

Sera Star Systems offers Federal Procurement Solutions for Companies Seeking to Maximize their Government Business



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CEOCFO Magazine

“Sera Star Systems helps companies maximize their government business and you want us on Your Team! We Fight to WIN and SUCCEED!”
- Lizanne Luchetti

CEOCFO: Ms. Luchetti, what is the focus at Sera Star Systems?

Ms. Luchetti: Sera Star Systems is an economically disadvantaged, woman-owned small business. We offer a variety of federal procurement solutions. Our focus is aerospace and defense - business development & strategic consulting, dealer & reseller to OEM's, and special projects- research & technology, etc. S3 helps large and small companies, either currently doing business with the federal government or wanting to learn how, strategically pursue or maximize their offerings inserted to the military marketplace. We facilitate relationships with our contacts and create winning teams. I often say we are “military matchmakers”- we just propel our customers forward.

CEOCFO: Why the decision to work directly at this point, or is it just a natural progression?

Ms. Luchetti: It has been a natural progression moving from the subcontractor role into the role of a Prime. There is a supplier diversity advantage that we can offer to meet contracting requirements- for companies and government agencies. S3 now has an IDIQ contract vehicle to connect our federal buying agencies with our industry partners and rapidly field commercial life-saving technologies to the warfighter.

S3 has been a subcontractor for many years to some major life support prime contractors; it is just recently that we have received a few prime contracts ourselves. We have a Phase II Navy Small Business Innovation Research project going on and are hoping to move into a Phase 3 commercialization effort in the next 18 months. Our team is also participating in the Navy's Small Business Technology Transition Program which gives guidance, training and education on how to turn a research and development project to a funded program of record for the Department of Defense.

CEOCFO: What do you understand about working with the government?

Ms. Luchetti: I understand that it can feel like an intimidating and daunting process for some (most)! That's where I realized the advantage that we offer—my team understands all different aspects of dealing with the government procurement process. Personally, I have been doing this for sixteen years. Starting out as an administrative assistant, I really absorbed everything that I could, and my roles and skillset naturally progressed. I love to learn.... and I continue to master acronyms.

It was not until about 2011, that I understood the diversity value an economically disadvantaged, woman-owned small business status presents. In 2019, Sera Star Systems has a comprehensive team of diverse professionals that offer a combined total 100+ years of relevant experience. I understand everything from contract requirements, bid & proposal process, funding and appropriations, programs of record, full life cycle support, project management, WAWF, GSA,

DFARS / FARS regulations, DCAA / DCMA compliance, and security and technology requirements. This is the career path I've chosen, so I can only continue to improve, grow and broaden my personal experience.

CEOCFO: *What types of companies have engaged with Sera Star Systems?*

Ms. Luchetti: We have some long-standing industry relationships with OMNI Medical Systems (AMXD – Advanced Mission Extender Device), Martin-Baker Aircraft (ejection seats), SkyRunner (light-sport aircraft), and SAFRAN and Zodiac Aerospace companies, and many others.

We have had the opportunities to be part of incredibly talented, and dedicated teams- and have seen technologies and ideas come to fruition and strengthen the warfighters' capabilities and protect our military. Doing business with the government can be a long process, so you must be in it for the long game. If you can understand the future payoff... all of the in-between is just the means to the long-term value in the end.

CEOCFO: *How will you decide what projects to bid on?*

Ms. Luchetti: It is about what feels right. I am a true believer that when I push the universe to force something, it pushes back. We monitor federal solicitations and RFI's daily and when we read an opportunity that piques our interest- we run with it. Whether it's in our wheelhouse, or not; ultimately, it's about being comfortable we can put together a team, evaluate level of effort, financial commitment... and this is something that my team and I really want to pursue. "Que será, será" Whatever will be, will be.

CEOCFO: *What have you learned since 2011 that allows you to do a better job today?*

Ms. Luchetti: I am a proud mom of 3 and an excellent multi-tasker. I've needed a flexible lifestyle to be my most productive self; learning to balance my roles and implement a culture that supports people like myself. My business model has naturally morphed into the trend that S3's core team is primarily made up of veterans and moms. By having the company's goal for roughly 80% of our work to be performed remotely, helps us to focus our investments and keep our overhead costs low. I've learned that a flexible work style encourages personal accountability and stronger morale.

Over the last 8 years, I have really learned to own and value my quirky traits that often don't "fit the traditional mold"; this has led to greater authenticity in my business relationships. I wouldn't say I was born an entrepreneur, but my curiosity to learn in-depth and absorb information has led me to wear many hats throughout the years. I have mastered many internal roles from accountant, IT department, office manager, human resources, and everything in between. I like to consider myself a "swiss-army-knife", being all the tools in one package. That approach has helped build a team of quality employees that all bring something different, and valuable to the table. Ultimately, I have just been hands-on in so many detailed aspects of this business; experiencing every role within this company has really led me to find my passion.

