



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

July 16, 2021

OVERVIEW

Snowmass Tourism seeks a well-qualified, full-service advertising agency to provide comprehensive brand strategy/logo design, campaign development, and integrated advertising and destination marketing services, to build brand awareness and drive destination visitation to Snowmass Village, Colorado.

Submission deadline	Friday, August 6, 2021, 5:00pm MST
Contact for questions	Hannah Green, Marketing Coordinator Snowmass Tourism hgreen@gosnowmass.com
Submission instructions	Email to vmcnellis@gosnowmass.com , or deliver to Virginia McNellis, Marketing Director Snowmass Tourism 130 Kearns Road Snowmass Village, CO 81615

BACKGROUND & INFORMATION

Snowmass Tourism Background

Snowmass Tourism (ST), a department of the Town of Snowmass Village (TOSV), is a non-profit government agency dedicated to the promotion of Snowmass Village, Colorado as a multi-season tourist destination. The selected agency will demonstrate a deep understanding and strategic perspective on how to motivate travelers to choose Snowmass over key competitors.

The mission of Snowmass Tourism (ST) is to support the economy of the Town of Snowmass Village, Colorado (TOSV) through activities, events and programs that attract visitors and the associated spending.

Snowmass Village has a strong and unique value proposition for its visitors. With strong funding, Snowmass Tourism is well positioned to increase the competitiveness of its marketing, group sales, guest service and event initiatives.

The current aspiration statement captures the overarching vision for the Town of Snowmass Village:

“Snowmass Village aspires to be the leading multi-season, family-oriented, inclusive mountain resort community. We will do this by creating, marketing and delivering distinctive choices for fun, excitement, challenge, learning and togetherness. All this is done amidst our unique, natural splendor ... as part of a memorable Aspen Snowmass experience.

Further, we wish to be seen as welcoming, dynamic, convenient and successful. We will always be responsible stewards of our environment, economy and society. When successful, Snowmass Village will have achieved the quality of life and economic vitality that will assure our future as a sustainable resort community.”

Snowmass Village History & Overview

Snowmass Village is a former ranching community that became a destination resort with the opening of Snowmass Ski Area for the 1967-68 winter season. Nine miles west of Aspen, and six miles from Aspen Airport, the Village’s year-round population is only about 3,000. However, the population swells to perhaps triple that in summer and 5 or 6 times that in winter, as there is a lodging base of approximately 8,000 pillows.

Snowmass Ski Area is the largest of the four ski areas that make up the Aspen Snowmass resort (Aspen, Aspen Highlands, Buttermilk and Snowmass), which are owned and operated by Aspen Skiing Company (ASC). The second-largest ski area in Colorado, Snowmass is characterized by vast terrain that includes exceptional beginner slopes, wide open intermediate terrain, and more than 1,000 acres of expert, double-black diamond terrain. Note: Snowmass Mountain is a 14,000’ peak nearby, for which the ski area and the town are named. Also, there is an unincorporated town of Snowmass, Colorado (locally referred to as Old Snowmass), located 8 miles from Snowmass Village, which is a different town and zip code.

An abundance of slopeside lodging, a lack of crowds, and a uniquely “family-friendly” atmosphere differentiate the Snowmass Village experience from other mountain towns. Snowmass (the ski area and the Village combined) is consistently ranked in the vertical ski publications as a top 10 Ski Resort in the West.

[See Snowmass Winter Fact sheet >](#)

In the summer, the expansive hiking and biking trails combined with distinctively western and mountain activities make for a truly authentic mountain vacation. The summer event schedule is diverse and includes beloved annual events such as the Snowmass Rodeo, the Snowmass Free Concert Series on Fanny Hill, and the Snowmass Balloon Festival, as well as newer events such as the Snowmass Rendezvous and Heritage Fire. In January 2020, Snowmass and its neighboring destinations in the Roaring Fork Valley (Aspen, Basalt, Carbondale and Glenwood Springs) received top honors from the International Mountain Bicycling

Association, IMBA, being designated a Gold-Level Ride Center. The Roaring Fork Valley is the first IMBA Gold-Level destination in Colorado and just one of seven in the world. In the summer months, typically late June through September, Aspen Skiing Company operates the Snowmass Bike Park and Lost Forest, an on-mountain adventure center with an alpine coaster, ropes courses, ziplines, and more. [See Snowmass Summer Fact Sheet >](#)

Winter/ski season typically runs from Thanksgiving through mid-April, and commands the highest occupancy and ADR. Summer season typically runs June through September, and has been growing steadily over the past five years. Many Snowmass businesses close during the off-season, mid-April to Memorial Day, and October to Thanksgiving.

