



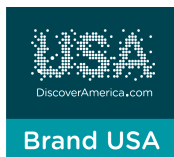
Brand USA



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Partner Marketing Services and Development

June 8, 2015



Request for Proposal

INTRODUCTION

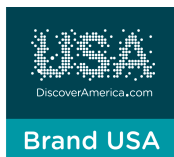
Brand USA is a public-private not for profit organization created by the Travel Promotion Act of 2009. The mission of Brand USA is to generate increased international visitation to the United States and to grow its share of the global travel market. Brand USA will accomplish this via marketing campaigns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

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

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

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

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



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WHY DOES A COUNTRY AS POPULAR AS THE USA NEED A MARKETING PROGRAM?

Although the United States remains one of the world's most popular travel destinations, during the first decade of this century, while the global travel market was booming, the USA's share of international travelers declined 37 percent—from 17.2 percent in 2000 to 12.4 percent in 2010. The resulting impact on the U.S. economy was an annual loss of 467,000 jobs and \$606 billion in lost revenue. In addition to being seen as unwelcoming (resulting from increased security measures that came following 9/11) and too familiar, the United States was also one of the world's only industrialized nations without a national tourism board to attract international travelers to its shores in order to fuel the nation's economy by inspiring the world to visit the U.S.A.—to see it again, or for the first time.

With the strength of a national marketing effort from Brand USA now in place, the United States is working to regain its share of the global travel market. By welcoming more international visitors to the USA, Brand USA is supporting U.S. economic growth, helping to spur job creation, and creating a more positive impression of the United States around the world.

WHY IS INTERNATIONAL VISITATION SO IMPORTANT TO THE NATION'S ECONOMY?

International visitation helps local communities.

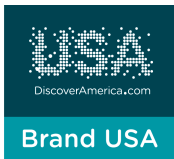
On average, overseas visitors spend nearly \$4,500 per trip and generate tax revenue in communities across the USA without burdening local services, such as public schools and fire departments. When international travelers spend this kind of money in our communities, it lessens the tax burden on U.S. citizens.

International visitation supports American jobs and economic growth.

When international visitors come to the U.S.A., the money they spend directly supports more than 1 million American jobs and added \$181 billion to the U.S. economy. (Source: US Travel Association and NTTO 2013 Data)

International visitation enhances the image of the United States worldwide.

Surveys show that international visitors to the United States are 74 percent more likely to have a favorable view of America and 61 percent more likely to support U.S. policies.



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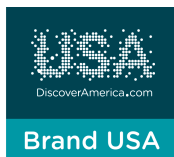
Who Pays for It?

International visitors and private contributions fund the work of Brand USA—with half of Brand USA's budget generated by contributions from the private sector and matching funds provided by a \$10 fee paid by travelers from markets that are not required to have a visa to enter the United States. These markets are designated as visa-waiver countries. As a result, U.S. taxpayers contribute \$0 toward Brand USA's marketing efforts.

BRAND USA IS BUILDING ON SUCCESS

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

In 2013, we were fully deployed (consumer, co-op, and trade marketing) in eight markets (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, and the United Kingdom)—and delivered a 47:1 return on marketing investment, 1.1 million incremental visitors, \$3.4 billion in direct travel spending, and \$7.4 billion total spending—which supported 53,000 new jobs. In 2014, Brand USA expanded the consumer campaign to China and Taiwan, and in 2015 will be fully deployed in 14 international markets (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom). Every 1 percent increase in travel from these markets fuels the nation's economy by generating 500,000 additional visitors and \$1 billion in international visitor spend a year.



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PURPOSE

Brand USA's mission is to increase international visitation, spend and market share to fuel our nation's economy and enhance the image of the USA worldwide. A foundational element of that mission is to promote the entirety of the USA with innovative marketing that supports all 50 states, the District of Columbia and five territories to, though, and beyond the gateways.

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify the appropriate vendor to develop and manage various cooperative marketing programs for Brand USA and its stakeholders. The successful bidder will deliver strategy and solutions to generate awareness of and activation for international visitors to visit the United States as a premier travel destination. The marketing programs should focus on innovative ways to market the United States as a whole and not just the gateways. All marketing solutions should guarantee a strong return on investment for Brand USA and its partners.

