

**FLORIDA TOURISM INDUSTRY MARKETING  
CORPORATION  
dba VISIT FLORIDA**

**Public Relations Agency**

**INVITATION TO NEGOTIATE**

**August 16, 2011**

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 ITN OBJECTIVE**

The Florida Tourism Industry Marketing Corporation, d.b.a. VISIT FLORIDA (referred throughout this competitive procurement as VISIT FLORIDA) is the issuer of this Invitation to Negotiate (ITN).

The objective of this ITN is to competitively procure the services of a Public Relations Agency of Record. Initially agency work for VISIT FLORIDA will be projected based on a budget in the \$100,000 to \$150,000 range. Following a successful project track record, the work process and budget may be re-evaluated and adjusted.

VISIT FLORIDA anticipates a need for public relations services concentrated in the following areas:

- Creating and executing innovative attention-getting public relations campaigns, as stand-alone public relations campaigns and as part of fully integrated marketing campaigns
- Relationships with national media, especially broadcast
- Crisis communications

The focus of this ITN is PR services for the domestic United States. At this time, VISIT FLORIDA is not seeking public relations services for its international or business focused audiences.

The anticipated length of the contract(s) is 12 months with a possible extension clause and customary provisions for early termination based on performance. In the event that negotiations fail to result in a binding contract, VISIT FLORIDA retains the right to re-open negotiations with other ranking proposer(s) until a mutually beneficial relationship is secured.

### **1.2 VISIT FLORIDA OVERVIEW**

VISIT FLORIDA, the state's official tourism marketing corporation, serves as Florida's official source for travel planning to visitors across the globe. VISIT FLORIDA is not a government agency, but rather a not-for-profit corporation created as a public/private partnership by the Florida Legislature in 1996. VISIT FLORIDA was one of the first

public private partnerships in the country and has been repeatedly recognized as one of the leading destination marketing organizations (DMOs) in the US.

VISIT FLORIDA is guided by industry volunteer-staffed advisory committees under the direction of a Board of Directors comprised of leaders from all sectors of the tourism industry including attractions, restaurants and lodging, and Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs). Tourism industry participation is also evident in more than 10,000 tourism businesses who participate in VISIT FLORIDA website listings, promotions, co-operative advertising efforts welcome center brochure and transparencies, and consumer, trade, sales and public relations events both domestic and international.

As the state's number one industry, tourism is responsible for welcoming more than 82 million visitors each year who spend more than \$60 billion, generating 22 percent of the state's sales tax revenue and employing nearly 1 million Floridians. VISIT FLORIDA receives state funding. For every \$1 spent on tourism marketing, VISIT FLORIDA generates more than \$147 in tourism spending and \$9 in new sales tax collections, paid by visitors, not residents.

Additional funding is secured from the private sector to expand VISIT FLORIDA's marketing dollars. Last fiscal year, VISIT FLORIDA raised more than \$40 million in private sector matching funds. This is done by actively recruiting the state's tourism industry to invest as Partners in cooperative advertising campaigns, PR and promotional programs and many other pay-to-play ventures. Through this public/private partnership, VISIT FLORIDA serves more than 10,000 tourism businesses, including 3,000 fully engaged Partners, 7,000 web affiliates and major strategic alliance partnerships with AirTran Airways, American Express Travel Related Services, Disney Destinations, Dollar Rent A Car, The Hertz Corporation, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment and Universal Orlando.

Partner investment in VISIT FLORIDA programs significantly increases the impact of VISIT FLORIDA marketing. Over the last four years (2006-2010) VISIT FLORIDA's spent nearly \$60.7 million for paid media advertising. During the same period, partners more than doubled that media spend, investing an additional \$76.7 million in VISIT FLORIDA co-op advertising programs, while contributing to VISIT FLORIDA promotions that generated nearly \$130 million in equivalent media value.

It is important to note that the ability of the organization to impact consumer travel is more than doubled by its unique public private partnership and the investment of its Partners. VISIT FLORIDA places a high priority on creating programs that merit partner support.

VISIT FLORIDA facilitates tourism industry participation in domestic and international travel trade and consumer shows, and media missions to the top global visitor markets. VISIT FLORIDA also works closely with travel agents, tour operators, meeting and event planners, and is responsible for operating Florida's five Official Welcome Centers.

Note that the word "partner" is used by VISIT FLORIDA in two principal ways. We prefer to use the word "partner" (with a lower case "p", rather than "vendor") to describe valued organizations with which we do business. We capitalize the word "Partner" as the preferred way of referring to our membership base.

