

**STATE OF MAINE**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**Office of Tourism**



**RFP# 202108118**

**Advertising and Marketing Services**

<b>RFP Coordinator</b>	<i>All communication regarding this RFP <u>must</u> be made through the RFP Coordinator identified below.</i> <b><u>Name:</u></b> Micki Mullen <b><u>Title:</u></b> Marketing Manager <b><u>Contact Information:</u></b> <a href="mailto:micki.mullen@maine.gov">micki.mullen@maine.gov</a>
<b>Submitted Questions Due</b>	<i>All questions <u>must</u> be received by the RFP Coordinator identified above by:</i> <b><u>Date:</u></b> <b>Wednesday, September 22, 2021</b> , no later than 11:59 p.m., local time
<b>Proposal Submission</b>	<i>Proposals <u>must</u> be received by the Division of Procurement Services by:</i> <b><u>Submission Deadline:</u></b> <b>Friday, October 15, 2021</b> , no later than 11:59 p.m., local time. <i>Proposals <u>must</u> be submitted electronically to the following address:</i> <b><u>Electronic (email) Submission Address:</u></b> <a href="mailto:Proposals@maine.gov">Proposals@maine.gov</a>

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

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**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**RFP# 202108118**  
**Advertising and Marketing Services**

The State of Maine is seeking proposals from an agency to support and expand the tourism industry in Maine and promote the state as a tourism destination. The agency shall develop and execute a statewide, year-round tourism marketing program in key domestic and Canadian markets, and provide a full complement of marketing services including, but not limited to, strategic planning, market analysis, market segmentation, positioning, branding, creative/production services, media services, and web services.

A copy of the RFP, as well as the Question & Answer Summary and all amendments related to the RFP, can be obtained at:

<https://www.maine.gov/dafs/bbm/procurementservices/vendors/rfps>.

Proposals must be submitted to the State of Maine Division of Procurement Services, via e-mail, at: [Proposals@maine.gov](mailto:Proposals@maine.gov). Proposal submissions must be received no later than 11:59 p.m., local time, on **Friday, October 15, 2021**. Proposals will be opened the following business day. Proposals not submitted to the Division of Procurement Services' aforementioned e-mail address by the aforementioned deadline will not be considered for contract award.

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# State of Maine - Department of Economic and Community Development

*Office of Tourism*

**RFP# 202108118**

## **Advertising and Marketing Services**

### **PART I INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Purpose and Background**

The Department of Economic and Community Development (Department) is seeking proposals to provide Advertising and Marketing Services as defined in this Request for Proposals (RFP) document. This document provides instructions for submitting proposals, the procedure and criteria by which the Provider(s) will be selected and the contractual terms which will govern the relationship between the State of Maine (State) and the awarded Bidder(s).

The Office of Tourism is a division within the Department of Economic and Community Development charged with administering a program to support and expand the tourism industry and promote the state of Maine as a tourist destination. The successful Bidder is expected to develop and execute a marketing program that will promote sustainable visitation and increase visitor expenditures in Maine with an emphasis on driving non-resident, overnight visitors to both inland and coastal regions of the state.

The Bidder shall provide a full complement of marketing services including, but not limited to, account management, strategic planning, market analysis, market segmentation, positioning, branding, creative/production services, media services, and web services.

Additionally, all work must support the Department's Five-Year Strategic Plan ([https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Maine\\_5Year\\_Strategy\\_Plan\\_2019-2023.pdf](https://motpartners.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Maine_5Year_Strategy_Plan_2019-2023.pdf)) introduced in 2019. Visitor research, annual reports and past advertising samples, along with other useful resources are available at MOTPartners.com.

#### **B. Overall Objectives**

Position Maine as a premier four-season destination in New England through development and execution of a statewide, year-round tourism marketing program in key domestic and Canadian markets that will sustainably increase overnight visitation and increase direct expenditures by those visiting Maine. When we talk about sustainable visitation, we are talking about distributing visitation more evenly across the state and throughout the year, providing the appropriate amount of visitation so as not to overburden communities and attractions. Given the diversity of Maine's geography and product offerings, peak season is different in coastal regions versus inland regions, so the successful Bidder's strategy should reflect this. The Bidder should be prepared to assist the Department with other marketing initiatives that result from growth in tourism, such as attracting a tourism workforce, attracting businesses that enhance the state's tourism offerings, and working cooperatively with the Department on developing new experiences that align with tourism trends.

## **C. Situation Analysis**

Tourism is an important economic engine for Maine with an estimated 16.5 million visitors in 2019 and direct expenditure of approximately \$6.5 billion. In 2020, Maine visitation dropped by nearly 27% with expenditures dropping by the same amount due to COVID-19.

Maine has traditionally been a drive destination with approximately 80% of visitors arriving by car. However, the state's two largest airports, Portland International Jetport and Bangor International Airport, have experienced a significant increase in new non-stop air service in the past couple of years, providing opportunities to attract visitors from these new air markets.

