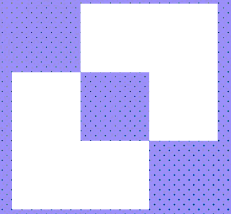


Executive Summary

Why do we lose multi-million-dollar bids?



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**Are you losing
multi-million-dollar
bids?**

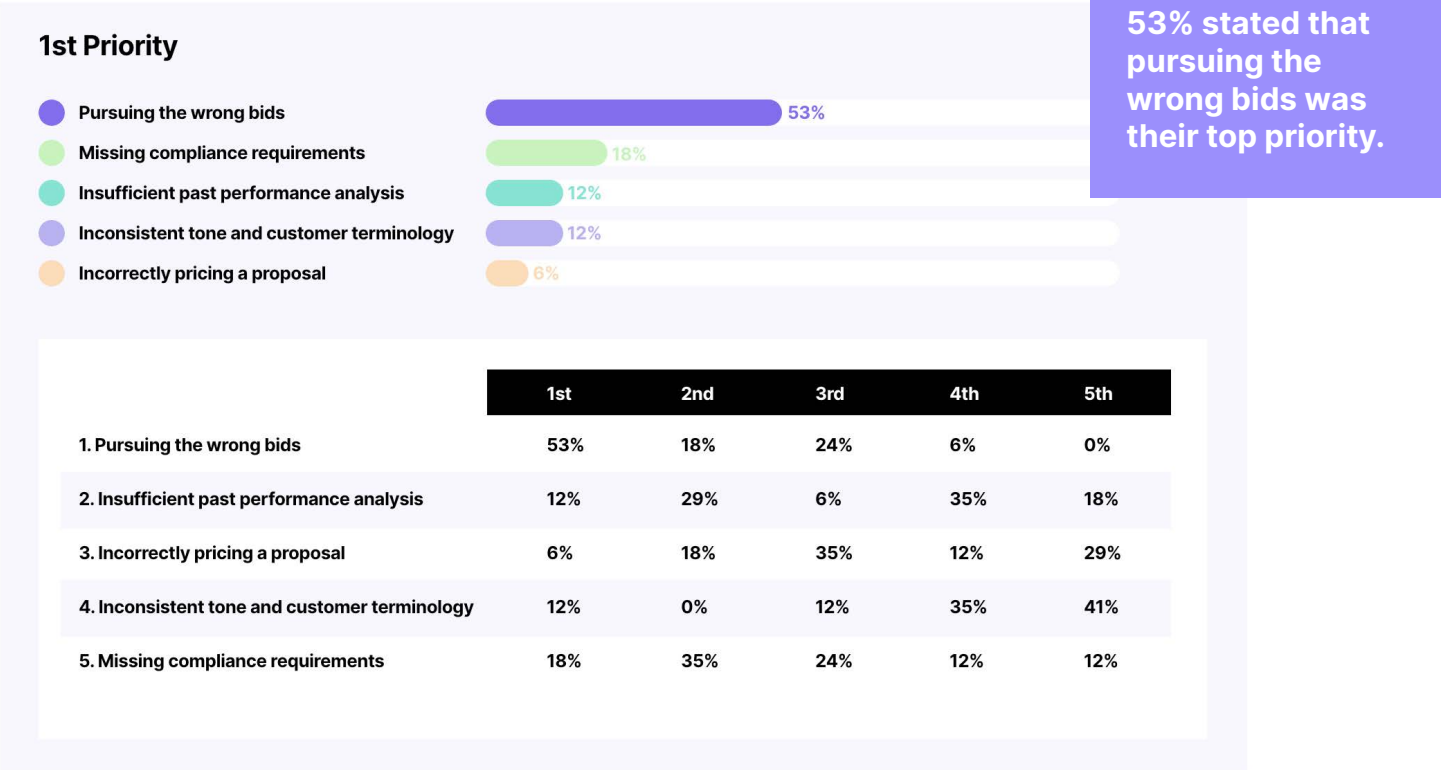


In our webinar [“Top 5 reasons for losing multi-million-dollar bids”](#), we explored the common reasons why organizations miss the mark and lose bids.

As part of our “Top 5 reasons for losing multi-million-dollar bids” webinar, we asked participants how they would rank the top reasons for losing bids. These were people in Business Development and Proposal Management roles. We asked them to rank these specific factors in order of importance:

- 1. Pursuing the wrong bids
- 2. Insufficient past performance analysis
- 3. Incorrectly pricing a proposal
- 4. Inconsistent tone and customer terminology
- 5. Missing compliance requirements

Seventeen (17) large organizations completed our survey. Here are the results:





The top 5 mistakes



1. Pursuing the wrong bids

There is nothing more frustrating than putting in many hours of work on a poorly qualified bid. This time equals valuable dollars wasted and opportunity cost when you and your team could have been putting those resources into other more suitable pursuits.

