



Grow and Tend

Welcome to Grow and Tend, your monthly dose of business growth advice courtesy of Contract Finder Pro.



Heather Murray
September 15, 2023



10-Second Intro

Morning! And happy September.

Today, we're delving into a topic many businesses are wary of: AI.

Software like ChatGPT can speed up the bid-writing process for small businesses, and we're telling you how to do it (and potential risks to keep in mind).

Plus, there are lots of great business grants opening at this time of year – we've outlined a couple in our Tenders and Small Business Grants news below.

So, let's dive in.



Can AI write your bids? Yes, but...

When you're first getting into tendering, you'll probably find it exhausting.

Searching for opportunities, preparing bids, refining your answers: all that takes time. Time that you don't always have as a small business.

And that's where AI comes in. Specifically, ChatGPT.

If you've not used it before or are confused about what it is, ChatGPT is a program that works using generative AI, which is just a fancy way to describe a software that creates original content based on patterns it learns from existing data.

Basically, instead of churning out predetermined responses, generative AI produces creative replies based solely on the question or prompt it receives.

But what has this got to do with bid writing?

ChatGPT can take a lot of work out of your hands when you're writing bids. You can use it to:

- Write a first draft of PQQ responses.
- See what a successful tender looks like.
- Proofread your submissions for mistakes.
- Refine your bid responses to meet word or character limits.

But your ultimate success with ChatGPT will come down to how well you can 'talk' to it. Prompt engineering – how you produce successful prompts for AI – is an invaluable skill to learn, but it requires practice.

For beginners, we recommend getting comfortable with asking ChatGPT to roleplay. For example, if you need it to write you a bid response, tell it to 'Act as a bid writer' in its answer.

So, that's how ChatGPT can help you write bids. But we'd be remiss if we didn't mention the risks of using AI programs like ChatGPT.

At Contract Finder Pro, we take a curious and hopeful view of AI, but we want everyone to use it with full awareness of the risks.

- **Knowledge limitations:** ChatGPT's knowledge only goes up to September 2021. If the tender requires knowledge of a current event, you'll have to feed ChatGPT this information.
- **Data security:** Information fed to ChatGPT may be used to train the AI, which means anything you give might appear in someone else's answer. The company behind ChatGPT, OpenAI, can also see all your prompts. So stay away from feeding it confidential company information.
- **Inaccurate solutions:** Generative AI can sometimes give false information (it's called 'hallucinating'). Always remember to proofread the answers it gives you and confirm the source to ensure the information is accurate and relevant to your bid.

All in all, AI is a really exciting technology for bid writers – just remember to use it responsibly.

Trending AI News for SMEs

- Google announces [new in-person training in digital skills](#), including AI, for small businesses in Ireland
- One-third of UK SMEs [want more training and resources](#) to support AI adoption
- New research shows that UK SMEs that have invested in innovative processes and technology see a [14.8% increase in revenue](#)
- The National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) [warns organisations about integrating chatbots](#) into their systems

Top New Tenders and Small Business Grants

[Provision of Employability Child Poverty Lead Service](#)


Orkney Islands Council

 £70,000

 Deadline: **6th October**

[Sexual Assault and Abuse Service](#)

Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner for Staffordshire

 £3,839,604

 Deadline: **9th October**

[GTR Marketing Media Tender](#)

Govia Thameslink Railway Ltd

 £20,190,000

 Deadline: **14th November**

[Innovate UK Investor Partnerships](#)

SMEs can apply for funding from investor partners for innovative projects focused on the 'Future Economy'.

🕒 **Deadline: 25th October**

[West Midlands SME Grant Programme](#)

Grants between £10,000 to £20,000 (may vary) available for start-ups and existing SMEs in the West Midlands region.

🕒 **Deadline: Applications for Round 6 funding, 20th September. Round 7 funding opens on 25th September.**

🎉 Celebrating Tender Wins

We're ending today's newsletter with a new section where we'll celebrate UK suppliers winning big contracts with the government. This is all thanks to Contract Finder Pro's new Professional feature: Supplier Profile.

