

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

## **Social Media Agency of Record for New Orleans Tourism**

### **About New Orleans Tourism**

New Orleans Tourism (in this context) is comprised of the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau and the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation.

The New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau (NOCVB) is a nationally accredited, 1,100-member destination marketing organization. The NOCVB and its members influence thousands of decision-makers and millions of visitors to choose New Orleans through direct sales, marketing, public relations, branding and visitor services at our New Orleans headquarters and offices in Chicago, Washington, D.C. and four foreign countries.

The New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation (NOTMC) is the City of New Orleans' official leisure travel promotion agency created to foster jobs and economic growth by developing the tourism industry in New Orleans. Annually, NOTMC's marketing campaigns bring millions of visitors to New Orleans through a mix of strategic broadcast and digital advertising, partnerships and sponsored content, and public relations. Creative assets for NOTMC's current campaign, Follow Your NOLA, can be found here - <http://www.neworleansonline.com/share/>

### **Marketing Objectives:**

NOCVB and NOTMC are soliciting proposals for a social media agency or professional to design and execute a comprehensive social media campaign that will drive awareness, engagement, and channel growth and deliver a measurable return on investment to each organization.

The social media campaign will play an integral role in NOCVB's and NOTMC's entire tourism marketing efforts which consist of television and display advertising, sponsored content and media partnerships, as well as social media, email marketing and public relations. The plan should fully complement and support these initiatives toward NOCVB's and NOTMC's overarching objectives to:

- continue to increase annual visitation to New Orleans
- generate a total visitor spend of more than \$7 billion annually by 2018
- add 33,000 more jobs in the hospitality industry as a result of this growth by 2018

Proposals should take into account the current marketing efforts and robust coordination and collaboration between NOCVB, NOTMC and its current agencies of record, Deveney Communications, FSC Interactive, Communify, Dentsu America/360i and Spears Consulting, ensuring consistency and maximization of resources. Post-award, the selected agency will review and analyze NOCVB's and NOTMC's existing social media programs and make recommendations to consistently improve performance over the course of 2015.

NOCVB's and NOTMC's social media efforts will run year-round, with heavy emphasis on the cyclical low occupancy periods (typically summer, early winter and mid-week year round) while positioning New Orleans as the world's most unique and compelling destination.

**Target audiences:**

- Leisure visitors, and specifically, *experiential discoverers*, as identified by NOTMC's advertising agencies of record, throughout the continental United States, with specific focus on regional and key national flight markets.

Additionally, many audiences also consider New Orleans from different perspectives, which also need to be addressed in our messaging. These are:

- Meeting professionals (including planners and attendees)
- Corporate business travelers
- Travel professionals (travel agents, cruise industry, bus tour operators)
- Group leisure (weddings, reunions, etc.)
- CVB members

International travelers will be reached via social through the CVB's international offices; however, our messaging should not conflict with efforts to position New Orleans as a great destination for all visitors, including international travelers.

**Services required:**

- Planning - design a comprehensive, holistic annual social media plan that meets the overall marketing objectives for the tourism industry, eliminates duplication of messaging between the NOCVB and NOTMC's Twitter and Instagram channels, and addresses the core needs of both organizations' target audiences.
- Creative - write, design, capture, and produce all social content, including frequent (often daily) on-the-ground live coverage of special events in New Orleans.
- Optimization – consistent, results-focused testing and calibration of all social media messaging and advertising.
- Reporting – agency will deliver monthly reports to NOTMC and NOCVB to review campaign performance to date and easily export reports based on mutually determined KPIs. Agency will also provide weekly summary reports to NOTMC and NOCVB on all initiatives along with optimization recommendations via regular phone calls or in-person meetings as needed.
- Coordination – agency will work closely with NOTMC and NOCVB and their industry partners to provide creative support in all social media efforts for branded partner programs (ex. Christmas New Orleans Style, Be at Tourist in Your Own Hometown, etc.).
- Crisis monitoring - agency will provide in-depth social media monitoring, as well as proactive and reactive strategies and messaging in the event of a citywide crisis or emergency (including, but not limited to natural disasters, a major crime event or greater issues of public health and safety). Further crisis-specific initiatives may occur, and will be considered on a case-by-case

basis between agency and client.

**Existing Social Media Assets:**

- Facebook - Facebook.com/NewOrleans
- Pinterest - Pinterest.com/visitneworleans
  
- Twitter -
  - Twitter.com/NewOrleans
  - Twitter.com/VisitNewOrleans
  
- Instagram -
  - Instagram.com/NewOrleansCVB
  - Instagram.com/VisitNewOrleans

**Budget:**

Proposals should take into consideration a planned annual social media budget of approx. \$300,000, including all agency fees for creative, account service, strategy, implementation, optimization and reporting. Any social media ad placement will be on a net basis (no commission). Agency fees should be on a monthly or quarterly retainer and clearly separated from ad purchases. All proposals should specifically outline hourly rates and services, as well as the billing process.

**Proposal Elements:**

All proposals will be judged on the following:

- Approach to program and primary program elements, evaluation criteria, and benchmarks for success – 35 points
- Brief case histories that demonstrate direct experience in social media (tourism experience a plus) – 30 points
- Explanation of agency’s billing procedures including rates and mark-ups – 10 points
- Infrastructure currently in place with list of team members to be assigned to the project, including specific social media roles identified, bios and client history – 10 points
- Plans to include participation by a qualified DBE, including level of participation - 10 points
- List of client references with contact information - 5 points

**RFP Guidelines:**

All proposals shall clearly demonstrate the applicant’s qualifications to perform the responsibilities outlined in the “Services Required” section of this RFP. Proposals shall further contain substantive

sections addressing the “Proposal Elements” factors in this RFP. Additionally, all proposals shall address all factors applicable in a professional relationship between Agency and NOTMC/NOCVB.

All proposals and all documentation submitted in response to this RFP are NOTMC and NOCVB property for all purposes. Applicants will clearly mark documents or information claimed exempt from public records disclosure and specifically justify the exemption. NOTMC and NOCVB will not credit any blanket exemption claims lacking specific justification. NOTMC and NOCVB do not guarantee the confidentiality of submissions.

This Request for Proposal, any Proposals submitted in reference thereto, and any related discussions or evaluations by anyone create no rights or obligations whatsoever. NOTMC and NOCVB may cancel or modify this solicitation at any time at will, with or without notice.

**Questions regarding the RFP should be addressed to Jeremy Cooker via email at [jeremy@notmc.com](mailto:jeremy@notmc.com) and Lauren Cason at [LCason@NewOrleansCVB.com](mailto:LCason@NewOrleansCVB.com). Please submit all questions no later than 5 PM CT, August 27, 2014.**

**All proposals (6 copies) should be mailed or hand delivered no later than end of business on September 4, 2014 to New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation, Attn: Social Media RFP, 2020 St. Charles Avenue, 4th Floor, New Orleans, LA 70130.**

Following the submission of Proposals and their initial review by NOTMC and NOCVB, those agencies submitting Proposals may be contacted for the purposes of, without limitation, scheduling presentations, attending meetings, or addressing additional questions related to their Proposals, as applicable. NOTMC and NOCVB anticipate this process to occur during the month of September 2014.

Final review and notifications of up to but no more than three finalists is anticipated to occur on or about September 26, 2014. Finalists will be asked to make a presentation (format of presentation to be announced) to NOTMC and NOCVB on or about October 8, 2014. NOTMC and NOCVB will then consider each presentation and the respective Proposals in order to select the winning agency. The winning agency will be expected to become a member of the NOCVB and begin performing services on January 1, 2015.