auditel

AUDITEL.CO.UK

Building strong relationships between our clients and suppliers

SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIP GUIDE

Auditel help Graze to reduce costs and improve efficiency in a variety of cost areas

"Auditel have released significant savings into our business and provided valuable support and resource to our management team. They are true specialists in reducing indirect costs."

Graze.com

Auditel integrate with Pandora's global procurement department

"Auditel are a dedicated procurement resource for the business on isolated P&L lines. On some of the really big contracts, they've integrated well with our global procurement department; it's been a good team effort."

Finance Director for UK & Ireland, Pandora

Introduction

Founded in 1994, Auditel was established to help organisations make effective and informed procurement decisions within a rapidly evolving market.

Auditel Procurement Specialists develop robust relationships with organisations, going over and above any short-term benefits to provide impartial market knowledge and fact-based analysis. This enables us to deliver cost savings and process & efficiency improvements, through our holistic approach.

All of our specialists understand the value of client and supplier relationships. We ensure we work alongside suppliers to understand the market and how they will be able to service the client, in order to find out the capabilities of a supplier, in terms of what they are able to deliver.

We understand that for any client-supplier relationship to be effective, both sides must be able to fulfil their business goals. Auditel acts as a conduit between our clients and suppliers, ensuring a successful, sustainable relationship.

While we work as an outsourced extension to our clients management teams, charged with finding the right products and/or services for their needs at the best value, we know that suppliers also need to run sustainable businesses in order to provide this value.

This guide has been designed in order to assist with your understanding of how Auditel works within the context of the client-supplier relationship and to understand our code of ethics and values. We hope that this guide can help you work within our processes to win new, and to retain existing business moving forward.

THE POWER OF AUDITEL

Resource

Dedicated resource that adds considerable weight to your current procurement team

Knowledge

Detailed procurement knowledge of what best value looks like and how to achieve it, whilst delivering innovation into your supply chain

Expertise

Hand-picked procurement specialists negotiating on your behalf, who have long careers working in over 100 different expenditure areas

Tools

Unique benchmarking and analytical tools that speed up the tendering process and make sense of complex data - allowing you to make an informed decision

Buying Power

Access to serious buying power due to supplier relationships and unique pricing frameworks exclusive to Auditel

Strategic procurement built-in for Bovis Homes Group plc

"I always appreciate the fact that Auditel are on top of their work, I never have to chase. Their reporting is concise, accurate and provides me with valuable data to monitor group spends and activity."

Head of Group Procurement, Bovis Homes Group plc

Long-term partnership brings strategic gains for intelligence giant Mintel

"Any company would benefit from Auditel's services. Frankly, I see no reason why you wouldn't engage them – it's a no-brainer."

Chairman, Mintel

Auditel's approach to suppliers

If you are an incumbent or prospective supplier to a client that engages with an Auditel Procurement Specialist to review an area (or areas) of cost, you can expect a professional, consistent and positive relationship with the people involved.

If you however feel that this isn't the case, please let us know via our supplier feedback process which can be found on page 10 of this document.

We will always try to involve you in the review process as early as possible to ensure that you have an even chance of retaining the business, unless our client advises us not to. By using our people, tools, knowledge and processes we are able to determine if our client is receiving the best value from their current suppliers.

If we find an opportunity to improve the value the client can get (by looking at the wider market), or if the client raises other issues relating to their current supply chain, we will select and invite alternative providers to tender for the business, along with the incumbent.

We advocate close working relationships and see them as routes to best value, competitive pricing, efficient working practices and ultimately a long term, sustainable and profitable relationship for all involved.

How we select suppliers

Auditel specialists select suppliers for projects by using the details within our internal supplier database, which holds details of our past experiences. These experiences can determine which suppliers are selected.

In other cases, we could be approaching your company for the first time, having identified you as a viable alternative supplier to our client.

We always try not to waste the time of any supplier and subject to the area in question, we will generally invite a maximum of 4-6 suppliers into the tendering process. We may question you in some detail before issuing a tender, this is to save you the time of preparing a proposal if your products/services are not a good fit in order to deliver best value to our client. We will always notify you if your proposal is unsuccessful and provide you with as much information as possible to help increase your chances of winning business through us in the future.

