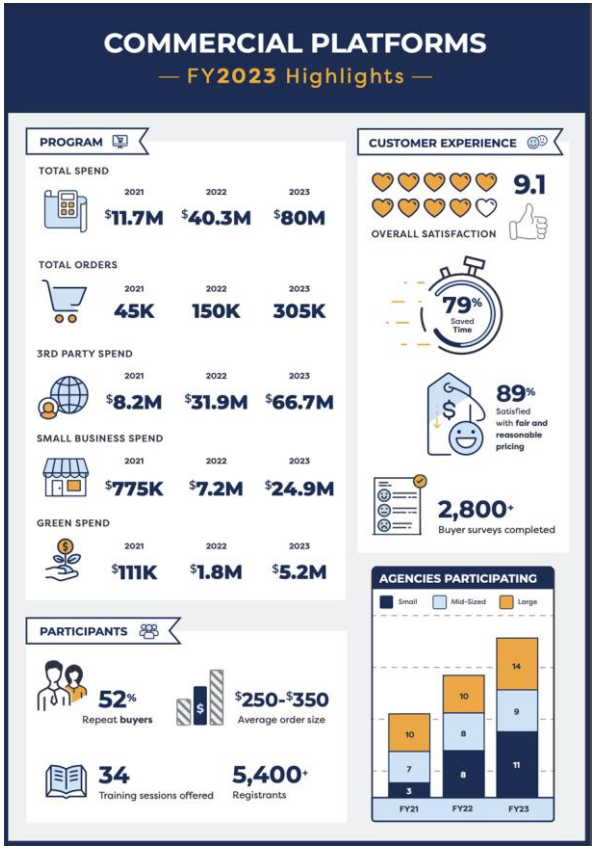
Ease of use is another of the most frequently selected reasons for using Commercial Platforms

73 percent cited time savings as a benefit

> "The [Commercial Platforms] program is so convenient! [The platforms] ship fast, and I can find products not available elsewhere. They save time and make it easy to order online."
>
> —USDA buyer

Program and Customer Experience Results

PROGRAMMATIC



CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Training and admin support

We host virtual **"Meet the Platform"** demo sessions with awarded online platforms using Zoom for Government.

These sessions provide participants with an in-depth look at each platform and an opportunity to meet and ask questions of representatives from each platform.

Topics include **account management**, **market research capabilities, order placement and management**, **platform enhancements**, and **GPC reconciliation capabilities**.

Agencies can request sessions with the platforms for their **cardholders** and **administrators** as needed.

Sessions are **recorded** and available for later viewing for those who sign up.

Get involved

Meet with GSA (1:1 Agency Meeting) to share and discuss platforms of interest

Begin to establish agency presence on selected platforms by sharing GPC lists

Agency cardholders to attend regular "Meet the Platform' training sessions

Ongoing partnership:
Program reviews
CX highlights
Newsletters
Policy updates
Data sharing

Thank you!

Commercial Platforms website:
www.gsa.gov/commercialplatforms

Program inbox:
CommercialPlatforms@gsa.gov

GSA