

# PROEBIZ

eAuction & eProcurement platform



**proebiz.com**

Ostrava // tel: +420 597 587 171, email: euteam@proebiz.com, Masarykovo náměstí 52/33, 702 00 Ostrava, Czech Republic  
Prague // tel: +420 255 707 016, email: czteam@proebiz.com, Opletalova 5/7 (ČTK building), 111 44 Prague 1, Czech Republic  
Bratislava // tel: +421 232 222 260, email: skteam@proebiz.com, Šulekova 2, 811 06 Bratislava, Slovakia



# Every other step

**We produce extremely reliable, user-friendly and logical software solutions, to which we add professional support services and consultations in public procurement. Since every other step in public procurement will be digital from the end of this year, this information is sure to be of great benefit.**

**The software products and services bearing the PROEBIZ brand were born at the turn of the millennium.** Its eAuction solution was one of the first in the whole of Europe, and for almost two decades it has been invaluable to its 400 or so long-term users. Thanks to the fact that Czechs, Slovaks and Poles were working at NAR, where PROEBIZ was born, it's only natural that Slovakia and Czechia became among the leaders in eAuctions in the EU. Our initial clients were primarily industrial concerns. The first eAuction in Central Europe for a public tender was held in 2005 and the contracting authority was the Municipality of Levice in Slovakia. It was for a printing supplier for the town's newsletter and was very successful. The money saved was invested in textbooks for school children. This marked the beginning of the use of PROEBIZ products and services by public procurers. We developed a professional assistance service for eAuctions and, utilising this expertise, digital

processes for the implementation of public tenders arose. As other providers have emerged on the market we have realised and been able to verify that our greatest strengths, allowing us to stand out from the crowd, are our expertise and the stability of our solution. We were reminded of this just last year when a new colleague, who had previously worked for a different provider, was surprised that neither the PROEBIZ SYSTEM nor JOSEPHINE ever "crashed" or slowed down even under a heavy workload. This will be appreciated by every procurer, because they work in real time and cannot afford to wait five minutes for a solution to finish its task. Another advantage differentiating us from the pack is the number of specialists available on the phone to help and advise in the formulation and setting up of tenders, to give advice on what kind of tender to use, or to send a verified template from a successful public tender.

**Martina Klacek**, Municipality of Žiar nad Hronom

#### **What led you to the digitalisation of public procurement?**

For a long time, we have been looking for a way to make the public procurement process more transparent, more efficient and faster. That was the basic idea. We were definitely convinced when we had the opportunity to work with the test version of the system, which we immediately started to use in cases that were not under the law. We have found that public procurement can be done more efficiently and with a reduced administrative burden.

#### **In which concrete ways does digitalisation help you?**

For me, as a user who is responsible for city contracts, the greatest benefit is transparency. The system can be set up anonymously so that I cannot see which companies have entered the tender and what bids have been made until the bidding is opened. Bids are opened simultaneously in front of the whole commission. Another benefit is financial savings. The resulting contract price has always been lower than the estimated value.

# JOSEPHINE

**Reliable, user-friendly and logical solution for the digitalisation of public procurement in full compliance with the requirements of national and European legislation.**

**A key step in the digitalisation of procurement is the judicious selection of a reliable solution and provider.**

JOSEPHINE is just such a solution and PROEBIZ is just such a provider. It fulfils the legal and procedural requirements necessary for contracting authorities to carry out complete procurement from beginning to end, without process errors, with transaction time savings and with speedy responsiveness. It offers easy and intuitive preparation and implementation of calls for tender and the evaluation of tenders. It allows for the retrieval of all information, electronic communications, tender documents, other documents and all reports with time-stamps, as well as the complete export of tenders. For the needs of more demanding clients it is possible to connect JOSEPHINE with the professional WORKFLOW and PROEBIZ SYSTEM solutions to create the extremely flexible JOSEPHINECHAIN solution, which allows for a tailor-made customisation of each component according to need. Basic JOSEPHINE training takes about five hours, including how to set up a public tender. During training, great care is taken to ensure that users acquire the skills to handle additional public

tenders themselves. Our PROEBIZ support team can be contacted at any time by email. We have established our reputation on their patience and quality. JOSEPHINE support services can also be provided to bidders and potential bidders in Slovak and a variety of other European languages.

