
Racking Recommendations

The following is the finding and recommendations of the workgroup on racking included in commodity procurements. The goal was to research for a better plan to procure commodity worker nodes that decreases the time of procurements. The main issue revolves around purchasing racks and the parts that go into the rack ahead of node procurement, or to continue to purchase racks with the node procurements. Listed below is what we think are some of the major pros and cons.

The Pros to buying racks ahead of node procurement.

1. Open the node procurement process to vendors who only supply nodes or to vendors who do not want to do rack solutions. More vendors can bid. Nodes may cost less.
2. The procurement of nodes should be faster, due to no rack process included.

The Cons to buying racks ahead of node procurement.

1. This process requires additional separate bids to be placed and process, more work for local project manager.
2. Depending on the degree of decoupling, there will be more work for managing a process that can have several different vendors doing work on the procurements.
3. Rack construction on site instead of at vendor's factory. The staging area maybe small.

We have been in practice buying racks without nodes for several projects where the nodes were re-racked from one density to another density and then moved to GCC or LCC. This process is understood and works fine.

The Pros to not buying racks ahead of node procurement.

1. Single vendor to deal with, may appeal to customers who only buy a single rack every few years and do not have staff to manage multiple vendor procurements.
2. Well understood process.

The Cons to not buying racks ahead of node procurement.

1. We limit the number of vendors who will participate in the bid.
2. Procurement can be longer with delays in logistics of rack parts or system parts. Need to plan your timeline of procurement.

So we recommend the following two options:

1. The first is to decouple racks procurement and further develop and refine procurements that decouple node procurement from rack procurement. Pre buy and overlap procurements of racks and nodes to shorten the time lines. Then use this process where it makes sense to.
2. The second is that we continue to use the present procurement process where it makes sense to, but further refine the process to make the timelines shorter.

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