



**Request for Proposal
ALO-0983-3
Public Relations and Media Support
June 2009 – May 2010
Proposal Due Date-05/20/09**

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1. Overview

About ALO magazine

ALO Hayati is the world's premier, English language, Middle Eastern culture and lifestyle magazine. ALO magazine was launched in April 2005, and just three years later it has an international readership of more than 1.2 million. ALO is poised to reach out to new and larger audiences. The goal is to affirm an enduring position for the cultures of the Middle East, North Africa and the Mediterranean in world media.

About ALO Cultural Foundation

The ALO Cultural Foundation, a US-based, 501 (c) 3 charitable entity, has championed a full menu of humanitarian endeavors, including international relations initiatives that support and develop cultural exchange programs for women and youth. The foundation is by the publisher of *ALO Hayati magazine*, an upscale printed magazine that bridges the cultural gap between Middle Eastern communities and Western mindsets.

With assistance from the board of directors, the primary goals and missions of the ALO Cultural Foundation are to **Educate, Empower and Enlighten** people of Middle Eastern, North African and Mediterranean descent.

2. Purpose of the Request for Proposal

The purpose of the Request for Proposal (RFP) is to solicit proposals to establish a contract, through competitive negotiations, with a qualified PR retainer agency that can provide an effective, cost-efficient, and customized public relations program to promote ALO magazine and the ALO Cultural Foundation.

The selected firm must be capable of, but not limited to, providing comprehensive on-going public relations consultancy services, ranging from strategic counsel on issues, to tactical implementation support on special event or ad-hoc communications activities. All PR activities shall produce quantitatively measurable results identified by ALO.

3. Information Security

The company submitting the proposal ("the company") shall acknowledge and agree that, if the company is selected as the Contractor, it shall be bounded by our Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) and Information Security Policy (highlights of the policies illustrated in Appendix A). Customer data and any information supplied to the company by ALO shall remain the property of ALO. The company shall be obliged to employ the abovementioned data and information for the sole purpose of project and services delivery. The company shall protect the data of ALO customers and shall never allow any person to gain access to the data except for the aforesaid

purpose. The company shall comply with the obligations under the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance and any other obligations in relation to personal data.

The company shall be provided a set of NDA and Information Security Compliance Statement after ALO received the company's Expression-of-Interest before the stipulated time.

The NDA and the Information Security Compliance Statement shall be signed and returned to ALO attached with documents required by the Compliance Statement before the scheduled deadline.

ALO will only consider proposals from parties who have signed both the NDA and the Information Security Compliance Statement.

According to the Information Security Policy of ALO, proposals submitted shall be classified as Restricted information and the following security measures should be observed:

1. The documents should be marked "RESTRICTED" at the centre-top of each page in black color;
2. The document, if transmitted electronically, must be encrypted.
3. Each proposal will be reviewed under the terms of non-disclosure by the staff and the Board of ALO.

4. Background and Objectives

The goal of engaging the PR retainer is to increase and sustain the public awareness of the ALO brand identity as well as increasing the popularity and use of 'ALO' and all of its related services, which include existing 'ALO' managed organizations and new initiatives and on internet developments. The PR retainer agency is expected to measure, manage, and advise on each ALO marketing program/activity in order to maximize the desired outcomes. The ALO PR and communications objectives are set out below. Emphasis on each objective should be addressed in the bidder's proposal. Public Relations, Communications objectives are:

- To establish brand awareness of ALO and generate long term interest and understanding of ALO and its services among target audiences.
- To reinforce the awareness of the benefits of 'ALO' domain names and promote new developments
- To increase total awareness of ALO and its managed organizations cross the target groups with the general public and business sectors
- To generate sustained, quality media coverage in target media the target audiences for the public relations and marketing efforts.

