



## **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

### **FOR A PUBLIC RELATIONS COMPANY IN THE U.S.**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) is the Caribbean's tourism development agency comprising membership of 34 governments and a myriad of private sector entities. Member governments reflect the diversity of the region and include Dutch, English, French and Spanish-speaking territories in the Caribbean.

The CTO's mission is to provide to and through its members, the services and information needed for the development of sustainable tourism for the economic and social benefit of the Caribbean people.

The CTO is inviting proposals from public relations companies with tourism or destination account experience to provide PR services to the Caribbean region via the CTO. The selected company will work with the CTO to develop a strategic plan to enhance and promote the image of the Caribbean in the United States of America.

#### **2. Overview**

The CTO has a strategy of appointing public relations agencies in key markets and is desirous of doing so in the U.S in 2010. The public relations agency will:

- Position the Caribbean in the U.S as the world's premier, warm weather tourism destination.
- Provide PR services for the Caribbean region as a whole through the CTO.
- Provide a range of services including, but not limited to: Media relations, image management, promotions and event coordination, crisis communications, media preparedness training, cause marketing, social networking initiatives, strategic and creative planning.

- Act as CTO's liaison with public relations agencies representing CTO's members; and co-chair with the CTO a grouping of public relations agencies whose clients conduct business with the Caribbean.
- Liaise with the CTO's headquarters in Bridgetown, Barbados and in particular with the CTO's headquarters-based Communications Specialist.
- Increase consumer awareness and demand for the Caribbean and assist the CTO in fulfilling this objective through events including, but not limited to: Caribbean Weeks, the Governments of the Caribbean State Ball, the Sustainable Tourism Conference, the Caribbean Tourism Conference, World Tourism Day, Caribbean Tourism Day, as well as initiatives involving the CTO Foundation and the CTO Relief Fund.

### **3. The Approach**

The approach to handling the CTO account is targeted, results-driven and flexible. There will be mutually agreed, realistic targets and methods of quantifying the results. These methods will help the CTO to assess the effectiveness of the public relations company's efforts to:

- Enhance the Caribbean's brand identity. This includes the use of the public relations company's influence and creativity to secure significant amounts of positive media coverage for the Caribbean.
- Expand and strengthen strategic partnerships. The public relations company will develop and implement a "working through partnerships" strategy through activities that involve Caribbean governments, the Caribbean Tourism Development Company, the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association, airlines, cruise lines, hotels, tour operators, trade associations and other strategic partners to maximize the cost-effectiveness of the activities and the profile of the CTO and its members in the market place.
- Establish a database comprising journalists, media representatives, travel writers and publicists encompassing the mainstream, the Caribbean Diaspora and Caribbean-specific entities.
- Assist with the planning, promotion and implementation of CTO conferences and events.

- Alert the CTO promptly of any negative perceptions about the Caribbean.
- Prepare and implement a crisis communications action plan to be used as needed for any occurrence that could impact Caribbean tourism such as hurricanes, earthquakes, crime, health risks and other issues.
- Issue monthly reports stating the activities and communications conducted on behalf of CTO.

#### **4. Reporting**

The public relations company will report to the CTO's Director of Marketing for the Americas. Monthly and annually, the public relations company will submit a report to the CTO which should consist of at least the following information:

- i. Activities and measurable results of activities.
- ii. Evidence of results of public relations activities in the form of clippings, reports from media outlets and/or industry constituents; and advertising media cost comparisons.
- iii. Listing of personnel assigned to the account, hours incurred by individual, percent of individuals' total time spent on the account, activities engaged in and costs incurred per individual where applicable.
- iv. Listing and documentation of out-of-pocket expenses accompanying the monthly invoices.
- v. A spreadsheet that details the status of the budget. This will include expenditures for the month, expenditures to date by project, and the remaining balance. The public relations company will present a draft of the format of the monthly report for approval prior to submission of the first monthly report.

#### **5. Qualifications**

The public relations company is expected to have an established, incorporated business with full back-office facilities, qualified staff and a sound knowledge of the Caribbean. A superb command of English is a necessity. Facility with Spanish, French and Dutch would be a considerable asset.

The public relations company should have at least five years experience in the travel/tourism industry and a thorough knowledge of the traditional media, the Caribbean Diaspora media and online media.

Ideally the public relations company should have represented a destination. The agency **must not** currently be representing a Caribbean destination or a direct competitor of the Caribbean.

## **6. The Budget**

For 2010/2011 CTO will allocate an overall budget of US \$125,000 including fees and expenses.

All documented out-of-pocket expenses (such as travel, postage, faxes, shipping, and telephone) or costs incurred in producing materials, photography, or subcontractors' fees (such as press clipping services) will be billed to the CTO at the public relations company's net cost with no markup or commission.

The final budget and work plan will be agreed with the public relations company in advance. The public relations company will be expected to work within the budget and to make recommendations on how best the financial resources can be utilized. The public relations company will be expected to recommend ways of enhancing the budget through attracting sponsorships and strategic alliances.

## **7. The Contract**

The contract is expected to begin in August, 2010 for a period of one year to be renewed at the CTO's discretion.

The public relations company will have a contractual relationship with the CTO and be paid an agreed monthly fee. In detailing how it should be compensated, the public relations company must specify what services are included in the fee. Payment by the CTO of any money to the public relations company will be subject to the contract ultimately signed between the two parties.

The public relations company will be solely responsible for the payment of all its staffing, as well as City, State and Federal taxes, medical coverage and pension contributions.

## **8. Proposals**

Proposals should outline the overall strategic approach to the effort rather than present a specific campaign. Companies must submit case histories and creative samples that are strategically related to the Caribbean.

Proposals should illustrate how the company would go about publicizing the wide diversity of cultural, heritage and other tourism attractions and increasing the economic impact of tourism in the

Caribbean. Companies will be judged on their ability to effectively promote the Caribbean as a year-round destination.

To be considered, each proposal submitted in response to this Request For Proposal (RFP) must contain the following:

- i. A statement of the public relations company's qualifications and capabilities to perform the task described in this RFP.
- ii. Descriptions of any similar assignments which the company has handled.
- iii. An indication of the company's clients including length of service.
- iv. An outline of the company's strategy for performing the tasks outlined in this RFP.
- v. A list of the staff that will work on the CTO's account including a brief bio on each person and their capabilities.
- vi. Details of the proposed fees and expenses.
- vii. Three industry references.

Proposals, in a sealed envelope should be sent by courier or registered mail addressed to:

**Public Relations RFP**  
**The Caribbean Tourism Organization**  
**80 Broad Street, Suite 3200**  
**New York, NY 10004**  
**USA**

Four copies would be appreciated. Proposals sent by fax or e-mail will not be considered. The final date for the receipt of proposals is Monday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010.