



# BCIS

Independent cost information  
for the built environment

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# 2009 BCIS eTendering Survey Report

*'The results of the survey are both encouraging and perplexing in equal measure. The supply of documents in electronic formats has grown, but the trend is to send them in the post. Having made a comprehensive web based e-tendering solution available to RICS members via a low cost pay-per-project service there is clearly an ongoing challenge to bring home the benefits to more clients and practitioners.'*

**Joe Martin, Executive Director BCIS**

## 1. Executive summary

In February 2009, BCIS conducted an eTendering Survey in conjunction with the RICS QS & Construction IT Business Group to update the information from a previous survey conducted in February 2006.

Web survey invitations were successfully delivered to 4669 UK partner/director and sole principal members of the Quantity Surveying and Construction Professional Group. 369 RICS members, 7.9%, responded to the Web survey.

This report compares the responses from the 2006 survey sample with the full 2009 survey sample and responses from members issuing 50 or more and 100 or more tenders per year. The key findings are:

- **Greater use of electronic document transfers:** The percentages of contract documents sent in electronic format only and in both electronic and paper formats increased substantially, while the percentage sent only in paper format decreased. The growth in electronic-only document transfers was pronounced in firms issuing larger numbers of tenders.
- **An increase in the use of physical media to distribute electronic tender documents:** The use of disks or other physical media increased, while the percentage sent via email fell, and there was little change in the percentage sent via Web based portals.
- **RICS members' sentiment toward e-tendering remains strongly positive:** 68% of responding members felt that the ability to tender projects by electronic means will enhance their service in the market place *to some extent*, a further 9% answered *greatly*.
- **Ongoing acceptance by the majority of responding members of the benefits of e-tendering:** Between 91% and 65% of members agreed with each of five key benefits associated with e-tendering: *lower administration costs/effort (printing, copying and distribution), better contractor access to information for sub-contractors, reduced effort in issuing clarifications, reduced timescale of tendering, and reduced effort in analysing tenders.*
- **Concern about the costs and clients' sentiment ranked highly:** The perceived costs associated with Web based e-tendering and perceived clients' lack of interest and unwillingness to bear the costs were the most highly ranked barriers to greater use of Web based e-tendering.
- **Almost half (47%) of responding members are aware of the RICS e-tendering solution and a further 22% requested information.** BCIS will continue its efforts to bring home the benefits of web based e-tendering and the RICS eTendering Solution to clients and practitioners. BCIS is convinced that Web based e-tendering minimises the administrative overheads associated with tendering, streamlines document handling, speeds up tender processes, eases the demands on managerial resources, provides added security and makes it easier to comply with best practice recommendations.

## 2. Introduction

The 2009 eTendering Survey is the latest in a series of BCIS investigations relating to e-procurement and electronic means of transferring information. In 2002, in conjunction with a Measurement Survey, BCIS conducted a small straw poll which suggested that 29% of Bills of Quantities were being distributed in electronic format and that it was fairly common to distribute tender documents in electronic format, but much less common for them to be returned in electronic format. A wider survey of UK practice was called for to verify current member practices.

In February 2006, in conjunction with the preparation of the *RICS e-tendering Guidance Note* by the RICS QS & Construction IT Business Group, BCIS undertook a Web survey of UK sole principal and partner/director members of the Quantity Surveying and Construction Faculty. Based on the findings of that 2006 survey, in conjunction with BravoSolution, BCIS launched the RICS eTendering Solution as a subscription service.

In February 2009, BCIS and the RICS QS & Construction IT Business Group repeated the original survey, largely unchanged, but with some alterations, omissions and additions. The objective was to assess how the e-tendering practices and sentiments of RICS members have changed. The results are reported in Section 4, but the additional comments offered by members in response to some questions are reproduced in two Appendices.

BCIS is grateful to the responding RICS members for their time and effort expended in completing the survey, or tendering their apologies. Their support is much appreciated.