SCOPE OF WORK

Brand USA seeks a premier marketing solutions company to develop and manage multiple cooperative marketing programs for Brand USA and its stakeholders. The contract is eligible to last three (3) years. The purpose of the cooperative marketing programs are to engage potential international visitors and encourage them to travel to the United States to take advantage of the limitless experiences the United States has to offer.

The successful bidder will be responsible for the following:

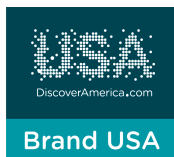
I. Print and Digital Publishing and Distribution

Brand USA publishes multiple print products every year, including an Inspiration Guide, print inserts to accompany multi-channel marketing campaigns, and additional print publications promoting various marketing initiatives.

The Inspiration Guide is a 200-page collection of stunning photos and brief copy that inspires consumers to book travel to the United States. At minimum, publisher must be capable of producing 500,000 print copies, supported by 30 million digital impressions. Brand USA also expects to create *ad hoc* print publications focused on specific themes such as a Culinary Guide, with production numbers to vary based on interest and resources.

There are roughly 20 multi-channel marketing campaigns in 10 countries each year with an approximate circulation of 500,000 per campaign. These campaigns generally take the form of special inserts in foreign newspapers' magazines, and other highly read publications. Each multi-channel campaign focuses on a specific theme (great outdoors, urban excitement, etc.) or region to inspire readers to travel to the United States.

Brand USA will maintain full and exclusive rights, including copyrights and usage of the title and contents considered to be intellectual property. This will include, subject to the rights of third parties, editorial materials, advertisements, circulation data, and conceptual and finished artwork,



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photographs, among other materials.

For all print publications, Contractor will be responsible for the following:

- Requisite staffing to accommodate annual publishing needs
- All concepting, formatting, designing, developing content as necessary, and production
- Collaboration with federal agencies – via Brand USA – to incorporate messaging as appropriate
- Coordination with Brand USA’s translation vendor and localization¹ of content
- All pre-press, proofing, and printing
- Publisher may be required to contact and work directly with Inspiration Guide and multi-channel participants to facilitate the formatting, design, and ultimate production of those products.
- Development of digital versions/eBooks of the print publications
- Development of other distribution opportunities - both digital and print – that tie to the larger Brand USA thematic messages
- Distribution as directed – specifically to all Brand USA pavilions at international trade shows

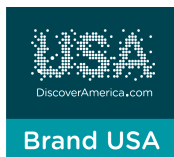
II. Content Creation (In-language)

Brand USA seeks high-quality content for its websites and other digital channels. This content is meant to inspire international visitors to visit the destinations featured in videos, web pages and social media posts. Successful articles and videos will be measured by consumer engagement. Articles will feature destination-specific content about US states, cities or experiences. Brand USA expects to create between 150 – 250 HD-quality videos of varying lengths (1.5 – 3 mins and :15 pre-roll spots) each year. Contractor must be able to support each video production with high-resolution photographs, added b-roll, articles/written content, and meta data for each component.

Brand USA will provide the subject and Contractor will be responsible for:

- Requisite staffing to accommodate production needs
- Creation of editorial website content
- Concepting, formatting, editing, and all production to capture destinations and activities and align with current Brand USA websites
- Host and talent recruiting and coordination
- Rights clearance
- Post-production
- In-language editorial writing and narration
- Press outreach and tracking for appropriate markets relating to upcoming filming
- Coordination with Brand USA international representation firms to build interest in developed content
- Distribution management via Brand USA channels – including Youtube and other social media sites – and elsewhere as described in media planning and buying section

¹ Markets include, but are not limited to: United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Japan, South Korea, China (mainland), Taiwan, Hong Kong, Southeast Asia, India, Australia, New Zealand, France, Sweden, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway, Argentina



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III. Brand USA Website Development and Digital Content Strategy

Brand USA operates a number of websites and content microsites. A Contractor is necessary to oversee content integration across all of those channels. The Contractor will also be responsible for developing and executing a traffic generation strategy that will encourage consumer engagement with all Brand USA cooperative digital content.