The solution

- Avoid a 'we bid on everything' culture, ask the right questions and revisit pursuit decisions as conditions change.
- You can avoid reputational hits and/or cost overruns by ensuring your organization has the capabilities and the resources to deliver.
- Cease "reflexive bidding" based on anecdotal assumptions and customer relationships only.
- Use data analysis to align your core competencies with the core requirements in the solicitation.

2. Insufficient past performance analysis

Past performance is where you show evidence of having performed related work in prior contracts.

But analyzing past performance of dozens or hundreds of past contracts is a time-consuming and tedious process. A lot of teams spend too much time searching through contracts that are not compelling or relevant to this pursuit.

The other challenge is that the search is a purely manual doc search using CTRL + F. And by its very nature, requires lots of time, and diligent search practices. Time that may not be available, so short cuts are common.

The solution

- Automating this analysis can speed up the ability to identify the most relevant contracts quickly.
- Within that contract, you can drill down into aspects like style references and Labour Category (LCAT) tables.
- Instead of having two documents up on separate screens to compare side by side or relying on historical knowledge, use an automated search approach to review a grid of documents including the pursuit itself.
- You also need to be able to compare multiple docs side by side using key concept density visualization.
- Use the customer themes and language in the solicitation to guide this analysis.



3. Incorrectly pricing a proposal

It is important that you deliver a competitively priced proposal. It is difficult and tedious to manually identify the requirements of a proposal. This can delay estimating kick-off, lead to underestimated costs and insufficient risk registers and reserves.

Sometimes pricing teams underestimate certain technical requirements as they are wrapped up in open-ended and often complex & dense language. This language can often “hide” multiple distinct requirements. Open-ended language including “tells” like “etc.” or “including” suggests a lack of a complete requirement. This leads to scope creep and price over-runs. And even if you win the contract, this will erode your profitability post-award.

The solution

- By automating you can quickly identify every requirement in one, or a range of documents.
- You can then sort those requirements into a reviewable, actionable format for estimators and functional teams.
- This actionable format allows teams to read through the requirements that pertain to them and get that output faster. This will result in better risk registers with a more balanced ‘goldilocks’ level of management and contingency reserves. And an improved BOE (Basis Of Estimates).

4. Inconsistent tone and customer terminology

Our survey ranked inconsistent tone of voice to be slightly less important. That said, when we talk with Proposal Managers especially, we know they burn a lot of time and energy during proposal cycles in an effort to achieve a uniform tone. We also see teams are overburdened.

Our own experience working with government contractors suggests that review for consistent tone and reiterating customer language happens too late in the proposal process. If the language is choppy and inconsistent, it can be hard to read for evaluators.

The solution

- Incorporate the customer’s language. There is a psychological element called “mirroring” that you can take advantage of by mimicking the customer’s language.
- Mirroring their language shows that you know the customer and are compatible with them in your approach.
- Run proposal volumes through a readability analysis to score them. This will pinpoint inconsistent tone-of-voice and different writing styles. You will deliver a consistent tone of voice when multiple authors collaborate on a proposal.