### 3. The survey method and questions

An email inviting participation in an electronic Web survey was successfully delivered to 4669 partner/director/sole principal members of the Quantity Surveying and Construction Professional Group (*vs. 4000 in 2006*). The original survey email was sent on 26 January 2009 calling for responses by 6 February. A first reminder was sent on 3 February and a second reminder extended the response deadline to 13 February. The Web survey form asked for confirmation of the respondents details and posed the following questions (*the response options offered follow in parentheses*):

- For whom are you answering? (Whole firm, Single office, Myself)
- If answering for a firm or office, how many UK surveying staff will your responses reflect?
- For how many UK projects did you organise tenders in 2008?
- What percentage of the above UK projects were in the public sector?
- What percentage of the UK projects were subject to OJEU rules?
- What percentages of the contract documents sent as part of the tenders were distributed in the following ways?  
(*Electronic format only, Electronic and paper, Paper only*)  
Note: The 2006 survey posed separate delivery and response questions.
- What percentages of documents sent electronically to tenderers were distributed by the following means? (*Disk or other physical media, E-mail, Web based portal*)
- How often do your clients demand e-tendering? (*Often, Rarely, Never*)
- Would you be interested in using a web based tendering portal if the cost was similar to the cost of preparing and distributing hard copy tenders?  
(*Yes, No, and If not, why not?*)
- Please state if you agree or disagree with the following benefits attributed to electronic means of tendering? (*Strongly agree, Somewhat agree*)
- Will the ability to tender projects by electronic means enhance your service in the marketplace? (*Greatly, To some extent, Not at all*)
- Please rank the following issues as barriers to your firm's use of Web based e-tendering? (*Not important, Minor issue, Major issue, If other, please specify*)  
Note: The issues are reproduced in report Section 4.
- Per project, what would you expect to pay (*in £ Sterling*) to use a web based e-tendering service to send out and analyse the tender responses?
- Are you aware of the RICS eTendering solution? (*Yes, No, No, but I would like to be sent details*)
- Have you read the RICS e-tendering guidance note? (Yes, No)
- Would you like to be sent a link to the survey findings when they are published?  
(Yes, No)

## 4. The survey results

### Response profile

A total of 369 members, 7.9%, responded (vs. 298 or 7.4% in 2006). Together these responses represented more than 4406 staff, an average of about 12 staff per respondent (vs. 2754 staff, 9.2 per respondent, in 2006).

Members were asked whether they were responding on behalf of their whole firm, a single office or themselves. The response profile is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** For whom or what members were responding

Response category	Number	Percentage
Whole firm	203	55%
Single Office	70	19%
Myself (individuals)	94	26%
<i>Number of answers</i>		<i>367*</i>

\* 2 respondents did not answer the profiling question.

### Respondents' answers

The members' responses to the substantive survey questions are presented below under sub-headings corresponding to the questions.

#### **Q For how many UK projects did you organise tenders in 2008?**

In the past year, 343 respondents organised 9342 UK tenders, an average of 27 per respondent (vs. 25 in 2006). (Twenty-one respondents did not organise any tenders in the past year. Eight respondents did not answer this question.)

#### **Q What percentage of the above UK projects were in the public sector?**

On average, 26% of tenders were for public sector projects (vs. 31% in 2006). This equates to 3313 tenders.

#### **Q What percentage of the UK projects were subject to OJEU rules?**

On average, 12% of tenders were subject to OJEU rules (vs. 8% in 2006). This equates to 1529 tenders. So, the percentage of tenders subject to OJEU rules was 50% higher.

#### **Q What percentages of the contract documents sent as part of the tenders were distributed in the following ways?**

Considering all the responses, the average percentages of contract documents sent in electronic format only and in both electronic and paper formats increased substantially, while the percentage sent only in paper format decreased.

In Table 2, and other tables that follow, the answers from the full sample base (2009 all) are followed by the answers from members that said they issued 50 or more tenders/year (2009 50+) and 100 or more tenders/year (2009 100+).

**Table 2.** Formats for distribution of contract documents sent as part of tenders

Format v	Sample>	2009 all	2009 50+	2009 100+	2006 all
Electronic format only		15%	27%	26%	8%
Electronic and paper		40%	25%	25%	27%
Paper only		45%	48%	49%	65%
	<i>Number of answers</i>	352	52	27	

**Q What percentages of documents sent electronically to tenderers were distributed by the following means? (Disk or other physical media, E-mail, Web based portal)**

Considering the entire sample, the average percentage sent via disk or other physical media increased substantially, while the percentage sent via email fell, and there was little change in the percentage sent via web based portals. Table 3 records the averages of the percentages quoted by the full samples and firms that send out larger numbers of tenders. Relative to 2006, the use of physical media increased markedly, while the use of email fell, and there was little change in the use of Web based portal.

**Table 3.** Means of distribution of electronic documents

Means v	Sample>	2009 all	2009 50+	2009 100+	2006 all
Disk or other physical media		46%	56%	60%	29%
E-mail		46%	33%	27%	64%
Web based portal		8%	11%	13%	7%
	<i>Number of answers</i>	319	50	26	

**Q How often do your clients demand e-tendering?**

The profiles of the answers to the above question are recorded in Table 4. The averaged responses for the full survey sample bases suggests there has been no substantial change in client demand for e-tendering.

