

RFP 20-07: District Wide Cabling Equipment and Services Executive Summary

Purpose

The purpose of solicitation RFP 20-07 is to procure professional services from an experienced, highly qualified and capable provider to supply, configure, install, and maintain a structured cabling system in all 134 schools and administration locations in the Wide Area Network within DCSD on an as needed basis. It is expected that the Awarded Offeror will provide services in accordance with the specifications, requirements and terms and conditions stated within the solicitation. Services shall include all equipment, labor, materials, tools, specialized equipment, supplies, trained personnel, insurance, travel and per diem, direct and indirect administrative costs, overhead, any other charges, and all things and services necessary to provide a complete turn-key solution.

Background and Process

The evaluation team was made up of seven staff persons in the Division of Information Technology, with five representing Enterprise Services (Manager, 1-Wireless Engineer, 2-Information Security Officers, and 1-Telecommunications Engineer) and two representing the Project Management Office (Manager and 1-Project Manager).

The RFP was written and submitted for approval in December 2018 and was published for two weeks in February 2019. Electronic notifications were sent to 15 vendors from the DCSD Vendor Bid List and 1742 vendors through the State of GA Procurement Registry. In March 2019, four vendors responded to the RFP, deemed responsive, and were evaluated.

Evaluation Results

After conducting an initial and summative evaluation of how well each of the 4 possible choices could meet the 3 major criteria considered, Core Technologies, Inc. possessed the highest score.

The 4 choices considered were:

- Core Technologies, Inc.
- GC & E Systems Group, Inc.
- Integrated Communication Networks (ICN), Inc.
- PearlNet LLC

The criteria used to evaluate the options and their weightings were:

- Cost – 45%
- Ability to Execute – 35%

Ability to Provide a Complete Solution to DCSD – 20%

Core Technologies, Inc., GC&E Systems Group, Inc., and Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. were all considered to be leading candidates. Cost was overwhelmingly the most significant factor leading to Core Technologies, Inc. receiving the highest score over GC & E Systems Group, Inc., Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. and PearlNet LLC.

The question of "RFP 20-07 District Wide Cabling Equipment and Services" was evaluated by means of a decision table.

	Cost			
		Ability to Execute		
			Ability to Provide a Complete Solution	
Core Technologies, Inc.	9.45	6.43	7.00	7.90
GC & E Systems Group, Inc.	8.12	7.00	5.00	7.10
Integrated Communication Networks, Inc.	6.39	8.07	7.00	7.10
PearlNet LLC	4.69	7.47	7.00	6.13

Decision Table for RFP 20-07 District Wide Cabling Equipment and Services

Cost Evaluation

RFP 20-07 Cost was evaluated by means of a decision table.

	Data Drop (Cat6)					
		Internal Fiber				
			Trip Charge			
				7' Cabinet		
				48 Port Patch Panel (Cat6)		
						Summary
Core Technologies Inc	125.00	3129.00	75.00	1575.00	110.00	9.45
GC & E Systems Group, Inc.	178.25	2553.49	45.00	2235.95	268.31	8.12
Integrated Communication Networks, Inc	225.00	2560.87	100.00	1991.36	525.00	6.39
PearlNet LLC	268.77	3713.04	120.00	2348.13	533.88	4.69

The criteria used to evaluate the choices and their weightings were:

- Data Drop (Cat6) – 70%
- Internal Fiber – 10%
- Trip Charge – 9%
- 7' Cabinet – 7%
- 48 Port Patch Panel (Cat6) – 4%

Weightings were the result of calculations of anticipated spending over the next 5 years. Known future projects and historical data were used as the basis for the projections. Cost entered in the Internal Fiber category is the sum of several fiber related cost items from the Cost Table. All other categories come directly from the Cost Tables. Only items expected to represent 2% or greater of anticipated spending were used in the evaluation.

For the decision of RFP 20-07 Cost, the top options were:

- Core Technologies Inc.
- GC & E Systems Group, Inc.

Comparisons among Choices

Core Technologies Inc. versus GC & E Systems Group, Inc.

Core Technologies Inc. was considered to be a better choice than GC & E Systems Group, Inc. in 3 of the 5 criteria considered. Of these, the critical factor was: Data Drop (Cat6)

After a careful evaluation of each option, Core Technologies Inc. appears to be the best choice based on Cost.

Ability to Execute Evaluation

RFP 20-07 *Ability to Execute* was evaluated by means of a decision table.