Like many states, Maine is experiencing a significant increase in visitors coming for outdoor recreation. With increased usage, many outdoor recreation sites are experiencing overuse and misuse. It will be incumbent upon the Bidder to take this into consideration as they develop a marketing program for the state.

The Maine Film Office is a division within the Office of Tourism. The Bidder will occasionally be required to assist the Film Office with projects.

The Bidder is expected to be nimble and adjust quickly to changing circumstances. While a long-term strategy is necessary for success, the ability to pivot based upon market conditions and customer preferences is a necessary qualification for the Bidder.

## **D. General Provisions**

1. From the time the RFP is issued until award notification is made, all contact with the State regarding the RFP must be made through the RFP Coordinator. No other person/ State employee is empowered to make binding statements regarding the RFP. Violation of this provision may lead to disqualification from the bidding process, at the State's discretion.
2. Issuance of the RFP does not commit the Department to issue an award or to pay expenses incurred by a Bidder in the preparation of a response to the RFP. This includes attendance at personal interviews or other meetings and software or system demonstrations, where applicable.
3. All proposals must adhere to the instructions and format requirements outlined in the RFP and all written supplements and amendments (such as the Summary of Questions and Answers), issued by the Department. Proposals are to follow the format and respond to all questions and instructions specified below in the "Proposal Submission Requirements" section of the RFP.
4. Bidders will take careful note that in evaluating a proposal submitted in response to the RFP, the Department will consider materials provided in the proposal, information obtained through interviews/presentations (if any), and internal Departmental information of previous contract history with the Bidder (if any). The Department also reserves the right to consider other reliable references and publicly available information in evaluating a Bidder's experience and capabilities.
5. The proposal must be signed by a person authorized to legally bind the Bidder and must contain a statement that the proposal and the pricing contained therein will remain valid and binding for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
6. The RFP and the awarded Bidder's proposal, including all appendices or attachments, will be the basis for the final contract, as determined by the Department.
7. Following announcement of an award decision, all submissions in response to this RFP will be public records, available for public inspection pursuant to the State of Maine

Freedom of Access Act (FOAA) ([1 M.R.S. §§ 401](#) et seq.).

8. The Department, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to recognize and waive minor informalities and irregularities found in proposals received in response to the RFP.
9. All applicable laws, whether or not herein contained, are included by this reference. It is the Bidder's responsibility to determine the applicability and requirements of any such laws and to abide by them.

#### **E. Contract Terms**

The Department is seeking a cost-efficient proposal to provide services, as defined in the RFP, for the anticipated contract period defined in the table below. Please note, the dates below are estimated and may be adjusted, as necessary, in order to comply with all procedural requirements associated with the RFP and the contracting process. The actual contract start date will be established by a completed and approved contract.

Contract Renewal: Following the initial term of the contract, the Department may opt to renew the contract for two renewal periods, as shown in the table below, and subject to continued availability of funding and satisfactory performance.

The term of the anticipated contract, resulting from this RFP, is defined as follows:

Period	Start Date	End Date
Initial Period of Performance	January 1, 2022*	December 31, 2022
Renewal Period #1	January 1, 2023	December 31, 2024
Renewal Period #2	January 1, 2025	December 31, 2027

\*The contract is scheduled to begin on January 1, 2022. However, if a bidder other than the incumbent is awarded the contract, the Department reserves the right to negotiate an earlier start date to allow for transition prior to January 1, 2022.

#### **F. Number of Awards**

The Department anticipates making one award as a result of the RFP process. The Department, however, reserves the right to make one or multiple awards, whichever is in the best interest of the State, as a result of this RFP process.

## **PART II      SCOPE OF SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED**

Bidders, in their proposals, **must** ensure narrative responses are presented in a format which reflect the respective header titles below.

### **A.    Brand Management**

Bidder shall possess a deep understanding and knowledge of the Maine brand, as well as extensive experience with brand management and brand strategy. Provide recommendations on integrating the brand into every aspect of tourism and film marketing activity including, but not limited to, traditional and digital paid media, web site development and SEO, strategic partnerships, travel/trade shows, and visitor centers. To maintain and support the brand, the agency may be asked to provide input on other campaigns that are not designed to increase visitation to the state, but could impact tourism, including workforce attraction and investment attraction.

### **B.    Market Analysis**

Conduct on-going market research including, but not limited to, segmentation research, analyzing market trends, analyzing website trends, ad testing, web user experience testing, capturing and understanding traveler insights and data, and using this information to develop targeted marketing programs designed to drive sustainable overnight visitation and maximize visitor expenditures in the state.

### **C.    Tourism Development Plan**

Assist the Department in the development and implementation of an annual, statewide tourism plan that aligns with the current Five-Year Strategic Plan, balances brand awareness and includes the development and marketing of niche experiences. The comprehensive plan, which must address all major programmatic elements herein described, must include:

1. Identification of target markets;
2. Specific strategies that include measurable objectives for target markets;
3. Tactics to achieve the objectives; and,
4. Measurement of campaign results.

Additionally, the Bidder shall assist the Department with development of the Office of Tourism's next Five-Year Strategic Plan for the years of 2024 through 2028.