### **1.3 MISSION, VISION, VALUES AND OBJECTIVES**

VISIT FLORIDA's Mission is to market travel and drive visitation to and within Florida. The Vision of the organization is that VISIT FLORIDA establishes Florida as the #1 travel destination in the world. VISIT FLORIDA's Corporate Values include: Integrity, Excellence, Innovation, Inclusiveness, Welcoming, Fun, and Teamwork.

VISIT FLORIDA's objectives are:

- Increase VISIT FLORIDA's total, annual budget to \$125 million by June 30, 2013
- Increase engagement of Florida tourism industry as measured by 10,000 listings on VISITFLORIDA.com by June 30, 2013
- Increase engagement of the Florida tourism industry as measured by exceeding the legislatively mandated 1-to-1 match of public investment to private industry match by June 30, 2013
- Increase the percentage of domestic visitors to Florida that were significantly influenced by VISIT FLORIDA's primary marketing tools from 15.8% to 20% by June 30, 2013
- By June 30, 2013, increase the economic impact from VISIT FLORIDA destination marketing efforts from \$32 to \$40 for every \$1 of public investment
- By June 30, 2013, increase from 35.00 to 40.00 the index of Americans viewing VISIT FLORIDA as the trusted source for travel planning information
- Increase the value of the VISIT FLORIDA brand and affect a 5 percentage point increase by June 30, 2013
- Through June 30, 2013, maintain an 80% satisfaction level of VISIT FLORIDA as measured by the annual study of industry satisfaction

## 1.4 VISIT FLORIDA AUDIENCES

Florida is a mature destination that hosts more than 100 million in state, domestic and international visits a year. VISIT FLORIDA approaches the marketing challenge of sustaining this travel – while leveraging the investment of an opt-in partner base - by creating a foundation of five marketing platforms: Business to Business; Your Florida Side; Share a Little Sunshine; Destination Matters; International. These platforms target different audiences.

The Business to Business platform targets the Florida tourism industry at large and VISIT FLORIDA Partners. *Your Florida Side* targets domestic United States, non-Florida residents and Canadians most likely to visit the state within the next two years. *Share a Little Sunshine* targets Florida residents and through them, their social networks outside of the Sunshine State. *Destination Matters* targets decision makers in the Meetings and Conventions industry. The international platform targets consumer and travel trade in the UK, Europe, Latin America and Asia. More information about these platforms and the audiences they target are available in the 2011-2012 VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Plan which can be found at [www.VISITFLORIDA.org](http://www.VISITFLORIDA.org). This plan includes segmentation strategy, geographic targeting, demographic and psychographic profiles and campaign briefs.

### **Domestic Audience**

As a high level introduction to the domestic audience which in 2010 comprised 87% of the total visitation several key insights are of note:

- Women. Women make 92% of all vacation decisions.
- Loyal. 95% of Americans who traveled to Florida in the past year have already visited Florida – almost half within the previous year.
- Frequent Travelers. Florida's most frequent repeat visitors are frequent travelers in general and concentrate their non-Florida travel into larger cities more than travelers who visit Florida less often.
- Freedom Seekers. Nearly 42% of Florida's visitors highly desire spontaneity when they are on vacation.
- East of the Mississippi. The majority of Florida's visitors come from origin markets east of the Mississippi, with about a third

coming from six markets (Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, New York City and Washington, D.C.)

- Couples, Young Families and the Connected Generation. 35% of Florida's leisure visitors are couples, 29% are families with children under the age of 13 and 20% are members of the "connected generation, comprised of about 90% GenX and 10% Millennials).

Based on 2009 data, the latest year for which there is comprehensive data on actual visitors to the state:

- A. The average household income of domestic visitors to Florida was \$97,200
- B. The top three income brackets for Florida visitors by percentage of all visitors are:
  - \$100,000-\$149,999, which constituted 27.8% of all visitors
  - \$50,000-\$74,999, which constituted 18.6% of all visitors
  - \$75,000-\$99,999, which constituted 16.5% of all visitors
- C. VISIT FLORIDA divides its target audience into three age categories
  - 18-34 year olds constituted 27.7% of all visitors
  - 35-54 year olds constituted 43% of all visitors
  - 55+ year olds constituted 29.3% of all visitors
- D. The average age is 46; the median age is 44
- E. Top origin states for air visitors were New York (14.7%), California (7.2%), and Illinois (6.9%)
- F. Top auto visitor origins were Georgia (21.4%), Alabama (10.5%) and South Carolina (6.0%)