**Table 4.** How often do clients demand e-tendering?

Frequency v	Sample>	2009 all	2009 50+	2009 100+	2006 all
Often		11%	17%	15%	10%
Rarely		38%	42%	41%	38%
Never		51%	40%	44%	52%
	<i>Number of answers</i>	361	52	27	

**Q Would you be interested in using a Web based tendering portal if the cost was similar to the cost of preparing and distributing hard copy tenders?**

The profiles of the answers to the above question are recorded in Table 5. The averaged responses for the full samples suggest that members' interest in using a Web based tendering portal may have fallen slightly in the current economic climate.

**Table 5.** Would you be interested in using a Web based tendering portal if the cost was similar to the cost of preparing and distributing hard copy tenders?

Interested v	Sample>	2009 all	2009 50+	2009 100+	2006 all
Yes		62%	73%	85%	64%
No		38%	27%	15%	36%
	<i>Number of answers</i>	361	51	26	

**Q Please state if you agree or disagree with the following benefits attributed to electronic means of tendering?**

More members than in 2006 agreed strongly that e-tendering offers *lower administration costs/effort*. The response to the newly suggested benefit, *reduced effort in issuing clarifications*, was also quite positive. However, with most suggested benefits, the responses were similar to those in 2006, and with *better access to information for sub-contractors* slightly more negative.

**Table 6.** Agreement with benefits attributed to e-tendering

<b>Benefit/Sentiment v Sample&gt;</b>	<b>2009 all</b>	<b>2009 50+</b>	<b>2009 100+</b>	<b>2006 all</b>
<b>Reduced timescale of tendering</b>				
Strongly agree	19%	19%	22%	17%
Somewhat agree	47%	46%	52%	47%
Disagree	35%	35%	26%	36%
<i>Number of answers</i>	361	52	27	
<b>Reduced effort in analysing tenders</b>				
Strongly agree	20%	27%	37%	29%
Somewhat agree	45%	44%	37%	47%
Disagree	34%	29%	26%	24%
<i>Number of answers</i>	357	52	27	
<b>Lower administration costs/effort (printing, copying and distribution)</b>				
Strongly agree	53%	58%	56%	50%
Somewhat agree	38%	38%	44%	39%
Disagree	9%	4%	0%	11%
<i>Number of answers</i>	360	52	27	
<b>Better contractor access to information for sub-contractors</b>				
Strongly agree	30%	33%	30%	30%
Somewhat agree	55%	53%	56%	57%
Disagree	15%	14%	15%	13%
<i>Number of answers</i>	357	51	27	
<b>Reduced effort in issuing clarifications</b>				
Strongly agree	36%	35%	37%	
Somewhat agree	45%	46%	52%	
Disagree	19%	19%	11%	
<i>Number of answers</i>	357	52	27	

**Q Will the ability to tender projects by electronic means enhance your service in the marketplace?**

Comparing the full samples, in comparison with 2006, on balance, 1% fewer answered *greatly* and 4% more answered *to some extent*.

**Table 7.** Will the ability to tender projects by electronic means enhance your service in the market place?

<b>Sentiment v</b>	<b>Sample&gt;</b>	<b>2009 all</b>	<b>2009 50+</b>	<b>2009 100+</b>	<b>2006 all</b>
Greatly		9%	17%	19%	10%
To some extent		68%	75%	78%	64%
Not at all		23%	8%	4%	26%
<i>Number of answers</i>		361	52	27	

**Q Please rank the following issues as barriers to your firm's use of Web based e-tendering**

The profiles of the answers to the above request are recorded in Table 8.

*Cost of the e-tendering service/software (and other associated costs), lack of client demand, and clients won't pay* were all ranked highly.

