

**Competition Management
Case Study: Must Win Competition
(Aerospace – Federal)**

Solutions
For A Highly Competitive
World

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Our client, a large division of a major defense contractor, was faced with a must win contract for the next generation fighter aircraft. The winner would dominate domestic and international fighter sales for the foreseeable future. Losing this contract would make maintain a fighter aircraft building capability very difficult. The development contract and resulting production units would make this the largest defense contract ever awarded.

SM&A joined the proposal team during the competitive contract phase when both competitors built prototype aircraft. At the time, our client was facing severe criticism for overrunning budgets and not performing on contractual requirements. We reformulated the win strategy and applied our competitive proposal processes to run all key milestone reviews and manage communication with the customer. Our proposal manager filled key proposal leadership positions with seasoned volume leads and subject matter experts. They conducted independent reviews and adopted a graphic-rich proposal style to better convey our client's themes and discriminators. Upon submission of the initial proposal, we implemented a disciplined process to answer customer questions and prepared the final proposal revision.

The result was a successful proposal and the largest contract in our client's history. In fact, the government surprised our client by actually signing the contract the same day as award. The contract documentation was in excellent shape and did not require the typical weeks or months of negotiation. SM&A was asked to stay on board to implement a QuickStart effort that would help the client get through the first customer reviews and transition the team from proposal to program. The effort was also awarded the Collier Trophy, the most prestigious award in the aircraft industry.