

Vermont Agency of Commerce & Community Development
Department of Tourism & Marketing
Deane C. Davis Building, 6th Floor
One National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05620-0501

Request for Proposal (RFP)

MEDIA BUYING

ADDENDUM 1

June 6, 2020

TO ALL BIDDERS OF RECORD:

This Addendum consists of 6 (six) pages.

Acknowledge receipt of this Addendum by entering its number and date on the Proposal Form. This Addendum forms a part of the Contract Documents and modifies them as follows:

Questions and Answers:

1. I was just wondering if we would have to be a resident of Vermont to do this.

Proposals are welcome from all qualified bidders. As noted in Section 3.3. of the RFP, all other considerations being equal, preference will be given first to resident bidders of the state.

2. Historically, what has been your Gross Media Planning and Buying Budget annually?

The Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing annual budget for media planning and buying is approximately \$2 million.

3. How many campaigns do you execute on an annual basis?

Usually three: seasonal campaigns for summer, fall and winter.

4. Is there a breakdown of budget allocation that you have used historically per campaign?

The annual budget is split approximately evenly between the three seasonal campaigns, although the summer campaign is more heavily resourced.

5. Do you breakdown your campaigns by seasonality, geo-targets (i.e. fly or drive markets), or experience pillar?



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Campaigns are organized per season (summer, fall and winter) with specific objectives defined for each campaign for geo- and behavioral- targeting.

6. Who is your current creative agency that will be delivering all creative?

Creative development is currently completed in-house. An RFP for creative services was recently posted, but no contract has been awarded.

7. Do they have the capability to deliver robust dynamic digital ad creative inclusive of video, display, and native?

Yes.

8. Will this media planning / buying engagement include paid social?

The successful bidder may be asked for media planning and buying services related to paid social, but the majority of social media management is completed by our in-house team.

9. Will this media planning / buying engagement include paid search?

The successful bidder may be asked for media planning and buying services related to paid search, but the Department also has a current contract for paid search consulting.

10. For billing, you mention that media costs will be direct billed to the state – is that direct bill from media vendor, or at the campaign level by selected media agency that will bill you for the net cost of the media and fees will be billed separately than media pass through costs?

Direct billing from media vendors to the state will be required. The successful bidder will need to confirm that all media billing is accurate through media reconciliation services requested in the RFP.

11. In Section 2.4, the RFP makes reference to research tools. Is the department (VDTM) willing to invest in research or research tools that are not provided by a media vendor if the costs are reasonable and assist in making strong media decision rationale?

Yes, recommendations on investments for research or research tools will be considered.

12. Will the selected agency designate their own research tools to work with, or will the department provide their own selected research partner for education and support?



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Bidders are encouraged to share in their proposal responses their approach to research or other data-driven strategies employed to inform media decisions, in addition to any specific tools that might be recommended.

13. Will marketing be focused predominantly on in-state (Vermont residents) tourism? Or will there be a specific portion allocated to drive (and fly) markets pending the outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic at the commencement of the contract?

This media buying contract will support the on-going work of the Department of Tourism and Marketing. While in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic an in-state strategy may be employed for a limited time, but the primary mission of the Department is to increase visitation and promote the state as a national and global travel destination.

14. Does this contract allow for subcontractors for specific media buying tasks such as search or event coordination?

Yes. As noted in Section 4.2.3., bidders must identify and address the background and experience of any subcontractors they intend to use for any portion of the work to be performed.

15. Could the media budget support promotional items that would benefit the media campaign or hardware such as event tents or banners/signage that would fall outside of media but be required to successfully fulfill a vendor media buy?

Recommendations for promotional items or investments in other items to support media campaigns will be considered.

16. Is the state allowed to work on any project management and communication tools such as basecamp or slack for ease of communication?

Yes, the Department has used both Basecamp and Slack in the past. To integrate with other current systems, Microsoft products such as Teams and Planner are preferred for communication and project management.

17. Will paid social be considered as part of the media buying, or would this be awarded to another contractor? If so, are there opportunities for collaboration to share information such as tracking/measurement protocols, best practices, historical learnings, and campaign benchmarks?

Refer to Answer for Question 8. Collaboration and the sharing of information is strongly encouraged between any outside vendors that work with the Department.



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18. What are VDTM's campaign goals/KPI's and target demographics as mentioned in section 2.3.1. of the RFP?

Refer to Answer for Question 5. Specific goals, objectives, targeting and KPIs are developed for each seasonal campaign.

19. Are there protocols in place to pivot marketing outreach or shift above goals/demographics in case Vermont encounters spikes in COVID-19 cases and needs to bring back tourism restrictions/enforce shelter-in-place measures?

Refer to Answer for Question 13. This media buying contract will support the on-going work of the Department of Tourism and Marketing -- to promote the state as a national and global travel destination, but to do so with strategies that are able to react to any prevailing market conditions, including COVID-19.

20. With the "Northeast" coming together with a unified approach to lessening travel restrictions (as outlined by Gov. Scott in recent press conferences), is there a likelihood of a multi-state funded media buy supporting tourism between states?

The Department is not aware of any such efforts at this time.

21. If we are already a contractor of the state of Vermont and/or Vermont Tourism, are we allowed to submit Vermont Tourism or State of Vermont examples?

Bidders are encouraged to share in their proposal responses any materials that would demonstrate the bidder's ability to provide the requested services as described in the RFP.

22. Could you clarify the overall budget available for this scope?

Refer to Answer for Question 2. The Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing annual budget for media planning and buying is approximately \$2 million.

23. Is there an incumbent firm / vendor who will potentially be responding to this RFP as well?

Proposals are welcome from all qualified bidders.

24. Will in-person meetings be required and if so, to what frequency?

Given the uncertainty of future work conditions under COVID-19 continues, the Department would not



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require in-person meetings at this time but could also anticipate in-person meetings would be desired at a future point within the contract term.

25. Is the selected firm required to have an office in Vermont?

No, proposals are welcome from all qualified bidders.

26. Is there a preference for Vermont-based firms vs. out of state?

Refer to Answer for Question 1.

27. Is tourism marketing experience required by the primary bidder?

Proposals are welcome from all qualified bidders. Knowledge of and expertise in destination marketing strategies is one of the evaluation criteria as noted in Section 3.3.1 of the RFP.

28. Do you have any additional information you could send?

This Addendum is the only additional information available at this time.

29. Since no budget parameters are provided for the media buys, is it acceptable to submit our hourly rates for associated services in the price proposal?

Yes, bidders are expected to the hourly cost per service on the Price Proposal as part of their response to this RFP.

30. What is your typical net media budget in a 12-month time period?

Refer to Answer for Question 2.

31. Is there a media budget already allocated for the initial year of this contract term?

Refer to Answer for Question 2.

32. Who is your current media buying agency?

Karen Fahey Advertising.



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33. Will the incumbent media buying agency be considered for this project?

Refer to Answer for Question 23. Proposals are welcome from all qualified bidders.

34. We see this requires Vermont business registration, does the registration process need to be complete before the RFP is answered or can we still be awarded if we start the process but registration for whatever reason is not complete by the RFP due date on Friday?

The Certificate of Compliance must be included in the bid submission, which states the Bidder agrees to register with the Vermont Secretary of State's office, among other provisions. It does not state that the registration process must be completed before bid submission.

35. Are you open to hiring an agency who's headquartered outside the state of Vermont?

Refer to Answer for Question 1.

END OF ADDENDUM #1