5. Scope of Work

ALO intends to seek for an external public relations consultant to provide consultancy services on a retainer basis. An estimated average of at least 70 hours is required quarterly. The scope of work may include but is not necessarily limited to:

1. Media interviews / meetings: (Expected Deliverables: 20 per year);
2. To secure media opportunities and face-to-face meetings/luncheons to communicate key messages as well as building good relationship with the media;
3. Case study and byline articles: (Expected Deliverables: 4 per year);
4. To identify and line-up target media for interviews or article placement;
5. Media relations and office. (Deliverables: ongoing plus monthly coverage reports);
6. To provide daily news monitoring services for coverage relating to ALO;
7. 'ALO' and other players in the target and strategic industry;
8. To recommend media format and target media groups that best reach the program's specific goals;
9. Communications materials (statement, speech, press release, etc): (Expected Deliverables: 4 pieces per year);
10. To produce and/or edit high quality printed and broadcasted communications materials that meet the public relations and outreach objectives;
11. Strategic counsel: (Deliverables: ongoing plus quarterly review reports);
12. To develop communications concepts and messages based on sound marketing, communications principles and/or market knowledge;
13. To advise on strategy and approach in response to new opportunities and crisis management;
14. The bidder shall provide an evaluation methodology on the success of the program/activities, such as monthly updates on progress of PR retainer program;
15. To position ALO as the leading in business solutions and creative boutique with complete marketing solutions;
16. To produce and secure media for ALO managed organizations, ALO and ALO Foundation and ambassadors;
17. Take "interested" newspapers/magazines/television shows and turn the leads into reality. Target of five (5) realized stories, two of which have a national reach;
18. To interview/Public Speaking Training and full workshops needed for Publisher and Editor;
19. Secure ALO Cover such as JLo, Sting, Shakira and any new Ideas and fresh content;
20. To secure spokesperson role. Need to position Wafa as a cultural spokesperson for the "pros" of the Middle East. CNN, Al Jeezera. (Publisher's ultimate goal on Oprah show for ALO magazine);
21. To secure speaking engagements, three secured engagements at relevant trade shows, associations, etc. Minimum attendance of 100 each spot for awareness of ALO and networking event;
22. To promote PR efforts to reflect on on-line traffic for ALO and for ALO magazine. Have the efforts promote for more subscribers and advertisers interest as a new media outlet, calls from interested businesses and corporations for ALO product and services;

23. Position ALO with a targeted list of potential investors – say 25 nationally and 25 internationally – that have the potential to invest \$100K into the magazine and become an Ambassador/Board of Trustees for ALO.

6. Fee Arrangements

The PR retainer agency should quote a flat monthly rate for the service.

To ensure mutual relationship starts off well, the method of billing, hourly rates for additional services, third-party costs, out-of-pocket expenses and markup/commission percentages, as well as payment terms and any interest charges for late payment should be fully detailed in the bidding proposal.

7. Service Period

The service period is from June 1, 2009 to May 31, 2010. The contract may be extended for one additional one-year period after that without going through another bidding process. ALO reserves the right with no penalty to change the budget and services may be added or deleted as necessary.

8. Proposal Response Format

All proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that the ALO marketing team could properly evaluate the bidder's capabilities in providing the required services. Each proposal shall include all of the following items:

A. Cover Page

- Project Title: PR Retainer Services June 2009 – May 2010
- Company contact information including the Company name, registered address, contact person, his/her title, contact telephone number, fax number, email address, company website.
- Project leader(s)' name, title, contact telephone number, personal fax number (if any), email address

B. Executive Summary

- One-page executive summary is to briefly describe the bidder's proposal. This summary should highlight the major features of the proposal. It must indicate any requirements that cannot be met by the bidder.

C. Conflict of Interest Declaration

- Declare any conflict of interest in relation to the Retainer Services project and the 'ALO' with all its managed organizations

D. General Company Background

- Major activities, financial situation, organizational structure, management team and achievements in PR and media relation services outsourcing of the company should be elaborated. Tracked records are preferred.

E. Detailed Response

- Detailed descriptions include the following areas:
- Staff qualifications and experience:

- Describe the qualifications and experience of all proposed staff and subcontractors (if any) in providing public relation services and media services.
- Media Outreach, PR and Communications Programs:
 - Provide information on your firm's skills and capabilities in applying public relations, media outreach and communications principles and techniques to create a strong awareness of services in relation to Internet and/or service industry such as increasing the popularity and usage of these services.
- Describe at least two outreach and/or PR initiatives that your firm has undertaken.
- Strategic communications:
 - Describe your firm's experience in producing strategic counseling/communications materials that successfully communicated messages to various groups including media, government departments, business, organizations, individuals with diverse educational, technical background, and/or in low socioeconomic background.
 - Also include materials that would demonstrate the firm's ability to manage issue/crisis, as well as meeting client's objectives and addressing the challenges of outreaching to the target audiences.

