

Request for Proposal
For
Branding, Website Development, Digital Marketing
for the High Point Convention & Visitors Bureau

Notice and Instruction to Bidders

The High Point Convention & Visitors Bureau (HPCVB) seeks an experienced and qualified marketing firm to represent the HPCVB as the marketing agency of record and to develop a re-branding strategy and initiative that will drive the creation of new digital and print collateral materials and a website. The HPCVB is accepting proposals for re-branding; as well as the design, and development of digital marketing collateral, and a new web site. 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.

Interested parties are to respond to this RFP **no later than 5PM on Friday, April 13, 2012**. Respondents should submit three (3) copies of their proposal, including all specified information. Proposals should be delivered or mailed to:

Timothy C. Mabe CFE, CMP, CMM, MBA, President & CEO

High Point Convention & Visitors Bureau

300 South Main St. High Point, NC 27261

Call or email regarding questions concerning this RFP to tmabe@highpoint.org

Background of Organization

The mission of the High Point Convention & Visitors Bureau (HPCVB) is "*to encourage and promote economic development in High Point through travel and tourism*". HPCVB is a non-profit 501 c 6 tourism agency located in High Point, NC. The organization promotes High Point as a tourism/visitor destination for conventions, meetings, sporting events, social activities, as well as leisure travel. High Point is known as the Home Furnishings Capital of the World [™] and is home to the High Point Furniture Market which brings in an estimated 80,000 attendees from all over the world twice annually. High Point is centrally located in the heart of the Piedmont Triad, North Carolina's north central region. Attendees to the "market" as well as other events held in High Point enjoy extraordinary service, great transportation, friendly and helpful people, and a myriad of experiences that are available in the Triad.

Qualification Guidelines and Specifications for Responders

Purpose and objectives of the project

The HPCVB currently has a web presence that is somewhat outdated in appearance, structure and in presentation of content. An opportunity exists to re-engineer the site to better reflect the mission of the HPCVB and incorporate the latest web technology. It is also the desire of the HPCVB to select a firm which will conduct research to guide us in a new branding strategy. The desire is to also have new collateral material that is both digital and print. Upon completion of the development of the site, the HPCVB will assume full responsibility for web site content maintenance and administration. All content,

coding and graphics will become the sole property of the HPCVB.

Our primary Internet objective is to continue to build brand identity, awareness, and interest in High Point as a destination and the services the HPCVB provides. To be effective, our web site must be:

- Easy to navigate and intuitive
- Visually pleasing
- Informative
- Safe and secure
- Quick to load and operate

Website Development Guidelines:

The web site designed by the successful responder must:

- Create a content management system that will permit HPCVB staff to instantly update web site content on specific pages
- Website must also incorporate the event calendar site (Explore High Point) into the design and use
 - 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 the HPCVB to maintain a single database of users according to their area of interest and profile
 - Compatible with the latest versions of Internet Explorer, Firefox, and Google Chrome
 - Web site must not require plug-ins as a default.

- Must meet ADA requirements and other Federally-mandated access requirements

I. Scope of Work

The project will be approached in four phases:

Phase 1. Re-Branding Formation:

- a) Research - An adequate sample of quantitative and qualitative research using surveys, interviews, etc. with our current or previous customers including those who did not choose High Point as a destination. Competitive research should also be done as to what other similar convention and visitor bureaus are doing in regards to brand, marketing initiatives, and website look and utilization.
- b) Discovery - Confirm audiences, objectives, graphic look and feel, navigation, site marketing, technology issues and assumptions, required functionality, phasing, and budgetary constraints
- c) Identify strengths and opportunities to highlight and how we can exploit them to differentiate ourselves
- d) An analysis shall be made with sound conclusions presented e)
Present a recommendation of positioning for the new brand

Phase 2. Design and development of New Brand:

- a) Develop a marketing campaign and approach strategy utilizing results of Phase I
- b) Create the design concept for a unified campaign and content strategy

- c) Align the packaging and content to be used in all collateral including print, digital, web, letterhead, envelope, business cards, labels, etc.
- d) Redesign logo in multiple formats
- e) Create new collateral using multiple applications

Phase 3. Design and create digital collateral

- a) Create presentation materials and inserts to be used by sales staff including presentations for iPad devices, PowerPoint presentations, personalized templates for presentations, and PDF files for email distribution
- b) Fit the brand in the design of materials used in sales initiatives, eblasts, auto-response, and social media

