

College Apartment Center. com

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

**Website Redesign and implementation**

**January 31, 2012**

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## **1. SUMMARY**

College Apartment Center, in Illinois is accepting proposals to re-design, develop and host the company's web site: [www.CollegeAptCenter.com](http://www.CollegeAptCenter.com) This will be a concept to

completion production. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and to provide the candidates with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

## **2. PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS**

This is an open and competitive process. Proposals received before 6:00pm CST, Wednesday, February 16, 2012 is given preferred status. Proposals received after 6:00pm CST February 23, will not be considered.

If you wish to submit alternate solutions, please do so.

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

Provisions of this RFP and the contents of the successful responses are considered available for inclusion in final contractual obligations.

## **3. CONTRACT TERMS**

CollegeAptCenter will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by CollegeAptCenter legal counsel, and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

## **4. PURPOSE, DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Purpose**

CollegeAptCenter currently does not have a web presence. An opportunity exists to engineer the site to reflect the mission of CollegeAptCenter and incorporate the latest web technology. Upon completion of the development of the site, CollegeAptCenter will assume full responsibility for web site content maintenance and administration. All content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of CollegeAptCenter.com

### **Description**

Create a flexible, informative web site that is easy to maintain. We must develop a friendly site that targets to younger generation, particularly for college students. The basic website functions will remain the same.

CollegeAptCenter will maintain ultimate editorial control of content, without significantly delaying the publishing of new information on the site.

To be effective, our web site must be:

- ☐ Innovative web design for CollegeAptCenter.com
- ☐ Visually pleasing
- ☐ Easy to navigate
- ☐ Safe and secure
- ☐ Quick to load and operate

## **Objective**

To redesign our brand to attract more college students to use our service in searching their apartments on campus

## **Our Vision**

- ☐ Maximize web-based technologies
- ☐ Create the top search engine for College apartments
- ☐ Improve navigation ability
- ☐ Increase market share

In short we must tell our story through the use of compelling visuals, intuitive navigation, and concise messaging.

## **Make it easy**

Design the site to deliver intuitive navigation, a graphical user interface, and easy-to-find content organization.

## **Make it compelling**

Develop tools to deliver timely, relevant answers to the breadth and depth of member questions.

## **Make it happen**

CollegeAptCenter

Reinforce the COLLEGEAPTCENTER's brand and market and encourage users to interact with CollegeAptCenter

## **5. TIMELINE**

- ☐ This RFP is dated January 31, 2012. Proposers may also request a copy be sent via email by contacting [info@CollegeAptCenter.com](mailto:info@CollegeAptCenter.com)
- ☐ Proposals are due no later than 6:00pm CST, Wednesday, February 23, 2012.
- ☐ Proposals will be evaluated immediately thereafter. During this time we may require interviews at our office with our evaluation team on or about March 5th, 2012. You will be notified if this is requested.
- ☐ The name of the candidate firm who has been selected will be decided on or about March 12, 2012.
- ☐ Negotiations will begin immediately with the successful candidate and should conclude no later than March 28, 2012.
- ☐ All other candidates will be notified on or about April 15, 2012.
- ☐ Phase I of the project must be completed and delivered by April 30, 2012.
- ☐ Engagement work complete and web site live – deliverable date to be determined during Phase I.

## **7. BUDGET**

Please provide several cost proposals to accomplish the scope outlined below. The budget must encompass all design, production, and software acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the web site.

Hosting will be addressed separately and costs for hosting are not included in the budget for this project.

List pricing for:

- ☐ Phase I: Discovery, Requirements Planning & Site Definition
- ☐ Phase II: Site Development, Testing and Deployment
- ☐ Hosting: We have not yet made a decision to host on or off-site. Discussions during the discovery phase and your input and advice will help us make a decision in this regard.

## **8. SCOPE & GUIDELINES**

The scope of this project is to develop and launch CollegeAptCenterwebsite. COLLEGEAPTCENTER's in-house marketing department will create/provide all of the site copy and provide the successful

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candidate with the most necessary original and stock photography. A firm that can handle all site planning, interface design and production is required. The site must include a technology solution that allows the in-house staff to easily and cost effectively update content and modify site design after the initial launch.

**Design:**

Web site information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, home page and main navigation templates for each of the main navigation links.

**Development Guidelines:**

The web site designed by the successful candidate must meet the following criteria:

- ☐ Convert substantial amounts of existing content to new web site.
- ☐ Visually Appealing – The site must have an attractive mix of text and graphics.
- ☐ Common Theme – Each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The CollegeAptCenter logo should be prominently displayed on every page as a common header.
- ☐ Consistent Design – As stated above, each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The use of photographs, fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the site.
- ☐ Easy to Navigate – The site should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require no more than three levels of “drill down.” for the user to find the desired information.
- ☐ Development of web pages to accommodate the proposed navigation scheme.
- ☐ Provide necessary software and licenses to maintain site internally or externally, as decided by COLLEGEAPTCENTER
- ☐ Provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site.
- ☐ Gather e-mail, areas of interest and demographic information from visitors in a format that permits COLLEGEAPTCENTER to maintain a single database of users and e-mail each according to their area of interest and profile. Provide training and all necessary support to permit easy use by a selected COLLEGEAPTCENTER staff person.