F. Innovative ideas for ALO:

- Demonstrate ideas for better and/or additional ways to address the media/public relations needs which are not otherwise described in this RFP. It would be appropriate to indicate the advantages and disadvantages of the approaches you recommend, and specify the cost implied and justify the additional PR budget as part of the PR planning process, if any.

G. Proposed Cost of Service

- The overall pricing of the PR retainer program should be considered in accordance with Not-For-Profit rate under the ALO Cultural Foundation and allow flexibility for payment.
- It is important for ALO to be able to compare proposals at competitive budget levels.
- In addition to the above, the bidder should also include the proposed Service Agreement in the submitted proposal. A list of proposed optional items with cost should be included. This should be a reference in case additional projects shall be initiated during the contract period.

9. Selection Criteria

ALO will evaluate all proposals with following weighted criteria.

Weight Evaluation Criteria

25% Ability to meet the scope of work

- Proposed work plan
- Strong connection with local, education, business and IT media news, and demonstrate strategies at reaching target audiences, both printed and electronic media

15% Qualifications and Staff Experience

- Qualifications and expertise of staff involved in this program
- Direct experience in specified PR retainer program especially in Internet/ IT related fields
- Demonstrate the understanding and/or familiarity with the ALO business and its managed organizations, industry trends and researches

25% Demonstrated capability

- Work samples from relevant past projects in non-profit /member-based/internet related organization
- Work samples showing quality and innovative ideas to develop and execute strategic PR and communications programs
- References
- Value added. Give examples of how you can add value.

35% Cost (proposed monthly rate and costs for additional services)**10. Discussion with Bidders / Oral Presentations**

Each initial proposal should be submitted with the most favorable price and service standpoint. An oral presentation by a bidder to supplement a proposal may be required. These presentations, if required, will be arranged after the submitted proposals were shortlisted. The oral presentations will be made at the Bidder's expenses.

In any case, UI reserves the right to award a contract without going through the oral presentation and discussion process with Bidders.

11. Schedule *(subject to change without prior notice)***Tasks Completed by Remark**

Published RFP on web	May 1, 2009
Interested party shall send an email to jack@uniqueimageinc.com to express its interest.	
Please state the company name, address and contact person information including contact person name, email address and telephone number.	

Expression of Interest	May 27, 2009
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Deadline for NDA sign-off	May 28, 2009
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Deadline of submitting proposal and quotation	May 29, 2009
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Short-listed candidates may be invited to present their proposal(s) to introduce their PR plans and answer question.

Review proposal and presentation by vendor	June 5, 2009
Complete evaluation and recommendation	June 9, 2009
Vendor selection	June 11, 2009

Sign service agreement with the awarded party June 12, 2009

Commencement of service June 15, 2009

Contract will be signed by Unique Image, Inc.

12. Deadline and Inquiry

Proposals should be submitted on or before May 29, 2009, no later than **5:30 PM** at the ALO offices of the same day, either through email or by post. Any proposals received after this deadline will not be considered. ALO reserves all rights to extend the deadline as it sees fit. Announcement will be made on our website in case of any amendment to the deadline.

Should you have questions related to this document, please contact marketing department at jack@uniqueimageinc.com or Jack Reed (818-727-7785).

Appendix A – ALO Information Security Policy and Guidelines: An Extract Relevant to Outsourcing

This document provides an extract of the ALO Information Security Policy and Guidelines with the purposes of (a) introducing various measures and controls to be executed by ALO regarding outsourcing and (b) setting the expectation of any potential contractors that their participation and conformance in these measures and controls are essential contractual obligations.