Contractor will be responsible for the following:

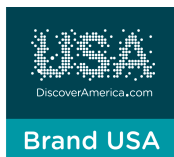
- Collection of appropriate materials and collaboration with partners
- Proofing content and
- Create custom and template layout design – to include written copy, photographs, and video – for thematic e.g., adventure travel, or regional e.g., American Southwest, content to enhance and align with Brand USA websites.
- Provide advice related to web navigation, page design, content nesting, linking, and other details as appropriate.
- Landing page development for media planning and buying
- Integration of Contractor-developed in-language content – written copy, photographs, and video – as well as all print publications and such other content provided by Brand USA into Brand USA websites as directed.
- Coordination with Brand USA social media agency(ies) to drive traffic to content
- Performance reporting

IV. Media Planning and Buying

The Contractor must be able to plan and buy media² to distribute content and drive traffic to a host of Brand USA digital properties. Contractors must be able to fully integrate media planning with Brand USA content, including the In-language Content, Web Enhancement and other Digital Development described above with custom microsites and landing pages designed for specific campaigns. Contractor must be able to develop plans that include appropriate call-to-action to drive consumers back to the appropriate site or social channel with reporting on impressions, engagement, and other relevant tracking. Brand USA expects to distribute 75-100 in-language content packages via media planning and buying with various budgets annually.

- E-mail
- SEO/SEM, including keyword research and translation services
- Print
- Radio
- TV
- Out of Home
- Social media
- Multi-channel – with a minimum of print and digital distribution, and may involve all channels listed above as directed– campaigns, which include negotiation with both a publisher for space and an online travel activation partner to service the campaign with travel packages to all destinations included (with post-run booking reports)

² Markets include, but are not limited to: Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, France, Spain, Mexico, Chile, Brazil, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, and other Southeast Asian countries



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V. Administration and Reporting

In all cases, Contractor must be able to effectively coordinate with destination and other partners. Such coordination will include the collection and integration of partner material, scheduling for content creation, and post-run reporting on all collaborative programs. Brand USA works with over one hundred destination partners. Contractor must have sufficient staffing to adequately respond to and report on activities with each partner.

Ownership

Brand USA will maintain full and exclusive rights, including copyrights and usage of the title and contents considered to be intellectual property. This will include, subject to the rights of third parties, editorial materials, advertisements, circulation data, and conceptual and finished artwork, photographs, among other materials.

Qualifications

- Willingness and ability to travel to Brand USA headquarters in Washington, DC for in-person planning meetings
- Experienced staff responsible for communicating, contracting, and reporting with and to Brand USA
- Experience working with the Destination Marketing Organizations (“DMOs”) and other travel industry entities.
- Experience working with and in international media
- Proven ability to create, manage and execute destination and travel-related co-operative marketing campaigns
- Proven ability to negotiate and purchase media in international markets, especially China, including leveraging media buys on a large scale
- Experience securing and working with travel-activation partners (including online travel agents (“OTAs”) and tour operators) in various international markets
- Experience creating social media content and driving traffic to/from it
- Proven ability to develop traffic-driving strategies that lead to high consumer engagement of cooperative content

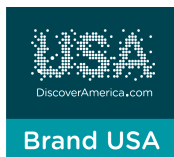


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PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SPECS

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

1. Provide background information on your company including your current position in the marketplace. Identify your core competencies and marketing channels of expertise.
2. Provide a staffing plan for personnel assigned to the project that should also include background information on experience and areas of expertise. Provide number of fully dedicated staff by function, including content, design, partner service, sales, account management and accounting. Provide international experience of this personnel.
3. Provide number of senior staff on the account and make a commitment to the number of days per month that senior staff would be in the Brand USA offices.
4. Provide 5 references in the travel space with descriptions of the work your firm provides for them.
5. Describe key agency processes including project management frameworks and billing policies.
6. Detail experience in working with activations partners on the OTA and travel trade side to develop co-ops and promotions.
7. Show experience in creating multi-channel marketing campaigns that incorporate numerous partner organizations in multiple elements of a single campaign.
8. Provide examples of your experience in co-op marketing, specifically in the travel category.
9. Describe your process for managing advertising and content material solicitation, production and proofing with partners.
10. Provide examples of work for US destinations/clients that are not in English - specifically in-language content and design with digital, print and video examples.



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12. Demonstrated experience in managing large content translation projects and provide details on the largest multi-channel print and digital projects you have led and managed.

