



Buy the Way

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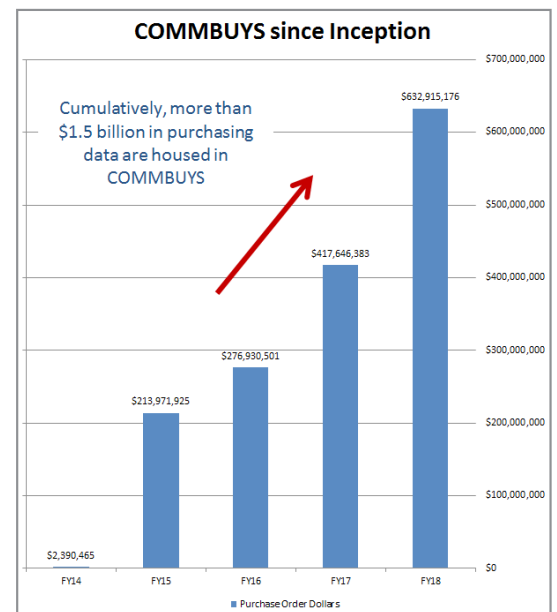
COMMBUYS: A Conduit for Affirmative Change

Change is hard, often demanding considerable short-term investment in pursuit of long-term gains.

Take the Commonwealth's adoption of COMMBUYS. Its launch in March 2014 changed users' day-to-day approach to procurement and purchasing in significant ways, requiring users to diverge from many ingrained routines. It also introduced 21st century tools and provided a mechanism to gather aggregate purchasing data, laying the groundwork for affirmative change.

COMMBUYS Community Growth

Four years following implementation, the number of COMMBUYS organizations has jumped considerably. Today, there are more than 900 buyer organizations in COMMBUYS, among them state agencies, cities and towns, public schools, quasi-public commissions, and non-profits, all with distinct purchasing requirements.



Along with COMMBUYS membership, activity in COMMBUYS has grown steadily since March 2014, and momentum continues to build. Over the FY17-18 period, COMMBUYS purchasing dollars grew by 52%, orders placed increased by 17%, and bid postings were up by 28%. Vendors continue to be interested in joining the COMMBUYS community: new vendor registrations over the past fiscal year grew by just short of 4,000, bringing the collective bidder pool to nearly 25,000. What's more – over its short lifetime, COMMBUYS purchases have totaled more than \$1.5 billion!

But How Does COMMBUYS Engagement Help the Commonwealth?

As Executive Department use of the system has continued to deepen and with sustained onboarding of new COMMBUYS organizations, the Commonwealth is amassing a cache of data that brings to light what public purchasers need in ways not previously explored. In the aggregate, purchases and posted bids are providing invaluable information about Commonwealth needs and, in turn, are influencing sourcing decisions.

Paul Short, Director of COMMBUYS Operations, shares that, "COMMBUYS data is helping the Commonwealth develop better bid and purchasing intelligence and it's transforming how the Commonwealth conducts procurements and builds contracts. This all falls in line with our initial vision for COMMBUYS – it's enabling us to better serve our customers."



**Official Newsletter of the
Operational Services Division**
August 2018

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Training for Buyers

How to Create a Departmental Master Blanket Purchase Order
August 23 (Westfield)

COMMBUYS Purchasing for Eligible Non-Profits
August 27 (Boston)

COMMBUYS Purchasing
August 28 (Boston)

COMMBUYS PunchOut & Line Item Catalog Ordering
August 28 (Webinar)

Essentials of State Procurement
September 11 (Westfield)

COMMBUYS RPA Release and RPA Release Enabled Contracts
September 17 (Webinar)

Strategic Sourcing Certification Program
Starts September 19 (Westfield)
Starts September 25 (Boston)

[Click here to see the full calendar.](#)

Training for Businesses

Connecting Your Business to the Commonwealth
August 21 (Boston)

Supplier Diversity Plan (SDP) Overview for Bidders and Prime Contractors
August 22 (Webinar)

Supplier Diversity Plan (SDP) Overview for Certified Businesses
August 22 (Webinar)

COMMBUYS for Awarded Statewide Contract Vendors
August 29 (Boston)

Selling to the State: Marketing Your Business to Public Purchasers
August 29 (Boston)

Demystifying the RFR: Understanding the Importance of the Request for Response
September 13 (Boston)

[Click here to see the full calendar.](#)

COMMBUYS: A Conduit for Affirmative Change (continued)

Building Better Intelligence: Case Study

One of the Commonwealth's high-volume Statewide Contracts – OFF36 Office Supplies – will be rebid later this year and, as you might expect, a good amount of sourcing activity already is taking place. One set of statistics the sourcing team has been analyzing is four years of contract purchasing data from COMMBUYS, examining the frequency with which items were purchased, quantities, and total dollars spent. The ability to access and analyze this data is providing the team with valuable insights and ideas as to the most critical factors necessary to include in the RFR. Taking this data-driven approach will drive best value responses that align with customer demand once the solicitation is released.