### **D.    Account Services**

1. Provide a day-to-day point of contact for Department staff responsible for overall management of the account, including contracts, budgets, billing, quality control, and project management to assure projects are delivered on time and on budget.
2. Attend and present at quarterly Department meetings, the Maine Governor's Conference on Tourism and other tourism related conferences and events as needed.

### **E.    Strategic Partnerships**

Identify companies or organizations with like-minded brand values/attributes to develop, manage and execute strategic partnerships to meet the needs of today's visitors.

## **F. Media Services**

1. Utilize primary and secondary research resources to quantitatively and qualitatively evaluate media opportunities and advertising performance including media trends and audience recommendations.
2. Include a national media strategy to maximize exposure for Maine, drive sustainable visitation and increase the state's domestic and Canadian market share. This includes planning, purchasing and placement of all paid media.
3. Negotiate added-value marketing opportunities throughout media channels.
4. Report on campaign performance for traditional media, provide detailed tracking for all digital advertising and evaluate analytics for on-going optimization of campaign performance.
5. Check all paid media for accuracy, appearance, and quality.
6. Verify all paid media ran as scheduled.
7. Collaborate with the Department's public relations contractor who has responsibility for the organic social media program. Please note that public relations work, such as pitching story ideas to travel media, is not the responsibility of the Bidder and should not be included in the proposal.

## **G. Creative Services**

1. Design, produce, and manage integrated marketing campaigns using the most effective media channels to reach the target audiences. This includes brand development and advertising work for the Department, as well as occasional projects for the Film Office and individual tourism regions/partners, as directed by the Department. The Bidder should develop a year-round tourism marketing program that changes seasonally to target the appropriate audiences. The Department defines the seasons as: Spring/Summer, Fall and Winter.
2. Plan and manage all aspects of photo/video shoots and/or asset acquisition necessary to market Maine. Photo and video assets shall be produced or acquired for spring/summer, fall and winter marketing programs.
3. Design materials for the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism to include the website masthead, Maine Highlights Sheet, Annual Report for the Office of Tourism and Film Office for the year completed and Annual Plans for the Office of Tourism and Film Office for the upcoming year. Links to these documents may be found at [MaineTourismConference.com](http://MaineTourismConference.com).
4. Negotiate licensing agreements with third-party vendors for materials used to create campaign assets. All original advertising material or specific rights to material created or negotiated for or on behalf of the Department such as copy, photography, illustration, artist's layouts or design sketches, and storyboards are the property of the Department, unless otherwise stated in a Professional Services contract, once contractor charges are fully paid.

## **H. Web Services**

1. Redesign and on-going management, hosting and maintenance of the Department's consumer-facing tourism web site, [www.visitmaine.com](http://www.visitmaine.com) with new Content Management System (CMS) and an intuitive, easy to use interface for visitors that allows for inspiration and easy vacation planning. This includes hosting and maintenance of current site until the new website is complete.



2. Evaluate the Department's Tech Share program and provide a recommendation for how the Department can best align Department and Tech Share partner web sites. Tech share is an agreement that enables several regional marketing organizations to host their web sites using the Department's content management system. The Department currently uses [Elebase](#). Participating sites include:
  - a. <https://visitaroostook.com/>
  - b. <https://downeastacadia.com/>
  - c. <https://kennebecvalley.org/>
  - d. <https://mainelakesandmountains.com/>
  - e. <https://mainesmidcoast.com/>
  - f. <https://themainehighlands.com/>The successful Bidder shall maintain the existing Tech Share system until a suitable alternative is developed and put into place or the system is discontinued. This includes assisting businesses with organization listings as needed.
3. Annual hosting and maintenance of the Department's consumer-facing tourism web site, [VisitMaine.com](#) and the Department's Film Office web site, [FilminMaine.com](#).
4. Annual evaluation of [VisitMaine.com](#) and [FilminMaine.com](#) web sites for SEO and usability.
5. Negotiate fees and pay all costs associated with the software necessary to implement the Department's tourism marketing program. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - a. Annual content management system (Elebase or Bidder recommendation)
  - b. Annual digital mapping services (Google Maps or Bidder recommendation)
  - c. Annual email marketing services (Bronto or Bidder recommendation)
  - d. Annual mobile location data tracking and digital ad tracking services (Arrivalist)
6. Annual hosting and maintenance of the Department's industry-facing tourism web site, [www.MOTPartners.com](http://www.MOTPartners.com)
7. Manage all domain names owned by the Department and domain redirects.

#### **I. Other Services**

1. The Bidder shall provide a means of reporting on key performance indicators (KPIs) for review by the Department in the form of a dashboard or other reporting system.
2. The Bidder shall pay for storage and maintenance of the Department's trade show exhibits.
3. Each year the Department issues marketing grants to the eight tourism regions within the state. The Bidder is expected to participate in the regional grant application review process by serving as a member of the grant application review committee.
4. The Bidder is expected to provide support and assistance to the Maine Film Office.
5. As a division within the Maine Department of Economic and Community Development, the Bidder may also be asked to work on other relevant departmental projects.

