30 LESSONS

For Doing IT Business in the Public Sector

DLT E-BOOK

DLT | **30 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE**

A TECH DATA COMPANY

30 LESSONS

For more than 30 years, DLT has been accelerating public sector growth for channel partners and technology vendors. We know the best ways companies like yours can grow public sector business, fast.

DLT is sharing 30 lessons that you can use right now to expand your public sector business today. These lessons will cover every aspect of public sector success, including marketing, sales, channel enablement, contract vehicles, market insights, engineering and more.

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PUBLIC SECTOR MARKET

Lesson #1: Being Successful Requires Setting Your Expectations

The reality is the public sector can be slower to adopt new technologies than the private sector. This caution is not surprising given that risk aversion is baked into the DNA of the public sector — its #1 priority is providing the foundation for our society no matter what. To succeed in the public sector, you must be sensitive to this cautious approach and set your expectations and your timelines appropriately.

Lesson #2: Innovation Is Burgeoning in Public Sector

No two technologies are the same, and the way they must be sold to the public sector isn't either. To maximize your public sector sales, you must know your mission and build a proper plan around it. A solid joint business plan that is mutually accepted is key to success.

Lesson #3: Technology Is Not the Mission

At the end of the day, a public sector agency's purpose is to deliver on the mission, goals and objectives outlined by legislation. Technology is simply an enabler that allows the agencies to fulfill their mission. When talking to government agencies about your technologies and solutions, always frame your offering within the context of how it's going to support their mission, meet their requirements and solves their challenges. It is not about the speeds and feeds — it's always about the government's mission.

Lesson #4: Learn the Language

The public sector is a unique market with its own language, customs and rituals. Budgets are mandated by law and that funding is set aside for programs, projects or goals. You must learn that the government is all about the mission. Learn the mission, the requirements, the acquisition method, the processes and the procedures. The more you understand the public sector culture, the more effective you're going to be.

Lesson #5: Follow the Money

The budgets for agencies are mandated by law. Understand how much money is available, how much might already be accounted for, how it's allocated and what requirements the money is meant to support. Look into the program and contract preferences for how the acquisition might take place. If there is no money directly available, consider alternate funding methods like the Technology Modernization Fund as a possible pool of funding that can be tapped to drive innovative or new capabilities that support the mission.
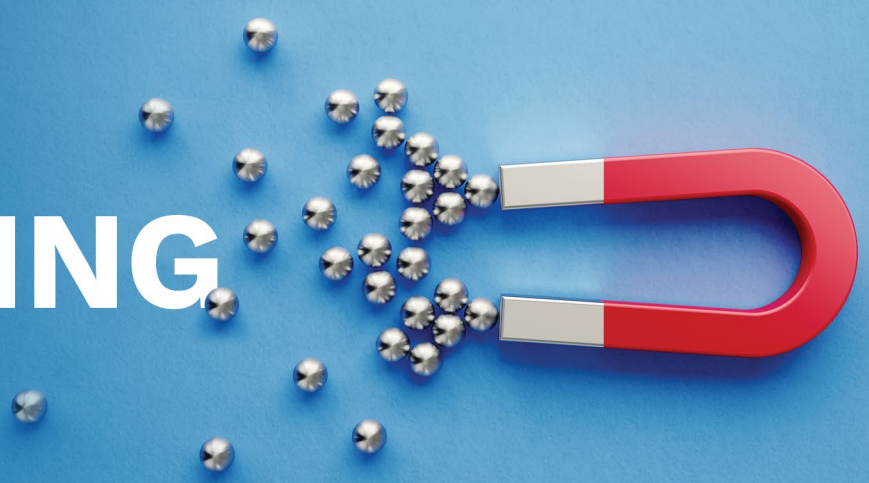
Lesson #6: Solve Your Customer's Problem with the Subject Line

This lesson is all about the battle for the inbox. Public sector decision makers prioritize opening emails they can act on, so your subject lines must address how you are going to solve your customers' problems. The more specific your subject line is, the higher the likelihood that your email will be opened and convert into a potential opportunity for your business.