“COMMBUYS data is helping the Commonwealth develop better bid and purchasing intelligence and it's transforming how the Commonwealth conducts procurements and builds contracts.”

Paul Short
Director of COMMBUYS Operations

COMMBUYS Data Directly Influences Our Path Forward

So, the next time you're using COMMBUYS to post a bid, make a purchase, or enter an RPA (COMMBUYS after-the-fact purchase documentation), take note of your important role in helping the Commonwealth take some mighty steps forward in the sourcing arena.

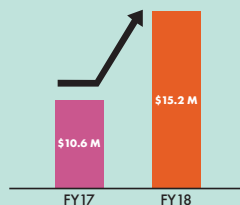
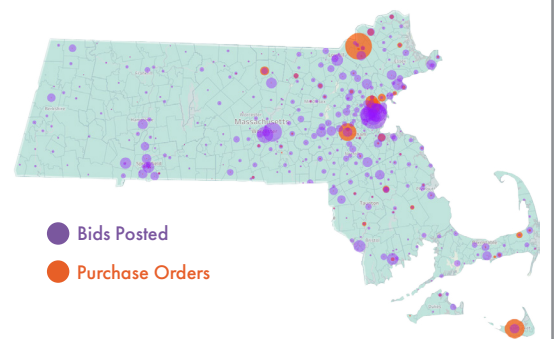
COMMBUYS: A Municipal Retrospective

Since its implementation in 2014, the use of COMMBUYS by municipal organizations has increased each year. Many cities and towns across the Commonwealth are experiencing cost and time saving benefits, choosing to make COMMBUYS a central part of their procurement process. To learn more about purchasing goods and services with COMMBUYS, contact our Local Government Enablement team at COMMBUYSenablement@mass.gov.

Municipal Activity in COMMBUYS

More than 96% of Massachusetts' cities and towns have registered in COMMBUYS.

129 Municipal Organizations have made purchases in COMMBUYS from March 2014 through June 2018 totaling \$31.5M.



- Municipalities have posted 9,211 bid notices since COMMBUYS launched in March 2014.
- Municipal purchases in COMMBUYS increased nearly 50% from FY17 to FY18.

TOP 10 MUNICIPAL PURCHASERS IN COMMBUYS*

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 City of Lawrence | 6 City of Fitchburg |
| 2 Town of Nantucket | 7 Town of Saugus |
| 3 Town of Needham | 8 City of Quincy |
| 4 City of Everett | 9 Malden Housing Authority |
| 5 City of Malden | 10 City of Haverhill |

*by count of purchase orders as of June 30, 2018

STATEWIDE CONTRACT UPDATES | AUGUST 2018

[Procurement
Schedule](#)

[Statewide Contract
Reference Guide](#)

[COMMBUYS](#)

[Statewide Contract
User Guides](#)

[Save\\$mart](#)

Commercial-Grade, Zero-Emission Landscaping Equipment on Statewide Contract

Attend a Learning Session, Discover the Advantages!

The Operational Services Division recently added commercial-grade, zero-emission mowers, blowers, and other handheld landscaping equipment to the [FAC88](#) Statewide Contract, offering sustainable alternatives to gas-powered equipment, along with rugged construction and durability.

Knowing that electric battery equipment options may be new to many buyers, OSD and [Quiet Communities](#) are hosting buyer learning sessions in late September (details below). Participants can expect to walk away from these sessions with an appreciation of the quality and viability of these options, together with facts and resources to make informed buying decisions on behalf of their organizations.



Explore a New Path!

Commercial-Grade Electric Battery Lawn Equipment

Strict Quality Requirements:

*Rugged Construction & Durability
Zero Toxic Emissions
Zero Greenhouse Gases
50% Less Noise
No Fuel Spillage
Negligible Fuel Costs
Less Maintenance
No Soil or Water Pollution*

Learning Session Agenda

- Benefits of new technologies;
- Clean, quiet, sustainable alternatives now available on Statewide Contract;
- Organizations that lead by example;
- What it takes to start the transition;
- Try out new technologies and speak with Statewide Contract Vendors;
- Learn how to calculate long-term savings and environmental impacts.

Register to Attend!