#### **J. Industry Outreach & Education**

1. Assist the Department with developing presentations for local, regional, statewide, and nationwide groups. Bidder may be required to consult with and provide guidance to Maine's regional marketing organizations as well as other Department marketing partners.
2. While it is not a requirement for the Bidder to have an office in Maine, the Bidder will be required to attend meetings and make presentations in the state and must be prepared to travel to Maine as needed.

## PART III KEY RFP EVENTS

### A. Questions

1. **General Instructions:** It is the responsibility of all Bidders and other interested parties to examine the entire RFP and to seek clarification, in writing, if they do not understand any information or instructions.
  - a. Bidders and other interested parties must use **Appendix D – Submitted Questions Form** – for submission of questions. The form is to be submitted as a WORD document.
  - b. The Submitted Questions Form must be submitted, by e-mail, and received by the RFP Coordinator, identified on the cover page of the RFP, as soon as possible but no later than the date and time specified on the RFP cover page.
  - c. Submitted Questions must include the RFP Number and Title in the subject line of the e-mail. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete/on time e-mail transmission and receipt.
2. **Question & Answer Summary:** Responses to all questions will be compiled in writing and posted on the following website no later than seven (7) calendar days prior to the proposal due date: [Division of Procurement Services RFP Page](#). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain a copy of the Question & Answer Summary. Only those answers issued in writing on this website will be considered binding.

### B. Amendments

All amendments released in regard to the RFP will also be posted on the following website: [Division of Procurement Services RFP Page](#). It is the responsibility of all interested parties to go to this website to obtain amendments. Only those amendments posted on this website are considered binding.

### C. Submitting the Proposal

1. **Proposals Due:** Proposals must be received no later than 11:59 p.m. local time, on the date listed on the cover page of the RFP. E-mails containing original proposal submissions, or any additional or revised proposal files, received after the 11:59 p.m. deadline will be rejected without exception.
2. **Delivery Instructions:** E-mail proposal submissions are to be submitted to the State of Maine Division of Procurement Services at [Proposals@maine.gov](mailto:Proposals@maine.gov).
  - a. Only proposal submissions received by e-mail will be considered. The Department assumes no liability for assuring accurate/complete e-mail transmission and receipt.
  - b. E-mails containing links to file sharing sites or online file repositories will not be accepted as submissions. Only e-mail proposal submissions that have the actual requested files attached will be accepted.
  - c. Encrypted e-mails received which require opening attachments and logging into a proprietary system will not be accepted as submissions. Please check with your organization's Information Technology team to ensure that your security settings will not encrypt your proposal submission.
  - d. File size limits are 25MB per e-mail. Bidders may submit files separately across multiple e-mails, as necessary, due to file size concerns. All e-mails and files must be received by the due date and time listed above.

- e. Bidders are to insert the following into the subject line of their e-mail proposal submission: **“RFP# 202108118 Proposal Submission – [Bidder’s Name]”**
- f. Bidder’s proposal submissions are to be broken down into multiple files, with each file named as it is titled in bold below, and include:
- **File 1 [Bidder’s Name] – Preliminary Information:**  
*PDF format preferred*  
**Appendix A** (Proposal Cover Page)  
**Appendix B** (Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification)  
All required eligibility documentation stated in PART IV, Section I.
  - **File 2 [Bidder’s Name] – Organization Qualifications and Experience:**  
*PDF format preferred*  
All required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section II.
  - **File 3 [Bidder’s Name] – Proposed Services:**  
*PDF format preferred*  
All required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section III.
  - **File 4 [Bidder’s Name] – Cost Proposal:**  
*PDF format preferred*  
**Appendix C** (Cost Proposal Form) and all required information and attachments stated in PART IV, Section IV.

## **PART IV PROPOSAL SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

This section contains instructions for Bidders to use in preparing their proposals. The Department seeks detailed yet succinct responses that demonstrate the Bidder's qualifications, experience, and ability to perform the requirements specified throughout the RFP.

The Bidder's proposal must follow the outline used below, including the numbering, section, and sub-section headings. Failure to use the outline specified in PART IV, or failure to respond to all questions and instructions throughout the RFP, may result in the proposal being disqualified as non-responsive or receiving a reduced score. The Department, and its evaluation team, has sole discretion to determine whether a variance from the RFP specifications will result either in disqualification or reduction in scoring of a proposal. Rephrasing of the content provided in the RFP will, at best, be considered minimally responsive.

Bidders are not to provide additional attachments beyond those specified in the RFP for the purpose of extending their response. Additional materials not requested will not be considered part of the proposal and will not be evaluated. Include any forms provided in the submission package or reproduce those forms as closely as possible. All information must be presented in the same order and format as described in the RFP.

### **Proposal Format and Contents**

#### **Section I. Preliminary Information (File #1)**

##### **1. Proposal Cover Page**

Bidders must complete **Appendix A** (Proposal Cover Page). It is critical that the cover page show the specific information requested, including Bidder address(es) and other details listed. The Proposal Cover Page must be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Bidder.