CEOCFO: *How do you reach out to potential new customers or clients for the Phase 1 of Sera Star Systems?*

Ms. Luchetti: Networking and continued engagement with industry. We have been longstanding members of the SAFE (Survival and Flight Equipment) Association, and we have established the DFW Metro Chapter of the SAFE Association and I am currently the President for the local chapter. SAFE hosts its annual industry event in Reno, in October, and S3 is seeking to support additional technologies or items that enhance the warfighter or military life support equipment.

We have begun reaching out to aerospace and defense contractors here in the Dallas / Fort Worth area. This strategy is going to be our approach over the next 6 - 8 months... to make industry introductions in our backyard and start connecting companies through the DFW Metro SAFE Chapter and see what kind of teams and partnerships we can build.

I recently started working with the SBA program and received a SCORE mentor. I am collaborating with the North Texas Small Business Development Center and other resources to help fill the gaps. In the coming months, I am strategically planning for S3 to move into a facility that can accommodate our projected needs; really to plant some roots in the community and see what kind of impact we can have for local economic development and growth.

CEOCFO: *What do you look for in your people?*

Ms. Luchetti: Curiosity would be first. A curious person naturally tends to be more of a problem solver, eager to understand and self- motivated. Initiative and excitement would be the other qualities. We really do get to play with some awesome toys sometimes... helmets, night vision goggles, light-sport aircrafts... I prefer enthusiasm to intimidation with the variety of equipment and products with which we work. Each employee must take individual ownership and accountability to handle his/her role, but team collaboration is imperative to collectively combine our strengths. I need people who can just go with the flow and jump into whatever project required at the time.

CEOCFO: *What surprised you as the business has grown and evolved?*

Ms. Luchetti: I've been surprised at just how many variables there are to oversee the daily operations, implement processes and procedures, technology protocols, finding team members that fit our culture. I can do it all; I just must find the balance. I have learned how to delegate; I am really learning how to be a teacher. It has been a great test along the way. Our evolution continues daily- but the perspective looking back at the past three years makes me very proud and drives me to push harder.

CEOCFO: *How is business today?*

Ms. Luchetti: It has been a tremendous and exciting year; I always have things that need to get done- which is a great problem to have. We are outlining our 5-year forecast and posturing the company to scale its operations. I am optimistic for the possibilities and relationships that lie ahead. I am enthusiastic to see what kind of team we can build and how we can locally expand our network and opportunities.

CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about the project you are working on now?*

Ms. Luchetti: Sera Star Systems is going to be a dealer / reseller for a wide variety of commercial off-the-shelf life support items to support the US Air Force Try-Decide-Buy (TDB) contract. This contract vehicle supports a wide array of solution possibilities, so we are working on growing our entire partnership base and onboarding new suppliers that can help us fill these requests when the orders come out.

The USAF TDB contract seeks to rapidly field and deploy Commercial-off-the-Shelf (COTS) items including, but not limited to: Uniforms, Cold Weather Clothing Systems, Visual Augmentation Equipment, Personal Protective Equipment, Helmets, Body Armor, Tactical Carriers, Individual & Survival Equipment, Lighting, Hydration, Air Crew Support Equipment, Communication & Electronics Test Equipment, Tactical Equipment, Load Bearing Equipment, Lethality Support Items, Boots, Gloves, Eye Protection, Egress Equipment, Aerial Insertion Equipment, Search & Rescue Equipment, Personnel Recovery Equipment, Medical Equipment, Bladder Relief Equipment, Power Management, etc.

CEOCFO: *Is it different parts of the Air Force that are requesting different things? How does it work?*

Ms. Luchetti: The answer is YES. Not only is this a contract vehicle open to different Air Force program offices, but its goal is to allow orders from other agencies (Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard) to also utilize this opportunity.

You can have a product you'd like to sell to the military; the agencies can have money in their budget to spend... but if there is not a "contract vehicle" in order to connect the buyer to the manufacturer, then it's more difficult to make sales. The USAF Try-Decide-Buy contract effort opens an umbrella-type opportunity of potential funding and opportunities to field commercially available industry solutions to the military user.

S3 is working to expand our supplier base, so when a FOPR (fair opportunity purchase request) is released, we can evaluate who we have relationships with, who has a product that is able to meet the requirements. We will initiate an RFI and RFQ with 48-hour bid turnaround requested. Our suppliers must understand that this contract requires rapid-response and rapid-fielding effort.

We want to partner with industry so that we can offer the latest and greatest technologies and solutions to the end-user.

CEOCFO: *Why pay attention to Sera Star Systems?*

Ms. Luchetti: Our mission is to enhance and strengthen the warfighter. Our success is measured by meeting the customer's strategic goals, needs and intended results. Our value is added through our "swiss-army-knife" approach to integrated solutions. Sera Star Systems helps companies maximize their government business and you want us on Your Team! We Fight to WIN and SUCCEED!