You'll find Supplier Profiles in our Competitor Search tool. Simply search a supplier's name and click on 'Supplier Profile' to see information about new contracts and frameworks.

Alternative Heat Ltd

Last Tender Won 5/9/2023

Tenders Awarded 13	Estimate Value Won: £225,695,090
Average Supplier Number 2.8	Sum Value (Max): £318,002,783
CPV Code Breakdown ⌵	Average Value: £24,461,753
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="margin-bottom: 5px;">50 46.2% Repair and maintenance services <li style="margin-bottom: 5px;">45 30.8% Construction work <li style="margin-bottom: 5px;">03 23.1% Agricultural, farming, fishing, forestry and related products 	<div style="border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block; margin-bottom: 5px;">Supplier Profile ➔</div> <div style="border: 2px solid orange; border-radius: 10px; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">View Awards ➔</div>

Tender Award Details ⌵

Recently, offsite fabrication specialists Alternative Heat was named the sole contractor on a £28,701,093 contract with The Highland Council 🎉

1 Renewable Heat Services-2023-SER051 Published: 5/9/2023

Award

The Highland Council

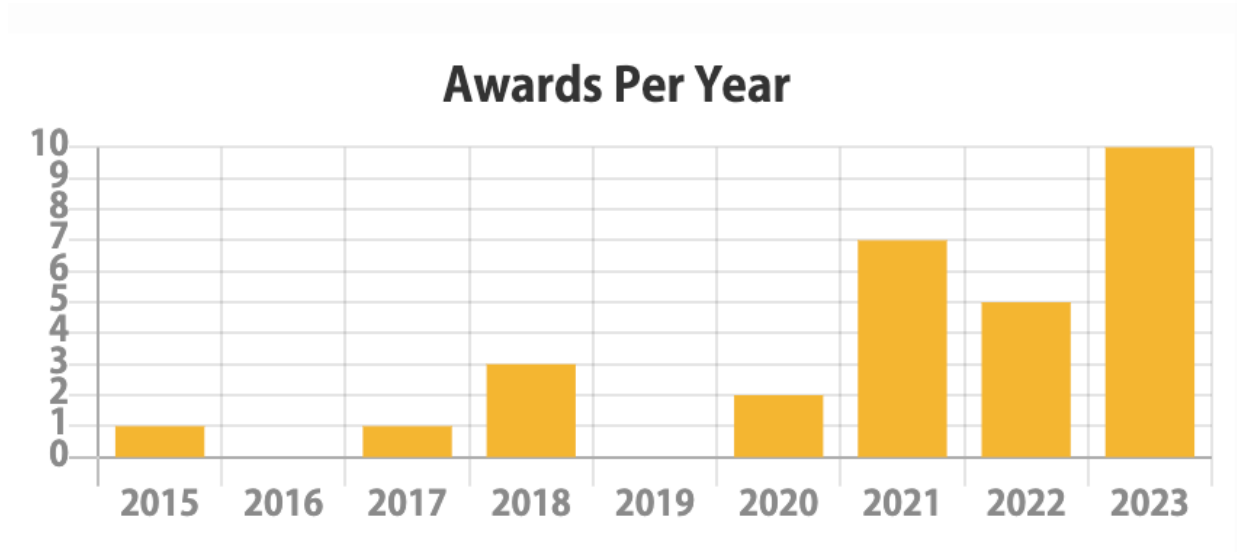
50000000 Repair and maintenance services

Single Contractor Appointed

Alternative Heat Ltd

View

Our supplier data also shows Alternative Heat is increasingly winning more work with the UK government. Congratulations!



So, that's it for this month. See you soon!

Lianne and the rest of the Contract Finder Pro team

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Your monthly dose of news and opportunities for SMEs.

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