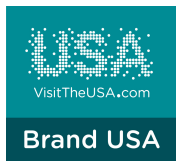


REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Digital Agency for China

August 2, 2016



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.



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?

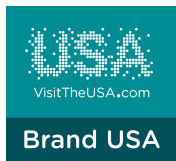
International visitation helps local communities.

On average, overseas visitors spend nearly \$4,500 per trip and generate tax revenue in communities across America 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.

Who Pays for It?

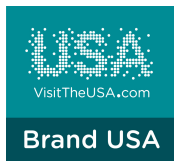
International visitors and private contributions fund the work of Brand USA—with half of Brand USA's budget generated by contributions from the private sector and matching funds provided by a \$10 fee paid by travelers from markets that are not required to have a visa to enter the United States. These 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.





PURPOSE

The purpose of this Request for Proposal (RFP) is to identify a world-class digital agency for Brand USA's websites and social media platforms in China. The goal is to create and disseminate engaging, localized in-language content and creative, which will stimulate consumer desire to travel from China to the United States of America.

SCOPE OF WORK

The selected vendor will collaborate with Brand USA and constituents to serve as Brand USA's digital agency in China. This includes:

Website Development for GoUSA.cn and GoUSA.tw:

Innovate website design features and infrastructure that allow for continuous improvement and user-based customization, including front and back-end coding; ingestion of data as needed, personalization, integration of third party APIs; and testing/quality assurance.

Provide website hosting, maintenance and technical support in China.

Obtain necessary in-country licenses or permits.

Deliver the websites through acceleration and geo-targeting via a reliable content delivery network.

Create and maintain an SEO strategy and execution with the goal of consistently increasing organic traffic.

Maintain a content audit for the websites.

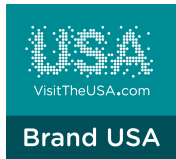
Assist with website analytics and make performance based recommendations.

Mitigate online threats by providing DDOS protection and provide data recovery, if necessary.

Social Media Management:

Provide social media management services for Go USA branded pages on Sina Weibo, WeChat, Youku, Weishi, Lofter, and Facebook (where available). Social media services include, but are not limited to: Creation of





original, aggregated and user generated content; moderation/response as needed; and management of assets for advertising campaigns.

Identify and work with popular Chinese social media Influencers to create value for GoUSA properties and partners.

Recommend emerging/important Chinese social media channels and verify GoUSA registration prior to launch.

Assist with social media analytics and provide performance-based recommendations.

Digital Media Partnerships:

Identify opportunities and manage relationships with in-country digital media partners to drive traffic to GoUSA.cn and GoUSA.tw and partner websites and social media platforms.

Vet each proposed digital media company to ensure legitimate website referral traffic and verify value proposition.

Liaise with Brand USA to develop media partnerships including both paid and contributed media.

Oversee placement of this negotiated cash/in-kind digital media specific to vendor.

Content Creation:

Continuously create compelling content and creative, specifically tailored for website and social media consumption for Brand USA and destination- and attraction-specific campaigns, utilizing a clear calendar structured approach. This includes working closely and directly with Brand USA travel industry partners and our team of agencies, including our agency of record, USA social media/content agency, partner agency and others as appropriate. (Content is broadly defined as text, images, video and animation).

Surface the most appropriate user-generated content about the United States across websites and social platforms, obtaining clearance rights prior to use.



Strategy and Logistics:

Develop annual strategic plans, including supporting partnership acquisition and programming, geared to deliver corporate goals and objectives.

Provide limited translation services in Mandarin and Cantonese. This includes regular translation of social media posts to English, so Brand USA can understand what is being featured; all legal contracts/documents; and other short-form content needs.

Host weekly calls with Brand USA and conduct regular meetings with other agencies as needed.

Attend Brand USA quarterly agency and conference meetings in-person.

Accurately manage to budget and present additional scopes of work, if required.

Devise and manage a project roadmap to meet, or beat deadlines.

Advise Brand USA on leveraging emerging technology and platforms

QUALIFICATIONS

- A minimum of three years experience in China, directly managing all technical aspects of website development, hosting, acceleration, geo-targeting and SEO.
- A minimum of three years experience creating experiential content, creative and art for digital distribution via websites and social media platforms. This includes creating short and long-form video in the USA, for consumption in China.
- A minimum of three years providing enterprise level service to major global companies.
- A minimum of three years of website architecture/design expertise, including map development - all informed by research, testing and analytics.
- Must be a business based in China.
- Demonstrated experience working with partners in developing content and generating revenue via digital platforms.
- In-house capability of translating English to Mandarin and Cantonese, quickly and accurately.
- Experience with insights, developing key performance indicators, reviewing research, interpreting analytics and social media listening is required.

- Solid relationships with Chinese digital media companies.
- Proven experience in developing state-of-the-art digital platforms.
- Ability to meet technical specifications with flexibility to tailor the product to meet our needs.
- Significant project management experience.
- Superior references from large consumer brands currently utilizing your services in China.
- Excellent support system with fast response times.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- What is your specific experience in designing and developing websites in China?
- What is your specific experience with Chinese social media platforms?
- How do you encourage consumer engagement?
- Can you recommend three digital media companies who might be interested in paid and contributed media partner relationships with Brand USA? Only refer companies who can deliver legitimate website traffic.
- Have you worked with a parent company, which has many constituents who also have requirements of your agency? If so, please describe.
- How do you utilize third parties, or outside consultants to perform work?
- What is your process and timeline for developing wireframes/UX, art, templates and other necessary website design elements?
- What are your typical support response times? Do you use third-party vendors for support?
- How do you measure website speed performance and what consistent page load times can we expect?
- Have you addressed all of the required “qualifications” listed above?

