

Admissions Information Management System (AIMS)

Request for Proposal: Questions & Answers

April 4, 2017

1. For PaaS/SaaS solutions, a Cloud Services Provider (CSP) would be responsible for maintaining access in terms of performance and availability to the State Bar's data. The State Bar's data would be owned by the State Bar. The State Bar would have access to its data and metadata, but not all of the PaaS/SaaS solution source code. The State Bar would have full rights to extract their data at any time during the subscription service. However, PaaS/SaaS CSP does not typically offer system source code because it is inapplicable to software delivered as a service subscription through a multitenant architecture. While it is possible to provide the source code in an escrow account for a configured solution, the source code would only be able to operate in the CSP's PaaS/SaaS environment. Therefore, can the State Bar remove the source code requirements?

As part of the Terms and Conditions of the contract for a PaaS/SaaS solution, it will be required that the State Bar would own and have access to its data and metadata. Should the PaaS/SaaS vendor default in its ability to provide the services under the terms and conditions of the contract agreement, this situation poses a high risk for the State Bar in its ability to continue its business with the solution being provided by the vendor. Therefore, a PaaS/SaaS Escrow Agreement must be part of the contract agreement to ensure that the application and data is still accessible until the State Bar is able to transfer the application or build another application to continue its operation.

2. As a multi-tenant cloud service provider, we do not typically offer a Right to Audit clause as part of the base service offering. As a multi-tenant service, compartmentalization is virtual, not physical. Annual site visits can be arranged at the State Bar's expense, but in consideration of our other customers, random access cannot be permitted. We have third party auditors that inspect and review our security. We undergo annual audits for compliance with additional frameworks such as SSAE 16 SOC 1, SOC 2, SOC 3, ISO 27001, and PCI-DSS Level 1. The results of these audits can be provided to the State Bar as desired under NDA. Is this acceptable to meeting the State Bar's requirements?

Yes. As part of the contract agreement, the vendor will provide the audit results related to the PaaS/SaaS audit compliance.

3. The Cloud Service Provider (CSP) is unable to provide [a copy of “Results of a Third-Party Security Audit”] in a public procurement response due to the security and proprietary nature of the content. The results of CSP's third-party security audits can be provided to the State Bar as desired under NDA upon contract award. Is this acceptable to meeting the State Bar’s requirements? If so, we ask that the State Bar consider issuing a modification to the RFP instructions regarding the Submission Requirements. This modification should clarify that results of third-party security audits can be provided under NDA upon contract award.

Yes, that is acceptable. This Q&A document serves as clarification.

4. For Attachment J, there are a number of requirements that are not applicable to a Cloud SaaS solution. These are requirements such as DB-009, AV-010, ENV-001, ENV-002, and OP-002. In this case, how are vendors to respond? Can vendors provide a “N/A” code with an explanation?

A response of N/A with explanation will suffice.

5. The Cloud Service Provider (CSP) offers a pure multi-tenant web application. No software or infrastructure is required to be managed by the State Bar to access other than a mobile device or computer, browser and internet connection. Is this acceptable to meeting the State Bar’s requirements?

Yes, this form of access is acceptable.

6. Does the State Bar require that cloud-based solutions hold a FedRAMP Authority to Operate (ATO) at the moderate impact level for Software as a Service and Platform as a Service? Additionally, is a one hour response time for support acceptable for the life of the contract?

FedRAMP is not a requirement, but is desirable for any cloud-based solution proposed. PaaS/SaaS providers should have failover and disaster recovery plans that enable their customers to continue operations seamlessly. Response time can be negotiated at the time of contract negotiation.

7. What are the anticipated numbers of State Bar internal users that will require access to the solution?

There is an approximate upper limit of 70 staff users per the staffing number of the Office of Admissions within the RFP. See the Description of Existing Technology and Current Level of Admissions Actions sections within the RFP for external interaction numbers. An exact hierarchy within the desired system has not been determined, the design and definition of user roles is within the scope of services requested by this RFP.

8. What is the anticipated number of external users that will require access to the solution? Will these users require authenticated access to the solution?

Approximately 15,000 external users annually are estimated; all require authentication to the solution.

9. The Cloud Services Provider (CSP) uses commercially reasonable efforts to make its on-demand services available to its customers 24/7; except for planned downtime, for which the CSP gives customers prior notice; and force majeure events. Can the State Bar please adjust this requirement and specify that the SLA requirements can be negotiated based on the Service provider chosen?

