



Request for Proposal
Managed IT Services
7 December 2009

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1 Summary

BuzzBack Market Research ("BuzzBack") is accepting proposals for managed IT services encompassing network infrastructure, systems administration, VoIP, and helpdesk support for the organization and its public-facing production systems. 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.

BuzzBack conducts global research projects exclusively through online media, and as such the stability and availability of the company's data collection and client support systems is the highest priority for IT management. BuzzBack has recently undergone an overhaul and refresh of its back-office systems and seeks to engage a managed services partner who can provide reliable, professional, and timely ongoing support for IT operations as well as for end users.

2 Proposal Guidelines and Requirements

This is a free and open process. All valid proposals will undergo competitive evaluation and the bidder that represents the best value to BuzzBack will be selected. Though cost is a significant factor, BuzzBack is not obliged to select the lowest cost bidder.

This RFP outlines minimum requirements for this effort as determined by BuzzBack. Bidders who wish to submit alternate approaches are encouraged to do so, however the solution must indicate how it will address these minimum requirements.

Prices quoted should be inclusive of all costs. If the quoted price excludes certain fees or charges, the proposal must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

Responses to questions submitted in writing by the deadline designated in the RFP schedule will be distributed to all parties who have expressed their intention to bid.

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

2.1 Proposal Deadline

The due date for all bidders' final proposals is Wednesday, 23 December 2009 at 5:00 PM ET. Proposals received after the established deadline will be rejected and destroyed.

2.2 Subcontracting

If the execution of work to be performed by the bidder requires sub-contracted resources, this must be clearly stated in the proposal, identifying the sub-contractors and the work they will perform.

BuzzBack will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of sub-contractors; however we retain the right to refuse the sub-contractors you have selected based on their past performance and other qualifications.

2.3 On-Site Assessment

All bidders are invited to make an on-site assessment of BuzzBack's existing infrastructure in the New York City office in order to prepare a thorough proposal. The bidder will bear all expenses associated with the assessment and any related travel.

2.4 Confidentiality

All proposals become the property of BuzzBack and will not be returned to the bidder. All proposals will be held in confidence by BuzzBack unless otherwise required by law. A list of bidders and the name, address, and bid price of the successful bidder is subject to disclosure.

Bidders shall not disclose, divulge, lend, license, or sell to any third party any information, data, databases, documents, software, proprietary information, or technical material supplied by BuzzBack in the execution of this RFP. Bidders shall not disclose their proposals or elements of their proposals to third parties without the prior written consent of BuzzBack.

2.5 Exclusivity

The award of this engagement shall not restrict BuzzBack from contracting for identical or similar goods and/or services from any other entity.

2.6 Disclaimer

BuzzBack shall not be liable for any inaccuracies in this RFP and schedules to it. BuzzBack has provided its best efforts to give the detail according to its best knowledge and experience. If any details change, BuzzBack shall provide notice so that proposals may be altered accordingly.

2.7 Contract Terms

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

This contract will be awarded as a firm fixed price engagement. Where it is financially advantageous for BuzzBack to do so, we will enter into a contract for services for multiple years.

The issuance of this RFP or the receipt of responses in no way obligates BuzzBack to award a contract. BuzzBack may, at its sole discretion and without explanation, cancel this RFP prior to contract award.

3 Purpose, Description and Objectives

3.1 Purpose

BuzzBack currently occupies leased office space on a single floor in midtown Manhattan. Internal business systems, including Exchange Server 2007, BlackBerry Enterprise Server, VoIP systems, file server, and network backbone are housed in this facility. BuzzBack has recently undertaken an overhaul and refresh of its back office infrastructure, consolidating several physical servers using virtualization technology, implementing a storage area network device, and updating all backbone switches and top-level networking equipment.

BuzzBack also maintains a small office in London, UK. This location houses a back-up domain controller, firewall and switching equipment, as well as a VoIP telephony solution.

BuzzBack's maintains production data collection systems that are located in an unmanaged collocation facility in Boston, MA as well as in a fully-managed hosting facility in Somerset, NJ.

BuzzBack's IT infrastructure supports approximately 30 employees in its New York City offices, 7 employees in the United Kingdom, and another 7 employees who are full-time teleworkers. BuzzBack employs a Chief Information Officer, but has no other permanent staff dedicated to IT infrastructure operations or help desk support. All IT services are provided through a variety of consultant contracts.

