

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

***** CONFIDENTIAL *****

MAINE NETBOOK PURCHASING CONSORTIUM

PREPARED FOR RELEASE JUNE 1, 2009

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDELINES.....	3
PURPOSE OF THE RFP	3
PROPOSAL SUBMISSION.....	3
ADMINISTRATIVE.....	4
CONTACT.....	4
DUE DATES	4
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS	4
PROPOSAL DETAILS.....	5
NETBOOK MODELS	5
NETBOOK SPECIFICATIONS.....	5
POWER	6
WARRANTY TERMS.....	6
SUPPORT.....	6
REPAIR PRACTICES	6
ASSET MANAGEMENT.....	7
OPTIONS.....	7
PURCHASE AND DELIVERY	8
SCOPE.....	9
NON-MNPC SCHOOL DISTRICTS	9
PURCHASING WINDOW	9
STAFF, STUDENTS, AND PARENTS.....	9

INTRODUCTION AND GUIDELINES

PURPOSE OF THE RFP

The Maine Netbook Purchasing Consortium (MNPC) is a collective of Maine K-12 school districts working to introduce financially sustainable laptop programs in our schools. The consortium includes, but is not limited to, the following Maine school districts: Brunswick, Bucksport, Easton, Erskine Academy, Foxcroft Academy, Islesboro, Lincoln Academy, Portland, RSU 1, Sanford, Scarborough, Waterville, Wells, Windham, Winslow, and Maine School Administrative Districts 17, 22, 35, 36, 41, 49, 52, 56, and 74.

The purpose of this RFP is to acquire competitive pricing and service offerings for a distributive large-scale netbook purchase. Given the financial state of flux for many school districts, the minimum purchasing commitments of MNPC represent only a portion of the potential netbook quantities. Expansion of the program to other school districts, students, and staff members is not only possible but likely. As such, proposals should represent pricing and service offerings aggressive enough to capture this potential business.

At present, the MNPC represents a committed purchase of over 3,000 netbooks. Depending on the pricing and upon state funding, MNPC represents a two to three year potential of no less than 10,000 machines, with significant room for aggressive growth.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Factors in the determination of the winning bid will include, but are not limited to the following: cost, service, value-add offerings, vendor track record, and program flexibility.

Though MNPC represents the collaborative effort of multiple school districts, it is not a single purchasing entity. Each participating school district will therefore make unit purchases from the winning vendor separately. Therefore, all bid proposals must be presented on a per-unit cost basis. Additional services and options must likewise be priced and presented.

MNPC reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all offers and discontinue this RFP process without obligation or liability to any potential vendor.
- Accept other than the lowest priced offer.
- Award a contract on the basis of initial offers received, without discussions or requests for best and final offers.

ADMINISTRATIVE

CONTACT

Any questions concerning technical specifications or proposal requirements must be directed to:

Name	Mike Dunn
Address	1570 Main Street, Suite 11, Oxford, ME 04270
Phone	207-743-8972
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DUE DATES

All proposals are due no later than 11:59PM on Sunday, June 14th, 2009. Any proposal received after this time and date will not be evaluated for award. Please note that electronic proposals by email are preferred but not required.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Event	Date
1. RFP Distribution to Vendors	June 1 st , 2009
2. Proposal Due Date	June 14 th , 2009
3. Target Date for Review of Proposals	June 15 th , 2009
4. Final Vendor Selection Discussion(s)--Week of	June 15 th , 2009
8. Anticipated decision and selection of Vendor(s)	June 22 nd , 2009

PROPOSAL DETAILS

The following section provides a breakdown of proposal deliverables and requested options. Participating vendors must bid on all required deliverables to be considered.

NETBOOK MODELS

MNPC has elected to restrict this proposal to three netbook models which we have evaluated extensively. Please note that each proposal should reflect only one of these models. Vendors may elect to submit a separate proposal for another model listed below, but each proposal is intended to stand on its own.

Proposals for all other brands will not be considered. New Asus, Dell, Lenovo, and Acer models which exceed specifications detailed below will be considered to prevent the exclusion of newly released technologies. The specified models are:

- Asus eeePC HE1000
- Dell Latitude 2100
- Acer Aspire One D150
- Lenovo S10-2

NETBOOK SPECIFICATIONS

The above Asus, Dell, Lenovo, and Acer models must meet or exceed the following specifications:

Specification	Requirement
Screen	10-inch, 1024x576 or higher resolution
Processor	Intel Atom N270
Memory	1GB 533MHz
Storage	160GB IDE Preferred, 20GB SSD Considered
Networking	10/100 Ethernet, Wireless 802.11g/n, Bluetooth (optional)
Ports	Three (3) USB 2.0 Ports, VGA-Out, Audio-Out
Audio/Video	Built-In Camera, Microphone, Speakers
Operating System	Linux or No Operating System Installed ¹
Power	AC Power Adapter, 6-Cell Lithium-Ion Battery ²

¹ Windows XP Pro and Windows XP Home must be offered as options; See the Options section.

² Battery specifications can be found under the Power section.

POWER

Battery life is critical to the function of any laptop in a K-12 school environment. As stated in the Netbook Specifications, a 6-Cell battery is a requirement of the bid proposal. This battery must be rated for a minimum runtime of six hours of continuous use. Bid proposals should specify milliampere hour (mAh) ratings for the battery being provided.

Batteries must furthermore be covered under the full length of the warranty and will be considered replaceable when they fall to 50% capacity. Details of these terms must be included in the warranty language.

