



**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:
Public Relations Services**

**Issued: August 14, 2009
Responses Due: September 18, 2009**

**ITS America's Annual Meeting & Exposition
May 3-5, 2010
Houston, Texas**

ABOUT THE INTELLIGENT TRANSPORTATION SOCIETY OF AMERICA

The Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America) was established in 1991 as a not-for-profit organization to foster the use of advanced technologies in surface transportation systems. We are the leading advocate for technologies that improve the safety, security and efficiency of the nation's surface transportation system. The formation of ITS America was motivated by the recognition that while numerous existing organizations were actively involved in transportation issues, no single organization existed to focus exclusive attention on emerging technologies. Our members include private corporations, public agencies, and academic institutions involved in the research, development and design of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies to enhance safety, increase mobility, and sustain the environment.

The advancement of ITS is addressed through the society's annual meeting and workshops, Webinars, and technical forums. ITS America also educates ITS stakeholders by being an educational resource through its Web site and publications.

ITS America is aggressively involved in advocacy efforts related to the most vital transportation issues, including measuring and improving performance through ITS, dedicated funding for ITS solutions, advancing next generation innovations, bringing transportation into the 21st century, and financing the future of transportation, and others.

Mission

To be proactive leaders for all ITS stakeholders promoting collaboration and networking in research, development and design of ITS technologies to accelerate their deployment and sustain the environment.

Member Profile

- 50 percent of members fall into the private sector category (e.g., engineering firms, automotive manufacturers and suppliers, commercial vehicle operators, IT firms, telecommunication companies)
- 50 percent of members fall into the public sector category (e.g., local, state, and federal transportation agencies, universities and research institutions, metropolitan planning organizations, transit agencies, toll authorities)

Membership Benefits

ITS America is the platform through which ITS stakeholders can achieve their goals and work together on ITS-based solutions to real-world transportation challenges. Our members:

- Gain access to the expertise and experiences of the country's leading transportation decision makers and innovators.
- Build relationships and develop business opportunities with public sector and private industry partners.
- Leverage unique information resources - ITS America staff, conferences and other networking opportunities - to achieve their professional goals.

ANNUAL MEETING & EXPOSITION BACKGROUND

ITS America has identified the need to utilize a public relations firm to assist it in identifying, developing and implementing a public relations program for its 2010 Annual Meeting & Exposition, May 3-5, in Houston, Texas to:

- Better educate the public about transportation issues
- Increase awareness of available technologies that can be applied to transportation
- Communicate the value of ITS America's Annual Meeting to members and potential members
- Provide an information resource for members, legislators, and press
- Establish ITS America as a primary resource for ITS information

The public relations contractor will work under the direction of ITS America's Director of Communications, Sabrina McGowan. In addition, the contractor will be expected to work closely with the volunteer members of the Annual Meeting Business Development Subcommittee.

Annual Meeting & Exposition Profile

The purpose of the Annual Meeting is to provide continuing education and networking opportunities for the Society's members. This is accomplished through a three-day conference that includes more than 100 educational sessions, two plenary sessions, two networking receptions, technical tours, and an exposition filled with ITS products and services from more than 140 exhibiting companies and public agencies. The Society also conducts its general business meeting and a board of directors meeting on site.

Attendee Profile

The Society's members make up the majority of conference attendees. In 2007, 71 percent of attendees were members of ITS America. Twenty-four percent were first-time conference attendees. Eighty percent of attendees rated the conference above average to excellent.

By Sector:

- 45 percent = Private Industry
- 39 percent = Public Agencies
- 9 percent = Academic and Research Institutions
- 3 percent = Trade Association
- 4 percent = Other

By Level:

- 21 percent = Executive (CEO, President, General Manager, VP)
- 50 percent = Manager (Director, Manager, Senior Engineer)
- 24 percent = Technical or Operational (Engineer, Project Manager, Developer, Specialist)
- 5 percent = Other

By Company Size:

- 20 percent = 1-99 employees
- 8 percent = 100-249 employees
- 8 percent = 250-499 employees
- 15 percent = 500-999 employees
- 14 percent = 1,000-2,499 employees

- 35 percent = 2,500+ employees

Areas of Transportation Attendees Represent or Interested:

- 68 percent = Transportation Management
- 20 percent = Travel Information
- 21 percent = Commercial Vehicles
- 18 percent = Freight Movement
- 39 percent = Public Transportation
- 24 percent = Automotive/Consumer Electronics
- 43 percent = Telecommunications
- 38 percent = Policy/Legislative
- 40 percent = Research and Training

Exhibition Profile

ITS America believes that exhibits are an integral part of the total conference experience providing members with opportunities to investigate a variety products and services. Exhibitors represent a wide array of companies including:

- Automotive manufacturers and suppliers
- Commercial vehicle and freight managers
- Electronic equipment manufacturers and suppliers
- Public and private service call center operators
- Public transportation manufacturers and operators
- Service developers and providers
- Systems integrators
- Telematics providers
- Transportation consultants
- Transportation officials
- Transportation researchers

To encourage maximum attendance in the exhibit hall, refreshment breaks and lunches are held in the exhibit hall each day of the conference. A cocktail reception is held on the first evening of the conference in the exhibit hall.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

ITS America's Annual Meeting & Exposition is the leading event for intelligent transportation system (ITS) professionals. Sponsored by the Intelligent Transportation Society of America (ITS America) based in Washington, DC, this is an annual conference and exhibition hosting 2,000 attendees and showcasing more than 140 exhibiting companies. In 2010, the event will be held at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, Texas.

ITS America is soliciting proposals for public relations services for its 2010 Annual Meeting & Exposition. ITS America will be responsible for managing the marketing campaign and overseeing how the public relations effort is incorporated into the campaign.

The vendor will report directly to Sabrina McGowan, ITS America's Director of Communications. The vendor will participate in regular team conference calls and meetings at ITS America (depending on location of firm) which will also include other participants from the Annual Meeting & Exposition Organizing Committee as necessary.

The press effort needs to begin immediately. This campaign will require an aggressive media plan and the retained vendor should be prepared to begin work on this project as soon as the contract is awarded and also be prepared to dedicate enough staff resources to the project to accomplish all requirements in a timely fashion.

ITS America will be working very closely with the selected firm to ensure that all opportunities are maximized.

CAMPAIGN OBJECTIVE

This will be a domestic press initiative focusing primarily on garnering coverage of the 2010 Annual Meeting & Exposition in mainstream media outlets, with industry trade press being a secondary target. The selected firm should have extensive experience in targeting these types of media outlets.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

Regarding mainstream media outlets, the retained agency's primary job will be to develop coverage angles pertaining to the Annual Meeting & Exposition and to conduct an extensive pitch effort to media to generate as much publicity for the event as possible. The selected vendor will need to develop key messages to support and amplify topics being addressed at the World Congress including, but not limited to, our vision of solving community challenges through the application of smart technologies and:

- Transportation Safety
- Congestion Reduction/Mobility
- Environmental Sustainability
- Security

Responsibilities will include the following actions:

- Develop a strategic media plan and timeline for the roll-out of the PR campaign.
- Elicit media attendance and coverage of the Annual Meeting & Exposition pre-show and on-site in Houston as the show stages, including identifying list of key contacts and conducting targeted efforts as necessary to accomplish objectives.

- Manage overall media relations including developing relationship with key contacts on behalf of the Annual Meeting & Exposition.
- Develop all supporting materials and media kit.
- Develop and execute of opening day “show launch” release and media effort.
- Develop and distribute any “at-show” releases of news and events from the Annual Meeting & Exposition floor to maximize exposure opportunities.

Regarding industry trade press, the retained agencies primary job will be to:

- Promote media attendance of the Annual Meeting & Exposition.
- Respond to and maximize all press inquiries.
- Provide support materials to encourage coverage of the Annual Meeting & Exposition, see more details below.

ITS America will develop a list of PR contacts for exhibiting companies at the Annual Meeting & Exposition. The retained agency is to utilize this list to conduct an outreach effort that will allow them to mine for information about exhibitor activities and product launches related to the Annual Meeting & Exposition. Use of this information is two fold:

- For trade press, this information is to be used to develop support materials and to provide a new product guide and lead list reporters can use to develop articles about the Annual Meeting & Exposition and its exhibitors.
 - o It is important to note that all exhibitors who respond to an outreach effort will expect that the information they provide is included in the materials made available to trade press contacts.
- For mainstream media, this information will be used to develop and substantiate the Annual Meeting & Exposition coverage angles, and should be included in press materials directed to this target.
 - o It is important to note that the expectation here is that the retained agency will determine and make recommendations as to which exhibitors should be included in the overall effort to this target.

ITS America will support the exhibitor outreach effort by assisting in development of any online content and forms for data collection (see lower section about online press room for more details). The retained agency will be responsible for managing and analyzing the data received; determining the best way to incorporate it into coverage angles, press materials and pitch effort; developing new product listings and leads lists.

The selected agency’s responsibilities will also be to:

- Increase press attendance/registration effort:
 - o Develop and distribute advisories to media contacts in advance of the show to promote press attendance as well as to provide details of attending, registration information and instructions.
 - o Serve as primary contact for all press inquiries related to attending the Annual Meeting & Exposition
 - o Receive and manage all press registrations, ensuring proper credentialing and maintaining list of all attending press. This information then be communicated to either ITS America or registration vendor who will ensure it is input into the show registration system.
 - o On-site, distribute press credentials to contacts as they “check-in” in the press room.