PROPOSAL FORMAT AND SPECS

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

- Provide background information on your company, including your current industry ranking in China, including a list of current clients, demonstration of an ability to meet the qualifications, and



answers to the questions presented.

- State unique selling proposition over competitors.
- Show case studies (minimum of three) with demonstrated results relevant to Brand USA (scale, industry, and/or similarity).
- Illustrate how we will interact for execution and optimization.
- Describe your experience working in a multi-agency, fast-paced and integrated marketing environment.
- Provide staffing plan, which should include resumes, if possible. Identify other potential resources (writers, influencers, strategists, or anyone outside your agency you may want to utilize). Note employee retention rate.
- Provide three client references.
- Proposal shall not exceed 45 pages.

BUDGET

Based on the RFP requirements, the proposer must submit a detailed, realistic pricing matrix.

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 August 19, 2016 (due by 5:00 pm, EDT), and sent by email to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com. Responses will be posted to Brand USA's Corporate website – www.thebrandusa.com.

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

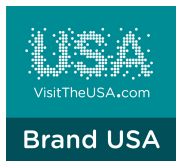
1. Notice of Intent to Bid (Attachment 1) must be received by August 31, 2016 (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT). The notice shall be sent by email to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com at the Brand USA office. The NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID, is nonbinding; however, it ensures the receipt of all addenda related to this RFP. 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 in China. List the location(s) of the office(s) from which the primary work on this contract would be performed and serviced.
- c. No Conflict of Interest: Client relationships that could potentially be considered a conflict of interest must be listed.
- d. 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.
- e. Current resumes must be attached for each person who would in any way be associated with this account.
3. References: Provide at least three relevant references.
4. Pricing Matrix.
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	August 2, 2016
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	August 19, 2016
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA Website	August 25, 2016
D. Notice of Intent To Bid Due (due by 5:00 p.m. EDT)	August 31, 2016
E. Proposal Due (due by 3:00 p.m. EDT)	September 19, 2016
F. Proposal Evaluation by scoring committee	October 21, 2016
G. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	October 26, 2016
H. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	December 14-15, 2016
I. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	January 19, 2017



DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Insert copy here.

Proposals may be e-mailed to rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com or sent by courier such as Federal Express, UPS, etc. to:

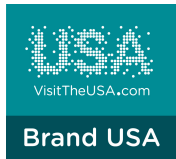
Brand USA Headquarters
C/O RFP Administrator
1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C., USA, 20006
ATTN: RFP – Website Development and Design
Phone: 202.536.2060
Email: rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com

DUE no later than September 19th, 3pm eastern time.

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 Information 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: August 31st, 2016 5pm EDT

SEND TO:

Brand USA Headquarters

C/O RFP Administrator

1725 Eye Street NW, Suite 800

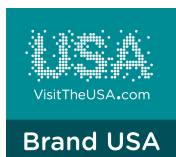
Washington, D.C., USA, 20006

ATTN: RFP – Digital Agency for China

Phone: 202.536.2060

Email: rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com

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



ATTACHMENT 2

CERTIFICATION

Please include this statement as part of the Proposal

Certification Statement

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

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

Authorized Signature

Typed or Printed Name

Title

Date

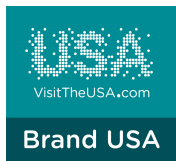
Official Contact

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

Official Contact Title





Request for Proposal

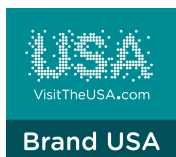
Email Address

Phone Number

Facsimile Number

Street, City, State, Zip





ATTACHMENT 3

FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

Bid/Proposal: _____

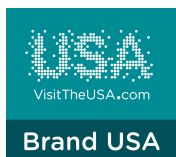
Evaluated By: _____

Date: _____

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation committee will judge each written proposal based on the following criteria of demonstrated work in China:

	MAX. POINTS	SCORE
1 Experience with website development	15	
2. Social media management experience	15	
3. Digital media partnerships	15	
4. Content Creation	15	
5. Strategy and logistics	15	
6. Qualifications of personnel	15	
7. Cost effectiveness	10	



TOTAL POINTS	100	
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FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

ORAL INTERVIEW / DEMONSTRATION CRITERIA

The evaluation committee may, if it deems necessary, select certain proposers for oral interviews and/or demonstrations. Interviews/demonstrations apply only to the top finalist(s), as determined by the evaluation committee. The oral interviews/demonstrations will allow finalists to demonstrate their understanding of the project objectives and to articulate their capability to meet or exceed the requirements of this RFP.

The evaluation committee reserves the option of conducting the oral interviews/demonstrations via teleconference, at the Brand USA office, at the finalist’s and/or the proposed subcontractor’s site, or other designated site.

The evaluation committee reserves the right to designate one or more members of the committee to perform the oral interviews/ demonstrations, if needed, so that grading of oral interviews/demonstrations may be done by fewer than the entire committee.

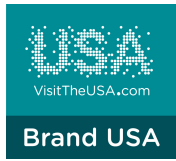
If interviews/demonstrations are not required, the maximum number of points is 100. If interviews/demonstrations are deemed necessary, the maximum number of points is 150.

If a finalist cannot meet on the designated interview/demonstration date, the evaluation committee reserves the right to disqualify the finalist as non-responsive.

The following criteria will be used for scoring the oral interview/demonstration:

	MAX.	SCORE
1. Provider demonstrations will be judged on the same criteria - pro rated - as listed in Attachment 3 “Proposal Evaluation Criteria”.	50	





Request for Proposal