Cary Memorial Building Lexington, MA

Wednesday, September 26, 2018

9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Register: <https://conta.cc/2LSvmt4>

Tower Hill Botanic Gardens Boylston, MA

Thursday, September 27, 2018

9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Register: <https://conta.cc/2KnPpdz>

Thank you to the Town of Lexington and the Tower Hill Botanic Garden for providing their facilities for these events! We hope to see you there!

Send questions to [Julia Wolfe](#), Director of Environmental Purchasing, at 617-502-8836.

COMMBUYS

Help Desk Assistance

Questions about COMMBUYS?
Contact us for help.

1-888-627-8283

COMMBUYS@mass.gov

Staff are available
8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET,
Monday through Friday.

Third Annual State Fall Fleet Event



Wednesday, October 3, 2018

From 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, MA

Register today!

statefleetbuyers.eventbrite.com



STATEWIDE CONTRACT UPDATES | AUGUST 2018

ITS63 Full Service and Niche Vendors — Offering Short-term IT Staff Solutions Now Featuring More than 80 Vendors!

Statewide Contract [ITS63 for IT Staff Augmentation](#) fills short-term personnel gaps, bolsters staffing for rollouts and special projects, and provides expertise that you may not have in-house. Describe the skills and experience you require and let our more than 80 vendors locate candidate résumés and references for your inspection.

Here are some ways we can help...

- Expertise in Accela, Java, LexisNexis, Peoplesoft, Tableau, and Websphere, among others;
- Software Application/Web Development;
- Technical Documentation;
- System/Network/Database Administration;
- Business Analysis; and
- Project Management.

Contract Resources

- Find contract resources as an attachment in [COMMBUYS](#):
 - Request résumés: Job Specification Template;
 - Locate vendor names/emails: Vendor Listing Spreadsheet; and
 - Pricing information: Rate Cards.
- Niche services detailed in the [Contract User Guide](#) on p. 13;
- All vendors offer a 5% Prompt Pay Discount for payments made within 30 days.

Eighteen vendors have been added to Category 1 and five to Category 3.

COMMBUYS Users: If you clone bids created before the additional vendors were added, new vendors will not receive notice of or have access to the cloned bids.

Non-COMMBUYS Users: Locate the comprehensive Vendor Listing in [COMMBUYS](#).

Speak with Marge MacEvitt, Contract Manager, if you have questions about how to use this contract: marge.macevitt@mass.gov or 617-720-3121.

New Purchasing Agent Brings COMMBUYS to Andover

When Theresa (Terri) Peznola transitioned to her new job as Purchasing Agent in the Town of Andover, she brought her experience and extensive knowledge of COMMBUYS with her. Having successfully implemented COMMBUYS in the Town of Saugus, she was eager to duplicate the time and cost-saving benefits in Andover.

“It actually came up during my job interview,” Terri said, “Andover was considering COMMBUYS, so they were pleased to learn I had so much experience using the platform.”

Terri hit the ground running in Andover. “The first person I called was [Local Government Enablement Account Manager] Jenn Forsey.” Together, they scheduled a series of training sessions for staff from various departments in the town. A total of 16 staff members attended COMMBUYS training within Terri’s first month on the job. Terri’s explanation for the enthusiastic response: “The time you save by using COMMBUYS, eliminating the need to go out to bid for everyday purchases, transforms your work day. Our people really value that.” In addition, the town’s leadership has been strongly supportive of COMMBUYS, contributing to the widespread adoption by staff.

When asked why she first started using COMMBUYS, Terri quickly responded, “Why wouldn’t you?” She went on to say, “As municipal procurement professionals, we have an obligation to our constituents to purchase high-quality items from responsible vendors at the best value. COMMBUYS and Statewide Contracts enable you to fulfill that obligation, and do so in less time.”

Terri accepted the Andover position in April, facilitated the town’s first COMMBUYS purchase in June, and, as of August, Andover ranks fourth in COMMBUYS purchasing activity for municipalities in Fiscal Year 19!

If you would like to learn more about implementing COMMBUYS in your city or town, please contact the Local Government Enablement Team at COMMBUYSEnablement@mass.gov.



Terri Peznola (right)
Purchasing Agent, Associate
MCPPO for the Town of
Andover, pictured with Local
Government Enablement
Account Manager Jennifer
Forsey.

COMMBUYS PunchOuts Save Time



Experience the convenience of online shopping with COMMBUYS PunchOut Catalogs!

