Acquisition Research Program
Project Plan

Graduation Date: *22 Dec 2023*

Research Team Members:

Name	Program	Graduation	Rank	Service	Country
John Doe / john.doe@nps.edu	815	Dec 2022	LT	USN	USA
Cool Johnson / cool.johnson@nps.edu	815	Dec 2022	MAJ	USN	USA
Joyful Smith / joyful.smith@nps.edu	815	Dec 2022	MAJ	USN	USA

Faculty Advisors:

Name	Advisor Role
Best Advisor	Lead Advisor
Really Cool	Secondary Advisor

I. Project Descriptive Information:

Project Title: Small Business Participation in Online Marketplaces Availability

Project Topic/Subject: Online marketplaces have become a default way to purchase commercially available goods and services, but DoD and the federal government have been slow to adapt acquisition processes to these new technologies. Congress and the General Services Administration are taking the first steps with the so-called "Amazon amendment" of the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act. Regardless of the technology, DoD has struggled to take advantage of market efficiencies when procuring commercial items, as numerous regulations have been added to ensure proper execution of these acquisitions.

Problem Identification: As commercial e-commerce portals are being developed for use in the federal government, some stakeholders in federal acquisition are worried they will lose their place in the market. Small businesses, for instance, have expressed concern that they can't compete with a potential technological monopoly run by a company like Amazon. This research would explore the relationship between small businesses and current online marketplaces, comparing those relationships to current dynamics between small business contractors supporting the federal government and/or Department of Defense. Findings could help inform the composition of online marketplaces designed to support federal agencies.

Research Questions:

a. **Primary Research Question:** How can online marketplaces provide market efficiencies to government buyers without sacrificing competition and diversity among providers?

a. **Secondary Research Questions:**
• How do online marketplace providers structure relationships with their suppliers/business partners?
• What concerns do small businesses and other interest groups have about the transition to online marketplaces?
• How can small businesses profit and benefit from changing their business processes to better align with this digital acquisition approach?

Project Objectives:

a. To compare the relationships to current dynamics between small business contractors supporting the federal government and/or the Department of Defense

b. To review the current barriers to entry for small businesses looking to sell items to the government through NASA SEWP and GSA websites and how those online marketplaces could be improved to allow more small businesses to begin doing work with the government

Background: This problem extends to the procurement of services as well; the federal government conducts hiring through portals such as usajobs.gov, while the private sector leverages more robust online marketplaces such as Indeed or Monster.

Research Methodology: Review the "Amazon Amendment" of the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act to understand how it applies to Small Businesses interested in doing business with the U.S. Government.

Data Sources:
- The "Amazon Amendment" of the FY2018 National Defense Authorization Act;
- FAR Parts 5 (Publicizing Contract Actions), 6 (Competition Requirements), 8 (Required Sources of Supplies and Services), 10 (Market Research), 12 (Acquisition of Commercial Items), 13 (Simplified Acquisition Procedures), and 19 (Small Business Programs);
- Section 809 panel recommendations, specifically Volume 1 Recommendation 21: Refocus DoD's small business policies and programs to prioritize mission and advance warfighting capabilities and Volume 3 Recommendation 80: Preserve the preference for procuring commercial products and services when considering small business set-asides.

Sample Reference Documents: We will start with reviewing the FAR and Section 809 Panel recommendations.

II. Draft Outline:

a. Chapter Titles:

Chapter 1. Introduction (problem statement, research questions, organization of project)

Chapter 2. Background

Chapter 3. Literature Review

Chapter 4. Analysis (Methodology, Data and Analysis)

Chapter 5. Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations

III.   Roles of Participants:

o **Students:** Conduct research, stay on schedule, and write a quality thesis.

o **Faculty Advisors:** Faculty advisors will provide applicable insight and guidance throughout the project, including:

1. Review draft documents

2. Recommend research sources and methodologies

3. Evaluate final project

o **ARP:** Improves the quality of the research established content, timeline and milestone, editing and transcription services and processes.

IV.   Proposed Project Schedule: The required ARP milestones are outlined below. Please add additional date or revise the date for each milestone, as needed.

Milestone	Due Date
1. Submit Project Plan	26 May 2023
2. Data Collection Complete	24 July 2023
3. Submit Three Consecutive Chapters to TaskIt for Editing	21 Aug 2023
4. Submit All Chapters to TaskIt for Editing	22 Sept 2023
5. Submit Final Research Report (WORD) to TaskIt	15 Nov 2023
6. Submit Findings Poster to ARP through TaskIt	15 Nov 2023
7. Submit Short Video Based on Findings Poster to TaskIt	15 Nov 2023
8. Graduate	22 Dec 2023

V. Other

o **References:**

o **Report Classification and Distribution:** Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited. If this is not the case, please comment: N/A

o **Interviews/Survey:** Will you be conducting interviews or using a survey to complete your research? If yes, please comment on your plan (who, what, when, where and how). As of now, we are not planning to conduct interviews.

o **Transcription:** If applicable, please estimate the number of recorded hours that will need to be transcribed. N/A

Acknowledge:

As the lead advisor, I believe that this project is compliant with NPS Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements related to Protection of Human Subjects and I anticipate that the report will be Approved for Public Release, distribution as unlimited. I recommend this research team and project to the ARP.

Lead Advisor Signatures:

X _____

Advisor

. Submit Findings Poster to ARP through TaskIt