Lesson #7: Use HTML the Public Sector Way

In the commercial space, email marketing is all about the bells and whistles. However, when marketing to the public sector — and more specifically the U.S. Department of Defense — a lot of those bells and whistles are stripped out, which can make your email look like spam. Successfully marketing to these audiences means developing emails that are effective in both HTML and Plain Text formats so you can track engagement while still delivering valuable content.

Lesson #8: Make the Landing Page Beautiful, Make the Email Work

The number one goal of your marketing email should be to drive customers to your landing page — the landing page itself is your opportunity to make a visual impact on your public sector audience. Good use of whitespace, engaging (but relevant!) imagery and previews of the content you are marketing are all effective strategies to developing eye-popping, effective landing pages.

Lesson #9: Offer Value to Get Value

You've gotten your customer to open your email with an engaging subject line, you've driven them to your beautifully designed landing page — now what? In order to turn a prospect into a lead, you need your customer to provide contact information including their name, email and phone number. This is valuable information that public sector customers won't give up unless they get something of equal or greater value in return.

Lesson #10: Sell, Then Nurture

A huge part of public sector marketing is nurturing target customers who might not be ready to buy until they are ready to transition from a prospect to an actual lead. However, just because some of your target customers are in nurture programs doesn't mean you should stop selling to them. Always open your marketing efforts with an offering that can lead to a sale — never miss out on what could be a sale because you want to take your time.

Lesson #11: One Thing Never Changes, The Importance of Adapting to Change

New styles, requirements, process, operational changes and overall value-add enhancements are a constant when selling to the public sector. Over the past 30 years, DLT has learned that to increase revenue for technology vendors and channel partners, you must stay ahead of these changes and adapt your strategies accordingly when the occur.

Lesson #12: You Need a Technology-Specific Sales Strategy to be Successful

No two technologies are the same, and the way they must be sold to the public sector isn't either. To maximize your public sector sales, you must know your mission and build a proper plan around it. A solid joint business plan that is mutually accepted is key to success.

Lesson #13: Lean on a Team and Its Tools

Public sector IT sales cannot be successful without the full support of all your available resources. DLT helps technology companies leverage marketing, accounting, contracts, operations, finance, and many more public sector purpose-built resources to be successful.

Lesson #14: Turnover Happens — Adapt and Overcome

The reality of public sector IT sales is turnover can be high. The ability to adapt and overcome challenges like turnover can make the difference between success and failure. Organizations like DLT can help ease the burden and avoid any interruption in sales with support from top-to-bottom of the sales funnel.

Lesson #15: Bottom Line, Sales is About Accountability and Consistency

Staying accountable to your team, your customers and your goals is what makes a good public sector IT sales team great. The ability to consistently deliver results to our technology vendors and channel partners is what has led to DLT's 30 years of success.

Extra Credit: Enlist a Sales Expert

The public sector is complex. Trust an experienced guide – like a seasoned sales consultants – to help accelerate your sales team's path to profitability.

THE CHANNEL

Lesson #16: Channel Partners Come in Many Shapes and Sizes

There are a variety of channel partners that have different business models. Creating the right program for these different business models is critical because there is no "one box fits all" type of program.

Lesson #17: Contract Vehicles Are King

When selling to the public sector, the last thing you want is for a potential sale to be lost because of a lack of contract vehicle access. Working with aggregators like DLT ensures you always have access to contracts — either through the aggregator themselves or their channel partner ecosystem.

Lesson #18: Always Know Your Deal Registration Ranking

Incenting your partners to do the right thing is paramount — you want them to make the investments necessary to grow your revenue. You can help achieve this by protecting your partners with special pricing, terms and conditions.

Lesson #19: Partner Enablement Should be Consistent, Relevant and Easy to Consume

Anytime you are enabling your partner community with things like trainings and workshops that will better help them sell your technologies to the public sector, remember their time is valuable. Being consistent, relevant, and easy to consume ensures your partner enablement efforts don't go to waste.

Lesson #20: Don't Forget About Leveraging Socioeconomic Partners

23% of all prime public sector contract awards go to specific socioeconomic groups including SMB's, 8A's, SDVOB's and more. Working with partners that specialize in these markets can help unlock new revenue for your business.