The visitor experience at Snowmass is centered around three main commercial areas: the Snowmass Center, which recently received approval for complete redevelopment; the Snowmass Mall, built in 1967 and site of the current Marriott Autograph Collection renovation; and Snowmass Base Village, and Snowmass Base Village, which opened in December 2017 and recently completed its second and most substantial phase. The \$600 million Base Village development increased the Snowmass lodging base by 350+ units and 14,000+ square feet of retail space, including a skating rink/plaza and gathering space with daily programming, called The Collective. Notable lodging options in Snowmass include the Viceroy Snowmass, Limelight Hotel Snowmass, and a former Westin property that will reopen as a Marriott Autograph Collection hotel called the Viewline Snowmass Resort, slated to open in December 2021 after a \$45 million investment. Significant capital investments continue in Snowmass Village, including the Snowmass Center, Snowmass Transit Center, Electric Pass Lodge, Snowmass Rodeo Grounds, etc, representing an ongoing momentum in the resident and visitor experience.

Snowmass Tourism Goals & Structure

Snowmass Tourism is part of the government of the Town of Snowmass Village (TOSV) and is funded by a 2.5% sales tax and a 2.4% lodging tax. An annual budget of \$7 million is stewarded by Snowmass Tourism. A team of 20 people under the direction of the Town's Tourism Director provides marketing, PR, special events, group sales and guest services to support its stakeholders – all Snowmass Village businesses who collect and submit sales tax revenue to the Town.

ST current goals:

1. Effectively position Snowmass as a leading resort with a world-class value proposition.
2. Increase annual total demand for overnight visitation, especially for the summer and shoulder seasons.
3. Support and promote the retail, food and beverage sectors as necessary for the delivery of complete guest services.
4. Develop opportunities for guests and RFV locals to engage in key lifestyle and passion segments including outdoor recreation, arts & culture, food & wine, history & science, romance, family, and luxury travel.

Snowmass Village works in partnership with Aspen Skiing Company (ASC) and with Aspen Chamber Resort Association (ACRA) to promote the Aspen Snowmass experience year-round. ASC focuses the majority of its budget on winter marketing; ACRA focuses the majority of its marketing budget on summer. Snowmass Tourism splits its budget fairly evenly across the two seasons. (See www.aspensnowmass.com, www.aspenchamber.org and www.gosnowmass.com.) Snowmass Tourism also partners with other DMOs in the Roaring Fork Valley on valley-wide initiatives such as the [IMBA Gold-Level Ride Center designation](#), and with the Colorado Tourism Office on promotional programs and grants.

Snowmass Tourism currently engages four agencies to achieve marketing goals.

- Vladimir Jones was selected as the AOR in 2016 and will run the winter 2021-2022 campaign through Q1 2022. ST is required to go to RFP every five years for contracts of this scale, and Vladimir Jones will not be participating in the 2021 RFP.
- Black Dog Digital handles all website functionality and SEO for gosnowmass.com, bikesnowmass.com and hikesnowmass.com.
- B Public Relations handles media relations and influencers.
- The Myers Roberts Collective handles collateral design and local marketing materials.

The Snowmass Tourism marketing team includes:

- Tourism Director, Rose Abello
- Marketing Director, Virginia McNellis
- Online Marketing Manager, Maria Sechrist
- Public Relations Manager, Sara Stookey Sanchez
- Online Marketing Coordinator, Allie Welsh
- Marketing Coordinator, Hannah Green
- Guest Services Supervisor, Sue Whittingham (+4-6 seasonal Guest Services Representatives)

In-house marketing initiatives include collateral, local marketing campaigns, website management, social media, public relations, photography, email marketing, stakeholder relations, premiums, and group sales marketing support.

Snowmass Tourism reports to the Town Manager. In addition, the TOSV Town Council appoints a Marketing, Group Sales & Special Events advisory board for high-level strategy and policy-making input. While the Town Council does not get involved in day-to-day business of Tourism, Town Council has ultimate approval of the Snowmass Tourism annual budget.