An opportunity exists to provide BuzzBack with reliable, professional, and timely maintenance of its IT assets and to offer BuzzBack employees superior customer service through end user support.

3.2 Description

BuzzBack seeks to engage a qualified firm that will be responsible for the management and support of its existing IT operations and end user support.

With guidance from BuzzBack, the successful bidder will take ownership for and manage the following:

- Day-to-day operational management of assets
- Proactive monitoring of network and technology assets
- Break-fix response for all network, server, and desktop issues
- End-user help desk support for internal staff
- Maintenance and support of existing VoIP solution
- Procurement and management of all IT assets and required software licenses
- Management of vendor and service provider relationships

3.3 Objective

To establish a partnership with a strong managed services provider that will leverage industry best practices to support BuzzBack's critical IT operations.

3.4 Specific Strategies

- Increase availability of information assets

- Ensure a minimum of three nines availability for data collection and reporting systems
- Increase internal staff satisfaction with reliability of systems
- Enhance customer service related to end-user technical support
- Prevent data and productivity loss through the implementation of disaster recovery best practices
- Simplify support and procurement through equipment standardization
- Ensure compliance with licensing requirements through regular audits and software asset management

4 Timeline

BuzzBack will observe the following schedule for the RFP process and ensuing contract:

Event	Date
RFP issued	7 December 2009
Intent to Bid and all questions due from bidders	11 December 2009 5:00 PM ET
Answers to bidder questions issued	15 December 2009
On-site assessment	15 – 18 December 2009
Proposals due	23 December 2009 5:00 PM ET
Oral presentations	5 – 7 January 2010
Vendor selection and notification	15 January 2010
Engagement commences	1 February 2010

5 Budget

Please provide a cost proposal to accomplish the scope outlined below. Where appropriate, please cost alternate scenarios. Quotes must show the monthly recurring cost for ongoing help desk and IT infrastructure support as well as standard hourly rates and accompanying explanation for any out-of-scope work.

6 Scope and Guidelines

The scope of this engagement is to provide ongoing network operations and end-user technical support for BuzzBack Market Research. Additional detail regarding specific facets of the scope of this engagement is supplied below.

BuzzBack can provide diagrams illustrating network topology and detailing equipment upon request.

6.1 Network Operations Support

The successful bidder will providing ongoing network operations support to ensure the availability of network resources and business critical systems. BuzzBack seeks a partner that will utilize a proactive approach to network management, anticipating issues before they become critical problems.

6.1.1 New York Office

The New York office is BuzzBack's corporate headquarters and contains key infrastructure that supports BuzzBack worldwide back office operations. Key components located in this facility are:

- Microsoft Exchange 2007 (virtual)
- Windows Server 2003 R2 file and print server
- BlackBerry Professional Software 4.1.4.3 (virtual)
- Symantec Endpoint Protection antivirus server (virtual)
- Cisco Unity Express VoIP telephony solution

The New York facility's infrastructure is standardized on Cisco networking and Dell server equipment. 95% of networking and server equipment has been replaced within the past six months.

6.1.2 London, UK Office

BuzzBack supports European operations from a small office located in the London suburbs. E-mail, file server access, and domain authentication and authorization for this location are all maintained from the New York facility utilizing a site-to-site VPN tunnel. Key components of this facility are:

- Backup domain controller
- Cisco Unity Express VoIP telephony solution

All server and networking equipment in this location has been purchased within the past four months.

6.1.3 Boston Collocation Facility

BuzzBack supports primary survey data collection operations from a collocation facility located in Boston, MA. BuzzBack administers surveys to respondents across the globe, and as such the data collection environment is engaged 24x7. Key components located in this facility are:

- Confirmat™ authoring/back-office server
- Confirmat™ deployment/front-end servers (two physical servers functioning as a load balanced, fault tolerant pair)
- Confirmat™ reporting server
- Microsoft SQL Server 2005 x64
- Staging/sandbox server

All server equipment in this location is Hewlett Packard. All networking equipment, with the exception of load balancers, is Cisco.

6.2 Disaster Recovery

The successful bidder will provide ongoing data protection services. These may include, but are not limited to, configuration, maintenance, and monitoring of all disk, tape, and Internet-based data backup jobs, assurance and testing of back up integrity, and restoration (where necessary) of data for disaster recovery purposes.