##### **2. Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification**

Bidders must complete **Appendix B** (Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification Form). The Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification Form must be dated and signed by a person authorized to enter into contracts on behalf of the Bidder.

#### **Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience – Limit submissions of this section to 30 pages, single sided (Minimum 11-point font for body copy), not including Certificates of Insurance or Dun & Bradstreet Business Information Report Snapshots. (File #2)**

##### **1. Overview of the Organization**

The Bidder is to describe their qualifications and skills to provide the requested services in this RFP.

##### **2. Current Clients**

Provide list of current clients, years of service and reference contact information for each. Identify any current clients posing a possible conflict of interest. Please indicate if you are the agency of record or if you are providing work on a project basis.

### **3. Annual Billings**

To ascertain if the Bidder has capacity to manage a contract of similar size and scope to the Department, please provide total annual billings for 2018, 2019, 2020, and anticipated for 2021 and 2022.

### **4. Key Personnel**

Provide a professional biography or summary for the personnel who will be working with the Department, including proposed subcontractors. Discuss their roles in relation to the work areas and include any applicable experience with tourism clients.

### **5. Regional and National Marketing Experience**

Demonstrate the organization's experience in regional and national advertising, marketing and promotion campaigns and media placements for an account of this size and scope. Explain the organization's experience in the development of destination marketing campaigns at the state, regional or national level. In addition to tourism destination marketing experience, explain any experience in workforce and business attraction or assisting in the development of visitor experiences.

### **6. Relevant Examples/Case Studies:**

Provide samples of two (2) relevant campaigns along with a brief description of the success of these efforts. Include the challenge the client faced, goals you set, rationale for the strategy you employed and the outcomes. Provide one example of a consumer-facing web site designed and developed by the Bidder. Explain what the web site was designed to accomplish and relevant outcomes.

### **7. Subcontractors**

If subcontractors are to be used, provide an explanation of what elements of the Scope of Services they will be doing, provide a list that specifies the name, address, phone number, contact person, and a brief description of the subcontractors' organizational capacity and qualifications.

### **8. Litigation**

Attach a list of all current litigation in which the Bidder is named and a list of all closed cases that have closed within the past five (5) years in which Bidder paid the claimant either as part of a settlement or by decree. For each, list the entity bringing suit, the complaint, the accusation, amount, and outcome. If no litigation will be included, write "none" on submitted attachment.

### **9. Financial Viability**

Bidders are to provide a current copy of their Dun & Bradstreet Business Information Report Snapshot.

### **10. Certificate of Insurance**

Provide a certificate of insurance on a standard Acord form (or the equivalent) evidencing the Bidder's general liability, professional liability and any other relevant liability insurance policies that might be associated with the proposed services.

**Section III Proposed Services – Limit submissions of this section to 60 pages, single sided, not including work samples (Minimum 11-point font for body copy). - (File #3)**

**1. Services to be Provided**

Discuss sections A through J in PART II (Scope of Services to be Provided) above and what the Bidder will offer. Bidders **must** ensure narrative responses are presented in a format which reflects the respective header titles. Give particular attention to describing the methods and resources you will use and how you will accomplish the tasks involved. Also, describe how you will ensure expectations and/or desired outcomes as a result of these services will be achieved. If subcontractors are involved, clearly identify the work each will perform.

**2. Understanding of the local and national tourism markets:**

Provide a narrative of the Bidder's understanding of Maine's tourism product, the state of the travel industry including national trends and forecasts, with particular emphasis on the opportunities/challenges for Maine.

**3. Positioning/Strategy:**

Based on project objectives, articulate the marketing strategy for future growth. Describe the positioning, messaging, and tactics you would propose to support the scope outlined above and how you would measure campaign effectiveness. Provide a narrative explaining the plan, the research that supports your proposal, the rationale behind the recommended market selections, and media and strategic partnerships.

**4. Campaign Creative/Messaging:**

Present the Bidder's creative concepts for positioning Maine in an authentic and compelling manner. Articulate how the creative and media strategies address the Department's goals including:

- a. Present Maine as an authentic destination.
- b. Increase direct tourism expenditures.
- c. Increase gross restaurant and lodging taxable sales.
- d. Increase number of visitors staying overnight in paid accommodations.
- e. Extend length of stay.
- f. Promote Maine as a sustainable destination that results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural, and cultural environments of the state

Assume a maximum media budget of \$7 million for the first year not including agency fee and all other costs necessary to meet the requirements in Part II of this document.

*Note: For the purposes of this RFP, a \$7 million media budget is being used. The actual media budget will be dependent upon available funds at the time the contract is awarded.*

**Section IV Cost Proposal (File #4)**

**1. The Department will compensate the successful Bidder as follows:**

- a. A fixed agency fee paid monthly. This fee compensates for all internal staff work done by the Bidder on behalf of the Department. This includes, but is not limited to, account management, branding and strategic planning, creative planning and execution, media planning, buying and trafficking, communication and billing.
- b. Reimbursement for all other costs necessary to meet the requirements in the Scope of Services (Part II) of this document except the fixed agency fee and media budget mentioned above.