Eighty-six percent of domestic visitors came to Florida for leisure purposes. Vacationing was their primary reason for coming to Florida (37.5%). Visiting friends or relatives was the second most common reason (26.2%) followed by general business (14.5%) The average length of stay for domestic visitors to Florida was 5 nights. The majority of domestic visitors traveling via airplane prefer to stay 4-7 nights while in the state (47%), and those traveling via automobile prefer to stay 1-3 nights (47%). The average expenditure per person per day in 2009 was \$134.60 for domestic visitors. Air visitor expenditures per person per day averaged \$169.80, while auto visitor expenditures averaged \$99.00 per person per day. The average travel party size in 2009 was 2.3 persons. For those arriving by air, the party size was 2.0 persons, while for those that came by auto; the average was slightly higher at 2.6 persons.

Florida's top origin states for domestic visitors (combined air and drive) were Georgia (11.4%), New York (9.4%), and Illinois (6.9%).

### **Stakeholders**

VISIT FLORIDA has approximately 10,000 tourism industry businesses which participate on our consumer website (3,000 who invest in VISIT FLORIDA and in other programs). Other important stakeholder groups include: The State of Florida; Florida Convention and Visitor Bureau's (CVBs), Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) attractions, retail, hotel operators, travel agents and tour operators.

It is important to note, that many of VISIT FLORIDA's most effective public relations campaigns have been achieved through cooperative initiatives with stakeholders. The successful respondent to this ITN will be able to demonstrate an understanding of VISIT FLORIDA's leadership position for the Florida tourism industry and the opportunities and challenges associated with the task of engaging and aligning stakeholders in shared communications efforts.

## **1.5 THE FLORIDA BRAND AND THE VISIT FLORIDA BRAND**

Florida has been promoted as a tourism destination for more than a hundred years by a variety of visitors and tourism businesses. Throughout its history, three themes have repeatedly emerged, portraying Florida as a destination where consumers could experience sun, fun and freedom. These three themes were leveraged in numerous ways by a variety of tourism businesses over the decades, building up a brand identity even before the state officially began to promote itself.

In the 1950s, state license plates began proclaiming Florida as the "Sunshine State" and Florida's brand identity began to coalesce. It is solidly in place today. Consumers know that in Florida, the Sunshine State, they will find sunshine any time of year, and will always enjoy vacations that let them experience and share their own internal sunshine state. Expressed visually, the Sunshine State is communicated through: bright and sunny landscapes; open vistas; sunny smiles and bright visages; settings that are bright and brilliant where visitors feel vibrant and alive as they give over to their own sunshine state of mind.

### **Key Brand Attributes:**

Visual: bright open expanses, vivid colors, a sense of movement and excitement

Tone: passionate, fun/quirky/playful

Characteristics: exciting and sensual in a believable way

Personality Snapshot: Florida is the exotic girl next door - both exciting and accessible – with a playful sense of humor.

**Current Brand Campaign:** *Your Florida Side is Calling Everyone has a Florida Side – the part of you that loves to feel the way you feel when you are on vacation in the Sunshine State. The campaign encourages you to respond to it – embrace it, unleash it, pamper it or awaken it ... by coming to Florida.*

All VISIT FLORIDA communications programs must align with the brand and directly or indirectly support the efforts of the current brand campaign.

### **The VISIT FLORIDA Brand**

When VISIT FLORIDA was first established as a public/private entity, the organization created and promoted its own brand “VISIT FLORIDA.” Currently, for consumer facing campaigns, VISIT FLORIDA is represented in two ways: 1) VISIT FLORIDA is the call to action for state of Florida campaigns (for example: visitflorida.com), and 2) VISITFLORIDA provides a stamp which serves as the state’s official tourism seal, a sort of “good housekeeping seal” that certifies official approval.

As a tourism marketing organization and as a seal, key attributes of the VISIT FLORIDA brand include: honesty, trustworthiness, authoritative source.

It is important to note the point where the Florida brand and the VISIT FLORIDA brand intersect: trust. Visitors have trusted Florida with their vacation time and vacation dollars for more than a century, returning again and again themselves and passing that pattern on through multiple family generations. Florida is the nation’s tourism leader because of these repeat visitors, and VISIT FLORIDA protects the state’s relationship with its continuing visitors by diligently serving as the trusted source for information about Florida travel.

