

## FEATURE – GO Awards

# The perfect solution

In the first in a series of articles from 2007's *GO* Award Winners, **Jessica McPherson** explains how eProcurement Scotl@nd has contributed to the e-government agenda.

**S**haring technology and best procurement practices and processes across the Scottish public sector underpins the success of the eProcurement Scotl@nd initiative. Winning the *GO* 2007 eGovernment Award was a great way of showing all 80 of the organisations which have participated in the programme that their hard work and commitment to improving procurement, and introducing e-procurement systems in their own individual organisations, has been recognised and rewarded.

Procured by the Scottish Government, eProcurement Scotl@nd is a business change programme that has created a single, central e-procurement service suitable for all public sector organisations in Scotland to use.

*This offers a fully hosted and managed e-procurement service which:*

- eliminates the replication of cost and effort of different organisations pursuing their own individual e-procurement initiatives
- rapidly delivers the classic benefits of e-procurement, including more efficient and productive procurement and lower administrative costs via streamlined ordering and payment processes
- achieves better management and budget control via improved information flows
- avoids the difficulties and complexities for suppliers of having to deal with several different e-procurement systems

eProcurement Scotl@nd is an unequivocal success story. Since becoming operational in 2002, more than 1.2 million purchase orders – totalling more than £2.2 billion of Scottish public sector expenditure – have been transacted through the service

with over 44,000 suppliers. Through the use of collaborative e-auctions, transactional process savings and purchase payment automations, the eProcurement Scotl@nd service has to date delivered over £90 million of savings for the Scottish public sector – savings that have been redirected to frontline services.

As the only end-to-end purchase to pay e-procurement service that meets the needs of an entire nation, eProcurement Scotl@nd is providing other government administrations across the UK and Europe with evidence that sharing public services can work.

Furthermore, eProcurement Scotl@nd is in an ideal position to share with administrations the experiences and lessons that such a successful initiative has brought about, assisting them to formulate actions and plans to take forward e-procurement in their own countries.

This win-win situation of sharing procurement technology is key to the success of the collaborative agenda that is currently sweeping procurement in Scotland. In his Review of Public Procurement in Scotland, John McClelland CBE stated that *“one single system is a key prerequisite for the aggregation of purchase volumes to support best value through collaborative purchasing”*.

eProcurement Scotl@nd, and its related services in e-sourcing and transactional purchase to pay technologies, strengthens and supports the work of the sectoral and national Centres of Procurement Expertise that are currently being established across Scotland. The commodity-



Pictured are the eProcurement Scotl@nd team receiving their Award from Grahame Steed, Managing Editor of *GO* magazine (second from right), with Simon Lill, Public Sector Sales Director of Open Text

based structure of the Centres of Procurement Expertise allows collaboration, aggregation and optimisation of procurement expenditure at national, regional, local and sector levels. This provides the NHS, central and local government and further and higher education organisations with the opportunity to take full advantage of collaborative procurement, including better utilisation of scarce procurement resources and skill and aggregation of spend, creating greater purchasing power.

In addition, work is under way to review and subsequently enhance the services offered by eProcurement Scotl@nd, ensuring the most technologically advanced infrastructure to support collaboration and offering a less complex and more defined interface to suppliers. Future development for the programme will focus on electronic advertising of contracts, electronic invoicing and content management systems.

In an environment where public sector organisations are being pushed to demonstrate efficiencies and save hard cash, eProcurement Scotl@nd and its user organisations from

across the public sector in Scotland have embraced the use of e-procurement tools to support their participation in the collaborative procurement agenda, and will ultimately gain the savings and efficiencies that come from sharing common service requirements. 

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AWARDS

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### Further information

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