	Experience with Organizations comparable to DCSD					Summary	
		Prior Experience with DCSD			Warranty		
			References	Technical Capability			
Integrated Communication Networks, Inc.	7.00	9.00	7.00	9.00	9.00	8.07	
PearlNet LLC	7.00	7.00	7.00	9.00	7.00	7.47	
GC & E Systems Group, Inc.	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	
Core Technologies, Inc.	4.00	7.00	7.00	7.00	9.00	6.43	

The criteria used to evaluate the options, and their weightings were:

- Experience with Organizations comparable to DCSD – 21%
- Prior Experience with DCSD – 21%
- References – 21%
- Technical Capability – 21%
- Warranty – 6%

Prior Experience with DCSD was the most significant factor leading to the choice of Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. over PearlNet LLC and GC & E Systems Group, Inc.

Experience with Organizations Comparable to DCSD was the most significant factor leading to the choice of Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. over Core Technologies, Inc. Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. was the leading choice by a substantial margin.

Comparisons among Choices

Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. versus PearlNet LLC

Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. was considered to be a better choice than PearlNet LLC in 2 of the 5 criteria considered. Of these, the critical factor was *Prior Experience* with DCSD. The reason Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. received a rating of Excellent for *Prior Experience* with DCSD was Integrated Communication Networks has been a valuable partner with DCSD, earning it a rating of 9 points.

PearlNet LLC versus GC & E Systems Group, Inc.

PearlNet LLC was considered to be a better choice than GC & E Systems Group, Inc. in 1 of the 5 criteria considered, *Technical Capability*. The reason PearlNet LLC received a rating of Excellent for *Technical Capability* was PearlNet provided employee certifications demonstrating its technical capability.

GC & E Systems Group, Inc. versus Core Technologies, Inc.

GC & E Systems Group, Inc. was considered to be a better choice than Core Technologies, Inc. in 1 of the 5 criteria considered, *Experience with Organizations Comparable to DCSD*.

After a careful evaluation of each option, Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. appears to be the best choice based on Ability to Execute.

Extended Discussion of Options

Integrated Communication Networks, Inc.

- Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. was judged Excellent in the matter of *Prior Experience with DCSD*. ICN has been a valuable partner with DCSD, earning it a rating of 9 points.
- Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. was judged Excellent in the matter of *Technical Capability*. They provided employee certifications demonstrating its technical capability.
- Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. was judged Excellent in the matter of *Warranty*. ICN's proposed warranty exceeded the 20-year warranty specified in the RFP.

PearlNet LLC

- PearlNet LLC was judged Excellent in the matter of *Technical Capability*. PearlNet provided employee certifications demonstrating its technical capability.

GC & E Systems Group, Inc.

- GC&E earned nominal scores across all criteria.

Core Technologies, Inc.

- Core Technologies, Inc. was judged Fair in the matter of *Experience with Organizations Comparable to DCSD*. The references provided by Core Technologies did not demonstrate experience with organizations similar in size to DCSD. Additional information was provided in the Company Profile regarding their experience with 11 smaller districts in Georgia.
- Core Technologies, Inc. was judged Excellent in the matter of *Warranty*. Core Technologies' proposed warranty exceeded the 20-year warranty specified in the RFP.

Ability to Provide a Complete Solution to DCSD Evaluation

RFP 20-07 Ability to Provide a Complete Solution to DCSD was evaluated by means of a decision table.

	Project Management			
		Concurrent Installations		
			Ordering and Installation	
Core Technologies, Inc.	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
Integrated Communication Networks, Inc.	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
PearlNet LLC	7.00	7.00	7.00	7.00
GC & E Systems Group, Inc.	3.00	7.00	7.00	5.00

The criteria used to evaluate the options, and their weightings were:

- Project Management – 50%
- Concurrent Installations – 25%
- Ordering and Installation – 25%

The top options were:

- Core Technologies, Inc.
- Integrated Communication Networks, Inc.
- PearlNet LLC

Project Management was the most significant factor leading to the choice of these companies over GC & E Group.

Comparisons among Choices

Core Technologies, Inc., Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. and PearlNet LLC versus GC & E Systems Group, Inc.