Extra Credit: Hire a Channel Evangelist

To build an effective public sector channel strategy, you need someone to own the program. Bring in high-level talent with experience in managing partner ecosystems.

Lesson #21: IT Innovation Continues to Change How to Serve the Public Sector

The world of brick-and-mortar, drop-ship and rack-stack installation are shifting to an "as-a-service" model way of doing business with the public sector. By leveraging new technologies like the cloud, CSPs and ISVs, public sector customers can install your technologies at the touch of their fingertips. Make sure your organization has the right tools in place to best serve your customers today and tomorrow.

Lesson #22: Installations Are the Past, Implementations Are the Future

IT installations no longer have to be boots on the ground, heavy-duty service — most can be done in half the time and completed remotely. To successfully grow your public sector business, you should focus on implementation. Successful IT implementation with your public sector customers results in a more long-term relationships and can make the difference when an agency is selecting a new supplier.

Lesson #23: Adaptability and Security Have Never Been More Important

This lesson focuses on overcoming inevitable obstacles with IT implementation. You will hit snags, you will hit roadblocks. By planning for these obstacles with the help of DLT, you can more easily adapt your IT implementation in a way that is safe, secure and successful to your public sector customers.

Lesson #24: Beware of Scope Creep

Successfully leveraging technologies like the cloud to grow your public sector business can be challenging, and scope creep can happen quickly. When selling to the public sector, the procurement requirements can often differ from the actual need of the end user. Leveraging DLT and its Confirmed Stateside Support (CSS) can help you deliver a successful product to your public sector customers while avoiding costly scope creep.

Lesson #25: Compliance and the Mission Are Equally Important to Success

Helping your public sector customers achieve their mission cannot come at the cost of compliance. When using technologies like the cloud to grow your public sector business, remaining within compliance regulations is critical — you must deliver your product in a safe and secure way. Programs like DLT's Cloud Navigator can help you learn how to leverage the cloud to grow your public sector business while delivering compliance and mission success.

Lesson #26: The Right Contract Vehicle Can Make All the Difference

Having access to your customers' preferred contract vehicles is the most surefire way to grow your public sector business. While market staples like GSA are a must, aggregators like DLT can provide access to other contract vehicles that are quickly gaining popularity within the public sector like SEWP V and ITES-SW2.

Lesson #27: View Contract Management Through the Eyes of the Program Office

IT installations no longer have to be boots on the ground, heavy-duty service — most can be done in half the time and completed remotely. To successfully grow your public sector business, you should focus on implementation. Successful IT implementation with your public sector customers results in a more long-term relationships and can make the difference when an agency is selecting a new supplier.

Lesson #28: Services and Products are Like Apples and Oranges

Many public sector contracts now prioritize the ability to deliver services like contract management product implementation and optimization. Providing these services at a high level requires more time and effort than simple product delivery, which is why many companies partner with aggregators like DLT who have a proven track record of delivering a white-glove IT services experience.

Lesson #29: Every Contract You Hold Should Serve a Purpose

If you have contracts within your portfolio that are rarely utilized, you could be wasting valuable resources on a nonessential contract and missing out on other contracts that can drive more sales. Companies like DLT know the preferred contract vehicles for each public sector market and can help you streamline your path to success.

Lesson #30: Contract Vehicles are Hunting Licenses

Winning a big contract and simply posting it to your website is a huge waste of opportunity. Proactively promoting and managing your contracts will help drive more sales to your business by increasing contract awareness and drawing more attention to your technology.

Extra Credit: Create Visibility Throughout Your Pipeline

By giving an aggregation partner more visibility around your opportunities, you can accelerate the contract process and improve your odds of success.

30 LESSONS

TURNING LESSONS INTO ACTION

If you're ready to grow your public sector business, having the
right guide is key to your success. At DLT, we have 30 years of experience
helping technology vendors reach their goal — and we can help you too.

Email us at **sales@dlt.com** to start a conversation,
or learn more at **www.dlt.com/change**