**Table 8.** Ranking of issues as barriers to the use of web based e-tendering

<b>Barrier/Sentiment v Sample&gt;</b>	<b>2009 all</b>	<b>2009 50+*</b>	<b>2009 100+*</b>
<b>General resistance to change</b>			
Not important	41%	33%	37%
Minor issue	49%	60%	56%
Major issue	10%	8%	7%
<i>Number of answers</i>	<i>354</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>Cost of service/software</b>			
Not important	14%	19%	30%
Minor issue	41%	48%	56%
Major issue	45%	33%	15%
<i>Number of answers</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>Cost of training</b>			
Not important	15%	19%	33%
Minor issue	52%	62%	59%
Major issue	33%	19%	7%
<i>Number of answers</i>	<i>355</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>Reliance on staff with special training</b>			
Not important	23%	27%	48%
Minor issue	47%	48%	41%
Major issue	30%	25%	11%
<i>Number of answers</i>	<i>354</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>Lack of client demand</b>			
Not important	13%	12%	19%
Minor issue	33%	27%	30%
Major issue	54%	62%	52%
<i>Number of answers</i>	<i>356</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>Client prohibition of e-tendering</b>			
Not important	38%	29%	33%
Minor issue	40%	46%	44%
Major issue	22%	25%	22%
<i>Number of answers</i>	<i>348</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>
<b>Client won't pay</b>			
Not important	21%	27%	33%
Minor issue	32%	27%	33%
Major issue	48%	46%	33%
<i>Number of answers</i>	<i>351</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>27</i>

\* 50+ and 100+ refer to samples including firms that issued 50 or more and 100 or more tenders/year.

**Q Per project, what would you expect to pay (in £ Sterling) to use a web based e-tendering service to send out and analyse the tender responses?**

The profile of the answers to the above question is presented in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Answers to question: *Per project, what would you expect to pay to use a web based e-tendering service to send out and analyse the tender responses?*

	2009 all	2009 50+	2009 100+
Minimum	£0	£0	£0
Maximum	£20,000	£2000	£500
Average of sums>0	£714	£347	£228
Average including 0s	£536	£267	£166
<i>Number of answers</i>	265	43	22

**Q Are you aware of the RICS eTendering solution?**

The answers to the above question are recorded in Table 10 below. Based on the full sample, fewer than half of those that responded were aware of the service.

**Table 10.** Answers to question: *Are you aware of the RICS eTendering solution?*

	2009 all	2009 50+	2009 100+
Yes	47%	50%	58%
No	*53%	50%	42%
<i>Number of answers</i>	355	50	26

\* 22% wished to be sent information.

**Q Have you read the RICS e-tendering Guidance Note?**

Table 11 records the response profile for the above question.

**Table 11.** Percentages of members that read or did not read the RICS Guidance note

	2009 all	2009 50+	2009 100+	2006 all
Yes, read	37%	55%	67%	37%
No	63%	45%	33%	63%
<i>Number of answers</i>	359	51	26	

## 5. Conclusions

Having reviewed the results of the survey as presented in this report and the additional comments from members reproduced in Appendices A and B, BCIS concludes:

- **Electronic document transfer is increasing** - For the entire survey sample, the percentages of contract documents sent in electronic format only almost doubled, the percentage in both electronic and paper formats increased by 13%, while the percentage sent only in paper format decreased by 20%. The growth in electronic-only document transfers in firms issuing larger numbers of tenders was pronounced – it tripled. Firms issuing 100 or more tenders per year now send more than one quarter of their tender documents by email. The greater use of electronic transfer would suggest that more firms would embrace the use of Web based e-tendering, but this does not appear the case.
- **There is increased use of physical media to distribute electronic tender documents:** Having provided a Web based e-tendering solution, BCIS is concerned that the use of disks or other physical media increased by 17% over the full survey sample, and by 26% and more in firms issuing greater numbers of tenders. BCIS is encouraged that fewer tender documents are being sent by email, as this practice is deprecated in the *E-tendering RICS Guidance Note*. The percentage of documents sent via email fell 18% for the full survey sample and is substantially lower in firms sending out more tenders. Issues such as the volumes of data associated with CAD files, restrictions commonly placed on the maximum size of emails and mailboxes, and the relative insecurity of standard emails may be contributory factors. The small increase in the percentage sent via Web based portals serves to confirm that their use is still not widespread.
- **RICS members' sentiment toward e-tendering remains strongly positive:** Table 7 shows that 68% of responding members felt that the ability to tender projects by electronic means will enhance their service in the market place *to some extent*. On average, this is 4% more than in 2006. A further 9% answered *greatly* – 1% less than the full sample's average response in 2006, but responses from firms issuing greater numbers of tenders are substantially more positive. Overall, the sentiment remains strongly positive.
- **Ongoing acceptance by the majority of responding members of the benefits of e-tendering:** Table 6. *Agreement with benefits attributed to e-tendering* shows that between 91% and 65% of members confirmed each of five key benefits associated with e-tendering: *lower administration costs/effort (printing, copying and distribution, better contractor access to information for sub-contractors, reduced effort in issuing clarifications, reduced timescale of tendering, and reduced effort in analysing tenders*. 65% of full sample base agreed e-tendering offers *reduced effort in analysing tenders*. This was 11% fewer than in 2006, but the views of respondents from firms sending out more tenders per year were significantly more positive. 91% of the full sample base, and all of the respondents from firms issuing 100 or more tenders per year agreed that e-tendering offers *lower administration costs/effort*.

