Background

1. What is the basis for the ‘new’ partnership between RENSSELAER and VWR?

Last summer, Rensselaer launched a new Procure-to-Pay Enhancement Project to streamline the campus-wide buying and supplier payment process and leverage its buying power to reduce the cost of products and services required by our departments. In support of this project, the Institute engaged the E&I Enterprise Solutions Group to assist Procurement Services with this project. One of the early phases of the project is to review and enable those E&I competitively bid contracts that will help Rensselaer lower its cost of products and services. VWR, an E&I partner supplier, has proposed a program specifically designed for Rensselaer to include:

- Aggressive pricing on commonly ordered items at RENSSELAER, resulting in significant cost savings.
- Seamless integration of these savings into OSCAR, RENSSELAER’s Online Shopping Cart at RENSSELAER.
- Continued partnering to provide sustainable, documentable cost savings
- Dedicated resources to help with contract implementation, customer support, and technical assistance.

As a result of this proposal, VWR has been designated as the first Strategic Preferred Supplier at RENSSELAER, with an effective launch in January 2012.

2. How is the new “Strategic Preferred Supplier” program different from our existing relationship with VWR?

VWR will build upon the solid foundation already developed with the faculty and staff at RENSSELAER. You can continue to expect to receive your orders within 24-48 hours. You will not see freight charges on VWR orders, and will see lower prices on your high volume items. Bill Fitzpatrick will be your dedicated rep and will be supported by sales support and management to ensure that all users have access to field support.

3. What are some of the other benefits of the relationship?

In addition to the cost savings on the current RENSSELAER usage, VWR is investing in additional customer support, the elimination of all freight charges on standard deliveries, and the resources needed to provide cost savings beyond year one of the agreement.

4. How will RENSSELAER see those savings?

Starting on day one, prices on RENSSELAER’s usage list will be reduced. VWR will also be actively tracking cost savings and reporting those savings to RENSSELAER.
Benefits

5. How will this specifically benefit the users at RENSSELAER?
You can expect the best pricing combined with the best service and representation on campus. VWR will also facilitate on campus vendor shows and technical seminars with key manufacturers of laboratory products.

6. Who will be my contacts at VWR if there are questions?
Bill Fitzpatrick will continue to be the key point of contact for the RENSSELAER users. Bill has been serving the labs at the University for XX years. With this new program, Bill will be supported by the dedicated RENSSELAER Inside Team at VWR (see below). Bill can be reached at 518.763.4865 and his email is bill_fitzpatrick@vwr.com.

7. How do I reach the dedicated inside support team at VWR?
A dedicated email address, rpicustomerservice@vwr.com, has been set up to support the users at RENSSELAER. The dedicated phone line for this team is 877-877-881-1207. All of the staff on the support team have been trained on the RENSSELAER requirements, and this team’s mission is to provide courteous, knowledgeable and timely support. The team is led by Evie Johns-Liveman, who can be reached at evie_liverman-johns@vwr.com and 877-897-6377 x163185.

General Questions

8. How will orders be placed?
Your existing ordering programs will accommodate the pricing and terms of this partnership. VWR will be visible on OSCAR via a punchout catalog. Special quotes can be handled through the “quote to order” function on the punchout, and Bill is available to handle any unique requirements that may fall outside of the normal ordering system.

9. Will other suppliers be on OSCAR?
Yes, RENSSELAER will continue to use multiple suppliers. However, some of these suppliers will not have access to special pricing quotes from key manufacturers like Corning, BD, and Nalge Nunc. If you find pricing or services that VWR is not offering, please contact your VWR associates for assistance.

10. What if there is a product less expensive than VWR, or that VWR does not carry?
We ask that you immediately let your VWR contacts know, and let them investigate how they can save you money or source that product. While we may not be lower 100% of the time, we know that the total savings to RENSSELAER is significant.

11. How can I provide feedback on this program?
Through both VWR and RENSSELAER Procurement, your input is valuable. VWR will maintain both an email address, and a link on our web page to provide feedback. There will also be a regular survey tool to collect information on how to best service the faculty and staff.
12. Who are the RENSSELAER program sponsors?
The following RENSSELAER sponsors are leading the program and will be updated on all of our field activity.

- Rachael Kruse, Associate Director, Contract Administration, (518) 276-8327, kruser@rpi.edu

Looking Forward

13. How will RENSSELAER know that the program is ‘working’ as it is supposed to?
There will be regular performance checks to review cost savings, product additions, and service levels. These metrics will be available to the users, and reviewed with the steering committee.

14. What can we look forward to beyond the implementation?
As with all implementations of this type, there will be valuable feedback that will encourage new ideas and services to augment the best pricing. VWR will ask for participation of faculty and staff in a formal manner that keeps this program on track. Additional manufacturers will be added, pricing based on additional volume spend will be implemented, and services not currently enjoyed by users will be explored.