

FIRN, Inc.
2008 Scope of Work for
Language Connections Management/Marketing Consultant

Summary

FIRN seeks a Marketing consultant with 5 – 10 years experience in marketing and research to conduct a feasibility study to determine business expansion opportunities for the Language Connections Program in the Maryland area. The study has two primary objectives:

- ▶ To identify growth/expansion opportunities, competitive benchmarking and resource requirements (financial, staffing, etc.)
- ▶ To provide an assessment of the current program and recommend process and costs efficiencies for improved operational function.

About FIRN

FIRN is a nonprofit organization that serves the foreign-born population of Howard County and Central Maryland. Our mission is to help ensure access to community resources and opportunities for all foreign-born individuals. FIRN's vision is a community in which foreign-born individuals are welcomed and successful, and contribute to a global perspective, vibrant economy, and rich fabric of cultures and customs. One of FIRN's core programs is Language Connections – the only nonprofit interpretation and translation service in central Maryland.

Language Connections – Program Description

Language Connections provides professional, culturally-sensitive interpreting and translation services for public agencies, businesses, and other organizations that work with foreign-born populations.

Language Connections is designed to link more than 100 interpreters fluent in over 50 languages with the people, businesses, agencies and organizations that need them. Most of these professionals specialize in health and human services, making this benefit of particular value to health agencies, hospitals, private medical practices and social service organizations. In addition, we help institutional clients learn about the needs and cultures of their foreign-born clients and employees. Language Connections also provides translations of text and documents such as forms, transcripts, marriage records, and birth certificates.

Benefits/Services Provided

- ▶ Institutional clients can overcome language and cultural barriers, build trust among their foreign-born patrons, strengthen their reputations as sensitive and caring organizations, bring more foreign-born customers to their doors, attract a diverse staff, and protect their obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.
- ▶ FIRN fulfills 98% of requests for skilled medical interpreters, using approximately 15 interpreters on a regular basis. The most frequently-requested languages have been Spanish (95%), Korean, and Mandarin Chinese. Sporadically, there is need for other languages as institutional clients receive grants to serve new targeted populations.
- ▶ 90% of written translations are performed in-house for individual foreign-born clients who need forms, transcripts, marriage records, birth certificates, drivers' licenses and other documents translated into English; 10% of translations are simple brochures, fliers and forms for institutional clients.

Target Audience

Language Connections primarily targets federally funded health care providers. The Howard County Health Department is our largest client accounting for approximately 90% of revenue, however, we have a few clients in outlying counties (e.g., Baltimore County Health Department, Baltimore City Casey Family Services, Arundel County Coordinating Center, etc.).

Past marketing efforts introduced FIRN to over 200 service providers from 5 counties. Our Language Connections brochures are displayed at health fairs and other outreach events county-wide.

Scope of Work

Consultant will conduct market and competitive analysis to identify growth opportunities, competitive advantage and resource/investment requirements to successfully expand the customer base and increase revenue generated by Language Connections. A final report and recommendation will be presented to FIRN's Board of Directors and other key staff at the termination of the project. Key components of the report:

- ▶ Identification of the market opportunity for language interpretation and translation services in the Maryland area. What is the best opportunity for FIRN?
- ▶ Identification of customer segments who would be most interested in this type of service (e.g. healthcare providers, etc.)
- ▶ What is the competitive landscape – who is offering similar services? How are the services differentiated? Are FIRN's Language Connections services comparable?
- ▶ What are best practices in offering language services?
- ▶ What operational/structural changes would need to occur to optimize program management and operational efficiencies of current services.
- ▶ Identification of resource requirements to successfully grow Language Connections.

Consulting Schedule

The schedule for the proposed work is December 1, 2008 – February 15, 2009.

Consulting Budget

FIRN has up to \$18,600 available from a grant to accomplish this scope of work.

Requested Response

Please provide the following information in response to this solicitation:

- ▶ A narrative describing your background and qualifications in providing similar services described in the Scope of Work.
- ▶ A proposal describing your approach to this project including a timeline with key milestones to ensure completion by February 15, 2009.
- ▶ A copy of your most recent resume.
- ▶ A minimum of three professional references that we may contact regarding your work
- ▶ Your fee for the proposed work.

Required documents must be received **by 5:00 pm November 21, 2008** at:

**FIRN, Inc.
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