Phase 4. Design and development of Website

- a) Analysis of what needs to be on the site giving specific attention to SEO and SEM
- b) Organize the web site with a flow chart
- c) Create a site map and navigational structure
- d) Provide photography and video and incorporate into site e) Develop plans for using web site for sales initiatives, incorporate an RFP generator with auto-response, social media, mobile website, mobile app, Four Square, etc.
- f) Design - Web site information architecture, graphic look and feel, user navigation, home page and main navigation templates
- g) Secure web partner for hosting site

h) Development and programming

i) Testing and launch

II. Consideration for Selection of Agency of Record

Purpose

It is the desire of the HPCVB that the firm selected for both the project (Branding, Website Development, and Digital Marketing) also be selected for the ongoing agency of record and enter into an annual contractual relationship as the "Agency of Record". The intent is to utilize HPCVB staff to coordinate a growing amount of marketing and public relations efforts with a qualified firm that can offer suitable affordable services to include:

- Working with HPCVB staff to develop an annual marketing plan
- Meeting with HPCVB staff on a weekly or as needed basis to monitor plan success and implementation
- Media advertising placement and buys
- Graphic artistic design
- Direct mail and eblasts
- Customized Promotional Materials
- Signage
- Press Releases and editorial pieces
- Online Marketing
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

- Search Engine Marketing (SEM)
- Social Media Management
- Website sustainability (Blog, eCommerce, Informational, Mobile- Optimized, etc.)
- Web Tracking, Data Analysis and Reporting

III. Selection Criteria and Requirements

The successful responder for the agency of record will be:

- Experienced and qualified to execute the services named above
- Be very accessible to face-to-face meetings as needed
- Able to work on an affordable annual retainer for a fee to include all labor and other fees with the exception of out-of-pocket expenses for actual approved costs (such as advertising, print, etc.)

Required Project Pricing Disclosure and Format

The presenter must include in the proposal response the following in regards to pricing as follows:

- Pricing must be inclusive (e.g. a turn-key price) for both the project and separately for the Agency of Record
- On a separate sheet, clearly disclose the total inclusive price of providing the proposal for each
- If presenter wishes to present more than one option or choices as to pricing of what is to be included in the scope of work, etc., then each

option should each be presented on a separate sheet and identified as Option 1, Option 2 and so on with a breakdown of what is to be included

- Variables must also be identified that would drive the price up of the project such as travel, photography, etc. Variables must be presented as an estimate and must be clearly identified in the breakdown

Proposal Requirements

All proposals must follow the following proposal format and include:

- Business identification and main office address of the proposer
- Contact information (of individual(s) who will be involved in this process)
- Technical approach / proposed process
- Describe specific related and/or transferable experience to include:
 - Five web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work
 - Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL must be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation
 - Describe your experience in producing sites for non-profit and/or community-focused projects
- Project completion timeline must be clearly outlined and guaranteed
- Proposal cost (See Required Project Pricing Disclosure and Format)
- References (minimum of three including contact information)

IV. Selection of Responder

Scoring of Proposals - Selection will be scored as follows (showing maximum*)

- Approach submission 20*

- Cost 20*
- Staff Qualifications/Experience 20*
- Firm Qualifications/Experience 20*
- Firm References 10*
- Firm location in proximity to High Point 10*
- Total maximum potential score - 100

Acceptance of bids

Unless bids are submitted per the required instructions of this RFP the bid may be rejected by the Board as a non-responsive vendor.

Pre-Opening Proposal Forum

A Pre-Opening Bid Forum is scheduled for **Wednesday April 4, 2012 at 10 AM** at the HPCVB offices located at 300 South Main Street, High Point, NC. Please RSVP to Melody Burnett, Executive Administrator at mburnett@highpoint.org so that we can ensure appropriate seating available.

Opening of bids

Proposals will be opened on **Monday April 16, 2012 at 9 AM** at the HPCVB offices located at 300 South Main Street, High Point, NC.

Evaluation of Bids

The bids will be evaluated by a committee appointed by the Board. The Committee may want to interview a Responder. The responder who best meets the criteria as stated herein at the best value will be the successful candidate.

Award and Final Offers

After carefully evaluating responsive bids and vendors, the Committee will make recommendations to the Board, which will make the final decision regarding the firm to be selected.

Notification of Award

The firm selected by the Board will be notified in writing by the Board by Certified Mail within 1 to 3 business days of that decision.

Anticipated Timeline of Selection

Ideally, the successful candidate will be selected the **week of April 16th, 2012**.

However, the Board reserves the right to take as long as needed to consider who is best suited or to delay the search as long as they deem appropriate.

Equal Opportunity Proposal Acceptance Policy

It is important to the Board that all procurement practices, including this Request for Proposal be conducted with integrity, consistent with sound business practices and applicable laws and regulations. The evaluation process made by the Board shall provide for fair and open competition among all proposers.

Furthermore, the procurement function shall be conducted in such a fashion to promote the fullest attainable opportunities for disadvantaged business enterprises that are hereby strongly encouraged to submit a proposal for consideration.