

# Doing Business Online with Government

A guide for suppliers to trade electronically with  
Commonwealth Government agencies.



November 2002

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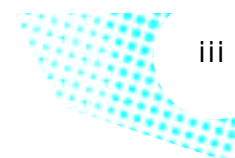
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## About this guide

This guide has been produced to assist suppliers trade electronically with Commonwealth Government agencies. It has been developed by the National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE) and a draft was released for public comment in June 2002. The guide highlights the benefits of trading electronically with Government and suggests how suppliers can get started doing business online. 'Trading electronically' in this context refers specifically to the purchase and sale of goods and services. It does not include other commercial transactions, such as payment for licences or lodgement of tax returns.

This guide covers the following phases of the Government procurement cycle:

- finding out about Government tenders
- responding to Government tenders electronically
- finding out about contracts awarded
- trading through online catalogues and e-marketplaces
- providing invoices electronically and invoiceless trading
- being paid electronically.

It also provides links to training resources and highlights relevant security and legal issues.

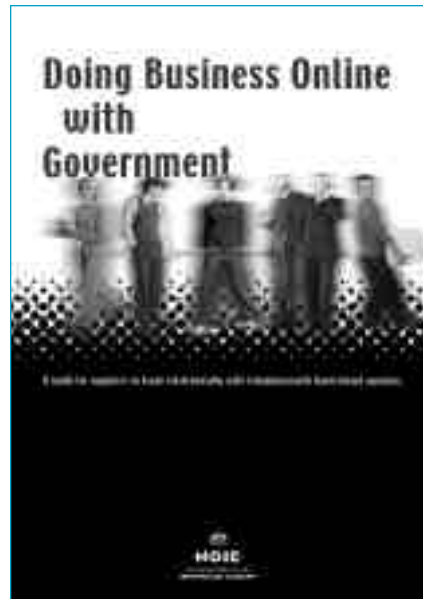
Useful e-commerce resources have already been developed by different organisations and this guide points to these wherever possible. NOIE is also preparing a general 'pathways' guide to e-commerce for small business for publication in late 2002.

This guide is intended to be of practical benefit to suppliers. If you would like to suggest improvements, or make any other comments, please contact:

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# Foreword

Over time, we have seen many ways of carrying out commercial transactions. In recent times, the development of the Internet and e-commerce has introduced a new means of buying and selling goods and services.

Increasingly, Commonwealth agencies are using e-commerce to do business online with their suppliers – reducing the red tape and inefficiencies of traditional paper-based trading. The Commonwealth Government seeks to be a leading user of online services and demonstrate the benefits of electronic trading to the wider community.

One of the key priorities of the Government is to encourage Australians' involvement with the information economy. Most Australian businesses are now online and using the Internet for some business processes. However, many small business suppliers are yet to fully capitalise on the new opportunities afforded by e-commerce.

The \$6.5 million Small Business Assistance package, announced by the Government in September 2001, is providing tools and information sources (such as this guide) which are intended for businesses wishing to embrace e-commerce.

The Government is also committed to ensure that its own services are available online. The Commonwealth has successfully met the Prime Minister's commitment that all appropriate government services be online by the end of 2001. A recent United Nations report, *Benchmarking E-government: A Global Perspective*, indicates that Australia has a solid transactional presence and is second only to the United States in leading the transition to e-government.

The benefits of e-government for Australian citizens and businesses are significant, with access to Government information and services now effectively available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. This provision of



world-class e-government services ensures that the opportunities offered by the Internet are available for the benefit of all Australians.

This guide has been developed by the National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE) to provide suppliers with advice and guidance on how to get started doing business online with Government.

I commend this guide to suppliers, and encourage them to fully explore the opportunities offered by e-commerce when doing business with Government.

SENATOR THE HON RICHARD ALSTON

Minister for Communications,  
Information Technology and the Arts

November 2002

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