- **Concern about the costs and clients' sentiment ranked highly:** The responses in 2009 and 2006 shown in Table 4. *How often do clients demand e-tendering?* suggest there has been little, if any, change in client demand for e-tendering. The responses recorded in Table 8 to the 2009 survey request to *Please rank the following issues as barriers to your firm's use of Web based e-tendering* show that the perceived costs and perceived clients' lack of interest and unwillingness to bear the costs, were the most highly ranked barriers to greater use of web based e-tendering. From largest to smallest, the percentages of the full sample ranking of these barriers as major issues were: *lack of client demand* 54%, *client won't pay* 48%, *cost of service/software* 45%.

BCIS is convinced that Web based e-tendering minimises the administrative overheads associated with tendering, streamlines document handling, speeds up tender processes, eases the demands on managerial resources, provides added security and makes it easier to comply with best practice recommendations.

For BCIS, the survey has confirmed that BCIS should continue its efforts to bring home the benefits of Web based e-tendering and the RICS eTendering Solution to clients and practitioners.

At present, many practitioners and clients may not fully appreciate the possibilities inherent in controlling the data formats in which tenders are returned. Better structured digital tender data supports improved analyses and facilitates the flow of information from contractors and subcontractors, through surveyors' systems, into clients' systems. Over time, BCIS believes industry firms will become increasing aware of the true value of such data.

## Appendix A: Reasons given for lack of interest in Web portal assuming similar cost

Members were asked: *Would you be interested in using a Web based tendering portal if the cost was similar to the cost of preparing and distributing hard copy tenders? If not, Why not?* Their comments are categorised below under bulleted headings. Small superscript numbers are used to indicate where a comment was split for categorisation purposes.

- **Access to an alternative system/web based tendering portal:**
  - Already developed a system.
  - Because we already use the Gleeds Tender Channel.
  - (I) am quite happy with the tendering documentation that my software offers.
  - Prefer to use own or client systems.
  - We already offer this facility.
  - We are a partner of BIW's tendering portal. Tendering this way is QA practice.
  - We have our own e-tender portal.
  - We have our own in house e-tendering package.
  - Will just use Local Government System ....<sup>(12)</sup>
  
- **Email and other alternatives:**
  - <sup>(12)</sup> ... (Will just use) email for private contracts.
  - <sup>(2)</sup> ... Why bother with a web portal when you can e-mail files direct?
  - Because it's cheaper using email.
  - Don't see the need. It's just as easy to tender via e-mail....<sup>(4)</sup>
  - Easier just to email - but I would consider trialing this alternative.
  - Electronic transfer of documents can be managed in other ways than web portals.
  - E-mail is free.
  - Happier to control electronic distribution either by disc or by using firm's web site.
  - It is likely to be dearer than email and is likely to be far more complex than email, which means it's less suitable for the small domestic projects I do.
  - Most tender documents can be distributed by e-mail or CD, which is already cheaper than hard copy tenders.
  - System we currently use appears to be working well, i.e. email with procedures to overcome problems such as confirmation of all documents received.
  - There is no cost to use e-mail and you can request read/send receipts to be certain that it has been received/read.<sup>(7)</sup>
  - Using e-mail more progressively.
  - We do not have the cost of hard copy tendering, all documents are distributed by email. Cost of tendering portal would have to bring significant benefits over own in-house procedures.

- **Clients:**
  - Client led decision normally.
  - Client requirements.
  - Clients (are) not yet ready for this, integrated and usable software appears to require risk(y) changes to web based intranets or the like. Clients' reluctance to accept e-tendering.
  - Clients don't ask for e tendering.
  - Clients would not be interested and....<sup>(1)</sup>.
  - Currently clients happy to pay for printing costs, but not e-tendering costs.
  - Driven by client needs.
  - No current client demand.
  - No requirement by clients <sup>(10)</sup>.
  - None of our clients to date have requested this <sup>(9)</sup>.
  - Not at the moment - the opportunity has not arisen with my clients who are predominantly in the hotels sector.
  - No local public sector requirement at present.
  - Tenders include non electronic client documentation.
  - The client's procurement department issues the tenders for the main client.
  - The interest is not there from the client's viewpoint.
  - Would not satisfy public sector contract regulations.
  
