

Bidding Frenzy: 9 Cloud Platforms To Find And Track RFPs

Word of mouth remains the go-to for builders looking for their next project, but these database sites with the latest job opportunities help, too.



Befitting the construction industry's reputation as a technology laggard, building pros say old-fashioned relationship building is still the best way to find new bidding opportunities. Nonetheless, there are a variety of electronic databases that help general contractors and subcontractors track requests for proposals, or RFPs, for public and private projects. Here are the ones that Construction Dive sources have pointed to as the best resources for commercial builders:

ConstructionWire - BuildCentral's ConstructionWire.com provides details on active projects — from pre-planning to early construction. Each report includes the location, schedule, project details and key contacts. The database focuses on private projects such as office buildings, hotels, retail and multifamily among other sectors, with a total construction value of over \$500,000. The system's staff gathers information directly from project sponsors, such as general contractors, architects, owners, city and state agency filings and business publications. About 3,000 to 5,000 projects are added each month, according to the company. Users can see project types within the database, such as whether the project is a data center, grocery, hotel, medical, multifamily, etcetera. Other features include access to what stage the project is at, such as whether it's in the planning phase, its future start date, early construction or completion date. The platform also shows whether the construction type is new, expansion or renovation. *Used by: U.S. Air Force, Turner Construction, Gilbane, AECOM*

Construct-A-Lead - This online database provides access to commercial construction project information throughout the U.S. and Canada, both public and private. Users can sift through open projects by state, ZIP code, project type or keyword. For example, multifamily projects can be searched by number of units, then by sub-project type, including apartment, condo, affordable housing, senior living and student housing. Hotel projects are available to search by the number of rooms, then by sub-project, including budget, extended stay, mid-range, upscale, luxury and brand. Medical and hospital projects can be searched by number of rooms and sub-project types, while restaurant projects can also be searched by brand, according to the Construct-A-Lead website.

Price: Plans start at \$995 per year for a county-level subscription and go up to \$11,995 per year for a national full access subscription. Custom pricing is also available.

Dodge Data & Analytics - Dodge Data & Analytics' database adds or updates over 6,500 projects daily, according to the company. Those early stage construction projects include public, private, small and large, according to its website. The platform provides visibility into expected labor costs to quickly assess the profitability of potential projects before committing to bid. Users may also access who has downloaded plans to a specific project to gauge outside interest, plan next steps, develop a shortlist of potential partners and understand what the competition is doing. Dodge's content collection process includes a team of reporters that build relationships with commercial construction professionals to capture the hard-to-find private projects, said Steve Masters, Dodge's senior vice president of product management. That process is supplemented by web scraping techniques as well as partnerships with local, state and federal government agencies that provide their project documents through Dodge Construction Network.

Used by: Hoar Construction, Messer Construction; Price: Varies



State tracking resources - Many state and local governments have databases construction firms can check regularly for updates about when RFPs are supposed to be released. For example, the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation has one such site and the state of Virginia has a website that tracks higher education projects. *Used by: Messer Construction, Wurzel Builders*
Price: Free

GovSpend.com - GovSpend maintains a database of all government spending at the federal, state and local levels, according to its website. The online platform has a dedicated team that maintains relationships with government agencies and requests their purchase information directly from them. Additionally, government agencies will use the GovSpend database for their own procurement needs. That's because due to the Freedom of Information Act, government agencies are required to report this data when requested so that there is transparency and open competition between vendors they work with. GovSpend, in turn, has streamlined and automated this process, according to its website. The database offers a 9% to 12% return on investment increase for clients in public sector departments, according to the company. On average, GovSpend claims its customers see a break-even return within six months. *Used by: Virgilio & Associates; Price: Customizable*

MyGovWatch - MyGovWatch is a government contract bid notification system that offers users industry-targeted leads from every level and type of government buyer. The database boasts over 200 RFP categories and adds tens of thousands RFPs monthly, according to its website.

Price: Paid plans start at \$49.99 per month for a regional subscription in three of 24 industry categories and six states. Each additional category is another \$10 per month and three additional states add \$5 per month. The national subscription, which includes all states, costs \$79.99 per month, and consists of three of the top 24 industry categories, as well as all of that category's subsectors. For example, construction, a top level category, would give subscribers access to all of its 18 subcategories, plus two other top level categories and everything under those. Each additional category is another \$10 per month.

RFPSchoolWatch - This database monitors 15,000 K-12 U.S. school districts, about 100,000 schools, the top 5,000 colleges and universities and all 50 state government departments of education for RFPs. To do this, the RFPSchoolWatch team monitors the URLs of schools, colleges, state governments and local governments, according to its website. The platform sends emails of bids out six days a week. *Price: Annual pricing starts at \$495 for a state subscription, \$695 for a regional subscription, \$895 for a national subscription and \$1,190 for a U.S. and Canada subscription.*

SAM.gov

The System for Award Management is an official website of the U.S. government that allows firms to register and do business with the federal agencies. There is no cost to use SAM.gov. The database lists all government future opportunities and solicitations, as well as expiring contracts. *Used by: Hoar Construction Price: Free*

Government Finance Officers Association NOFO tracker - The association has a Notice of Funding Opportunity tracker focused on IJA funds, with info on eligible uses and applicants, grant links and deadlines. *Price: Free*

- Sebastian Obando