## **PILOT SCHEME.**

For those who are undecided, we offer a two-month trial which we call BluePilot and users have the chance to try out all the features of the solution and its associated support service for free, apart from the initial training fee.



**Ondrej Kuruc,** Slovak Ministry of Health

### **How did your ideas about digitalising procurement work out in practice?**

I can say that 90% of everything works the way we imagined. Thanks to the fact that we were among the first to start using JOSEPHINE, we were able to influence its initial development by incorporating our knowledge from practice. Any other adjustments we're looking for are more about details to improve user comfort. These are features such as a calendar, the ability to alert you to the upcoming schedule, or a link to the public digital system.

### **In your opinion, what is the greatest advantage of digitalisation?**

It simplifies work and makes it easy to access and view all documents in one place. These are all reasons why I value the digitalisation of public procurement. I can say that in the last four years we have seen a significant increase in eAuctions in ministries, and we can say that we are currently moving towards full digital procurement. We also have some unique experience, for example, when we became the first state institution in Slovakia to sell surplus property using the PROEBIZ system. The premises were ultimately sold at a price that was several times higher than the estimated value.

**Veronika Ivaničová,** Slovak Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

### **What user requirements were key to you introducing digitalisation?**

Because we have a number of price criteria, we needed a system that would allow us to work with them in electronic auctions. In public procurement, we deal with above-threshold tenders and we would also like to launch a dynamic purchasing system linked to the National Food Catalogue. Another issue was low-value tenders. Basically, we wanted to implement all processes digitally in one system.

### **How important to you is support from the provider?**

I think that without the support of the provider with whom we communicate practically on a daily basis it would not work. We are now in a phase where we are trying to set up processes and technical assistance and consultation is key to us. We need to constantly discuss our ideas. Such intense cooperation is, in my view, essential at the start and is required for a number of months.



# PROEBIZ SYSTEM

**The most valuable moment in the procurement process, whether public or private, is the making the right decision when comparing bidders' bids.**

**Reliability, flexibility and support are the most appreciated advantages of the PROEBIZ SYSTEM for eAuctions.** It's the most widespread and heavily used eAuction solution in Central Europe. More than 100 eAuctions are carried out every day using it, some with complicated auxiliary calculations. On our stable server system, eAuctions have been carried out in five languages: Slovak, Czech, Polish, Croatian and German. In addition to these, six other languages are available to clients. The PROEBIZ SYSTEM support team has been designated HOUSTON ("Houston, we have a problem!") which has twenty specialists who can respond to queries and requests in several languages. The PROEBIZ SYSTEM is a certified solution for working in public procurement. The PROEBIZ SYSTEM has its origins in the original PROEBIZ software created in 2001. Having undergone many upgrades and updates, its development continues and we are constantly working hard to make it even better. We offer ten different types

of eAuction to our users, each suitable for a different type of negotiation. To be able to accurately differentiate the quality of bids, an extensive range of multicriteria evaluation methods are available in the eAuction solution, including using auxiliary calculations that are instantaneously converted into real-time results. The PROEBIZ SYSTEM can simultaneously evaluate multiple items using many criteria. ERMMA (English Reverse Multi-item Multicriteria Auction), our most widespread type of eAuction, was created in the PROEBIZ development workshops. Along with the PROEBIZ SYSTEM we can provide a library of proven eAuction templates for a variety of commodities with documentation which is suitable for public procurement.

We organise training at least once a month for working with the PROEBIZ SYSTEM in each region where we have a presence. More information can be found at [www.proebiz.com](http://www.proebiz.com).