13. Do you have experience utilizing research studies and consumer insights to create content and cooperative marketing campaigns?

14. Please provide 1-2 detailed examples of regional or state-led cooperative marketing campaigns that your team conceived, executed and managed.

BUDGET

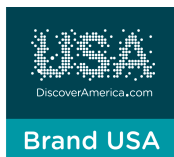
Based on the RFP requirements, the proposer must submit a detailed, realistic budget with an estimated execution timeline. The budget should outline each of the duties described in the Scope of Work, including all services, hourly rates, consulting or support fees, out-of-pocket costs, reimbursements and administrative fees (these costs shall include telephone, postage, travel, shipping, research, etc. if applicable).

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must address each item listed, giving specific details of techniques to be used in achieving these requirements. Proposals may be rejected if minimum requirements are not met. All proposers wishing clarification of this RFP must submit questions in writing to Brand USA, no later than June 22, 2015 (due by 5:00 pm, EDT), and sent by email to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com.

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

1. Notice of Intent to Bid (Attachment 1) must be received by July 1, 2015 (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT). The notice shall be sent by email to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com at the Brand USA office. The NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID, is nonbinding; however, it ensures the receipt of all addenda related to this RFP. Proposals will be accepted only from applicants who submitted a timely NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID.
2. RFP Responses must contain the following information:
 - a. Executive Summary.
 - b. Services and Activities: Provide description of the nature of the organization's services and activities. Note when the business was established, brief history and location. List



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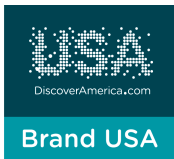
the location(s) of the office(s) from which the primary work on this contract would be performed.

- c. At least four examples of work.
 - d. No Conflict of Interest: Client relationships that could potentially be considered a conflict of interest must be listed.
 - e. Contract Manager/Team: Identify one individual on the proposer's account team who will manage the contract work. Identify the role of each member who will service the account. Current resumes must be attached for each person who would in any way be associated with this account.
3. References: Provide at least three references.
 4. Budget
 5. Timeline and/or Project Plan
 6. Certification Form (Attachment 2) must be signed and accompany all RFP Response submission.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

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

A. Proposal Released	June 8, 2015
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	June 22, 2015
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA Website	June 29, 2015
D. Notice of Intent To Bid Due (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	July 1, 2015
E. Proposal Due (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT)	July 22, 2015
F. Proposal Evaluation by scoring committee	August 5, 2015
G. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	August 7, 2015
H. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	August 17-18, 2015
I. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	August 21, 2015



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DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Each bidder is required to deliver a .pdf of its proposal to Brand USA's RFP Admin, no later than July 22, 2015 (3:00 p.m. EDT). The .pdf should be no more than three separate files. The proposal may not exceed forty pages double-spaced at 12-point font. Ten printed copies of the proposal must be delivered by July 22, 2015 to Brand USA, 1725 I St NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20006.

EVALUATION AND CONTRACTING

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

ATTACHMENT 1

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID

Due: July 1, 2015



Request for Proposal

SEND TO:

Brand USA Headquarters

C/O RFP Administrator

1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800

Washington, D.C. 20006

ATTN: RFP - PARTNER MARKETING SERVICES AND DEVELOPMENT

Phone: 202.536.2060

Email: rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com

NAME OF BIDDER / COMPANY:

CONTACT PERSON:

MAILING ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE:

FAX:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

SIGNED:



Request for Proposal

ATTACHMENT 2

CERTIFICATION

Please include this statement as part of the Proposal

Certification Statement

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

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

Authorized Signature

Typed or Printed Name

Title

Date

Official Contact

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

Official Contact Name

Phone Number

Official Contact Title

Facsimile Number

Email Address

Street, City, State, Zip



Request for Proposal

ATTACHMENT 3

FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

Bid/Proposal: _____

Evaluated By: _____

Date: _____

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

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

	MAX. POINTS	SCORE
1. Demonstrated success creating cooperative marketing campaigns in the travel industry	30	
2. Ability to produce programs detailed in SOW	25	
3. Creative capabilities	25	
4. Appropriate Staffing	10	
5. Cost effectiveness	10	
TOTAL POINTS	100	