- **Clients require paper, printing costs born by bidder:**
  - Although clients want e-tendering, they also want hard copy contract documents.
  - As a contractor we find that clients are increasingly e-mailing tenders. This obviously reduces clients initial tender cost, but results in an increased cost of tendering for the contractor who has to print documents and drawings. We also find that the clients require returns as hard copies (and) therefore postage costs still sit with the contractor. I have previous experience in web based tendering and was very impressed, though smaller contractors may struggle with the technology, and (the) training (required) again increases the tendering cost.
  - Clients, contractors, lawyers still like final documentation in black and white on a page.
  - <sup>(3)</sup> Printing costs are born by bidder.
  
- **Cost/benefits:**
  - Cost would have to be cheaper.
  - Fail to see cost or time benefit at present.
  - For the size of contracts the added complication would not be worth it.
  - I would be surprised if cost has been the issue on many projects - more related to issues of inertia, investing in the time to explain the benefits to the client and possibly some concern that an e-tender, which pushes costs of document printing, etc. to the contractor (which) might make the tender less attractive in a 'hot' market.
  - Needs to be a lot cheaper.<sup>(11)</sup>

**Cost/benefits: (continued)**

- Only benefit/attraction to change would be time and cost.
- Possibly (we might use e-tendering. It) depends on cost and whether the document safe.
- This would require changes in our current procedures and due to the limited number of tenders is not considered cost effective at present.
- Would need to offer cost savings and increase participation by supply chain.

- **Dislike/distrust of the technology involved:**

- After the planning portal debacle, I don't feel that standardised systems work for me.
- Because as a bidder they are a faceless and inconvenient way of bidding. Personal contact on queries is often difficult (3).
- I would want to retain complete control.
- (There is concern about) Losing control.

- **Electronic document related problems:**

- Audit trails are easier with hard copies, and do not rely on various versions of software. What appears on one printer or on one person's screen may differ from the original person's computer. PDF based drawings cause numerous scaling problems....<sup>(2)</sup>
- Because of our perception that e-tendered documents can be altered and therefore require checking at tender return - we already provide BQs in CITE or Excel format to contractors as an aid to tendering, but still require our original paper documents returned priced in ink.
- Physical evidence of tender contract documents in the event of any future dispute resolution issues.

- **E-tendering systems too complex/not suitable/present problems:**

- <sup>(11)</sup> Contractors can find it difficult to use and time spent explaining can be prohibitive.
- Experience of other client systems indicates that current systems are too complex. If systems could be greatly simplified and made far cheaper it would greatly enhance the uptake.
- I find that electronic systems are not totally suitable to the way I work and have sometimes caused major errors due to less attention being paid to detail.
- I have used such a system at a previous employer and found it to unnecessarily complicate the process particularly where smaller building firms or clients are concerned.
- Just more complex than paper way.
- Lack of tracking and getting tenderers to check for updates.
- Potential loss of control and email/disk processes work well. Potentially web based portal is leaving things to chance and you are relying on others actually downloading information.
- <sup>(7)</sup>The problem with a specific web based portal would be that it may be quite rigid and not sufficiently flexible to differing situations.

**E-tendering systems too complex/not suitable/present problems (continued)**

- Too complex...<sup>(6)</sup> also inevitable problems with heavy web traffic slowing down access to web portals.
- We have been fee tendering using this method and on a number of occasions have had difficulty downloading or saving or submitting our tender or a combination of these. Combined electronic and paper tendering works well and is well understood and received.
  
- **Insufficient experience:**
  - Insufficient technical experience both within office and client base.
  
- **Interested in e-tendering portal if:**
  - If it accepts or is a substitute for Masterbill BQ e-tendering process and easier than direct e-mail then, YES.
  - I would be interested for larger more complex tenders with sub-consultant packages.
  
- **No need to change:**
  - At present (it is) not necessary to change our current process.
  - <sup>(3)</sup> Because I don't handle projects of this nature.
  - Currently no great demand.
  - <sup>(4)</sup> Also, project sizes aren't large enough to warrant web based e-tendering.
  - No need.
  - No need.
  - Not needed.
  - Quite happy the way we are.
  
- **Preference:**
  - I prefer my present system.
  - I prefer the traditional methods.
  - It's a good idea, but the staff prefer hard copies of documents.
  - Our present system suits.
  - Tenderers collect (the tender documents. This) gives better feedback on level of interest and (the) cost (is) not that significant in overall process.
  
- **Security/trust issues:**
  - May not remain private.
  - Security.
  - Trust.