Current Marketing Strategy

The key marketing goal of Snowmass tourism is to increase visitation and spending in Snowmass, which is measured by occupancy, average daily rate (ADR), revenue per available room (RevPAR), and sales tax revenues. We currently use Destimetrics to measure occupancy, ADR and RevPAR before and after bookings, and TOSV reporting for sales tax revenues.

Occupancy is significantly impacted by visitation of groups to Snowmass, such as ski groups, associations, corporate groups, social groups (SMERF) and weddings. Snowmass Tourism employs a group sales team who drive that side of the business. The marketing team, and therefore the AOR, supports group business by running targeted campaigns to drive leads. Approximately 5% of our media budget is typically allocated to groups messaging and channels.

Key audiences, markets and messages were developed in 2016 and have been adapted to the changing market. We are looking for a partner who will assess and refine our targets.

Leisure Travel Audiences:

- Adventurous Families
- Prime-of-Lifers
- Millennial Achievers
- Trailriders (summer) / Powderhounds (winter)

Groups Audiences:

- Meeting planners, wedding planners
- Ski groups
- Associations
- Corporate groups & incentive travel
- Social groups (SMERF)

Leisure Travel Markets:

- Non-stop fly markets: Dallas-Ft. Worth, Houston, Austin (new in summer 2021), Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago, Phoenix, Atlanta (returning in winter 2021-2022)
- Connector markets: New York metro, Miami-Ft. Lauderdale, Southern California
- Drive markets (summer and mountain biking focus): Denver, Boulder, Ft. Collins, Colorado Springs, Grand Junction

Groups Markets:

- All markets above, with an emphasis on Denver, Texas, California, Florida, Chicago and Washington, D.C.

Key Messages:

Brand Platform “[Embraced by Nature](#)” was developed in 2016 and remains the foundation of all marketing messaging.

Specific messages that inform summer and winter campaign are:

- Nature/Wide Open Spaces
- Family/Squad
- World Class
- Evolving
- Approachable/Down to Earth
- Uncrowded Vitality
- Colorado Must-Visit Destination
- Longer Stays (Work Remote)
- Skiing/Snowboarding (winter only)
- Winter Outdoor Activities (winter only)
- Summer Outdoor Activities (summer only)
- World Class Biking (summer only)
- Fall Beauty (summer only)



CONTRACT SCOPE OF WORK

When agency is selected, the scope of work will include the following:

1. **Brand Strategy and Rebranding: spearhead strategic analysis of the Snowmass brand and its opportunities, and provide Snowmass Tourism with a new logo, brand platform and voice. Launch around March 1, 2022.**

In the strategic planning process, consider industry research, competitive analysis, social listening, stakeholder input, etc. Final deliverables will include a style guide that can be shared with Snowmass stakeholders, and a brand brochure concept/design.

Budget for Brand Strategy and Rebranding to be determined. Estimate must be included in proposal.

2. **Advertising Campaign and Media Planning: develop an overarching ad campaign that can be applied to both summer and winter messages. Create a strategic media plan to include both traditional and new media elements, including traditional advertising, digital marketing, and paid search. Launch summer campaign around April 1, 2022 and winter campaign around August 15, 2022.**

In campaign development, consider creative concepts that can apply to both winter and summer messages/products, and can run/evolve over a 2-3 year period. Messages must be developed that apply to the groups market.

Fees must include all production required to implement campaign concepts (photography, video production, etc). Snowmass Tourism currently has a comprehensive library of destination photos and b-roll that may be used. Please email Hannah Green at hgreen@gosnowmass.com to gain access to the photo and video libraries.

Media Planning includes production, trafficking and distribution. Markets include prioritized domestic fly and drive markets in current marketing strategy above, unless otherwise determined and approved with ST.

Ad channels may include, but are not limited to print, television, out of home, digital display, online video, digital native content, mobile, paid search, paid social, programmatic, strategic marketing partnerships, and experiential marketing. Consider endemic relationships, added-value and advertorial opportunities. A portion of the media spend must be dedicated to the groups market and have creative that specifically speaks to that audience.

Please address paid search specifically. If agency does not have proficiency in paid search, we can consider removing that from the scope and budget.