- ☐ Project Management – An assigned project manager will be made available to present information and coordinate with COLLEGEAPTCENTER staff, including a reasonable number of meetings to present design and development solutions.
- ☐ Once the web site has been completed and accepted by the COLLEGEAPTCENTER, the web site design and all of its contents, software and architecture become property of the COLLEGEAPTCENTER of Chicago, IL.

### **Site Specifications:**

COLLEGEAPTCENTER encourages creativity in the proposals submitted; however there are certain requirements for the web site project. Your proposal must account for all of these requirements.

- ☐ Site must be compatible with all of the most recent browser versions.
- ☐ Web site must not require plug-ins as a default.
- ☐ Meets ADA Requirements – The site should be developed to meet all Federally-mandated access requirements adopted by the Federal Access Board under section 508 subsection 1194.22 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- ☐ Site must be built in accordance to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0, provided by the W3C and should also be easily accessible to the novice as well as the experienced Internet user.
- ☐ Fast Loading Pages – The web site must be designed with a balance of text and graphics such that each page loads in 2 seconds or less on the average computer modem.

### **Testing:**

Testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure web site works as promised. Explain testing plan through development process (i.e. focus groups, etc.).

### **Delivery:**

Delivery and uploading of site to client for internal hosting, to an outside third party, or hosting by consultant (to be determined).

### **Tracking:**

Implementation of tracking software to produce user defined site log reports. We need a tool to help us better understand and measure web visitor behavior and improve web site performance and availability. (This may be offered through hosting service.)

- ☐ Web traffic analysis
- ☐ Path analysis
- ☐ Visitor trends
- ☐ Page views
- ☐ Entry pages
- ☐ Top pages
- ☐ Exit pages
- ☐ Page – length of stay
- ☐ Technical analysis: browsers and platforms

## **9. QUALIFICATIONS**



- ☐ List the five web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.
- ☐ Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.
- ☐ Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to produce our web site (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
- ☐ How many full-time staff does your firm employ? Please include a copy of your firm's organizational chart.
- ☐ Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- ☐ Briefly describe the percentage of your web staff that would end of working on this project relative to your entire staff (using full time equivalents). For example, if you would use five staff on the project and you have ten web designers and developers, the percentage would be 50%.
- ☐ What type of team will be assigned to this project? What will each person's role be? Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.
- ☐ Briefly describe your firm's project management process.
- ☐ Percent of total revenue derived from site developments and other business ventures.
- ☐ Explain your business model.
- ☐ Please discuss any planned IPOs, mergers or acquisitions.
- ☐ Please discuss any hardware/software vendor partnerships.
- ☐ Please discuss your testing and support plan.
- ☐ Please explain your service level agreement (SLA) structure.
- ☐ Time frame for completion. The time frame for completion of the project will be evaluated. In addition, time frames will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested.
- ☐ Process to include input from all program areas. Please state how you intend to communicate with all program areas to gather all of the required information.
- ☐ Terms and conditions.

## 10 . EVALUATION CRITERIA

The following criteria will form the basis upon which CollegeAptCenter will evaluate proposals. The mandatory criteria must be met and include:

Proposals that meet the mandatory requirements, as stated above, will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- ☐ Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- ☐ Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- ☐ Aesthetic Capabilities – Prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.
- ☐ Candidate Experience – Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- ☐ Value/Pricing Structure and Price Levels – The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer.
- ☐ Depth and Breadth of Staff – The candidate firm has appropriate staff to develop the site in the time frame needed.
- ☐ Proposal Presentation – The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- ☐ Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLA).

## **11. FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS**

Please use the following as a guideline to format your proposal:

### **Length and Font Size:**

Please use fonts no smaller than 10 point. Maximum proposal length including title page, cover letter, proposal, qualifications and budget should not exceed 35 pages (not including Hosting Attachment information).

### **Title Page:**

COLLEGEAPTCENTER, Web Site Development Proposal, your company name, address, web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

### **Cover Letter:**

Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company (1-2 pages).

### **Proposal:**

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. You should also touch on your ability to deliver the project in the timeframe noted in Section 5 (3-10 pages).

### **Qualifications:**

Provide the information requested in Section 12 (10-20 pages).

### **Budget and Fees:**

List budgets as requested above. Identify staff you anticipate working on the project and their hourly rates for work that may be needed for Phase I and Phase II.

**Attachments:**

Hosting options/information:

- ☐ Do you provide hosting? If so, please provide answers to the following questions.
- ☐ How often do you backup?
- ☐ How often do you have down time?
- ☐ How often do you upgrade software/hardware?
- ☐ Please describe your technical support.
- ☐ Please describe your security.
- ☐ Do you have a high-speed, direct connection to the Internet?
- ☐ Please describe your methodology and service level agreements.
- ☐ Pricing, terms and conditions.

If you do not provide hosting, please suggest a vendor/partner to provide this service and provide answers to the above questions.