



Request for Proposal (RFP)
Columbus.org and supporting web-based initiatives
Columbus Chamber of Commerce
150 S. Front St., Ste. 200
Columbus, Ohio
43215

I. Background

1 Introduction

1.1.1.1 At the Columbus Chamber we are currently evaluating a program to improve our organization's websites.

The Chamber's website inventory includes:

- Columbus.org – the primary Chamber site including information on Columbus, the Chamber, membership, news and events.
- blog.columbus.org - the Chamber's blog, currently hosted on Typepad; to be redesigned
- Columbusregion.org – the economic development site for the region, currently part of Columbus.org ; to be redeveloped as a separate but related site
- Columbusinternships.com – a site connecting the region's employers with intern candidates
- Liveworkplaycolumbus.com – a site where individuals interested in relocating Columbus can find information on housing, jobs and entertainment; this is a key component of the Chamber's attract and retain talent initiative
- DiversityBridge.org – a central, interactive website that provides women and minority-owned business with access to resources and opportunities; this site is currently being redeveloped
- Columbus2020.org – the website for the regional economic growth strategy

Our goals for this RFP are to update the appearance of the main Chamber site, blog and columbusregion.com, create a more unified presence among all the sites, and provide better usability and search-ability. Currently the majority of the websites noted above are hosted and managed by different providers. Because this is inefficient, we would like to co-locate the sites to one server and content manager.

The completed questionnaire along with the necessary attachments is due back on CD and/or electronically by 5 p.m. on Thursday, August 12. Please send your response to:

Michelle Bretscher
Director, Marketing & Communication
Columbus Chamber
150 S. Front Street, Ste. 200
Columbus, OH 43215
614.225.6908
michelle_bretscher@columbus.org

We will choose an agency partner in September.

Thank you in advance for your time and interest.

1.1 Requirements

The following will be requirements for Columbus Chamber, Inc. website redesign project:

- 1.1.1 www.Columbus.org and www.columbusregion.com will be redesigned with an updated appearance and user-friendly organization and navigation.
- 1.1.2 The sites will have an adaptable/customizable content management system (CMS).
- 1.1.3 The sites will be built to reflect current “best practices” for search engine optimization, including CMS editable title tag, meta description, meta keywords, image tags and header tags.
- 1.1.4 The sites will be built in partnership with current providers including Weblink (membership directory, member log-in and events sections)
- 1.1.5 The design will be created to withstand/offer flexibility for showcasing organization events, initiatives and changing priorities. For example, some signature Chamber events, such as the Annual Meeting, Clambake (ex. Columbus.org/clambake) and the Small Business Forum & Leadership Awards (ex. Columbus.org/sbfla), require more extensive listings to provide additional event details.
- 1.1.6 The Business2Business Network EXPO event, to be held each spring/summer, will require a separate URL. (similar to www.buythebigoshow.com)
- 1.1.7 Columbus.org site should also include separate, robust calendar for member events; preferable that members can submit events through a standard online submission form (then approved by Chamber).
- 1.1.8 Columbus.org site should include a separate, robust news page for members; preferable that members can submit news through a standard online submission form (then approved by Chamber).
- 1.1.9 Contract should include template creation for e-newsletter; e-newsletters will be compiled by Chamber staff and distributed through iContact.
- 1.1.10 Sites should include capability for sharing photos and videos through Social networks.
- 1.1.11 Site will not have a flash introduction page, but can include flash within the site or on the homepage, but must be SEO friendly with an optimized flash header.
- 1.1.12 Upon completion, the partner will provide a hard copy style guide for the site design that will include all style specifications.
- 1.1.13 Screen resolution will be built to at least 1024x768.
- 1.1.14 The Columbus Chamber will own any creation of software/images/CMS created for the website.
- 1.1.15 The partner will provide ongoing browser compliance testing and provide on a quarterly basis [or more frequently] a recommendation for improvements.
- 1.1.16 The site will be built to render content for handheld devices.
- 1.1.17 Sites should load in less than three seconds (cable).
- 1.1.18 Sites will be built for staff and stakeholders to take content away in various formats, including style sheet driven print this page, excel, word and PDF.
- 1.1.19 The sites will be built to showcase member banner ads based on keyword. Keywords for membership categories will be optimized for SEO.
- 1.1.20 The Columbus Chamber blog should be redesigned as part of this RFP, to coordinate with updated Columbus.org site (and be integrated into the main site). Wordpress is the preferred blog of choice.
- 1.1.21 In addition, the selected firm should assist the Chamber in redeploying its other sites, creating a strategy to migrate content across the sites onto one CMS, and to working to ensure we have properly branded the sites for their intended audiences.
- 1.1.22 RFP should include retainer for monthly site maintenance for ongoing upkeep of issues/items that cannot be handled by Chamber staff via the CMS.
- 1.1.23 The partner will help create any future sub sites.

1.2 Reply Procedures

Please include the following via e-mail or via mail on a CD:

- 1.2.1 RFP response (Web-based preferred, PDF accepted)
- 1.2.2 Columbus.org homepage and audience-specific landing pages design

Responses to this RFP must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Thursday, August 12, 2010.

Hardcopy paper designs/submissions will not be considered.

Potential partners are encouraged to provide any additional feedback for each section that is relevant to the objectives of this RFP. This includes suggestions, optional approaches, suggested improvements and comments.