Website development, public relations, local marketing, collateral production, and day-to-day social media management are NOT within the scope of this contract.

- 3. Agency Services: act as an ongoing partner to Snowmass Tourism, providing ongoing account support, campaign stewardship, competitive intelligence, campaign evolution and thought leadership.**

Consider analytics and ROI, attribution reporting, ongoing analysis and optimization, testing, industry insights and trends, and tools/resources that would contribute to informed decision making.

Contract budget, inclusive of items #2 and #3 above, totals \$1.3M annually, and must include all agency fees, all creative/production costs, all media including paid search, all ongoing agency services, all research, planning and strategic work. Media spend is traditionally allocated approximately 40-45% to summer, 55-60% to winter, with media and creative that support the groups market.

RFP RESPONSE SUMMARY

Please address the following in your RFP response:

1. Company Description: Please provide an overview of your company's history, ownership, executive leadership, the length of time it has been providing these services, current client list, and office location(s). Please provide at least three references, including one who is no longer a client of your organization.

2. Organizational Capabilities: Please provide an overview of all services provided by your organization. Also, provide significant details regarding your capabilities as they relate to the scope of work as described above, with examples of your prior work and outcomes on similar projects. Include areas where you are able to fulfill project needs within your organization and any areas in which you would need to partner with other agencies for added support or capabilities.

3. Relevant Experience: Provide examples of integrated brand strategy and marketing/advertising campaigns that you have completed in the past, as well as their outcomes. Provide examples of your tools/resources, attribution methodologies and tracking dashboards/reports. Identify additional skill sets and unique resources that you can provide to enhance the overall promotion of Snowmass.

4. Destination Work: Discuss your experience partnering with destinations, and experience with destinations offering similar experiences. Identify any similar destinations within Snowmass's comp set - North American mountain resorts/communities - for which you have worked or are currently working. This information will not disqualify a bidding agency but might be subject to further discussions should the possibility of a conflict of interest exist.

5. Project Approach: Please describe, in detail, the strategic and tactical approach your organization would take to achieve the desired goals of this initiative, listed in the Scope of Work section above. Gantt charts, project outlines, and sample reports are encouraged. Please be sure to address the following:

- A. What is your proposed timeline, process and strategic approach for our rebranding project, creative campaign, and media plan? Please address your capabilities around paid search, or note if you do not want to include that in the scope of work.
- B. How would we work together over the course of a year to develop media plans, creative assets, strategic shifts and reporting to satisfy our two distinct seasons (winter/spring and summer/fall), and distinct audiences (leisure and groups).
- C. What are the elements, attributes or USPs of Snowmass that will inspire you to develop amazing brand work and creative concepts if/when you are selected to pitch?

6. Account Service & Fee Structure: Identify the team that will be working directly on the account, what responsibilities they have, the length of time they've been with the company, and for what other accounts they have responsibility. Provide an overview of your proposed project budget, fee/retainer/commission structure for creative services and media placement. Provide an estimate specific to the brand strategy/rebranding project, which is a separate project/fee from the \$1.3M annual creative/media budget.

7. Competitive Advantages: Describe why Snowmass Tourism should contract with your organization. What sets you apart from your competition, and aligns well with our organization? How will you communicate knowledgeably about mountain/ski travel? Tell us what a successful client relationship looks like to you. What does actionable feedback sound like to you? How do you reset when things go off course? How do you celebrate (y)our successes?

RESOURCES

Email hgreen@gosnowmass.com to gain access to Snowmass Tourism Assets, including current style guide, board reports, past campaign creative, access to photo/video assets, press kits, and more.

Questions may be submitted directly on our [Snowmass Tourism RFP Q&A](#) doc or emailed to hgreen@gosnowmass.com to be added to the doc. Questions deadline is Tuesday, July 27, with answers available in the doc by Friday, July 30.

NEXT STEPS

Submissions are due Friday, August 6, by 5:00pm Mountain time.

Short-list selections will be made on Monday, August 16.

Candidates who are selected to pitch will present Snowmass-specific brand strategy, media strategy, and at least two distinct campaign concepts. Pitches will take place in Snowmass Village between September 15-24.

Thank you for your interest in working with us! We look forward to seeing how your brilliant minds work, and how we can partner to make great things happen for Snowmass.