- **Small Contractors/small projects/IT capability:**
  - (I would be interested in an e-tendering solution), but not on small projects less than £500,000.
  - A large proportion of our projects are small work (under £500k) and contractors who deal with these works are not geared to receive tenders, specifically drawings electronically.
  - Contractor resistance.
  - Contractors do not like the additional burden of receiving too much and often uncoordinated information. Tender periods need to be extended by a week to allow contractors time to deal with this additional burden. (This is for other than very large projects.)
  - Contractors we use are not fully geared up for electronic tendering.
  - Generally the level of scheme we work on means smaller contractors are tendering and some are not set up to run things electronically.
  - Majority of contractors I work with do not want web based tendering.
  - Many of our projects are small value for local authorities where the contractors are small and often do not have the IT skills to use web portals. Also many small firms do not have the ability to download and use CAD drawings, etc.
  - Minor projects only: small builders who often don't have a computer.
  - <sup>(6)</sup> Many contractors, clients and professionals still prefer to have hard copies of many documents to hand (to take to site, meetings, etc.).
  - <sup>(9)</sup> Not all contractors set up to receive it.
  - Most builders in my area of work would not be able to deal with it, i.e. (those tendering for) domestic (jobs with values of) £250k - £5m.
  - Most contractors we deal with are small locally based companies who have not yet embraced electronic technology. We do however, when requested, email copies of bills.
  - Not all contractors are geared up for e-tendering. Several prefer paper documentation.
  - Not all contractors are prepared for it. We deal in minor works and small contractors.
  - Not appropriate for the type of contractors usually employed on the contracts with which we are involved.
  - Not large projects.
  - Not suitable for our types of projects.
  - Only (a) certain number of contractors use this method and it would preclude certain contractors from tendering in rural areas.
  - Only undertake small domestic projects. I have a standard set of doc's on my computer.
  - Projects and clients not appropriate.
  - Projects I deal with are not large enough - smaller jobs tendered by smaller firms (some might have email addresses, but not all, and few have the facility to read/print drawings, which need to be sent to contractors and subcontractors to price from (usually plan and spec/schedule of work tenders).
  - <sup>(10)</sup> Some contractors tendering for minor projects do not have the facilities/expertise to comply with requirements.
  - Some tenderers are not IT literate.

- **Small Contractors/small projects/IT capability** (continued):
  - <sup>(1)</sup>... the contractors that I deal with would prefer paper.
  - The large proportion of the contractors we deal with would find it difficult.
  - The level of builders with which I engage are not necessarily geared-up for electronic tendering.
  - (With) the size of projects we are working on and the type of contractors, it wouldn't be effective.
  - <sup>(5)</sup>...The small and medium size contractors I use invariably request paper copies of documents (especially drawings).
  - To date, contractors' resistance.
  - Virtually all tenders are for single private sector houses and the most suitable contractors on the island are likely to experience difficulties accessing web based information.
  - We don't believe that the size of projects we are involved with makes them viable.
  - We tend to deal with small projects and small contractors.
  - With spec and drawings, not all contractors can handle drawings. Even if they can read .pdf drawings, they can't plot them out.
  
- **Too few tenders to merit change:**
  - At the moment, too few commissions to justify.
  - Do not send out enough tenders to warrant such a system.
  - Don't issue enough tenders.
  - My company is not big enough to warrant it.
  - Not applicable.
  - Not appropriate to the scale of project or contractors.
  - Not large enough.
  - Our output is relatively small and we deal with relatively small contractors.
  - Prepare own analysis - only a few operated per year.
  - Very few tenders required.
  - We do not do the volume.
  - We do not tender enough projects.
  - Would not have thought it to be worth considering for the small number of tenders we deal with.
  - Not currently applicable in my situation as sole trader. To be reviewed.

## Appendix B: Reasons given for why the ability to use e-tendering would not enhance service

Members were asked: *Will the ability to tender projects by electronic means enhance your service in the marketplace? If not why not?* Their *Why not* comments are categorised below under bulleted headings.

- **Already do it:**
  - Already tender electronically for our client through the BRAVO platform.
  - Do it already.
  - It's common practice with our clients' partners/consultants.
  - The ability to tender projects by hardcopy and/or electronic means should be the accepted standard.
  - This is done as a matter of course anyway, so the enhancement to the current process is negligible.
  - We already do that.
  
- **Email and other alternatives:**
  - We have been issuing tenders electronically (by e-mail and/or CD) for many years already.
  