BuzzBack currently utilizes a Dell PowerVault MD3000i direct attached storage device and an Exabyte Magnum LTO tape library for data backup for the New York and London locations. Data is backed up for the Boston location using the Symantec Protection Network solution.

6.3 VoIP Support

BuzzBack has recently implemented Cisco 2851 and Cisco 1861 VoIP devices in the New York and London offices respectively. These offices utilize Cisco 7941 IP Phones at the desktop as well as Cisco 871 routers at remote work locations for full-time teleworking staff. The successful bidder will provide ongoing support for this solution and ensure reliable function of both local and remote phones.

6.4 Help Desk Support

The successful bidder will provide comprehensive end-user technical support for BuzzBack employees in the form of a help desk. The proposed help desk solution must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Access to support through telephone and e-mail
- Tracking and reporting for all support requests
- Automated confirmation of request submission
- Confirmation of request resolution
- Access to after-hours emergency support
- Guaranteed SLA for response based on issue criticality
- Timely on-site support as needed

6.5 Customer Satisfaction

The successful bidder will administer a customer satisfaction program to monitor ongoing attitudes of BuzzBack employees regarding the IT services that the bidder provides. The bidder will be required to maintain an average customer satisfaction rating above 85%. Where the customer satisfaction rate falls below 85%, the bidder must show a clear plan for remediation as well as significant progress toward correction in order to maintain the contract.

6.6 Asset Procurement and Management

The successful bidder will create and maintain an inventory of all hardware and software assets owned or leased by BuzzBack. The bidder will proactively identify the need for hardware replacement where possible, and will monitor software license usage to ensure compliance with license agreements. With BuzzBack's approval, the bidder will competitively price and procure assets as necessary.

6.7 Vendor Management

The successful bidder will maintain relationships with all BuzzBack technology service vendors, including but not limited to telecommunications, collocation, and hardware service. The bidder will initiate and manage service calls with the appropriate vendor as necessary.

7 Qualifications

All bidders must outline their qualifications to complete the required work by addressing the following points:

1. List five recent engagements for which your firm provided or performed services of a similar size and scope to those described in this RFP.
2. Describe your experience in providing high-availability solutions for small- and medium-sized businesses.
3. Provide reference information for ten former or current clients. If providing reference information for former clients, your firm must have been actively engaged in work for that client within the past calendar year.
4. Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to provide the IT services outlined in this RFP (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
5. Outline the number of full-time staff your firm employs and include a copy of your firm's organizational chart.
6. Provide a company profile, length of time in business, and core competencies.
7. Briefly describe the percentage of your staff that would be assigned to 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 network administrators, the percentage would be 50%.
8. Describe the team that will be assigned to this project, including each person's role and a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.
9. Describe your firm's project management process.
10. Describe your firm's quality assurance process.
11. Describe your firm's change management process.
12. Discuss the service desk management system(s) that your firm employs. Include information on how long your firm has been utilizing this system or systems.
13. Outline the percentage of total revenue that is derived from managed services vs. other business areas.
14. Please explain your service level agreement (SLA) structure.

8 Evaluation Criteria

The following criteria will form the basis upon which BuzzBack will evaluate proposals.

Criteria	Percentage of Overall Score
Suitability of Proposed Solution	20%
Qualifications	25%
Past Performance	15%
Staffing	15%
Cost	15%
Proposal Preparation	5%
Oral Presentation	5%

9 Proposal Preparation and Delivery

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

9.1 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.

9.2 Title Page

BuzzBack Managed IT Services Proposal, your company name, address, Web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

9.3 Cover Letter

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

9.4 Proposed Approach

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution (3-10 pages). Diagrams of any proposed solution are strongly encouraged.

9.5 Qualifications

Provide the information requested above (10-20 pages).

9.6 Budget and Fees

List budgets as requested above.

9.7 Delivery of Proposal

Proposals must be submitted in electronic format and must be received no later than 5:00 PM ET on Wednesday, 23 December 2009. Proposals received after the deadline will be rejected without review. Proposals must include a cost proposal as described above.

Deliver proposals to the attention of:

Kevin M. Kelly, MS, PMP
Chief Information Officer
BuzzBack Market Research
kkelly@buzzback.com