

Getting the Best Value from MHEC Contracts

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MHEC hardware and software contracts have been designed to give good pricing for single item purchases. You can get even better prices using these contracts by keeping the following in mind:

1. If you are buying in quantity, contact a vendor sales rep to ask for special pricing. Quantity pricing can be had for quantities of as low as 25, but discounts will be higher for larger quantities.
2. Consider working with other institutions close by (or in the same system) to achieve larger purchase volume. Vendors will ship to more than one location.
3. Vendors will respond with more aggressive pricing if they know you are looking at products from their competitors.
4. Consider using standardized configurations (that you decide). Often this will get you a few more percentage points of discount.
5. Ask for a discount if you are willing to batch your purchases quarterly, or guarantee a purchase volume over a quarter or year.
6. For complex acquisitions, feel free to issue an RFP to select a winner, but use the MHEC contract as the actual purchase vehicle. You can save months by using our pre-negotiated terms.
7. If you need further changes to our contract, use an addendum. We need not be involved (but would like to be advised of your success).
8. If you are willing to sign an exclusive purchase agreement with the vendor (for at least a year) you should receive a further discount, or perhaps better warranty.
9. Doing your own troubleshooting or warranty work using formally trained staff can save you even further.
10. If you are willing to host and staff a sales location (store), that should also be worth some consideration.
11. Don't forget that not all improvements to your purchase involve a reduced price – consider improvements in other things you pay for indirectly, e.g. training, shipping, warranty, faster delivery, improved product features, or
12. Our contracts are designed to get the best price from the manufacturers, but in many cases your local reseller may be the actual provider of the services. These resellers may be able to offer additional cost-savings due to their intimate knowledge of your institution. This stimulates business in your local community as well as often getting you much better pricing.

And of course, as always, be honest and fair in your dealings with vendors. A good guide to ethical conduct in purchasing can be found at <http://www1.naepnet.org/abcode.shtml>