**Branislav Šarmír,** VO SK

#### **How long have you been dealing with digitalisation and with what results?**

We have been working hard since 2016 on the digitalisation of the public procurement process in Slovakia and we have been working with eAuctions since 2010. Initially, these were primarily low-value tenders, but now there are also our first above-threshold tenders. I expect them to result in the same great savings of time and money and reduced transaction times that we have seen with low-value tenders, and especially in a reduction in the administrative burden.

#### **What do you think a good digital solution should do?**

I consider the main parameters to be clarity and comprehension, which is important for both the contracting authority and the tenderers. In short, it should be good enough that users do not have to read the manual but can logically go through the whole process. As far as technical requirements are concerned, it should of course always be a viable and reliable internet application in which you can see an overview of all the completed competitions. Protection against data misuse and fast responsiveness is also important.

# WORKFLOW

**Every organisation is a flow of work and capital. With WORKFLOW you will be able to manage this flow and keep it constantly under control**

**WORKFLOW is a specialised solution for the management, approval and sourcing of requirements whether lower value direct purchases or the processing of public tenders.** It improves efficiency and precision when managing the decision-making process from the moment a requirement is raised until its implementation. WORKFLOW is designed with a great emphasis on user intuitiveness and speed of work. It takes in to account the need to be easily accessible and usable for any employee in an organisation. It is important to note that a knowledge of public procurement legislation is not necessary for its operation and it can be made available to the staff of any number of divisions and departments within an organisation. The solution can be linked to a user's digital working environment, to a budget approval system, to JOSEPHINE or to the PROEBIZ SYSTEM. A notable feature is its amendment and approval procedure, which can be set up within an

organisation's established approval process. Approvals or amendments can be made by the appropriate staff successively, cascaded or in parallel. Each event is archived and can be easily retrieved. The whole process can be monitored, supported by email notifications and its progress overseen for accuracy. In the next stage the solution goes on to record the ordering and delivery status of the requirement, whether sourced by direct purchase or by tender, and creates a receipt for the applicant. WORKFLOW stands out for its flexibility and capacity for customisation. The request form, approval settings and amendment cycle can be modified in accordance with the client's needs. WORKFLOW is available in Czech, Slovak and Polish languages and can be tried out for two months under the BluePilot scheme. The user only has to pay for initial training in using the solution.

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## **Ivana Mudriková,**

Municipality of Trnava

### **What is the practical impact of digitalisation in your opinion?**

The introduction of procurement digitalisation has made the work of the public procurement staff more efficient, has reduced the administrative burden, has accelerated the work of commissions, and has simplified access to tenders for the management, because, depending on privileges granted, we are able to access and look into the preparation and award of tenders. Substitution is also an option. In short, the tender information is all in one place. We use PROEBIZ to sell property, while we use JOSEPHINE to call for tenders and for commonly available ECS products. Putting it into practice was intuitive with us. After just a few training sessions we knew how it all worked.

### **What aspect of digitalisation is the biggest challenge for you?**

We are now looking forward to further simplifying our work through WORKFLOW, which we are currently testing. We also expect to streamline the work for other specialist services when awarding public service contracts, processing specifications and acquiring tender documentation, and speed up the approval process with a minimum of paperwork. The challenge is to connect to the public administration information system. That would be the ideal situation.

### **What are your thoughts about digitalisation in practice?**

Occasionally suppliers see digitalisation as burdensome. This can help us to „enlighten“ potential bidders by clarifying the importance of digitalisation, so that candidates understand how it is beneficial to them and understand that digital communications allows for equal treatment of tenderers as well as creating a transparent environment for all applicants.

### **What do you think is the main benefit of digitalisation?**

As a leader, I appreciate that I can enter the system as an observer and see what competitions are currently being announced and how the communications are going, since we do not share premises with the staff of our department. Overall, I am happy with all the steps that simplify work for people. That is why we have now reached the stage where we handle all orders digitally.