- c. Reimbursement for paid media costs with no markup. All media costs must be direct passthrough with no commission, fees or mark up.
- d. Any out-of-pocket costs incurred by the successful Bidder on behalf of the Department must be approved in advance by the Department and must be billed at cost, with no mark up.

## **2. General Instructions**

- a. The Cost Evaluation of this RFP, as set forth in more detail below under Proposed Costs, will be based upon the Monthly Agency Fee and all other costs necessary to successfully carry out all the services presented in the Scope of Services (Part II) of this document except for Excluded Costs, as set forth below.
- b. The Bidder does not need to include the following costs ("Excluded Costs") in its Cost Proposal and such costs will not be a part of the Cost Evaluation:
  - i. Cost for annual Arrivalist subscription as described in Part II, Section (H)(5);
  - ii. Cost for Google Analytics services for VisitMaine.com and FilminMaine.com;
  - iii. Cost for storage and maintenance of travel show exhibits as described in Part II, Section 1.2; and,
  - iv. The seven million (\$7,000,000) assumed media costs as described in the last paragraph of Part IV, Section III.
- c. No costs related to the preparation of the proposal for this RFP or to the negotiation of the contract with the Department may be included in the proposal. Only costs to be incurred after the contract effective date that are specifically related to the implementation or operation of contracted services may be included.

## **3. Cost Proposal Form Instructions**

The Bidder must fill out **Appendix C** (Cost Proposal Form), following the instructions detailed here and in the form. Failure to provide the requested information, and to follow the required cost proposal format provided, may result in the exclusion of the proposal from consideration, at the discretion of the Department.

## **4. Proposed Costs:**

- a. Based on the Bidder's proposed strategy and execution of all the services presented in this document, use the Cost Proposal Form to propose a monthly agency fee for performing work for the Department. Clearly explain what services the fee covers.
- b. Based upon the Bidder's proposed strategy and execution of all the services presented in this document, use the Cost Proposal Form to estimate all other costs not incorporated into the agency fee to deliver the full Scope of Services (Part II). Clearly explain what is included in all other costs.

## **PART V PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION**

Evaluation of the submitted proposals shall be accomplished as follows:

### **A. Evaluation Process - General Information**

1. An evaluation team, composed of qualified reviewers, will judge the merits of the proposals received in accordance with the criteria defined in the RFP.
2. Officials responsible for making decisions on the award selection will ensure that the selection process accords equal opportunity and appropriate consideration to all who are capable of meeting the specifications. The goals of the evaluation process are to ensure fairness and objectivity in review of the proposals and to ensure that the contract is awarded to the Bidder(s) whose proposal provides the best value to the State of Maine.
3. The Department reserves the right to communicate and/or schedule interviews/presentations with Bidders, if needed, to obtain clarification of information contained in the proposals received. The Department may revise the scores assigned in the initial evaluation to reflect those communications and/or interviews/presentations. Changes to proposals, including updating or adding information, will not be permitted during any interview/presentation process and, therefore, Bidders must submit proposals that present their rates and other requested information as clearly and completely as possible.

### **B. Scoring Weights and Process**

1. **Scoring Weights:** The score will be based on a 100-point scale and will measure the degree to which each proposal meets the following criteria.

#### **Section I. Preliminary Information (No Points)**

Includes all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section I.

#### **Section II. Organization Qualifications and Experience (35 points)**

Includes all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section II.

- a. Experience and quality of the members of the assigned Maine Team. Special attention will be given to the skills of management assigned to the Maine account, the Account Director, the media buyers, and the creative staff.
- b. The Bidder's capacity to manage a contract of similar size and scope to the Department needs.
- c. The Bidder's experience in implementing and executing regional and national advertising, marketing and promotion campaigns and media placements for an account of this size and scope.
- d. The Bidder's tourism/destination marketing experience.
- e. The Bidder's experience with web site development and design.
- f. Evaluation of two (2) relevant examples of finished Bidder-produced multi-channel advertising, marketing and promotion campaigns. The Department will evaluate how the Bidder used research, marketing, advertising, promotion, partnerships and media planning to successfully move their client's business forward.
- g. Evaluation of one relevant web site designed by the Bidder or subcontractor the Bidder will use for web services. Explain the objectives of the web site and outcomes achieved.
- h. Experience in workforce or business attraction and/or experience in development and



marketing of niche visitor experiences.

### **Section III. Proposed Services (40 points)**

Includes all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section III.

- a. Proposed positioning/strategy for tourism marketing. Evaluation of the creativity, emotional appeal, authenticity, compelling nature, and appropriateness of the proposed positioning as a reflection of the Maine brand.
- b. Proposed strategic approach to market selection and media mix towards achieving an increase in sustainable visitation and direct tourism expenditures. Include a one-year proposed media plan that includes geographic markets, media channels and insertion dates.
- c. Proposed web site redesign plan.
- d. Demonstrate Bidder's understanding of Maine's tourism product, national travel trends and forecasts, and Maine's potential to capture/increase market share.