As the incumbent or alternative supplier, please don't mistake this as a chance to re-submit your tender response.

We generally rely on the first responses and don't engage in multiple proposals, nor do we play supplier responses off against each other.

Your early involvement in developing best practices within the supply chain is always encouraged as it should enable you to offer better value to the client. Assisting in the development of an improved process will demonstrate your commitment to the success of the project. We advocate close working relationships and see them as routes to best value, competitive pricing, efficient working practices and ultimately a long term, sustainable and profitable relationship for all involved.

Our specialists record supplier dealings within our internal systems in order to build up a long-term record of your level of service, pricing performance and general client satisfaction.

What can you expect from Auditel Specialists?

- Professionalism, respect and courtesy and a prompt response to all reasonable questions
- Discussions with specialists that fully understand the purchasing practices and patterns of a client having performed an independent review of historic purchases
- The opportunity to submit a tender response on a level playing field along with any other existing suppliers and any other alternative suppliers which have been selected
- Details of any possible changes in supply methods, which may enable better value to be offered
- Invitations to offer innovation or change to deliver our mutual client(s) additional value
- To be treated on a level playing field along with any other suppliers involved
- A copy of our Letter of Authority (LOA) to negotiate on behalf of the client will be provided upon request, along with a full summary of relevant purchasing patterns and practices
- In the event of a successful tender response, a suitable implementation schedule will be issued
- In the event of an unsuccessful tender response, a debriefing will be provided

If you are the incumbent supplier, you can also expect:

- Early involvement in the review process
- General impartial review of the current value for money being offered to the client

Auditel unearth new opportunities that we wouldn't have obtained ourselves

"Partnering with Auditel has proved to be hugely successful from day one and, to date, approximately 40% of our corporate clients have come from Auditel - which is around 6000 connections. The feedback is always good, the service levels are great and customers are well looked after."

Mark Barber, Sales Manager, Supplier Partner

What can we expect from you as a supplier?

- Professionalism, respect and courtesy
- Prompt responses to all communications
- Accurate detail on any tender requests submitted to you
- Proposals which reflect long term best value and not just unsustainable headline rates to win contracts
- Respect for the contractual position our mutual client has awarded us to deal with you and for you not to approach the client directly in an attempt to circumvent the process
- Best value which is a combination of product/service quality, customer service and price
- For you to enjoy an acceptable profit margin for the product or services you provide to our client

IF YOU WIN AN RFP/TENDER:

Our specialists will inform you when your proposal is successful. The main actions required are for you:

- To provide Service Level Agreements (SLA's) and a price list based on the agreed prices to the client and our specialist
- To meet with the client and our specialist to discuss operational efficiencies identified within the project as and when required
- To meet with the client and our specialist to discuss and agree performance measures upon which ongoing service delivery will be monitored
- To provide usage reports to the client and our specialist on an agreed frequency
- To take prompt action to resolve any problems or complaints identified by either the client or our specialist
- To keep our specialists fully involved and informed of any issues you experience with, or any changes requested by, our client during the period of our engagement on the project

New suppliers

If we introduce a new supplier into one of our clients, our objective is to minimise any disruption to the client's business by having any new suppliers operational as quickly as possible.

In addition to the points on the previous page – the main actions required by a new supplier are to:

- Meet with the client to discuss handover procedures and to view other materials (where appropriate)
- Co-ordinate with our specialist, particularly during the implementation period.
- Meet with the client and our specialist after the first month of operation to review progress (where appropriate)

Our process

Understand & assess your current position

The Auditel Procurement Specialist performs a full and independent review of the clients purchasing patterns, processes and requirements. This information is then used to create a 'Status Report' detailing service level requirements, usage and price. Once this 'Status Report' is signed off by the client, our specialist can then look to speak with existing and new suppliers.

