

Platforms: a useful channel, but rarely a business advantage

Frédéric Le Pennec · 5 October 2026



Platforms can open up opportunities, but they mostly expose needs to immediate competition. For a Business Manager, the challenge is to use them as a signal, without making them the main source of business development.

A Business Manager identifies a request on a platform: a quality engineer, six-month assignment, quick start. He checks a consultant's availability, searches for a candidate or independent contractor, updates their resume, and prepares a response. A few hours later, the client has already received dozens of applications.

This situation doesn't imply that the BM performed poorly. It primarily highlights that **the platform makes the need visible to many providers, often simultaneously.**

An opportunity already open to competition

A client doesn't always start by posting an ad. They might first look for a solution internally, recall a known consultant, or reach out to a referenced IT services company. The platform sometimes comes into play after these initial actions. The need is then visible, but the BM doesn't necessarily know the context or the suppliers already consulted.

The platform provides access to an opportunity, but not necessarily to the relationship that helps understand the need, modify the demand, or defend a proposal.

This doesn't render these tools useless. They can signal account activity, help identify sought-after skills, or open a first door in a yet unknown company. A well-targeted application can lead to an exchange, then other opportunities. It all depends on what the BM does with this information.

The risk arises when the platform becomes their primary source of opportunities. They then spend a lot of time responding to requests already open to competition and often intervene late in the sales cycle.

The criteria followed by platforms

The BM doesn't just respond to a request: they also contribute to their company's reputation as a supplier. Depending on the client's rules and the tool's functionalities, several criteria may be evaluated:

- **Speed of response**, especially when the need has just been published.
- **Budget alignment**, including the tariff's consistency with the announced budget.
- **Relevance of profiles**, concerning the tasks, skills, and experience required.
- **Reliability of information**, notably actual availability and start date.
- **Quality and completeness of the file**, as well as adherence to format and instructions.
- **Respect for commitments and deadlines**, for instance, to present a profile or start a mission.
- **Results of applications**, when the client monitors the rate of selected profiles or missions won.

These criteria vary by platforms and accounts. Some tools display grades or indicators; others evaluate suppliers without fully revealing their rules. It's up to the BM to seek understanding of practices unique to each client.

Speed matters, but it doesn't offset an incomplete response. Sending an excellent profile whose fee significantly exceeds the budget, without checking if it's negotiable, unnecessarily wastes the consultant's and team's time. Similarly, merely echoing the ad's words in a resume isn't enough: one must be able to explain how the proposed experience meets the actual tasks.

Responding quickly is beneficial when the process is reliable: need understood, availability verified, consistent tariff, and suitably adapted file. Otherwise, the BM mainly hastens the dispatch of irrelevant proposals.

AI also accelerates competition

AI can assist in analyzing a posting, preparing a response, or adapting a profile's presentation. It saves time, as long as the BM verifies results and maintains control over commercial judgment.

Other suppliers can use the same tools. A well-written file and close to the ad's vocabulary isn't, alone, an advantage. A well-reformulated profile remains a poor choice if it doesn't align with tasks, budget, or schedule.

AI can also support upstream work: synthesizing public information, preparing hypotheses to check, or suggesting questions for a meeting. It helps prepare; it doesn't confirm a need's existence nor build the relationship for the BM.

Working the account before publication

To be consulted earlier, the BM must know the accounts they target and regularly exchange with people who can enlighten them. This starts with a selection: where does their company have real legitimacy, thanks to its references, skills, or available consultants?

For example, an IT services company that has already supported software validation projects in the aerospace industry might focus efforts on a few sector players rather than contacting fifty random accounts.

Contact should then give the client a reason to engage. A general presentation of the IT services company or the question "Do you have needs?" rarely suffices. The BM might mention an issue related to the client's activity, then ask a question that opens the conversation.

They also need to know how to conduct the exchange: listen, delve into the issues, and distinguish an immediate request from a broader problem. "We need someone quickly" could mean a replacement, a pressured team, or a deadline to secure. These situations don't necessarily lead to the same response.

Qualification allows verifying the context, expected skills, timeline, decision-makers, and selection conditions. Without this, the BM might send a relevant-on-paper profile, only to find that the budget is locked or a supplier is already a priority.

Follow-up matters too. It's not about mechanical reminders but returning with a useful reason: information, a project-related question, or feedback. "I wanted to follow up with you" doesn't suffice to re-engage a conversation.

Keeping the platform in its proper place

Developing an account takes time. A useful meeting may lead to no need for several months. To encourage this work, indicators must go beyond the number of calls, meetings, or profiles sent. The manager can also track gathered information, agreed next steps, and detected opportunities before their publication.

A platform can signal a need, allow a response, and sometimes open an account. It becomes more interesting when the BM already knows the company and can communicate with a contact beyond the announcement.

Responding to a publication can win a mission. Working the account ahead helps understand why it exists and what could follow. Faced with a new request, the BM can thus ask themselves two questions: **"Can I seriously respond to this request?"** and **"What can I learn to better work this account tomorrow?"**