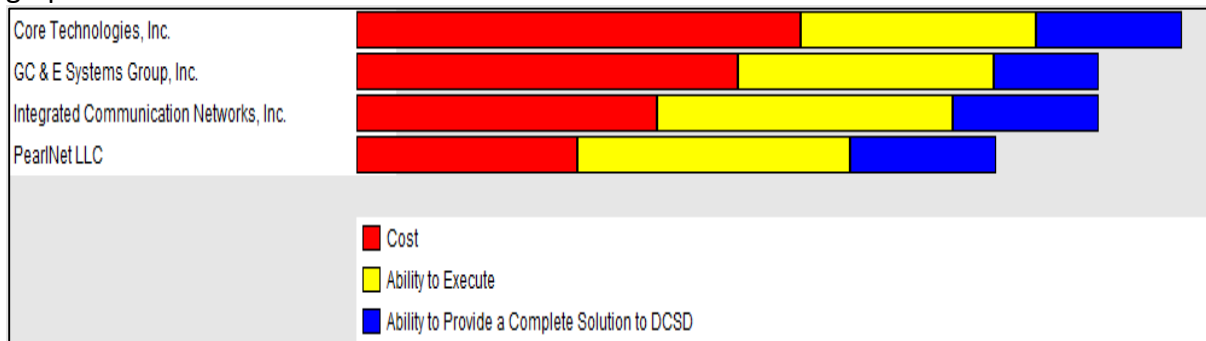
GC & E Systems Group, Inc. was judged Poor in the matter of Project Management. GC & E did not address Project Management in their proposal earning it a minimal rating of 3.

After a careful evaluation of each option, Integrated Communication Networks, Inc., Core Technologies, Inc. and PearlNet LLC are equally good choices based on Ability to Provide a Complete Solution to DCSD.

RFP 20-07 District Wide Cabling Equipment and Services - Final Selection

Comparisons among Choices

Relative strengths of the various choices in each of the factors is illustrated in the following graph:



Relative Strengths

Core Technologies, Inc. versus GC & E Systems Group, Inc. and Integrated Communication Networks, Inc.

- Core Technologies, Inc. was considered to be a better choice than Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. in 1 of the 3 criteria considered, *Cost*.
- Core Technologies, Inc. was considered to be a better choice than GC & E Systems Group, Inc. in 2 of the 3 criteria considered, *Cost and Ability to Provide a Complete Solution to DCSD*.

Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. and GC & E Systems Group, Inc. versus PearlNet LLC

- Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. was considered to be a better choice than PearlNet LLC in 1 of the 3 criteria considered, *Cost*.
- GC & E Systems Group, Inc. was considered to be a better choice than PearlNet LLC in 1 of the 3 criteria considered, *Cost*.

Extended Analysis

Core Technologies, Inc.

Core Technologies, Inc had the highest overall score due to their very aggressive pricing. On the contrary, they **scored lowest in the area of *Ability to Execute* due to their failure to provide any K-12 references or references comparable in size to DCSD.** While the pricing is attractive, it

left the evaluation team questioning if they could deliver a quality product at the pricing level quoted.

GC & E Systems Group, Inc.

GC & E also had attractive pricing and an average score in Ability to Execute. DCSD has had very limited experience with GC & E as a security vendor, but not as a cabling vendor. That experience neither earned it additional points nor subtracted points under the Prior Experience with DCSD category. GC & E did not address the project management processes. DCSD is a very large organization with numerous and complex projects. Lack of project management processes will certainly negatively impact the ability to meet deadlines and produce a quality product that meets stakeholder needs. **By not addressing their Project Management processes, GC & E fell last in the category of *Ability to Provide a Complete Solution to DCSD*.**

Integrated Communication Networks, Inc.

Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. (ICN) ranked third in cost, but was the highest ranked company in *Ability to Execute*. In their 23 years of providing cabling services to DCSD, ICN has proven itself to be a valuable partner. When it comes to meeting the needs of systemic school readiness at the start of each school year, ICN has been a workforce multiplier for the Information Technology Division, supporting the cabling of portable classrooms and repairing damaged network drops. Cabling is their core competency and ICN technicians have acquired detailed knowledge of DCSD buildings, further increasing their value and efficiency beyond mere cost. ICN has proven its ability to manage and support large projects in a school district the size of DCSD.

PearlNet LLC

PearlNet LLC had the highest overall cost and was ranked second in *Ability to Execute*. Along with Core Technologies and Integrated Communication Networks they had a nominal score in *Ability to Provide a Complete Solution to DCSD*.

Conclusion

While Core Technologies, Inc. scored highest in the evaluation process, there are serious concerns among the Evaluation Committee over their *Ability to Execute*. When compared to the other responses, the huge variance in cost raised concerns with the committee as well.

After a careful evaluation of each option and all of the previously mentioned key factors, Integrated Communication Networks, Inc. was chosen as the best choice for RFP 20-07 District Wide Cabling Equipment and Services.