Explore & identify options

Using our bespoke tools, the specialist will conduct a forensic line-by-line analysis of the client's data in order to uncover anomalies, spending patterns and behaviours that were previously unknown.

These can be challenged and/or corrected in order to maximise savings and process efficiencies.

Set a programme of work

Our clients gain access to our market knowledge, which enables our specialists to quickly judge the competitiveness and quality of any incumbent suppliers, while also enabling us to shortlist potential alternatives in a flash.

This coupled with the status report enables our specialists to put together a clear project timeline and programme of work.

Engage with trusted experts & suppliers

The incumbent and alternative supplier(s) that have been selected are contacted and informed about the project(s).

Incumbent suppliers are provided with a signed Letter of Authority from the client, and tender requests are then issued to suppliers. These tender requests are a one-time invitation to be considered. We analyse supplier responses to determine the best proposition being offered, that meets the needs of the client.

We make recommendations to our client, based on suitability and best value in a recommendation report. The client always makes the final decision on the most suitable option.

Implementation of chosen solution

All suppliers are notified of the outcome of their proposal, successful or not. Suppliers that are not successful will be de-briefed by the specialist.

An implementation plan is developed and agreed between the chosen supplier(s) and the client, in order to prevent disruption to the business as much as possible, with the specialist overseeing progress on behalf of the client.

Ongoing supplier management

Usage data, copy invoices and performance indicators will be monitored regularly to ensure the quality of service, delivery and product is maintained.

Regular meetings and calls may be called between the specialist, the client and the supplier(s) to ensure overall satisfaction from all sides, issues can be resolved, and the relationships maintained into the long term.

BUSINESS SUPPLIES & SERVICES

- Archive, Storage & Shredding
- Health Care & Medical Supplies
- Janitorial Services & Supplies
- Laundry
- Office Furnishings
- Office Supplies & Stationery
- Packaging
- Workwear & PPE

BANKING & FINANCE

- Credit Insurance
- Foreign Exchange
- Invoice Finance
- Merchant Cards
- Taxation & Allowances

CATERING

- Catering Consumables
- Contract Catering
- Kitchen Equipment
- Vending Machines

COMMS & TECHNOLOGY

- Artificial Intelligence
- Business Continuity
- Cyber Security
- Data Networking Infrastructure
- Equipment & Maintenance
- Fixed Line Communications
- Hardware Procurement
- ICT Services
- Managed Services
- Mobile Devices
- Robotics
- Software Procurement
- Unified Communications

COMPLIANCE

- Data Protection
- Energy
- Environmental
- Food
- General Waste
- Hazardous & Clinical Waste Management
- Health & Safety
- Human Resources
- Insurance
- Travel

LOGISTICS, TRANSPORT & TRAVEL

- Couriers
- Fleet Management
- Forklift Trucks
- Freight
- Fuel
- Haulage
- Insurance
- Materials Handling Equipment
- Pallets
- Travel
- Vehicular Communications
- Vehicle Leasing & Sourcing
- Vehicle Tracking
- Warehousing

PREMISES & PROPERTY

- Business Rates
- Contract Cleaning
- Engineering & Electrical Consumables
- Facilities Management
- Fire Systems & Equipment
- Grounds Maintenance
- HVAC
- Maintenance & Repair
- Pest Control
- Property Management
- Security Systems & Equipment
- Washrooms

PRINT & POSTAGE

- Business Machines
- Digital Marketing
- DX
- Fulfilment
- Hybrid Mail
- Mailing Solutions
- Managed Print Solutions
- Marketing Print
- Operational Print & Postage
- Photocopiers
- Postage
- Print
- Workflow

Expertise on demand

Auditel has expertise in many different areas of expenditure which we have broken down into these cost groups. This means that we can advise our clients on new innovative products, services, policies and processes that can eradicate profit leaks and deliver a significant competitive advantage.

UTILITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL

- Electricity
- Energy Efficiency
- Gas
- Recycling
- Renewable Energy
- Sustainability
- Waste & Environmental Services
- Waste Water & Sewerage
- Water

Auditel's Code of Practice

Professional Conduct

Auditel Procurement Specialists conduct themselves professionally and with integrity. We take great care to be objective in our decision making and with the recommendations we make. This way our decisions are not influenced by anything other than doing the right thing for our clients.