What's a PunchOut? Statewide Contract Vendors representing a variety of industries have worked with the Commonwealth to set up dedicated online shopping sites that display their contract products along with Statewide Contract pricing. Thirty-one vendors currently have PunchOut catalogs that collectively offer maintenance, repair, and operations items, vehicle parts, office supplies, medical commodities, homeland security equipment, computer supplies, and more.

Searching in PunchOuts is simplified, as navigation features are designed by the vendor with their products in mind. Although functionality varies from PunchOut to PunchOut, requesting quotes and easily converting quotes to orders is another way this type of purchasing may save time. PunchOut users also value being able to create favorites lists. Delivery times may be expedited as buyers place orders directly in the vendor's system, which are poised for delivery. Many vendors offer PunchOut navigation guides that acclimate buyers to their website's features; find these guides as an attachment to the vendors' MBPOs in COMMBUYS.

Learn More

See a [consolidated view](#) of our PunchOut catalogs.

Locate the [PunchOut catalog job aid](#).

Find [Statewide Contract User Guides](#).

Contact the COMMBUYS Help Desk:

- COMMBUYS@mass.gov
- 888-MA-State (627-8283)

It takes about
3-4 minutes to
complete a
PunchOut order in
COMMBUYS.

More than 50,000
PunchOut orders
totaling more than
\$34 million have gone
through COMMBUYS!

Check it out!
31 PunchOuts
span a wide range
of products.

If you're a
registered buyer,
you're PunchOut
eligible.

Click here to
see your
PunchOut
options.

Two clicks and go!
Once logged into
COMMBUYS, select
the gear icon and
G2B to get started.

PunchOut Tips for Optimal Purchasing

Turn off pop-up blockers.

Use robust browsers, such as
Chrome or Firefox.





[Sign-up for other email communications!](#)

About OSD

The Operational Services Division (OSD) administers the procurement process for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Agencies by establishing Statewide Contracts for commonly purchased goods and services. OSD's mission is to create and promote dynamic programs and services that anticipate and fulfill our customers' needs. Our operational and oversight activities facilitate and guide the evaluation, acquisition, management, and disposition of goods and services. We strive to deliver a personalized customer experience by creating a climate of communication and cooperation and leveraging innovative business techniques.

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COMMBUYS



COMMBUYS Helpful Hints: Guidance for Vendors and Buyers

Successful Quote Submissions

Before buyers may consider quotes, they must be submitted correctly in COMMBUYS by vendors. One essential step in that process concerns the **No Bid** check box on the **Items** tab.

We encourage both vendors and buyers to follow these quick tips in support of successful COMMBUYS quote submissions.

Vendors	<p>Uncheck the No Bid box on the Items tab for each item you are quoting and enter the Unit Cost.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- or -</p> <p>Select the No Charge box for each quoted item and upload price information as an attachment.</p> <p>Use the Create a Quote in COMMBUYS job aid to navigate the COMMBUYS quote submission process or sign up for COMMBUYS Training.</p>
Buyers	<p>When posting your bid, include the Create a Quote in COMMBUYS job aid with your bid documents.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">- and -</p> <p>Set Bid Opening Dates/Times during lower call volume periods at the COMMBUYS Help Desk – Tuesday through Thursday, 4 p.m. or earlier – to ensure staff may support last-minute inquiries from vendors.</p>

Password Guidance

If you have forgotten your login credentials, COMMBUYS offers a self-service option. On COMMBUYS.com, select **Sign In** followed by the **Login Assistance** link. On the **Login Help** page, select either **Forgot User ID** or **Forgot Password** and click **Continue**. Users will receive the requested information via email.

Vendors	<p>Seller Administrators may reset passwords for other Sellers within their business organization by accessing the Maintain Users icon under the Seller Administrator tab.</p>
Buyers	<p>Organization Administrators may reset passwords for all users within their organization by selecting the Maintain Agency Users icon.</p>

Please note: Though users may be prompted to save their COMMBUYS password within their browser, this is highly discouraged. COMMBUYS users will be prompted to change their COMMBUYS password every 60 days and will experience difficulty updating their COMMBUYS password if saved in their browser.

Still have questions? Reach the COMMBUYS Help Desk, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., at COMMBUYS@mass.gov or 888-MA-State (627-8283).

Upcoming Outreach Event

Don't miss the annual [Supplier Diversity Networking Event](#) co-sponsored by Northeastern University's Procurement Services department and OSD's Supplier Diversity Office on Wednesday, August 22, 2018, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Northeastern University, Curry Student Center, 360 Huntington Avenue in Boston. Network with procurement professionals from Boston area colleges, universities, cultural organizations, and hospitals, as well as local and state government agencies that may have diversity requirements for the procurement of goods and services. [Register Today!](#)