

Questions and Answer for Sources Sought Notice
HDEC05-12-SS-0001

Question 1: If you move forward, when do you anticipate awarding this program?

Response: All submissions will be reviewed and if there are any programs that DeCA wishes to consider further, those programs are anticipated to go into effect this calendar year.

Question 2: Is there an estimated date DeCA is looking to implement this program in-store?

Response: All submissions will be reviewed and if there are any programs that are selected, the implementation is typically anticipated to be within this calendar year dependent upon the complexity and logistics required to implement the program.

Question 3: Though you mention numerous in-store marketing elements in your solicitation is there one that is most important to DeCA?

Response: This is a request for information - we want to hear what is available and have nothing particular in mind.

Question 4: Of the following, can you rate what is most important to DeCA? Revenue generation for DeCA or in- store experience for customer?

Response: The in-store experience for the customer is more important; however, any program offered must either be at no cost to DeCA or revenue generating.

Question 5: Please clarify the types of products that can be advertised. Can we advertise autos? Apparel? Educational programs? And other services (insurance health) as well as food, consumer goods, health and beauty items?

Response: The Defense Commissary Agency is the grocer to the military; therefore, any programs regarding products must be already offered for sale in the commissary although cross advertising of items and services in other military resale and/or MWR programs may be considered.

Question 6: Must all marketing programs be available at all stores or can we target a subset? i.e. all stateside operations, all European etc. And can they vary by each program?

Response: We are looking for worldwide availability of programs; however, we will consider variations.

Question 7: Since this will be a non exclusive award, what protection is there for the winning company and the company's investment?

Response: If a program is considered further and then selected, a bi-lateral agreement will identify the terms and conditions and both the DeCA and the offering entity will execute that agreement.

Question 8: Would you award multiple companies to market different in-store programs from this solicitation?

Response: This is a request for information. The answer to your question is not known at this time; however, a possibility exists of implementing none or any number of the ideas submitted.

Question 9: Will you notify each contractor who submits a proposal the final results of your initiative and reasons why contractor did or did not receive an award?

Response: Companies submitting information will be notified of DeCA's ultimate decision as to that firm's submittal. Anyone participating in this process may request a debriefing of the process and selection(s) made.

Question 10: I am preparing a narrative for the above article. Would a site visit be available at this time, or will I need to wait until Stage II?

Response: DeCA feels that site visits would not be helpful at this time. Part of the reason for this decision is that most stores are different in layout and the concepts submitted will need to be reviewed to determine if site visits would be beneficial.

Question 11: Also, in the synopsis (paragraph five, sixth sentence), would hosted (aka cloud-based) services, be considered? I offer a hosted service; therefore I would not be able to surrender the accounts in their entirety to the government. However, all content entered and images uploaded on the app would be the property of the government with unlimited rights.

Response: We are not looking for any application that is tied to cloud-based services or any other application that would require changes to DeCA's POS system.

Question 12: Regarding the sentence: "Compliance with government IT security and PPI will be required." Will DeCA provide a list of the relevant government IT security and PPI regulations DeCA deems potentially applicable to programs that might be implemented as a result of this RFI?

Response: DeCA will provide further information regarding IT Security and PPI if the programs submitted for review are being considered further and IT Security and PPI are applicable.

Question 13: Regarding the sentence: “Offers requiring electronic communication shall not be based on the use of DeCA systems and should not interfere with DeCA systems including in-store wireless and ESL’s.” Will DeCA clarify the following terms: “based on the use of” and “not interfere with” with regard to point-of-sale interaction and network communications?

Specifically:

Point-of-sale interaction: Will a program be permitted to interact with commissary point of sale systems to apply discounts to shoppers’ baskets (based on who the shopper is and products purchased) as part of the check-out process? Or, will all such electronic interaction be prohibited? If not, what types of limitations (either as classes of activities or objective measures) are intended for such interactions?

Response: We will take into consideration all ideas/programs at this point. The Agency is in the process of updating stores with electronic price labels, we want to make sure that any shelf talkers/materials do not interfere with the signals that are sent to the labels. Also, DeCA is in the process of implementing a rewards card that has the ability to load electronic coupons. DeCA neither wants any new program to interfere with these two programs nor DeCA’s scanner data agreements which offer DeCA’s cumulative transaction data for sale.

Transaction data with basket markers: Will a program be permitted access to shopper transaction data (items purchased, counts, sale price, discounts, basket boundary indicator), including a unique basket identifier by household, should the household wish to opt-in), in order to target best offers to shopper households, assuming all security and privacy concerns are addressed to DeCA’s satisfaction?

Response: See above response 13 above.

Network communications: Will a program be able to use DeCA’s communications channel so long as it does not interfere with DeCA’s communications (for example, by executing larger transmissions at night and only very small communications during store operating hours)? If not, are there any communication channels available at DeCA today that fall outside this constraint (e.g., internet connections, phone lines)? Alternately, as part of its program, will a supplier be permitted to install its own communication link to communicate between DeCA commissary stores and remote data centers (e.g., internet connections, phone lines/POTS,cellular)?

Response: See above response 13 above.

Question 14: DeCA says it is seeking companies interested in providing “value added consumer services“. Does DeCA plan to issue a shopper loyalty card in the near future from which to track and reward patron shopping activity? If not, does DeCA plan in the future to capture information identifying a shopper or shopping household during a visit to the commissary? If so, will DeCA provide access to this data on behalf of DeCA to

personalize a shopper's experience? If yes, will this data be available daily or weekly?
Can/will this data include offer redemption information

Response: Yes, we are in the process of implementing a loyalty/rewards card program. We are not considering a loyalty card service with this notice-to-the-trade/request-for-information.

Question 15: Regarding the sentence: "Advertising should generally be limited to products carried in the commissaries although cross advertising of items and services in other military resale and/or Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) programs may be considered." In order to comply with this requirement, will DeCA provide a regularly updated, electronic list of products carried in the commissaries and, associated with this, a product hierarchy (organizing those products into logical groups) to facilitate compliance?

Response: DeCA will not provide a regularly updated list.