In all VISIT FLORIDA communications programs honesty, accuracy and transparency are essential.

## **1.6 THE VISIT FLORIDA COMMUNICATIONS TEAM AND CHANNELS**

VISIT FLORIDA sees itself as the authoritative source for information

(for consumers and media) about Florida destinations and activities. The VISIT FLORIDA communications team exists to support this vision and grow the organization's reputation as the "go to" source.

VISIT FLORIDA communications staff is organized into the following areas of focus:

- Corporate Communications
- Government Affairs
- Public Relations

The Corporate Communications team focuses on business to business audiences and manages crisis communications as a company-wide cross-departmental effort. The Government Affairs team focuses on communication with Florida's legislators and other government entities. The Public Relations team focuses on U.S. and Florida consumers by building relationships with key influencers in traditional and new media and providing leads, editorial assistance and editorial content. The Public Relations team works closely with a Content team that creates and publishes content for direct to consumer channels and also for placement with media outlets.

The Public Relations team consists of three Public Relations Representatives under the direction of the Public Relations Manager, who reports to the Vice President of Brand. The Public Relations team works closely with other VISIT FLORIDA departments that focus on messaging to the consumer, including advertising, content management and digital platforms. The VISIT FLORIDA Public Relations team develops and executes seasonal proactive media campaigns and collaborates with the integrated marketing team on all major marketing campaigns.

The Public Relations Department is also responsible for planning and executing several desk-side media missions and/or media receptions in key feeder markets each year. The media missions and receptions program focus on the following key domestic feeder markets: Atlanta (including Birmingham), Boston, Chicago, Washington, D.C. (including Baltimore and Philadelphia), and New York. VISIT FLORIDA has historically used external agency assistance in generating media attendance to the New York missions and receptions and it is expected that the winning respondent will provide this service going forward.

### **VISIT FLORIDA Communication Channels**

As the authoritative source for information about Florida destinations and activities, VISIT FLORIDA has a committed to quantity, quality

and relevance of the content on its consumer channels and in the media pipeline. VISIT FLORIDA content development is led by an in-house Senior Editor. The Senior Editor manages the production of content in two primary ways: 1) by an external publishing partner who manages core content for consumer print materials and websites 2) by contributions from free-lance top-tier journalists, photographers and videographers.

In addition to feeding content to consumers through VISIT FLORIDA's own distribution channels, content is also made available to a variety of media outlets.

### **VISITFLORIDA.com**

This is the state's official travel planning website and the serves as the call to action in a majority of VISIT FLORIDA marketing and communications initiatives. The website features advanced navigation and search capabilities; timely editorial content including articles, videos, photos and blogs; consumer comments, rating and reviews; interactive trip-planning and mapping tools; and targeted deals and events. A team of Florida journalists - the VISITFLORIDA.com Insiders – offer regular video reports, articles, blogs and tweets on travel topics of special interest (for example, families, budget travel, fishing, etc.). VISITFLORIDA.com Insiders also serve as content experts for media opportunities and can be available to anchor public relations efforts.

### **Special interest micro-sites**

In addition to VISITFLORIDA.com, consumers can also access special interest content on microsites for fishing, golf, weddings, trails and Florida's cultural heritage experiences and destinations. These sites can be accessed at: [fishingcapital.com](http://fishingcapital.com); [golf.VISITFLORIDA.com](http://golf.VISITFLORIDA.com), [weddings.VISITFLORIDA.com](http://weddings.VISITFLORIDA.com); [trails.VISITFLORIDA.com](http://trails.VISITFLORIDA.com); [vivaflorida.org](http://vivaflorida.org).

### **ShareALittleSunshine.org**

This site targets Florida residents and encourages them to act as advocates for Florida tourism in one of three ways:

1. Share invitations and offers
2. Share content
3. Share in the state (travel)

Over the last few years, VISIT FLORIDA has become increasingly adept at leveraging integrated initiatives (public relations, promotions, advertising, social media) to promote its communications channels.

Though the majority of a Public Relations Agency's work with VISIT FLORIDA will focus on national campaigns, these campaigns may include elements that drive consumers to these sites.

VISIT FLORIDA also maintains branded accounts on both **Facebook** (facebook.com/VISITFLORIDA) and **Twitter** (@VISITFLORIDA).

### **Media.VISITFLORIDA.org**

VISIT FLORIDA maintains a site for media that features current Florida happenings, corporate information, news releases, story leads, photos, videos, and research. It is anticipated that within the 1-2 year framework this site will be re-designed.