5. Missing compliance requirements

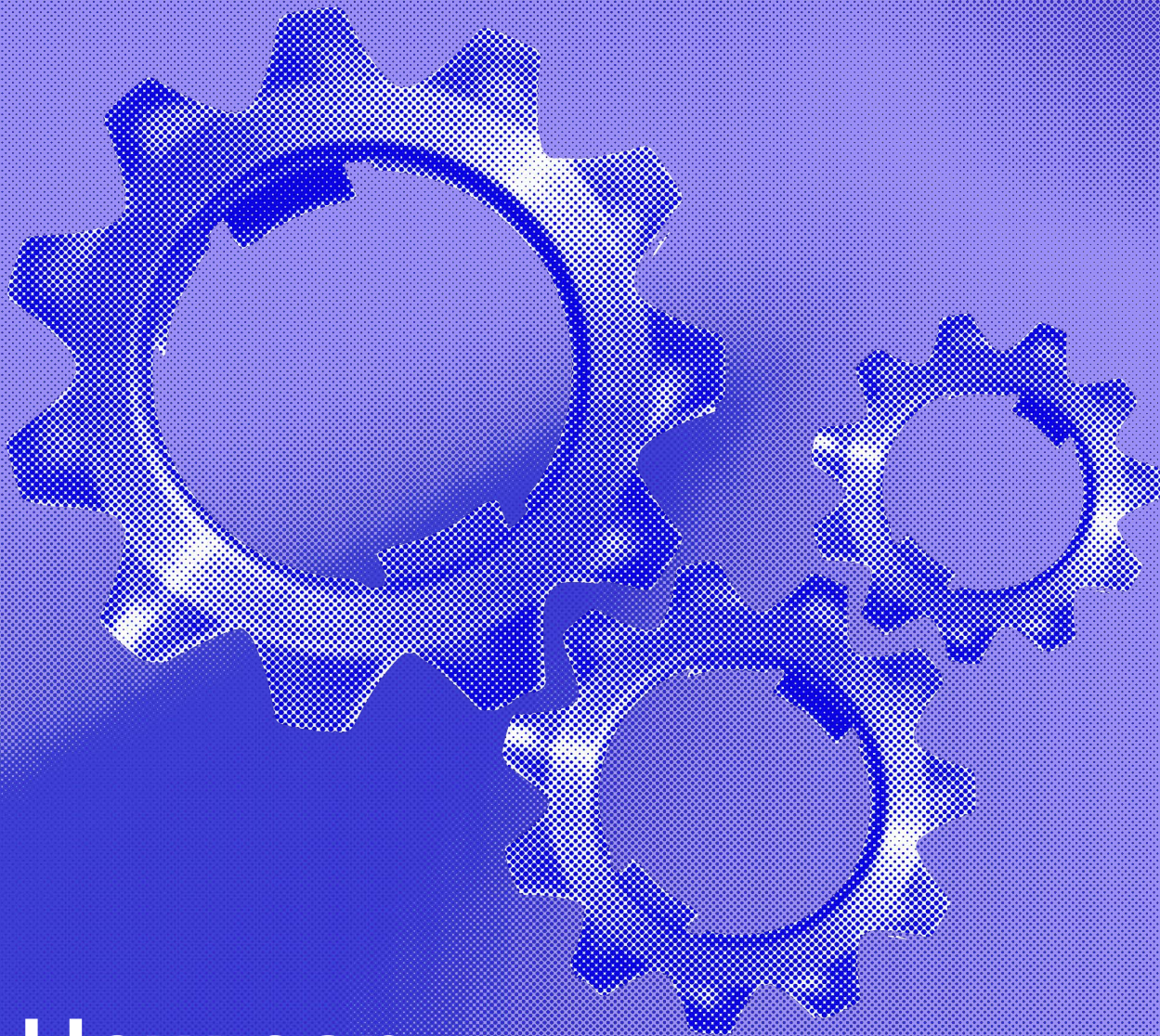
It may sound obvious, but delivering a non-compliant proposal leads to lost bids.

Yet when timelines are tight, manual reviews are the norm, and multiple document versions are flying around, it's easy to accidentally miss either technical or other requirements. Missing these compliance requirements can lead to delays and complications in the proposal process.

The solution

- Identify disqualifiers like cost accounting standards, set-asides, etc., early in the process.
- RFPs can change with amendments and Q&A periods. You want to be able to quickly highlight changes and flow them to the right teams. You also need to be able to assess scope impact for any changes.
- Flag and identify these requirements that require subcontractor flow down or action.





How can automation help avoid losses?



Automation can help the 5 problematic issues above. Here's how 2 organizations have made significant savings, and advancements since using VisibleThread in their proposal process.

85%

Of time saved

\$1 million

Saved per year



Their proposal and contract review teams have saved an average of 85% of time per proposal. And have saved \$1 million per year for 20 users of VisibleThread within their organization.

