

City of Reno, NV

Performance Indicators

- Customer satisfaction with the quality of service
- Customer satisfaction with the timeliness of service

For FY 2006, Reno reported that 93 percent of customers surveyed rated the quality of purchasing services as excellent or good. The mean and median values for all jurisdictions reporting were 86 percent and 90 percent, respectively.

For timeliness of purchasing services, 93 percent of customers rated service as excellent or good. The mean and median were 82 percent and 83 percent, respectively.

Reno describes its purchasing operation as decentralized, with 1.5 full-time-equivalent staff in the finance department providing support to other city departments responsible for making the purchases themselves.

The purchasing division must approve all purchase orders regardless of amount, and purchases greater than \$25,000 must also receive city council approval.

Relationship building is the key

When asked how it achieves such high customer satisfaction ratings, the Reno purchasing division noted the cultivation of strong customer relationships as the key. They stated that division staff make special efforts to inform customers of

- Purchasing approval requirements
- Criteria for choosing the appropriate purchasing method (for example, bid versus request for proposal)
- General time frames for completing different types of purchases.

Purchasing staff provide this information in workshops offered throughout the year and through informal interactions during the purchasing process itself.

Accommodating unexpected demands helps, too

Reno's purchasing staff also seek to accommodate customers with unexpected purchase needs and other quick turnaround requirements quickly. It is understood that sometimes unanticipated demands arise, and helping customers meet them while adhering to guidelines of good purchasing practice is important. This also boosts customer satisfaction!

Reno raises the bar—now targeting 97 percent satisfaction

Although Reno's purchasing staff remain pleased that 93 percent of customers rate their service as excellent or good, they seek do even better; and they recently raised their goal to achieving 97 percent of ratings in the excellent and good categories. Their goal is published in the city budget.

Case Profile

Population:

206,735

Square miles:

102

Median household income:

\$42,214

Form of government:

Council-manager



For additional information about the practices described in this case study, please contact Laurie Pedrick, purchasing program manager, at 775/334-2210.