### **Section IV. Cost Proposal (25 points)**

Includes all elements addressed above in Part IV, Section III.

2. **Scoring Process:** The review team will use a consensus approach to evaluate and score Sections I & II above. Members of the review team will not score those sections individually but, instead, will arrive at a consensus as to assignment of points for each of those sections. Sections III, the Cost Proposal, will be scored as described below.
3. **Scoring the Agency Monthly Fee Cost Proposal:** The Agency Fee proposed for conducting all the functions specified in this RFP will be assigned a score according to a mathematical formula. The lowest agency monthly agency fee will be awarded 10 points. Proposals with higher agency fees will be awarded proportionately fewer points calculated in comparison with the lowest bid.

The scoring formula is:

$(\text{Lowest submitted cost proposal} / \text{Cost of proposal being scored}) \times 10 = \text{pro-rated score}$

4. **Scoring Total Production/Out-of-Pocket Costs:** The total proposed production/out-of-pocket costs necessary to deliver a one year, fully integrated marketing program that fully addresses the Scope of Services (Part II) will be assigned a score according to a mathematical formula. The lowest Total Production/Out-of-Pocket costs will be awarded 15 points. Proposals with higher Total Production/Out-of-Pocket costs will be awarded proportionately fewer points calculated in comparison with the lowest bid.

The scoring formula is:

$(\text{Lowest submitted cost proposal} / \text{Cost of proposal being scored}) \times 15 = \text{pro-rated score}$

No Best and Final Offers: The State of Maine will not seek a best and final offer (BAFO) from any Bidder in this procurement process. All Bidders are expected to provide their best value pricing with the submission of their proposal.

5. **Negotiations:** The Department reserves the right to negotiate with the successful Bidder to finalize a contract at the same rate or cost of service as presented in the selected

proposal. Such negotiations may not significantly vary the content, nature or requirements of the proposal or the Department's Request for Proposals to an extent that may affect the price of goods or services requested. The Department reserves the right to terminate contract negotiations with a selected Bidder who submits a proposed contract significantly different from the proposal they submitted in response to the advertised RFP. In the event that an acceptable contract cannot be negotiated with the highest ranked Bidder, the Department may withdraw its award and negotiate with the next-highest ranked Bidder, and so on, until an acceptable contract has been finalized. Alternatively, the Department may cancel the RFP, at its sole discretion.

### **C. Selection and Award**

1. The Department reserves the right to request oral presentation from, or interviews with, the top-scoring Bidders. If an oral presentation is requested the Department may specify the Bidder team members that should be present. Scores may be adjusted based upon the oral presentation or interview.
2. The final decision regarding the award of the contract will be made by representatives of the Department subject to approval by the State Procurement Review Committee.
3. Notification of contractor selection or non-selection will be made in writing by the Department.
4. Issuance of this RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the State of Maine to award a contract, to pay costs incurred in the preparation of a response to this request, or to pay costs incurred in procuring or contracting for services, supplies, physical space, personnel or any other costs incurred by the Bidder.
5. The Department reserves the right to reject any and all proposals or to make multiple awards.

### **D. Appeal of Contract Awards**

Any person aggrieved by the award decision that results from the RFP may appeal the decision to the Director of the Bureau of General Services in the manner prescribed in [5 M.R.S.A. § 1825-E](#) and [18-554 Code of Maine Rules Chapter 120](#). The appeal must be in writing and filed with the Director of the Bureau of General Services, 9 State House Station, Augusta, Maine, 04333-0009 within 15 calendar days of receipt of notification of conditional contract award.

## **PART VI CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION AND CONDITIONS**

### **A. Contract Document**

1. The awarded Bidder will be required to execute a State of Maine Service Contract with appropriate riders as determined by the issuing department.

The complete set of standard State of Maine Service Contract documents, along with other forms and contract documents commonly used by the State, may be found on the Division of Procurement Services' website at the following link: [Division of Procurement Services Forms Page](#)

2. Allocation of funds is final upon successful negotiation and execution of the contract, subject to the review and approval of the State Procurement Review Committee. Contracts are not considered fully executed and valid until approved by the State Procurement Review Committee and funds are encumbered. No contract will be approved based on an RFP which has an effective date less than fourteen (14) calendar days after award notification to Bidders. (Referenced in the regulations of the Department of Administrative and Financial Services, [Chapter 110, § 3\(B\)\(i\).](#))

This provision means that a contract cannot be effective until at least 14 calendar days after award notification.

3. The State recognizes that the actual contract effective date depends upon completion of the RFP process, date of formal award notification, length of contract negotiation, and preparation and approval by the State Procurement Review Committee. Any appeals to the Department's award decision(s) may further postpone the actual contract effective date, depending upon the outcome. The contract effective date listed in the RFP may need to be adjusted, if necessary, to comply with mandated requirements.
4. In providing services and performing under the contract, the awarded Bidder must act as an independent contractor and not as an agent of the State of Maine.