- Develop and manage online “press room.” The Annual Meeting & Exposition Web site will have an area dedicated to press relations. This area is to be maximized as a vehicle to encourage and support both press coverage and attendance of the event to all targets. This area will need to be developed to support all aspects of the overall PR strategy and tactical rollout.
 - o The retained agency will be responsible for defining the various areas of the online press room as well as strategize and author or compile all content. ITS America will be responsible for hosting this area as part of the overall Annual Meeting & Exposition Web site (www.itsa.org/annualmeeting.html), building pages and posting content as directed by the retained agency.
 - o ITS America will be responsible for creating any special online elements required such as data collection forms, etc.
 - o The agency will be responsible for developing timeline associated with building the online press area and providing the elements and directing site updates in a timely manner.
- Work with ITS America staff to maximize resources available via the public relations team from the host state and state chapter helping to ensure their efforts are in tandem with the overall Annual Meeting & Exposition campaign.
- On-Site Management of Press Room and Press Relations. Responsibilities include:
 - o Develop and execution of an opening day press tour of the exhibit floor.
 - o Arrange interviews with speakers and other VIPs.
 - o Staff press room while coordinating with ITS America's communications staff and host city PR staff
 - o Ensure that press guests have adequate materials and providing general customer assistance.
- Agency to develop a press room plan with recommendations for materials, furnishings, technical requirements, supplies and refreshments necessary. ITS America will be responsible for ordering all items and for cost of the Press Room. Agency will need to be on-site to ensure Press Room is put together in a timely manner and is in accordance to the overall plan.
 - o Provide coordination assistance with exhibitors and partners who wish to hold press conferences.
 - o Draft communications to exhibitors letting them know of opportunity to distribute information to the press and to utilize the press room on-site.
- Post-show Publicity - Author and disseminate follow-up articles reporting on the outcome of Annual Meeting & Exposition to each of the various press target types.
- Reporting progress of press efforts;
 - o Pre-show Updates; PR vendor will be responsible for compiling reports on a regular schedule detailing ongoing efforts as well as summarizing Show coverage. Agency is responsible for providing advance notice of articles that will appear as often as possible so that notice can be sent out to ITS America and the board of directors. PR vendor also will be required to provide various types of specific information about progress as requested by ITS America.
 - o Clippings and samples; PR vendor will be responsible for developing a press portfolio that is to include collecting samples of all articles published about the show, providing samples of whole publications where articles appeared as well as digital

file copies of any exposure via online or on-air outlets. Copies of any pre-show coverage are to be provided regularly as part of the pre-show updates.

- ITS America will provide the retained agency with a list of participating trade media partners and outlets so that the agency can initiate contact, request manage receiving samples of all coverage. ITS industry trade press regularly devotes a great deal of resources to pre-show coverage of the event.
- o Post Show Report; PR vendor will be responsible for creating a post-show report and analysis of the overall press effort for the Annual Meeting & Exposition. Report will be due one month following the show dates and will include:
 - All registered media – onsite and total registered
 - List of all pre-show and post-show media placements
 - Synopsis of coverage including selected quotes or sections from coverage to be included as part of the report.
 - Copies of all press releases

BUDGET

Please provide options of services that you would recommend at the following three budget levels: (1) \$50,000; (2) \$75,000; and (3) \$100,000 – all of which are allocated over a seven-month period. Administrative costs should be estimated (e.g., telephone, postage, travel, shipping, research, etc.).

Direct printing expenses should not be included in the vendor's budget. Printing expenses, like any other related costs will be directly born by the PR campaign program, should be specifically detailed, with estimates of the amount or range of such potential expenses.

HOW PROPOSALS WILL BE EVALUATED

Proposals will be judged on the basis of overall technical quality and cost. The assessment of technical quality will take into account such factors as:

- Understanding of the Annual Meeting & Exposition's marketing needs and tasks to be performed
- Technical merit, including clarity and comprehensiveness of the work plan
- Creativity and added value of the proposer's suggestions about additional or alternative ways to meet the Annual Meeting's PR needs
- Demonstrated skills, experience, and ability to deliver high quality work on schedule

REQUESTED INFORMATION

- Overview of proposed staffing for the project; bios of staff to be dedicated to the project.
- Relevant work samples of mainstream media campaigns.
- Plan describing how your agency would undertake the described campaign.
- Relevant experience in publicizing transportation trade shows.
- Estimate of flat professional services fee and explanation of direct expenses.
- Sample services contract.

RESPONSES DUE BY 5:00 P.M. EDT ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2009

Please submit proposals via e-mail and six (6) printed copies to:

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