Ethics

We look to ensure our services are always delivered honestly and openly and expect our clients and suppliers to do the same. Our advice, strategic assistance and methodologies imparted through our business take proper account of ethical considerations and the protection of our suppliers and clients.

Confidentiality

Auditel are committed to maintaining the highest degree of integrity in all of our dealings with past, present and future suppliers. We achieve this through typical commercial confidentiality standards and the protection of all personal data received when dealing with Auditel.

Duty of Care

The advice and actions of Auditel will always conform with the relevant laws and industry standard practices.

Contracts

Our client agreements authorise Auditel to represent our client in dealings with the supplier markets, but they do not allow us to commit our client into any contractual obligation. However, our clients do rely on the experience we have and our agnostic viewpoint in their decision making. Our agreement binds us to always deliver what we see to be the best for the needs of the client.

Best Value

In all of the supplier negotiations and subsequent recommendations we provide to our clients, we judge each offering on the basis of achieving the best possible value. We define best value as "an offering that includes (but not limited to), consideration of service levels, delivery terms, trading and financial history, product/service quality standards, the cost to change supplier and the price per unit (where applicable)." Auditel Procurement Specialists never recommend changing supplier based on the price point alone.

Quality Assurance

We conduct regular ongoing reviews with our clients and suppliers in order to maintain the quality of service we deliver. These reviews typically consist of discussions around goals, activities and effectiveness of current projects as well as timelines on new and existing projects.

Equality / Discrimination

We aim to always be objective and fair in the advice and service that we provide. We are not influenced in our decisions, actions or recommendations by issues relating, but not limited to gender, age, race, disability, creed, colour or any other factor not directly related to the needs of the client.

Fees

Auditel's fees are typically paid by our client and no form of hidden remuneration is received by anyone within Auditel. We do work with suppliers to structure rebate and commission programmes as a way to provide leaner pricing for our clients. Auditel Procurement Specialists may take advantage of these remuneration methods, but only after discussion and full disclosure with the client.

Gifts

Under no circumstances do any of our specialists accept gifts from suppliers as a form of remuneration. To prevent confusion, gifts of any kinds with a value greater than £100 including (but not limited to) holidays/travel, meals, event tickets, retail vouchers, undisclosed commissions are considered as remuneration.

Conflict of Interest

Auditel works exclusively for their clients in a consultative manner, and will not allow any dealings, or negotiations, on behalf of our clients to be influenced by any outside work (or offer of outside work), by the supplier or any related party.

Frequently Asked Questions

For ease and reference, we have collated some of our more commonly asked questions that we get asked by suppliers. If you have a question that is not covered in this guide, please feel free to email your question to suppliers@auditel.co.uk and we will get an answer to you.

Q. As the incumbent supplier, are you going to take the business away from me?

Auditel Procurement Specialists are engaged to obtain best value for their clients in terms of service, price and quality. In over half of our projects we work with the incumbent to assist them retain the business. Ensuring we achieve best value is one of our standard practices, and to achieve that we will always include the incumbent in any RFP or tendering process. By working in tandem with the client and supplier(s) we often uncover additional benefits and/or efficiencies, which can help to adjust/streamline the procurement processes. These efficiencies can enable you to provide the client with the better value they are looking for.

Q. Are there any exceptions to the above?

The only time a specialist wouldn't include an incumbent supplier on an RFP or tender is at the explicit request of the client.

Q. Are you looking for best/preferred pricing?

No, we look to drive best value in all projects, and understand that sometimes best value doesn't come cheaply. Part of our role is to manage the expectation of the client when it comes to best value. Best value to Auditel is a combination of quality, reliability, delivery standards, service levels and price.