It is expected that these netbooks will be functional and productive machines beyond the warranty period. Since AC power adapters and batteries have a tendency to deteriorate over time, it is expected that replacements or spares may be needed outside the warranty coverage. Therefore, vendors must guarantee a capped price for AC power adapters and batteries specific to the netbook model being bid on. This price may drop, but will never exceed the cost detailed in the vendor's proposal for a period of five years following the award.

WARRANTY TERMS

The terms of the warranty shall be a minimum one year with the option to extend to at least three years. Pricing for the warranty extension is expected to be extremely aggressive. Batteries and AC power adapters will be covered under the full-length of the purchased warranty whether it is for one year, three year years, or longer.

In addition, warranty terms must explicitly outline the manufacturer's dead-pixel policy for replacing the netbook display. It is expected that no dead-pixel policy will exceed three pixels.

SUPPORT

The warranty provider will supply purchasing districts with a direct second tier support phone line. This phone line will consist of upper-level support technicians capable of issuing repair authorizations for multiple cases at once, as needed. A support account manager or dedicated Maine support representative is greatly preferred but not required.

REPAIR PRACTICES

Terms of all repair practices must be detailed in the proposal. A local Maine depot or authorized service provider is preferred but not required. Warranty providers must specify a guaranteed turnaround time for any standard repair which should not exceed five business days. The definition of non-standard repairs should be outlined to provide clarification.

Warranty providers will be responsible for all shipping costs, both to and from the purchasing district. In addition, warranty providers are expected to provide shipping materials as needed.

ASSET MANAGEMENT

Due to the volume of machines and number of school districts involved with this proposal, the warranty provider is requested, but not required, to provide asset management via online web-interface or equivalent means. The purpose of this asset management interface will be to provide districts with a way to track machines specifically purchased by that district, check repair status and detail (components replaced, diagnostics performed, etc.), and view historical records for any machine which has undergone a repair. MNPC requests that this information be made available for the full duration of the warranty coverage and sent electronically to the district when the warranty expires. Ideally, each district would have an individual login to this asset management system so that each school's inventory would remain separate.

OPTIONS

Each school district participating in MNPC has plans to implement the technology in different ways and using different software. With this in mind, it is important for vendors to provide options which will suit these disparate needs.

Windows Licensing

First and foremost, Windows XP Professional and Windows XP Home must be options for any school district not planning to use a Linux distribution or planning to use existing OS licensing. Vendors should offer prices for optional Windows XP Pro or Windows XP Home upgrades which should be preinstalled on the netbooks prior to the customer receiving them. It is also preferred, but not required, that a Windows 7 Upgrade also be offered.

Imaging

Many school districts plan to install a customized Linux or Windows image on the netbooks. Vendors should therefore provide a price for imaging assistance. If a vendor requires a minimum number of units to be imaged in order to create a custom image, these details must be included in the proposal. Details for delivery of the image from the customer to the vendor must be provided. Pricing for imaging should be on a per-unit basis.

Leasing

While many districts intend to purchase netbooks outright, many would consider a leasing plan. Vendors are encouraged, but not required, to offer leasing options.

Warranty Related Options

As was previously stated, a warranty upgrade to a minimum of three years is a required option offering. In addition to this, vendors may elect to offer additional services such as anti-theft tracking systems and damage.

Other Options

Vendors may elect to offer additional options and services at their discretion. Anything which may separate one vendor from the others should be explicitly outlined.

PURCHASE AND DELIVERY

Due to the disparate nature of the MNPC, no minimum purchase will be imposed on any district participating in the purchase. This will allow smaller districts and those with smaller needs to participate only to the extent that their funding allows.

Furthermore, each district will place its order separately with the winning vendor using the agreed-upon proposal terms and pricing. No district will be accountable for another district's order.

With the large netbook quantities being proposed, it is expected that immediate delivery will be difficult, if not impossible for vendors and manufacturers to achieve. School districts, however, have limited time to prepare these machines for distribution prior to the school year. The awarded vendor, therefore, agrees to guarantee delivery of each district's full netbook order within eight weeks of the ordering date.

Please note that delivery costs, if applicable, should be included in the vendor's bid proposal.

SCOPE

This proposal represents a major paradigm shift in educational technology. Netbooks and similar affordably sustainable technologies will change the way technology tools are delivered to students and used on a day to day basis. MNPC represents only a small portion of the potential for future growth and any vendors/manufacturers who wish to establish a firm foothold in this emerging market would do well to act aggressively now.

NON-MNPC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

A number of other districts who have not actively been involved with MNPC are waiting to see the results of this proposal before deciding whether to pursue a similar strategy. This proposal will therefore not be limited in any way to MNPC school districts. Once the contract has been awarded, all Maine schools should be able to participate within the purchasing window detailed below.

PURCHASING WINDOW

To accommodate non-MNPC school districts as well as any additional purchases by member districts, the purchasing window for this proposal must remain open at least through December, 2009. Vendors may elect to allow purchases beyond this date or may choose to offer a replacement model with the same terms following this date, should a new model be released. Any replacement model after the December, 2009 window must meet or exceed the specifications outlined here.

STAFF, STUDENTS, AND PARENTS

While it is not required of the proposal, we encourage vendors to allow individual purchases for district staff members, students, and parents. It would be highly beneficial for individuals to have access to and purchase the same technologies being used in their school districts. This obviously represents a tremendous opportunity for growth. Vendors willing to open the purchase to individuals should detail the terms of purchasing in the bid proposal. Proof of school affiliation and all transaction details should be the purview of the vendor.