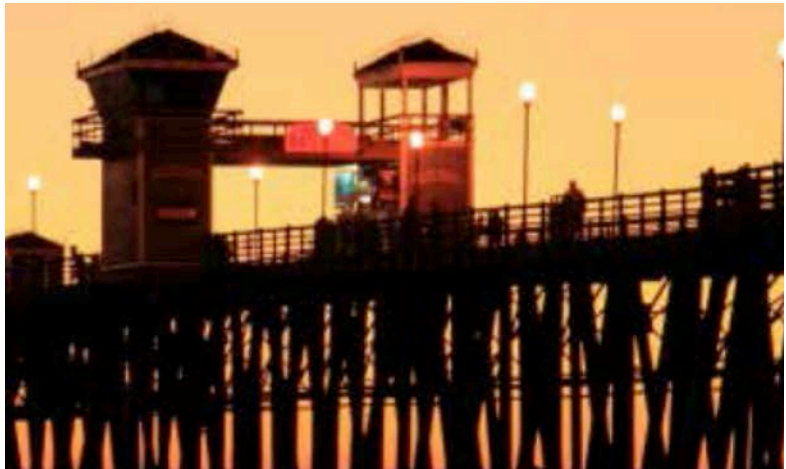




DiscoverAmerica.com

Request for Proposal



**Global Media Relations
September 30, 2014**





Request for Proposal

INTRODUCTION

Brand USA is a public-private not for profit organization created by the Travel Promotion Act of 2009. The mission of Brand USA is to generate increased international visitation to the United States and to grow its share of the global travel market. Brand USA will accomplish this via marketing campaigns and programs and partnerships with the travel industry. The incremental increase in international visitation will generate billions of dollars of revenue, which will in turn create new American jobs.

While the United States welcomed 60 million visitors in 2010, its share of the international travel market has decreased significantly over the past decade. The U.S. share of long haul international travel fell from 17.2 percent in 2000 to 12.4% percent in 2010. Brand USA, the U.S.'s National Tourism Marketing Organization will reinvigorate the nation's image and recapture its share of the market.

Brand USA delivers a dynamic marketing program that includes, but is not limited to, a global advertising campaign, earned media and public relations strategies, a robust social media outreach plan, promotional and incentive campaigns, trade shows and sales missions, and educational campaigns about U.S. entry policies. Brand USA carefully selected its marketing tools and target audience after vigorous analysis of existing and original market research.

Brand USA is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors. Each director is appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce. Each director represents a sector of the travel and tourism industry as identified by the Travel Promotion Act. The executive leadership team possesses strong expertise and experience in the travel, tourism, and advertising industries.

Brand USA is committed to including diverse firms as an important part of its sourcing and procurement activities. In furtherance and support of this goal, we encourage minority, women and locally-owned firms to pursue business opportunities with us. Minority and women-owned firms who otherwise meet the minimum requirements set forth in this Request for Proposal are encouraged to submit a Notice of Intent to Bid. In addition, Brand USA also seeks to do business with firms that also recognize the value of diversity and inclusion in the composition of their workforce and in their own contracting, subcontracting or teaming activities. We encourage such firms who meet the minimum bidding requirements (regardless of size or ownership) to also submit a Notice of Intent to Bid. Brand USA reserves the right to give weight or allocate bidding credit to diverse firms or those with a demonstrated commitment to inclusion as part of its evaluation process.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify the appropriate global media relations partner. As Brand USA works to build brand awareness and credibility both internationally and domestically, it needs a partner who will actively share the “good news” stories of why the United States should be the destination of choice for international travelers, as well as the business case of how travel positively impacts the United States economy – at the national, regional and local levels.

As our agency, the selected firm will be responsible for supporting and maximizing all Brand USA global public relations and media efforts as it relates to engaging in an “overarching” communications effort aimed at key international travel media influencers.

SCOPE OF WORK

Brand USA seeks to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of its communication and media efforts through the selection of a global media relations agency. The selected agency will be responsible for providing strong strategy and insight development for global campaigns that would inform Brand USA’s overall media direction across all communication channels. The selected agency’s responsibilities will include the below objectives.

Objectives

- Position Brand USA as an ambassador for U.S. tourism worldwide.
- Focus on international tourism to the United States and outlook of what’s to come in 2015.
- Establish working relationships with influential global media covering travel today.
- Enhance the credibility of the organization and its effectiveness in attracting foreign travel and visitor spending to the U.S.
- Mitigate potential negative issues while increasing level of goodwill for the organization, elevating appeal for its creativity, effectiveness, and ethical leadership.
- Emphasize business priorities including focusing on the promotion of the diverse tourism opportunities within the U.S.
- Extend domestic public relations efforts to assist in attracting additional partners both within the tourism industry and beyond.
- Secure targeted broadcast opportunities of Brand USA’s marquee programs and initiatives (i.e. Culinary strategy, Great Outdoors, etc.).

QUALIFICATIONS

- **Brand management:** Ability to drive brand consistency with appropriate localized nuances across international markets.
- **Global media** experience demonstrated by the execution of media strategies that result in positive media coverage.
- **Travel/tourism or hospitality** industry experience and demonstrated knowledge in cooperative marketing.
- **Local perspective** in our core markets, to include messaging/channel restrictions and language & translation best practices.
- **Planning and execution of media:** agency must be able to react quickly to tight turnarounds when necessary.