### **B. Standard State Agreement Provisions**

#### **1. Contract Administration**

Following the award, a Contract Administrator from the Department will be appointed to assist with the development and administration of the contract and to act as administrator during the entire contract period. Department staff will be available after the award to consult with the awarded Bidder in the finalization of the contract.

#### **2. Payments and Other Provisions**

The State anticipates paying the Contractor on the basis of net 30 payment terms, upon the receipt of an accurate and acceptable invoice. An invoice will be considered accurate and acceptable if it contains a reference to the State of Maine contract number, contains correct pricing information relative to the contract, and provides any required supporting documents, as applicable, and any other specific and agreed-upon requirements listed within the contract that results from the RFP.

## **PART VII LIST OF RFP APPENDICES AND RELATED DOCUMENTS**

1. **Appendix A** – Proposal Cover Page
2. **Appendix B** – Debarment, Performance and Non-Collusion Certification
3. **Appendix C** – Cost Proposal Form
4. **Appendix D** – Submitted Question Form

## APPENDIX A

**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**PROPOSAL COVER PAGE**  
**RFP# 202108118**  
**Advertising and Marketing Services**

<b>Bidder's Organization Name:</b>			
<b>Chief Executive - Name/Title:</b>			
<b>Tel:</b>		<b>E-mail:</b>	
<b>Headquarters Street Address:</b>			
<b>Headquarters City/State/Zip:</b>			
<i>(Provide information requested below if different from above)</i>			
<b>Lead Point of Contact for Proposal - Name/Title:</b>			
<b>Tel:</b>		<b>E-mail:</b>	
<b>Headquarters Street Address:</b>			
<b>Headquarters City/State/Zip:</b>			

- This proposal and the pricing structure contained herein will remain firm for a period of 180 days from the date and time of the bid opening.
- No personnel currently employed by the Department or any other State agency participated, either directly or indirectly, in any activities relating to the preparation of the Bidder's proposal.
- No attempt has been made, or will be made, by the Bidder to induce any other person or firm to submit or not to submit a proposal.
- The above-named organization is the legal entity entering into the resulting agreement with the Department should they be awarded the contract.
- The undersigned is authorized to enter contractual obligations on behalf of the above-named organization.

*To the best of my knowledge, all information provided in the enclosed proposal, both programmatic and financial, is complete and accurate at the time of submission.*

<b>Name (Print):</b>	<b>Title:</b>
<b>Authorized Signature:</b>	<b>Date:</b>

## APPENDIX B

**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**DEBARMENT, PERFORMANCE and NON-COLLUSION CERTIFICATION**  
**RFP# 202108118**  
**Advertising and Marketing Services**

<b>Bidder's Organization Name:</b>	
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*By signing this document, I certify to the best of my knowledge and belief that the aforementioned organization, its principals and any subcontractors named in this proposal:*

- a. Are not presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, and declared ineligible or voluntarily excluded from bidding or working on contracts issued by any governmental agency.*
- b. Have not within three years of submitting the proposal for this contract been convicted of or had a civil judgment rendered against them for:*
  - i. Fraud or a criminal offense in connection with obtaining, attempting to obtain, or performing a federal, state or local government transaction or contract.*
  - ii. Violating Federal or State antitrust statutes or committing embezzlement, theft, forgery, bribery, falsification or destruction of records, making false statements, or receiving stolen property;*
  - iii. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State or Local) with commission of any of the offenses enumerated in paragraph (b) of this certification; and*
  - iv. Have not within a three (3) year period preceding this proposal had one or more federal, state or local government transactions terminated for cause or default.*
- c. Have not entered into a prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a response for the same materials, supplies, equipment, or services and this proposal is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. The above-mentioned entities understand and agree that collusive bidding is a violation of state and federal law and can result in fines, prison sentences, and civil damage awards.*

**Failure to provide this certification may result in the disqualification of the Bidder's proposal, at the discretion of the Department.**

Name (Print):	Title:
Authorized Signature:	Date:

APPENDIX C

**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**COST PROPOSAL FORM**  
**RFP# 202108118**  
**Advertising and Marketing Services**

1. Complete the following form:

<b>Bidder's Organization Name:</b>		
<b>Proposed <u>Monthly Agency Fee</u> (12-Month Total):</b>	\$	
<b>Proposed <u>All Other Costs</u> (Include all costs necessary to fulfill the Scope of Services that are not already included in the Monthly Agency Fee for a period of 12 months except the following*):</b>	\$	
<b>*Costs that DO NOT need to be included in your cost estimate include all Excluded Costs as set forth in Section IV(2)(b)</b>		

2. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains all costs included in the Monthly Agency Fee
3. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains all the costs included in the All Other Costs. Be sure to include detailed costs for a comprehensive redesign of VisitMaine.com.

APPENDIX D

**State of Maine**  
**Department of Economic and Community Development**  
**SUBMITTED QUESTIONS FORM**  
**RFP# 202108118**  
**Advertising and Marketing Services**

<b>Organization Name:</b>	
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RFP Section & Page Number	Question

*\* If a question is not related to any section of the RFP, state "N/A" under "RFP Section & Page Number".*

*\*\* Add additional rows, if necessary.*