The SLA requirements can be negotiated with the chosen solution and provider. Please keep in mind that the SLA requirements will be comprehensive and will cover the areas of Performance, Support, Monitoring, Disaster Recovery, Costs, etc. This Q&A document serves as clarification.

10. “ENV-001 - The Application must efficiently operate using network core with Cisco switches with front-end connectivity between the two State Bar locations (Los Angeles and San Francisco) using Cisco routers. “

For SaaS/PaaS solutions, would other network and router configurations be acceptable provided they deliver the same required efficiencies and secure connectivity?

Yes, as long as the alternative configurations allow for the required efficiencies and security requirements they are acceptable.

11. “ENV-002 - The Application must efficiently operate using Internet access via Cisco routers.”

For SaaS/PaaS solutions, would other network and router configurations be acceptable provided they deliver the same required efficiencies and secure connectivity?

Yes, as long as the alternative configurations allow for the required efficiencies and security requirements they are acceptable.

12. Are clerk's to be considered internal users of the proposed solution? Does the 1 minute time requirement apply to the scanning process as well, or would that be handled outside of the solution with the solution being able to then index, upload and associate the documents to the appropriate record(s).

Clerks are classified as internal users. The time to scan is dependent on the scanner device and document management system integrated with the solution.

13. Some level of tailoring is common to address unique business needs, and in fact this tailoring is often critical to ensure the business requirements are fully addressed. With this in mind, we ask for a clear understanding of how the department defines ‘COTS’. Please include in your answer a % of the installed solution that is anticipated to be directly ‘off the shelf’ (i.e., no configuration). 90%? 50%?

- a. *Our understanding of a COTS software solution is a “General Purpose” solution that is more flexible for the various process flows within the department’s workflow function. COTS software provides current technology solutions; shortens the design-to-production cycle; and generally has a larger user base with proven implementations, which our organization can benefit from.*
- b. *The intent is to utilize the COTS solution out-of-the box as much as possible, but there will be certain process flows unique to our organization that will require customization. It is difficult to determine the percent of the solution that is directly “off-the-shelf” without knowing the solution being proposed by a vendor. However, based on the Bar’s requirements in the RFP, a vendor should be able to determine what % of their COTS solution can be considered “off-the-shelf” with configuration as opposed to customization. The Bar recognizes that there are products in the market that are “configurable” platforms, and we welcome those solution proposals as well.*

14. The services of a seasoned Solution Integrator provide critical value to the success of projects such as this one for the State Bar. With this in mind, however, the bid as written precludes the involvement of an SI specialist. We ask that the MQ's be revised such that (a) an SI is able to respond as 'bidder' (prime) and including a COTS vendor via subcontract, and (b) the MQ's related to software certification and referral installations (customers) apply only to the COTS subcontractor. This structure, we believe, opens up the potential response pool to the departments benefit with, we believe, no downside.

a. *A Solution Integrator should be within the minimum qualifications as currently written as they include "partner relationships". If an integrator has implemented a project with the intended subcontractor, then the relationship described should meet the minimum qualifications as they are intended. However, during review, the years of experience with the subcontracted vendor and the number of projects successfully implemented with them will be a factor in the Bar's confidence of the relationship and ability to bring the project to fruition.*

b. *For references, all vendors and subcontractors are required to provide an equal amount. As the subcontractor is the COTS system provider, their references should all be implementations comparable to the Admissions Information Management System described in the RFP. As a Solution Integrator, references should include any and all projects within the last five years with that subcontractor. If you do not have three discrete projects with that subcontractor, then provide references for systems similar to the Admissions Information Management System that may be with another vendor.*

15. Do you grant preference to CA 'certified small business' vendors? Please describe your small business program and its application to this bid.

The State Bar does grant preference to any vendors, all are equal.

16. How many Legal Specialization exams are administered annually?

There is one Legal Specialization Exam per year, administered in October.

17. It appears that information is missing from Attachment D: Concept of Operations. We only see detailed information through Element 9. The document ends on page 247 with a chart of 9.5 Moral Character Appeal. We seem to be missing the details for Element 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19.

All information was present in the original Attachment D: Concept of Operations, but was out of order. A re-ordered Attachment D is now posted.

18. What is the budget for this project?

The State Bar does not disclose projects budgets.