



# How Contract Manufacturers use AMCA to Win Federal Contracts

*The DIY proven system to land \$100K–\$5M contracts from the government without costly consultants*

## SUMMARY

The step-by-step playbook that shows AMCA CERTIFIED manufacturers how to break into federal contracting, avoid the costly mistakes that eliminate most bidders, and dramatically increase their odds of winning profitable U.S. government contracts.

## Phase 1 — Get Registered Properly

### 1. Form Your Business Correctly

You need:

- EIN from the IRS
- Active LLC or corporation
- Business bank account
- Good standing with your state
- Basic accounting system

If you already operate commercially, you probably already have this done.

---

## **2. Get a UEI Number**

The federal government replaced DUNS with UEI.

Go here:

SAM.gov UEI Registration

<https://sam.gov/entity-registration>

You'll receive:

- UEI (Unique Entity ID)
- Federal registration profile

Cost: FREE

Note: Never pay anyone for SAM registration unless you truly can't complete a basic form.

---

## **3. Register in SAM.gov**

This is mandatory before bidding.

Official site:

SAM.gov

You'll need:

- EIN
- Banking info
- NAICS codes
- Business size info
- CAGE code assignment

\* SAM approval can take days to weeks.

---

## **Phase 2 — Set Up Your Contracting Foundation**

### **4. Create a Capability Statement**

This is your federal “resume.”

Keep it to ONE PAGE.

Include:

- Core machining capabilities
- Materials you work with
- Tolerances
- Equipment list
- Industries served
- Certifications
- UEI + CAGE code
- Contact info

Example sections:

- CNC milling
- CNC turning
- Prototype machining
- Tight-tolerance aerospace work
- ITAR-ready work
- Quick-turn production

Your Capability Statement matters A LOT. If you don't have one, you can have a professional one made for about \$150. Well worth the cost!

---

### **5. Get Important Certifications**

These increase trust and eligibility.

For defense/aerospace machine shops, the biggest are:

### **Important Certifications:**

#### **ISO 9001**

Baseline quality system.

#### **AS9100**

Huge for aerospace/defense manufacturing.

#### **ITAR Registration**

Needed if working with controlled defense-related technical data.

*Official:*

U.S. Department of State DDTC ITAR Registration

<https://deccs.pmdt.c.state.gov/deccs>

#### **CMMC / Cybersecurity Readiness**

Important for DoD contracts.

Start learning here:

*CMMC Official Site*

<https://dodcio.defense.gov/CMMC/>

\* Even small shops are getting cybersecurity flow-down requirements now.

#### **AMCA Certification**

AMCA is increasingly important because of its progress in being federally recognized as a quality framework. Further, AMCA was developed to increase the global competitiveness of American manufacturers aligning with the Buy American Act.

---

### **Phase 3 — Use FREE Government Assistance**

## **6. Contact Your Local APEX Accelerator**

Formerly PTAC.

This is probably the most important free resource.

They help with:

- SAM registration
- Bid matching
- Certifications
- Proposal help
- Compliance guidance
- Finding opportunities

Find yours:

APEX Accelerators Locator

<https://www.napex.us/locations/>

*\* This is the government-supported version of many expensive consultants.*

---

## **7. Use SBA Programs**

The SBA helps small manufacturers pursue contracts.

Official:

U.S. Small Business Administration Government Contracting

<https://www.sba.gov/federal-contracting>

Programs include:

- Woman-owned
- Veteran-owned
- HUBZone
- 8(a)
- Small disadvantaged business

Even if you don't qualify for set-asides, SBA advisors are still useful.

---

## **Phase 4 — Learn Where Contracts Actually Appear**

### **8. Search Opportunities on SAM.gov**

Federal contracts are posted here:

SAM.gov Contract Opportunities

<https://sam.gov/opportunities>

Search by:

- NAICS code
- Keywords
- Agency
- “Machining”
- “CNC”
- “Fabrication”
- “Prototype”
- “Blow Molding”
- “Tooling”

Focus first on:

- RFQs under simplified acquisition thresholds
- Small recurring machining jobs
- Subcontract opportunities

\* Do NOT start by chasing giant prime contracts.

---

## **9. Register With Prime Contractors**

\*\*\*This is one of the fastest ways in.\*\*\*

Big defense contractors constantly need machine shops.

Examples:

*Lockheed Martin Supplier Portal*

<https://www.lockheedmartin.com/en-us/suppliers.html>

*Raytheon Supplier Information*

<https://www.rtx.com/suppliers>

*Northrop Grumman Suppliers*

<https://www.northropgrumman.com/suppliers>

*General Dynamics Suppliers*

<https://www.gd.com/suppliers>

\*\*\*Small shops often enters federal work through subcontracting first.\*\*\*

That's normal and ideal.

---

## **What Actually Helps Win Contracts**

### **1. Fast Response Time**

Many RFQs go to the first competent vendor.

---

### **2. Strong Documentation**

Government buyers LOVE documentation.

Have:

- Inspection procedures
- Quality manual

- Material traceability
  - Calibration records
  - Delivery metrics
  - AI-driven production monitoring (AMCA can assist you).
- 

### **3. Tight Tolerances + Reliability**

Most government buyers care most about

- on-time delivery (C-PARS)
  - low defect rate (Show systems reports, if possible) especially AI.
  - responsiveness (reply quickly to the contracting officer)
  - reducing risk (Customer-performance ratings)
  - proof of performance, not just compliance (ISO + AMCA)
- 

### **4. Certifications**

AS9100 and cybersecurity maturity often matter more than salesmanship. AMCA is the added oversight government buyers need.

---

### **5. Start Small to win contracts much easier**

Target:

- \$2k–\$25k RFQs
- repeatable parts
- overflow machining
- emergency jobs
- prototype runs

Winning small contracts builds your CPARS/performance history.

---

## **Flags With Expensive Federal Contracting Consultants**

Be cautious if they:

- guarantee contracts
- pressure you into large retainers
- charge huge fees for SAM registration
- claim “inside access”
- sell expensive seminars with vague promises

Most of the *real value* in winning federal contracts comes from:

- compliance systems
- quality systems
- relationship building
- responsiveness
- manufacturing capability

—not from “secret” proposal tricks

---

## **Recommended Low-Cost Strategy**

### **Month 1**

- Register in SAM
- Build capability statement
- Meet local APEX advisor
- Identify NAICS codes

## Month 2

- Search SAM opportunities daily
- Register with primes
- Prepare quality documentation

## Month 3–6

- Pursue small RFQs
- Build past performance
- Improve certifications
- Work toward AS9100/ITAR/CMMC readiness

---

## The MOST IMPORTANT Thing to Understand

Most shops do NOT win because they hired a consultant.

They win because they:

- consistently deliver
- answer RFQs fast
- maintain quality systems
- become reliable vendors
- stay compliant (ISO, ITAR, AMCA, AS9100, etc)

**That's the real game in federal manufacturing.**