- **Clients and lack of demand:**
  - Because clients never request e-tendering.
  - Cannot see how would enhance service to my clients.
  - Clients are people focused, and then price.
  - Clients aren't interested in e-tendering. If they were, we would invest in it.
  - Clients do not make judgments about suitability on the basis of your ability to operate a system.
  - Clients don't know about it and, if they did, I would advise them against using it for the small domestic projects I do.
  - Clients just interested in final outcome, not process.
  - Clients not requesting (e-tendering) in private sector.
  - Clients prefer my method.
  - Clients would not be interested.
  - I don't think it will (enhance my service in the marketplace).
  - I produce work to my clients' requirements.
  - Majority of work is in the private sector and these clients don't insist on electronic tendering or, in some cases, care.
  - Many clients still place the greatest amount of emphasis on personal service; e-tendering will bring inherent efficiencies, but I am not sure this equates to enhanced service.
  - My clients generally do not demand it.
  - ...<sup>(1)</sup> My Clients do not demand it.
  - No, as it has never been a client criteria and would not be seen by any as contributing to the success of procurement.
  - No demand for this service.

**Clients and lack of demand (continued):**

- No real demand.
  - No significant benefits for client.
  - The client is really not bothered as long as it gets done.
  - Not demanded.
  - Not required by our clients. On this basis, the only reason for us to change would be if there is a reduction in surveyors and admin time.
  - Our clients are not asking for any particular form of tendering so it makes no difference to them.
  - Our clients have no preference. This would be purely for our own convenience.
  - We have never been asked to issue tenders in this way.
- **Clients require paper, printing costs born by bidder, printing still necessary, tenderers asks for prints:**
    - Complex documents still need to be printed by the tenderer in order to analyse, which reduces bidding time. The use of electronic transmission is great if it replaces the postal service. Portals are user unfriendly and abused by public sector clients.
    - Local contractors are likely to need paper copies and do not have the facilities for printing the information themselves.
    - Tenderers on Minor Works contracts request hard copy.
    - The small and medium size contractors I use invariably request paper copies of documents (especially drawings).
- **Electronic documents related problems:**
    - Small projects generally. We are on Macintosh computers and not all info is compatible. It takes time to transfer to Mac systems.
- **E-tendering systems too complex/not suitable/presents problems:**
    - I am afraid I am from a generation who use electronic systems only where appropriate and in this instance I feel it could lead to serious errors. This has happened to me when experienced QSs have made basic errors concentrating on the electronic approach to measurement rather than take time and care to consider detail.
- **Insufficient experience in industry:**
    - Industry in Guernsey is not used to e-tendering yet, although this is being worked on.
- **No need to change:**
    - It is merely a distribution system - quality of service is inbuilt into the documents that are distributed by any means.
    - It is merely a tool; the technical content of service doesn't change.

**No need to change** (Continued):

- It's not rocket science anymore and we don't believe the marketplace will be impressed by it.
  - No need.
  - Possibly to assist contractors, but not necessarily to assist this practice
  - The documents will be the same.
  - We are generally the recipient of tenders.
  - What we do is safe and secure and gets reliable results.
  - Why would it (enhance our service), the traditional method continues to work well.
- **Preference:**
    - I offer a bespoke service. I do not want it standardised.
- **Small Contractors/Small projects/IT capability:**
    - I generally work on quite small projects with builders and clients who would not be experienced in the use of such methods or in some cases not able to use such methods.
    - It really suits Qs rather than building surveyors involved in jobbing type work and not involved in regularly tendering larger projects.
    - Not at present as clients and contractors are smaller scale; values up to 400K, and not set up to deal with e tendering.
    - Most contractors we deal with are small locally based companies who have not yet embraced electronic technology. We do however, when requested, email copies of bills.
    - Our projects generally not big enough to warrant electronic tendering.
    - The demand for this service is at present not required for the scale of projects that I am currently involved in.
    - The level of builders with which I engage are not necessarily geared-up for electronic tendering<sup>(1)</sup>
    - The projects I deal with tend to be on small scale.
    - We tend to deal with small projects and small contractors.

- **Too few tenders to merit change/Size of firm:**
  - At the moment too few commissions to justify.
  - I do not issue a sufficient number of tender documents for it to make any significant difference.
  - My company is not big enough to warrant it.
  
- **Miscellaneous reasons/comments:**
  - I think that there will be a switch to more single stage competitive tendering which will suit the system. I also think that having the full chronology of tender correspondence could be very useful should a dispute take place.
  - Not in this market.
  - The market expects everyone to be efficient and generally we all have adopted our own means to operate efficiently. Firms that haven't will find it increasingly difficult to survive.
  - Work mainly for specialist subcontractors.