



BIDS

FRANCHISE INFORMATION

What is BIDS?™

BIDS is an electronic publisher that distributes tenders and tender information to subscribers on behalf of public and corporate buyers.

BIDS is a privately owned company with head office in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. The corporate name is **Tendering Publications Ltd. (TPL)**

BIDS was founded in the 1970's as a twice weekly magazine listing all tenders issued by the Province of New Brunswick. In 1996, it moved to electronic publishing, offering tenders and tender information via email, fax and the **BIDS** website (**BIDS Alert™**). The magazine is still offered by mail (in printed form), fax and email.

Also in 1996, the company began expanding its operations to other jurisdictions by licensing independently owned and operated businesses to use the **BIDS** system. These franchises service local buyers and subscribers.

Currently there are three franchises — **BIDS** Nova Scotia, **BIDS** Newfoundland, and **BIDS** New Brunswick (operated by TPL). Franchises are connected to the central database electronically, providing local facility for registering subscribers and buyers, conducting transactions, and inquiring. The software allows franchisees to conduct business on the **BIDS** system from virtually anywhere.

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FRANCHISE INFORMATION

How the BIDS™ System Works

BIDS distributes tenders and tender information, and registers vendors for a variety of buyers that include private corporations, municipalities, hospitals, educational institutions, and provincial governments.

The principle service offered to subscribers is **BIDS Alert™**, which is a "push" service. It is unique in that customers do not have to browse, order tenders, or pay extra when a tender is of interest to them. They get their tenders automatically. (The exception is when the buyer has not provided us with the tender document.) We are aware of no service anywhere that is this convenient for the customer.

BIDS is also unique in its range of delivery options. The customer may choose to receive tenders by email, fax or magazine.

This convenient service at low cost has been welcomed in the marketplace.

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Outsourcing — Today's Trend in Purchasing

In today's world of down-sizing and belt-tightening, an attractive option for many organizations is out-sourcing the bidding process.

Buyers earn their money by developing specifications, and evaluating suppliers and bids. Soliciting bids is the pedestrian part of the procurement process, and it can be time consuming and expensive.

Organizations achieve savings in three areas:

1. expenditures are reduced or saved completely (advertising, printing, postage, faxing, courier etc);
2. lower prices follow from increased bidding activity (probably the greatest area of savings and the most difficult to document);
3. better use is made of purchasing staff time.

BIDS has the right services and products for the growing market in out-sourcing.

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The BIDS™ Business Model

BIDS derives its revenue through subscriber fees. The service to buyers is generally provided at no cost.

All of the information processing and distribution is done by the head office computer system. Local franchisees establish relationships with buyers, sell subscriptions, and act as distribution points for some products.

The **BIDS** system allows franchisees to enter subscribers' information directly into the database. Once in the system, the subscriber automatically receives the desired tenders/information as they become available.

BIDS is able to adapt to the needs of specific buyers. Buyers may specify that tenders be sent to individual vendors, regardless of their status as **BIDS** subscribers. Franchisees provide the vehicle to offer customized, local service, while taking advantage of the economies of scale of a central database.

Benefits of the **BIDS** Business Model:

1. The market likes the "pro-active" tender distribution service.
2. **BIDS** has an established base of buyers, providing a rich database of daily tendering opportunities.
3. **BIDS** has an established base of vendors, providing an active bidding environment for buyers.
4. **BIDS** offers solutions that are tailored to the needs of the individual buying organization.
5. **BIDS** has myriad opportunities for sectoral specialization. Those already in the system include: provincial governments, municipalities, oil and gas industry, educational institutions and hospitals.

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How a BIDS™ Franchise Works

As a **BIDS** franchisee, you own and run your own business. Following the **BIDS** formula, the franchisee utilizes a combination of direct mail, telemarketing, public relations and advertising to market the service to subscribers and to buyers.

BIDS/Alert™ is delivered from the TPL central system (email and fax). Emails are sent directly to the customer. Fax files are sent to the franchisee, who in turn redirects each fax to the customer each night (to save long distance charges). This process is fully automated. Magazines by email are sent directly to the customer. The magazine file is also sent twice/week to the franchisee who may print it for some customers.

A **BIDS** office should be manned initially by at least one full and one part time person. As volume and activity grow, more people may be required.

BIDS can operate as a stand-alone business, or in some cases may share office space, equipment and staff with another business.



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FRANCHISE INFORMATION

Getting Started

You should be prepared to invest \$15 – \$20,000. Cash flow will depend on the speed at which local buyers come on board.

BIDS offers full training on all its systems as well as on marketing and accounting. You will be required to come to Fredericton for training. **BIDS** personnel will visit the franchisee's location at time of the business launch.

Who Should be Interested?

If you're interested in running your own business, that's a start. If you have a business that you're looking to diversify, that also can work.

If you're are involved with potential buyers, such as petrochemical companies, hospitals, provincial, state or large municipal governments or major corporations, this could be a nice kick-start to getting your business going.

You don't have to be a computer whiz kid. We have the computer systems already in place, and we will train you how to use them. You should be comfortable dealing with customers, and thrive on the challenge of building your own business.

Location is not important. With the Internet it's as easy to communicate over thousands of miles as it is over just a few. We are interested in expanding into prime US and Canadian centers. Inquiries are also welcome from other parts of the world.