### **Print Publications**

VISIT FLORIDA produces two direct mail pieces, the *VISIT FLORIDA Magazine* and *FLORIDA Insider Magazine*. The *VISIT FLORIDA Magazine* serves as the main fulfillment piece and is distributed domestically to consumer on request, at sales shows, in the five Official Welcome Centers and by tourism industry business throughout the state. The *Florida Insider* magazine is designed specifically for Floridians by Floridians and is distributed to Florida residents, fans in neighboring drive market states and in the five Official Florida Welcome Centers. Both of these magazines incorporate mobile content and tie back to the VISITFLORIDA.com website.

## **2.0 PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES**

### **2.1 OBJECTIVES**

VISIT FLORIDA seeks a best-in-class public relations agency partner who is able to:

- collaborate with VISIT FLORIDA's internal communications and marketing teams and external agencies to concept, develop and execute innovative, attention-getting public relations campaigns in support of VISIT FLORIDA marketing goals,
- extend VISIT FLORIDA's reach and impact by the agency's ability to leverage significant national media contacts,
- include social media in these campaigns,
- provide crisis communications consultation and support as needed.

## 2.2 SITUATION ASSESSMENT

- VISIT FLORIDA sees itself as the authoritative and trusted source for content about destinations and experiences in Florida and anticipates significant growth in that reputation over the next two years as major digital and content initiatives gain momentum. VISIT FLORIDA expects that its growing content assets will be important in establishing and serving relationships with traditional media outlets and social media key influencers.
- As the number one destination for leisure travel in the US, Florida's destination news is of some relevance to millions of visitors and by extension to the media outlets those consumers view. VISIT FLORIDA has been very effective in creating media interest in previous years, and now seeks to elevate the impact of its media relations efforts to the next level by engaging a team with proven relationships and track record with national media, especially broadcast.
- VISIT FLORIDA has been moving into social media in a variety of ways (current Facebook fans in excess of 198,000) and will continue to expand its efforts in these channels. VISIT FLORIDA seeks a Public Relations Agency of Record that will be able to include social media in campaign plans as appropriate to the particular effort.
- VISIT FLORIDA seeks expertise in crisis communications that can be made available, should the need arise. VISIT FLORIDA has an extensive crisis communications plan which the organization does not expect to reconfigure in the upcoming year. However, in order to be prepared for extreme situations, VISIT FLORIDA would like to have consultant expertise available on call, along with the option of augmenting VISIT FLORIDA staff with an external team from the agency as needed.
- The marketing department at VISIT FLORIDA functions as an integrated team. Successful candidates will have a track record of working in a collaborative environment with multiple agencies and client internal staff.
- In 2013, the State of Florida will celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of Florida by Ponce de Leon – the first documented exploration by Europeans of any part of what is now the United States. This anniversary presents a significant public relations opportunity and it is anticipated that the Agency of Record will be involved in planning for this event.

- Within the 2011-2012 timeframe, VISIT FLORIDA anticipates that it will be re-designing its media website and the Public Relations Agency of Record may be asked to provide counsel or insight on this project.
- Agency work for VISIT FLORIDA could take place as stand-alone turn-key projects or could work in support of VISIT FLORIDA's internal Public Relations team efforts. Agency work could range from highly targeted media pitching efforts to innovative guerilla public relations campaigns to traditional satellite media tours to fully integrated national campaigns.

### **2.3 CONDITIONS OF WORK**

- Contractually, the partner selected as Public Relations Agency of Record for VISIT FLORIDA must adhere to all VISIT FLORIDA accounting processes and procedures. The most crucial policies and procedures require the selected partner to:
  - Obtain written authorization in advance of work being performed and bill VISIT FLORIDA monthly and furnish supporting documentation for services rendered by the agency for subcontractors and other reimbursable costs incurred by the agency. VISIT FLORIDA shall not be required to pay the amount by which the aggregate cost of any program or campaign exceeds the approved budget and cost estimate by more than five percent (5%).
  - Produce invoices for services rendered by the agency, that shall be payable within 15-20 days of receipt by VISIT FLORIDA provided all required back-up materials are attached to the invoice.
- Contractually, all tangible and intangible property acquired in conjunction with the purchase of PR services for VISIT FLORIDA shall be the property of VISIT FLORIDA and shall be used exclusively by the Agency for promotion of Florida tourism on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA. VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right of final approval of the disposition of said property.
- Contractually, the selected agency shall, at its own cost during the term of this relationship, maintain continuously in force an advertiser's liability policy for the benefit of VISIT FLORIDA in the minimum amount of \$2 million.