The original Policy and Guidelines applies to ALO's employees, contractors and third party users. However, a potential contractor may interpret the clauses up to their roles and responsibilities only. Nonetheless, the keyword "**contractors**" hereby refers to all relevant staff members of the contractor and those of any other subcontractors under the contractor's purview. Herein, ALO would also set the expectation of any potential contractors that upon their expression-of-interest to the project, they shall be required in the subsequent stages (a) to sign off a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) on all information to be provided and (b) to sign off a Compliance Statement where compliance requirements are specified in more details.

(A) Extract from the ALO Information Security Policy

In the following, "the organization" means Unique Image, Inc.

8. Human resources security

8.1 Security objective: To ensure that employees, contractors and third party users understand their responsibilities, and are suitable for the roles they are considered for, and to reduce the risk of theft, fraud or misuse of facilities.

8.1.1 Security roles and responsibilities of employees, contractors and third party users shall be defined and documented in accordance with the organization's information security policy.

8.1.2 Background verification checks on all candidates for employment, contractors, and third party users shall be carried out in accordance with relevant laws, regulations and ethics, and proportional to the business requirements, the classification of the information to be accessed, and the perceived risks.

8.1.3 As part of their contractual obligations, employees, contractors and third party users shall agree and sign the terms and conditions of their employment contract, which shall state their and the organization's responsibilities for information security.

8.2 During employment

Security objective: To ensure that all employees, contractors and third party users are aware of information security threats and concerns, their responsibilities and liabilities, and are equipped to support organizational security policy in the course of their normal work, and to reduce the risk of human error.

8.2.1 Management shall require employees, contractors and third party users to apply security measures in accordance with established policies and procedures of the organization.

8.2.2 All employees of the organization and, where relevant, contractors and third party users shall receive appropriate awareness training and regular updates on organizational policies and procedures, as relevant to their job functions.

8.3 Termination or change of employment

Security objective: To ensure that employees, contractors and third party users exit an organization or change employment in an orderly manner.

8.3.2 All employees, contractors and third party users shall return all of the organization's assets in their possession upon termination of their employment, contract or agreement.

8.3.3 The access rights of all employees, contractors and third party users to information and information processing facilities shall either be removed upon termination of their employment, contract or agreement, or adjusted upon change.

9. Information systems acquisition, development and maintenance

9.5.5 Outsourced software development shall be supervised and monitored by the organization

10. Information security incident management

10.1 Reporting information security events and weaknesses

Security objective: To ensure information security events and weaknesses associated with information systems are communicated in a manner allowing timely corrective action.

10.1.2 All employees, contractors and third party users of information systems and services shall be required to note and report any observed or suspected security weaknesses in systems or services.

(B) Extract from the ALO Information Security Guidelines

11. ORGANIZING INFORMATION SECURITY

11.2 EXTERNAL PARTIES

11.2.1 Identification of Risks Related to External Parties

The risks to the organization's information and information processing facilities from business processes involving external parties should be identified and appropriate controls implemented before granting the access.

11.2.3 Addressing Security in Third Party Agreements

Agreements with third parties involving accessing, processing, communicating or managing the organization's information or information processing facilities, or adding products or services to information processing facilities should cover all relevant security requirements.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT

12.1.3 Acceptable Use of Assets

Rules for the acceptable use of information and assets associated with information processing facilities shall be identified, documented, and implemented.

13. HUMAN RESOURCE SECURITY

13.1.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Security roles and responsibilities of employees, contractors and third party users shall be defined and documented in accordance with the organization's information security policy.

13.1.2 Screening

Background verification checks on all candidates for employment, contractors, and third party users shall be conducted in accordance with relevant laws, regulations and ethics, and proportional to the business requirements, the classification of the information to be accessed, and the perceived risks.

13.1.3 Terms and Conditions of Employment

As part of their contractual obligation, employees, contractors and third party users shall agree and sign the terms and conditions of their employment contract, which shall state their and the organization's responsibilities for information security.

13.2.1 Management Responsibilities

Management shall require employees, contractors and third party users to apply security measures in accordance with established policies and procedures of the organization.

15. Information systems acquisition, development and maintenance

15.5.5 Outsourced Software Development

Outsourced software development shall be supervised and monitored by the organization.