Q. Do you get paid by suppliers?

Auditel are agnostic of supplier, this enables us to remain objective and act in the best interests of our clients. We get paid by our clients typically and have a policy of not taking any form of hidden payment from a supplier. This way suppliers can be assured that projects are handled openly and honestly. If a commission-based approach enables leaner pricing or delivers additional benefits/efficiencies to the client, the Auditel specialist may take advantage of this - but only after full discussion and disclosure with the client.

Q. Do you have preferred suppliers?

No, Auditel strive to become trusted advisors to their clients, we are unable to do this if we prefer one supplier to others. Our agnostic approach ensures we select the right suppliers for inclusion within an RFP tender based on meeting the needs of our client and ensuring these suppliers are aligned to the strategic/business objectives of the client.

Auditel have a centralised supplier database, which holds records of all the suppliers we have worked with. Records hold details of the products and/or services provided by the supplier and a history of which specialists have worked with the supplier. This detail is used in the selection process in order to consider who are the best match based on the client's criteria.

Q. I have submitted RFPs/tenders – but have not received any form of feedback

Our specialists should notify you regardless to if you are successful or not with an RFP or tender and also provide the relevant feedback. If this doesn't happen, please contact the specialist directly to request feedback in the first instance. If you still don't get anywhere, please contact suppliers@auditel.co.uk with the high level detail or the RFP/tender and we will try to assist.

Auditel's unique approach supports The Royal School's impressive growth

"Working with Auditel means that my team can focus on core activities, confident in Auditel's abilities to progress other projects. This hands-off approach means we can make decisions with confidence."

Director of Finance & Services,
The Royal School

Over £3 million savings & counting for YMCA

"Auditel has worked with us for many years. Their projects have resulted in significant direct savings and enhanced our internal processes, so we also benefit from indirect cost savings on administration and staff time."

Procurement and Contracts Manager,
YMCA St Paul's Group

Complaints & Disputes

We will always attempt to be open in our dealings with you as a supplier. However, there may be occasions and cases where we are bound by instructions from our client which prevent us from disclosing specifics to you and your representatives.

These instructions may differ to your belief of the client's view, unfortunately we are unable to do anything to prevent this from happening and we ask you to respect these decisions when they occur and thank you for your understanding.

Suppliers are a huge part of the fabric of our business, and we are committed to developing and nurturing supplier relationships. As such, we have a complaints and dispute procedure. Should you feel that you have grounds for a complaint, this should first be raised with the Auditel Procurement Specialist in question.

If you feel that the matter has not been resolved to your satisfaction, please send an email detailing your concerns to the Auditel Head Office at suppliers@auditel.co.uk

We will acknowledge receipt of any complaint within two working days (sooner, where possible) and request any further information we may need, or to ask additional questions. We will then perform an internal investigation and report back to you with our findings and a resolution plan (where appropriate).

The Supplier Directory

Inclusion into our supplier database can give you an additional sales channel for your products and/or services. Auditel has a team of over 100 procurement specialists who, on behalf of over 1000 clients have the buying power based on expenditure of millions of pounds a year.

Suppliers that can meet client requirements for best value have the opportunity to win substantial volumes of new business without the direct cost of sale. However, inclusion doesn't guarantee business will come your way. There are a couple of ways a supplier can be included. Our specialists have the ability to add you into the directory, or you are able to register yourself.

- To register your company as an Auditel supplier please visit suppliers.auditel.uk.com and click on the New Supplier Registration link. Once approved, you will receive credentials into our supplier portal.
- If you have marketing information in an electronic format (brochures, catalogues, flyers, etc.) which you feel may benefit our specialists and/or clients these can be uploaded to your supplier record once your registration has been verified and your credentials have been generated. *This verification process can take up to 30 days*.
- If a specialist enters a supplier into the database they will have usually met with the supplier in order to gain relevant information and detail on the company and the products and/or services on offer.
- To keep your record as accurate as possible please keep your credentials safe so that you can manage your records at your convenience. If you are unable to do this for any reason, please email suppliers@auditel.co.uk to arrange a password reset, or you can send in the changes and they can be made by us in due course.

auditel

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CELEBRATING
25 YEARS OF
AUDITEL

EST. 1994