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SPECS

Proposal format is open to presentation style and delivery of the proposing team, but it must include the following information:

- Company history and background in media relations for global brands.
- Case studies (minimum of two) with demonstrated results relevant to Brand USA (industry, geographic or scale similarity).
- Overview of process and methodology used for campaign strategy development.
- Illustration of how the agency team and Brand USA team interacts as a part of the continuous planning, development, execution and optimization process.
- Competitive review process proposed/example.
- Overview of assigned team that would work with Brand USA.
- Fee structure (for current and incremental budget allocations).

BUDGET

Proposer must submit an appropriate and realistic budget, outlining each of the duties.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must address each item listed, giving specific details of techniques to be used in achieving these requirements. Proposals may be rejected if minimum requirements are not met. All proposers wishing clarification of this RFP must submit questions in writing to Brand

USA, no later than **October 3, 2014** (due by 3:00 pm, EDT), and sent by email to **rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com**.

Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the proposer and shall not be reimbursed by Brand USA.

1. **Notice of Intent to Bid (Attachment 1)** must be received by **October 13, 2014** (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT).

The notice shall be sent by email to **rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com** at the Brand USA office. The NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID, is nonbinding; however, it ensures the receipt of all addenda related to this RFP. Proposals will be accepted only from applicants who submitted a timely NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID.

2. **RFP Responses** must contain the following information:
 - a. Executive Summary
 - b. Services and Activities: Provide description of the nature of the organization's services and activities. Note when the business was established, brief history and location. List the location(s) of the office(s) from which the primary work on this contract would be performed.
 - c. Three examples of work.
 - d. One to two creative media ideas
 - e. No Conflict of Interest: Client relationships that could potentially be considered a conflict of interest must be listed.
 - f. Contract Manager/Team: Identify one individual on the proposer's account team who will manage the contract work. Identify the role of each member who will service the account. Current resumes must be attached for each person who would in any way be associated with this account.
 - g. References: Provide at least two references.
 - h. Budget
 - i. Timeline and/or Project Plan
3. **Certification Form (Attachment 2)**: Must be signed and accompany all RFP Response submissions.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This tentative schedule may be altered at any time at the discretion of Brand USA. Brand USA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or any part thereof; waive an informality in the proposals and accept the proposal that best meets the needs of Brand USA.

A. Proposal Released	September 30, 2014
B. Written Questions (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT)	October 8, 2014
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA Website	October 10, 2014
D. Notice of Intent To Bid Due (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT)	October 13, 2014
E. Proposal Due (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT)	October 20, 2014
F. Proposal Evaluation by scoring committee	October 24, 2014
G. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	October 27, 2014

DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Each bidder is required to deliver an electronic version of its proposal to Brand USA's RFP Admin, no later than **October 20, 2014** (3:00 p.m. EDT). Physical copies of the proposal may be sent to the address listed on Attachment 1.

EVALUATION AND CONTRACTING

All proposals satisfying the requirements of this Request for Proposals will be evaluated to establish which of the providers best fulfills the needs of Brand USA and this project. This Request for Proposals in no way commits Brand USA to award a contract, to pay any costs in preparation of a proposal, or to contract for the goods and/or services offered. Brand USA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified providers or to cancel this Request for Proposals. After awarding the contract, the schedule will include a period of collaboration between Brand USA and the selected Contractor to better define, elaborate upon, and fix the Contractor's final Scope of Work and general Terms and Conditions.



Request for Proposal

ATTACHMENT 1

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID

Due: October 13, 2014, 3:00 PM EDT.

SEND TO:

Brand USA Headquarters
C/O RFP Administrator
1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20006
ATTN: RFP - Global Media Relations
Phone: 202.536.2060
Email: rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com

NAME OF BIDDER / COMPANY:
CONTACT PERSON:
MAILING ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE:
FAX:
E-MAIL ADDRESS:
SIGNED:



Request for Proposal

ATTACHMENT 2

CERTIFICATION

Please include this statement as part of the Proposal

Certification Statement

By submission of this proposal and authorized signature below, Proposer certifies that the undersigned corporate officer has authority to bind the bidder to the terms of this Proposal and hereby certifies on behalf of the bidder that:

1. He/she has read and understands all commitments and terms of this Proposal.
2. The information contained in this Proposal is accurate.
3. Proposer's quote is valid for at least 120 days from the date of proposal's signature below.
4. Proposer understands that if selected as the successful Proposer, he/she will have ten (10) business days in which to complete contract negotiations, if any, and execute the final contract document. Date of execution can be extended by mutual agreement of contractor / Brand USA.

Authorized
Signature:

Title:

Typed or Printed
Name:

Date

Official Contact

Brand USA requests that the Proposer designate one person to receive all communications for clarification and verification of information related to this proposal. Please identify this point of contact below:

Official Contact
Name

Phone number:

Official Contact
Title

Facsimile Number:

E-mail Address

Street, City, State, Zip



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ATTACHMENT 3

FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

Bid/Proposal: _____

Evaluated By: _____

Date: _____

PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation committee will judge each written proposal based on the following criteria:

	MAX. POINTS	SCORE
1. Demonstrated execution of media strategies that result in positive media coverage	25	
2. Strategic thinking (message platforms, channel strategy, integration)	25	
3. Demonstrated results with relevant (international) scope campaigns	20	
4. Demonstrated experience in tourism and hospitality industry	15	
5. Cost effectiveness	15	
TOTAL POINTS	100	