\$20m

Successful submissions

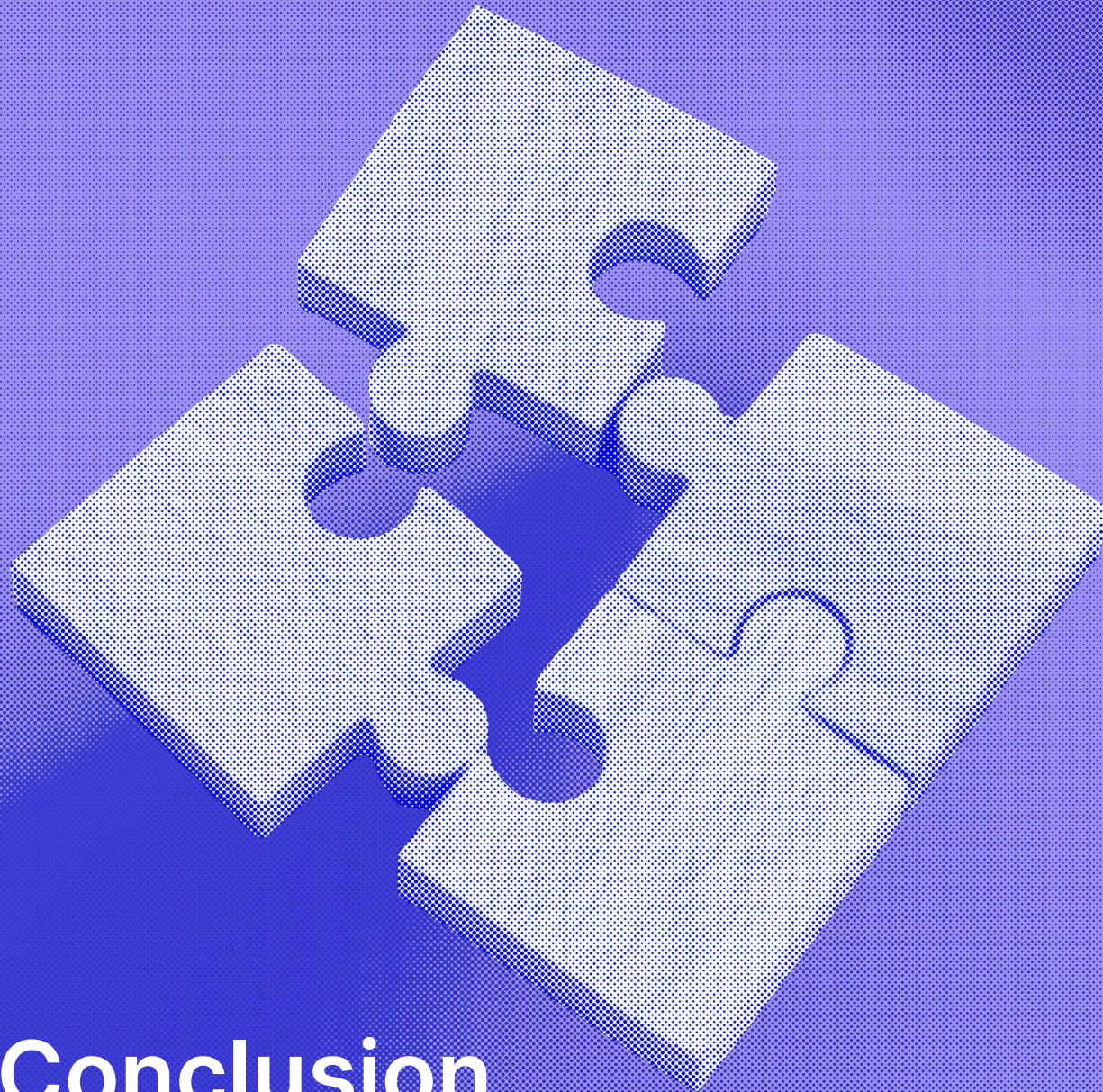
100%

QA Accuracy

BVTI

BVTI won a \$20 million contract after a successful on-time submission. They saved 18+ hours in the final critical week and achieved 100% accuracy during the final QA check.





Conclusion



Our survey respondents confirmed the priority of these 5 issues for losing bids.

There are tactics you can use to avoid these mistakes and increase your probability of winning more. Remembering these five key points when preparing a bid, you can increase your chance of winning and avoid these common mistakes.

Identifying the problem areas and equipping your teams with the right tools to solve these challenges allows you stay ahead of the game and win more. Leading global companies are applying automation to their processes. You should consider that too.

Here's an example of how AIRBUS averts these issues across their Program Management., Commercial Contracts, Legal, Engineering, Bid & Quality teams.

AIRBUS

Benefits from using VisibleThread

- ✓ Millions of \$ in savings
- ✓ Time savings of 480h per month
- ✓ Risk Mitigation
- ✓ Improved Compliance
- ✓ Improve Quality
- ✓ Single tone of voice

"Airbus saves between \$50k - \$100k per bid in the final proofreading stage of Proposal Responses."



André Zobolski,
Head of Commercial & Contracts for Space Systems
[AIRBUS Defence & Space](#)

[Read the Case Study](#)





Talk to us by mailing info@VisibleThread.com
to find out how you can avoid these mistakes.

To learn more about VT Docs, register for our
no-obligation live demonstration.

Live Demo