1.3 Disclaimer

The Columbus Chamber neither makes nor assumes any contractual obligations by:

- Issuing this RFP
- Receiving and evaluating agency responses
- Negotiating or making preliminary agency selections

The award of this project will be expressly conditioned upon execution of an agreement that shall be in form and substance satisfactory to the Columbus Chamber. Until execution of such an agreement, despite anything else that may be communicated to you (either orally or in writing), we do not have a binding relationship. COLUMBUS CHAMBER will contract with you only in a written document, which contains all of the terms and conditions governing the relationship.

The pricing data provided in this RFP will not constitute an agreement to purchase at these levels or mix. COLUMBUS CHAMBER reserves the right to reject any and all quotations and to accept a proposal or proposals other than the lowest proposal. Acceptance of any proposals is subject to the execution of a written agreement between an affiliate of COLUMBUS CHAMBER and the successful bidder. All quotes will be kept and are considered active for 120 days upon receipt.

All costs associated with the compilation of the proposal shall be the sole responsibility of the bidder.

1.4 Terms and Conditions

- 1.4.1 All selected quotations will become part of any resulting agreement subject to any modifications that may occur during the negotiation process.
- 1.4.2 All price quotes must be signed by an executive.
- 1.4.3 COLUMBUS CHAMBER reserves the right to amend this RFP at any time prior to agency selection, as well as to cancel the selection process at any time prior to execution of a written agreement.
- 1.4.4 All respondents to this RFP will be a member in good standing of the Columbus Chamber and remain a member during the term of this agreement and any extensions.
- 1.4.5 All agencies responding to this RFP will be notified when the final selection has been made.
- 1.4.6 Current standards and/or requirements are not to be construed as guaranteed future standards and/or requirements.

- 1.4.7 COLUMBUS CHAMBER will approve any outsourcing – further, resultant liability or contracted default from outsourced work is the sole responsibility of the agency.
- 1.4.8 All bids are to be made in good faith, without fraud, collusion or connection of any kind with any supplier for the same work. All bidders must compete in their own interest and on their own behalf.
- 1.4.9 All programming and proprietary database/graphic content produced under this contract will be solely owned by the Columbus Chamber. It may only be used with their express written consent. Specifically, by agreeing to this contract the developers will not sell, exchange, promote or otherwise utilize any of the code for any other purpose without prior permission of the Chamber. This is a full buyout contract. Upon completion of the project, the Chamber will be provided one copy of all files associated with the site's development. Should the proposal include the use of a proprietary site builder and content management tool, the vendor will be expected to both provide irrevocable, rights to the tool and may be asked to escrow source code for it.

II Response Categories

2.1 Contact Information/Company Background

Please provide your company contacts below.

Name of Company:	
Address:	
Current Chamber member:	Yes/No
Primary RFP contact person:	
Title/Function:	
Telephone direct:	
E-mail:	
Account contact person upon partnership:	
Title/Function:	
Telephone direct:	
E-mail:	

2.1.2 Please list your company's current clients and business activities:

2.2 Pricing

2.2.1 Please specify the communication method, reports and frequency of price changes.

2.2.2 Please detail cost associated with purchasing software, licensing fees, etc.

2.2.3 Interactive Design

2.2.3.1 Please provide a design proposal for the Columbus Chamber's homepage as well as a landing page for one of the Chamber audiences or Chamber initiatives.

2.2.3.2 Please provide a suggested site map for the Chamber's website.

2.3 CMS and Programming Environment

2.4.1 Content management proposal (if applicable please provide web-based demonstration of the tool's capabilities). Please detail capabilities of proposed content management program, including screen captures of meta data and content body control areas. CMS should be built for multiple levels of content (i.e. creation – approval by group leader – final approval by Director of Marketing and Communication)

2.4.2 Environment proposal. Please detail proposed programming environment

2.4 Ongoing Maintenance

2.5.1 Maintenance Schedule. Please detail requirements for an on-going maintenance relationship including client/vendor responsibilities and billing rates (image changes, additional website functions, font changes, etc.) for the personnel responsible for those updates.

2.5 Billing

2.6.1 Detail your payment options and terms.

2.6.2 Detail the billing rates for the personnel you would assign to this project.

2.6.2.1 Please provide billing as a lump sum, do not exceed for the initial project and a monthly retainer going forward.

2.7 References

2.7.1 Please provide two references from your existing customers for projects completed in past two years.

2.8 Suggestions for Improvements

2.8.1 Please use this section to provide and share any cost/efficiency and improvement ideas.

2.9 Audiences

2.9.1 Columbus.org: Chamber members/potential Chamber members; company employees such as CEOs, CFOs, senior management; sales professionals; Chambers of Commerce and peer economic development organizations; owners and management of existing employers in the region; community members looking for local businesses; members of the news media and local bloggers; young professionals.

2.9.2 Columbusregion.com: Relocation consultants hired by companies to initially assess and analyze the profitability of metropolitan regions and specific communities; corporate real estate executives; internal site selection committees that include a cross-section of managers, workers and corporate decision makers; commercial and industrial real estate agents who represent client companies and/or real estate developers with land and buildings available for sale or lease; others seeking community and economic development data; governmental agencies at the state and local level.

2.9.3 Columbusinternships.com: HR professionals from regional employers; students from local universities.

2.9.4 Liveworkplaycolumbus.com: HR professionals; relocating professionals and their spouses.

2.9.5 Diversitybridge.org: Women and minority-owned businesses; government agencies; companies looking to do business with WMBEs.

2.9.6 Columbus2020.org: Central Ohio business and community leaders.

3.0 Columbus Chamber Brand Toolkit

3.0.1 See attached PDF. The Chamber branding must be carried through the Columbus.org website in the redesign.