- Contractually, all interested agencies shall provide account management resources to perform assigned responsibilities.

### **3.0 PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS AND ADMINISTRATION**

#### **3.1 OVERVIEW**

This ITN represents the best effort of VISIT FLORIDA to document its requirements for this project. VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to adjust the specifications or scope of effort stated in this ITN. In the event that any modifications are necessary, VISIT FLORIDA will notify all respondents remaining in consideration via a written addendum to this ITN. Respondents will be notified via email of the results of the selection process.

#### **3.2 LIABILITY**

The issuance of this document and the receipt of the information in response to this ITN will not in any way cause VISIT FLORIDA to incur liability or obligation to you, financial or otherwise. VISIT FLORIDA assumes no obligation to reimburse or in any way compensate you for expenses incurred in connection with your response to this ITN.

#### **3.3 USE AND DISCLOSURE**

VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to use information submitted in response to this document in any manner it may deem appropriate in evaluating the fitness of the services proposed. Materials that are submitted by the respondent that should be considered highly confidential should be marked as such. If confidentiality is requested but cannot be afforded, the respondent will be notified and will be permitted to withdraw its proposal.

#### **3.4 PROTOCOL**

Responses must be submitted no later than close of business on the date specified in the Timetable (Section 3.7 of this ITN). VISIT FLORIDA will return any ITN responses that are received after the deadline.

Submit your response in the format that is described in Section 4.0 of this ITN. The response should be submitted to:

Heather Collins  
[itn@VISITFLORIDA.org](mailto:itn@VISITFLORIDA.org)  
Subject Line: Public Relations Agency ITN

VISIT FLORIDA will notify each applicant that their response has been received via e-mail. Please be sure to include your e-mail address with your response. It is mandatory that all questions and requirements stated in this ITN are addressed completely.

### **3.5 QUESTIONS FROM RESPONDENTS**

To ensure that all respondents have accurately and completely understood the service requirements, VISIT FLORIDA will accept written questions up until Friday, September 9, 2011. If you have questions, you should submit them via email to [itn@VISITFLORIDA.org](mailto:itn@VISITFLORIDA.org). Please include the ITN section reference, if appropriate, with your questions. Be sure to include the necessary contact information – Name, Company, Title, Telephone, Fax Number and E-mail address. The VISIT FLORIDA representative will attempt to answer all questions on or before close-of-business by Friday, September 23, 2011. All respondents will receive a copy of all questions and answers via e-mail. If you do not have any questions, please email [itn@VISITFLORIDA.org](mailto:itn@VISITFLORIDA.org) with your intent to bid in order to confirm your company will receive the questions and answers proposed by other consultants.

### **3.6 EVALUATION CRITERIA AND NEGOTIATION PROCESS**

VISIT FLORIDA is looking to make a “best-value” decision during this process. And, although cost is a critical part, we consider the quality of service, professionalism, pro-active/creative thinking, and project management commitment to be extremely important factors in making our decision. Our requirements are business-driven, and our decision will be based on the perceived ability to fulfill these requirements.

Priority will be placed on candidates that:

- A. Excellence in strategic planning with demonstrated success in planning, developing and executing communications efforts
- B. Have a solid track record of expanding awareness, engagement with a mature brand

- C. Demonstrate the ability to work seamlessly with other agencies, vendors, and in-house resources
- D. Constantly adjust and optimize efforts, based on a given situation, to achieve the highest awareness and success measurement

All responses received by VISIT FLORIDA will be evaluated by a committee consisting of VISIT FLORIDA management.

After the initial evaluation, VISIT FLORIDA will contact a short list of respondents. The finalists may be asked to formally present their solution, or they may be asked to submit additional information and/or recommendations as amendments to their initial proposal. VISIT FLORIDA may request an onsite visit to our facility. Any written summary of presentations or demonstrations shall include a list of attendees, a copy of the agenda, and copies of any visuals or handouts and shall become a part of the proposer's reply. Failure to provide requested information may result in rejection of the reply.

VISIT FLORIDA is under no obligation to reveal how a respondent's proposal was assessed or to provide specific feedback information. Further, VISIT FLORIDA is not obligated to reveal specific information about its decision-making process.

VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to reject any and all replies. VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to negotiate concurrently or separately with competing proposers. VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to accept portions of a competing proposer's reply and merge such portions into one project, including contracting with the entities offering such portions. VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to waive minor irregularities in replies.

### 3.7 PROJECT TIMETABLE

The following schedule provides you with key events and their associated completion dates.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Date</b>
ITN Issued	8/16/2011
Questions due to VISIT FLORIDA from respondents	9/9/2011 by 5PM EST
Intent to Submit due to VISIT FLORIDA	9/9/2011 by 5PM EST

VISIT FLORIDA responses to respondent questions	9/26/2011 by 5PM EST
ITN Responses Due	10/07/2011 by 5PM EST

## 4.0 PROPOSAL FORMAT

To ensure timely and fair consideration of your response, respondents are being asked to adhere to a specific response format, which is described in the following table. All responses should be submitted via email in Adobe PDF format or Microsoft Word. VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to ask any clarification questions and request additional information.

No.	Proposal Section	Content/Deliverables
1.	Authorization Letter and Signature	Under the signature of an authorized company representative, provide the names of individuals authorized to represent and negotiate the company's products and services.
2.	Table of Contents	No explanation required.
3..	Executive Summary	High level summary of the most important aspects of your proposal and your qualifications
4.	Company Profile	Respond to questions presented in Sections 5.1 of this ITN.
5.	References	Respond to Sections 5.2 and 5.3 of this ITN.
6.	Company Services	Respond to Section 5.4 of this ITN
7.	Pricing	Respond to Section 6.0

## 5.0 RESPONDENT PROFILE

### 5.1 COMPANY OVERVIEW

- A. Provide company legal name, parent company, ownership structure, mailing address, main phone number and fax number
- B. Provide primary contact
- C. Total employees and number of employees in Florida – whose primary function is A.) Creating and executing innovative attention-getting public relations campaigns, as stand-alone public relations campaigns and as part of fully integrated marketing campaigns; B.)

- Relationships with national media, especially broadcast; C.) Social media; D.) Crisis communications
- D. Provide senior staff bios and resume, including links to their social media profiles on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube as appropriate
  - E. If different from above, please provide the proposed project team's staff bios and resume, including links to social media profiles on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr and YouTube as appropriate
  - F. Guaranteed duration of the initial project team (the team whose bios are included in the response) on the VISIT FLORIDA account
  - G. Indicate the number of years and nature of your firm's experience in the Public Relations industry, as well as the number of years and nature of experience of the proposed team
  - H. If applicable, indicate the number of years and nature of your firm's experience with the tourism industry as well as the number of years and nature of experience of the proposed team
  - I. Describe specific knowledge of Florida tourism and familiarity with Florida travel destinations
  - J. List of public relations accounts lost or resigned in the last two years
  - K. Specify current relationships with other destination marketing organizations in the State of Florida and outside the state domestically and internationally
  - L. Describe pertinent Public Relations experience for non-Florida travel destinations
  - M. List any potential conflicts with existing clients and this ITN. Client relationships that could be considered a conflict of interest must be listed, including all clients in travel or tourism industry. Such list of potential conflicts does not disqualify a proposal, however, VISIT FLORIDA reserves the right to exclude a proposal from consideration at any point in the review or negotiation process should the conflict(s) of interest be deemed as unacceptable
  - N. List current and past clients and the industries they represent
  - O. Detail the company location that will be used to support the VISIT FLORIDA account and the business nature of the location's current operation
  - P. Describe your experience creating or managing websites to serve media

## 5.2 CURRENT CUSTOMER REFERENCES

Please provide contact information for at least three existing clients that VISIT FLORIDA can contact. Wherever possible, please include travel industry or destination marketing clients as references. For each reference, please indicate the following:

- |                          |                        |
|--------------------------|------------------------|
| * Contact Name and Title | * Contact Company Name |
| * Contact Phone Number   | * Industry of Client   |

\* Service Description

\* Length of Relationship

### 5.3 RECENT PAST CUSTOMER REFERENCES

Please provide contact information for at least two former clients that VISIT FLORIDA can contact and provide a brief explanation regarding the end of the business relationship. For each, please indicate the following:

\* Contact Name and Title

\* Contact Company Name

\* Contact Phone Number

\* Industry of Client

\* Service Description

\* Length of Relationship

### 5.4 COMPANY SERVICES

#### **Approach, Assets and Methodology**

- A. Describe your commitment to quality and your process for delivering flawless service
- B. Describe your process for project management
- C. Specifically describe your firm's assets and approach to building effective relationships with traditional media
- D. Specifically describe your firm's assets and approach to social media. How does your agency leverage social media as a listening and tracking process? How does your agency approach social media as a part of more traditional marketing campaigns?
- E. Specifically describe your firm's assets and approach to crisis communications. What are the personnel or partnership assets you can provide to support VISIT FLORIDA in a crisis situation?
- F. Describe your procedures during any given emergency that will enable you to carry on the business contained in this ITN on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA

#### **Accounting Process**

- G. Indicate how the agency will provide services described in section 2.3
- H. If applicable, identify staffing to support accounting services. All employees should be included with biographical sketches
- I. Proposals must provide evidence of financial stability. The proposer must document sufficient financial resources to perform all services associated with this contract. Audited or reviewed financial statements are required for the three most recent years of operations. Please also provide the agency's Dunn & Bradstreet number so that a report can be requested by VISIT FLORIDA. Financial statements are confidential and will be treated as such.

## Work Samples

Please provide the following requested examples that show relevant experience to the stated objectives, needs and scope of work detailed in this ITN. Examples should include: the challenge; goals/objectives; strategy; approach selected and rationale for approach; metrics selected and rationale for selection; value delivered against chosen metrics; creative materials; and how the examples apply to VISIT FLORIDA.

- J. Two (2) examples of past successful public relations campaigns which resulted in wide reaching consumer awareness through major media influencers (broadcast, traditional print and/or social media outlets).
- K. One (1) example of a highly innovative campaign that was produced for a current or past client. This could be traditional, non-traditional or a combination of both.
- L. One (1) example of a successful social media effort.
- M. One (1) example of a successful crisis communications campaign that includes significant digital elements.

## 6.0 PRICING INFORMATION

VISIT FLORIDA requests each agency to provide detailed pricing information that includes hourly rates for different services. Pricing must be fully comprehensive, and complete. Additional information and backup detail should be included as appropriate with your proposal.

## 7.0 CONTRACT

The contract terms shall be defined by a written agreement, which shall be binding when fully executed by both parties. Any responses to the ITN will be incorporated by reference in each written agreement and will become an integrated part of the final contract. Agreements will be customized through negotiations, and VISIT FLORIDA's basic terms and conditions and business requirements will be embodied in this contract.

The desired relationship is one marked with a commitment to consistent quality service and continual improvement for the contract processes and services. Therefore, any final agreement will include specific service level and performance standards requirements.

Other Contractual Considerations:

- A. All concepts, slogans, or plans submitted or developed by the

contractor for VISIT FLORIDA during the term of the agreement, whether or not used, and any and all layouts, copy artwork, films, and other tangible material which the contractor prepares for VISIT FLORIDA or purchases for its account pursuant to a campaign for VISIT FLORIDA, are VISIT FLORIDA's property exclusively, provided that VISIT FLORIDA has paid the invoices rendered, if any.

- B. All contracts for the acquisition or use of materials and properties, and for the employment of talent, shall be entered into and signed by the contractor on behalf of VISIT FLORIDA to the end that all materials, properties and rights obtained by virtue of such contracts shall become the property of VISIT FLORIDA.
- C. The contractor shall, at its own cost during the term of this relationship, maintain liability insurance of at least \$2 million covering claims or suits arising out of contractor's services.
- D. The contractor will exercise all reasonable precautions in the examination of all material prepared or used on VISIT FLORIDA's behalf to avoid any claims against either party. To the extent and limits of the general liability policy maintained by VISIT FLORIDA. VISIT FLORIDA will indemnify and hold the contractor harmless with respect to claims, demands, or actions arising out of representation or materials furnished by VISIT FLORIDA to the contractor. The contractor will indemnify and hold VISIT FLORIDA harmless from and against any and all claims, demands or actions arising from the preparation or presentation of any campaigns covered by the final agreements.
- E. VISIT FLORIDA shall reimburse the contractor for the costs of such materials and services, provided that the contractor shall be responsible for the completion of all subcontracted work in a manner deemed satisfactory by VISIT FLORIDA.
- F. To the extent the agency subcontracts for work, the agency is encouraged to meet or exceed the minority subcontracting goals provided by Florida law, through contracts with qualified minority subcontractors. Minority vendor activities and expenditures must be reported to VISIT FLORIDA on a quarterly basis.