



Request for Proposal: Website Design and Development & Enhanced Membership Directory

Overview

Project Summary

The American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC) seeks a website design & development firm to lead two projects: the redesign & redevelopment of our main organizational website (theaapc.org), and the redesign & redevelopment of our searchable membership directory. While we prefer a single firm for both parts of the project, we will accept proposals that address only one or the other. Both will be a concept-to-completion production. The website must integrate with the AAPC's existing Avectra CRM (avectra.com) and the omniCONTESTS platform (omnicontests.com).

Who We Are

The American Association of Political Consultants, founded in 1969, is a nonpartisan organization of political professionals. We are proud to represent the women and men of our industry who have dedicated their lives to making America a better place to live by attaining the goals set out more than 200 years ago in our nation's Declaration of Independence.

Purpose of the Website

The AAPC website provides a dual function: promoting the AAPC to non-members in an effort to drive them toward purchasing a membership, and serving as the primary member-resource hub for existing members.

Purpose of the Membership Directory

One of the most tangible benefits of joining The AAPC is access to our network; membership in the organization can lead directly to new business opportunities. A revamped member directory that could be promoted as "The Place For New Campaigns To Start" would be an important tool in persuading our target audience to become a member, while also demonstrating the value of membership to existing members.

Goals for the website redesign & redevelopment

This project will be a complete overhaul of the existing website to present the AAPC as a cutting-edge, professional organization that is keeping up with changing technological standards in the industry.

The primary goals are to create a site with a contemporary look and feel; more clearly direct casual visitors to appropriate content and actions; integrate seamlessly with the Avectra CRM and the OmniContest platform; and mobile-optimize all pages to ensure an effective experience

for visitors on small screen-size devices (mobile users represent a large portion of The AAPC's target audience).

Audience

AAPC members (and prospective members) consist of political consultants, media consultants, pollsters, campaign managers, corporate public affairs officers, professors, fund-raisers, lobbyists, congressional staffers and vendors. Membership is open to everyone associated with politics, from the local level to the White House. In addition to political professionals, our goal with the enhanced membership directory component of this project is to make the site a destination for candidates and others who hire political professionals and vendors to find appropriate services.

The website sees an influx of visitors in the December-February timeframe each year as visitors enter the annual "Pollie Awards" contest, an awards contest for political professionals. This is easily the greatest driver of casual traffic to the website, and we want to make a positive, lasting impression to these visitors and contest entrants through the design and structure of the new site.

Given that there are disparate audiences being served by the website, the new website needs to clearly direct these separate groups to appropriate actions:

- For non-members (the vast majority of website visitors):
 - Start them in an acquisitions funnel (email signup, Pollie submission, or even push directly to a membership purchase)
 - Present the membership directory as a useful tool for finding campaign services
 - Direct them to the job board to submit their resume or look for prospective hires
- For members:
 - Reinforce member benefits (listing in membership directory, discounts on Pollie submissions, etc.)
 - Drive to member resources
 - Members are typically driven to the website through email, so we have some control over the entry path for members.

Project Scope

There are two major development components to this project: the general website redesign & redevelopment, and redevelopment of the membership directory.

Website Redesign & Development

1. Goals & objectives

- a. Replace the current AAPC site with a fully-featured website with a professional look and feel that will promote engagement, email signup conversions, and membership growth
- b. Utilizing existing branding
- c. Simplify navigation and ensure the website provides clear direction to non-members, while also giving members easy access to the content they need
- d. Make the new website a destination for political professionals, as well as those seeking services
- e. Provide a clearinghouse for information on new developments in the field of political consulting
- f. Turn the website into a true acquisitions funnel to educate casual visitors and put them on a path to purchasing a membership
- g. Focus casual site visitors on a few key actions we would like them to take:
 1. Find professional services (i.e. search database of members who are political consultants or vendors)
 2. Find a job
 3. Sign up for AAPC alerts
 4. Become a member
- h. The overall goal is to create a design that gives the site a professional, contemporary look, as would befit the premier membership organization for political professionals

2. Technical requirements

- a. Mobile-optimize all pages and templates to ensure ease of navigation and site exploration for all users on small screen-size devices.
- b. A built-in splash page or modal overlay that can be used to generate email signups or direct non-members to a simplified home page
- c. A simplified landing page template for use in acquisition campaigns
- d. While The AAPC is agnostic on the specific content management system used on the new site, it must be accessible to users with limited technical training, provide multiple user accounts, and allow for “draft” page settings to facilitate internal approval before making new pages live. Security of chosen CMS must be

demonstrated.

- e. Integration of one-click social media profile join buttons for Facebook and Twitter. Prominent promotion of the organization's LinkedIn group. Embedded display of recent updates from these services preferred.
- f. Migration of existing website content into new CMS
- g. Ability to create themed mini-sites through the CMS that could be used for Pollies landing pages and conference/event hubs
- h. Integrate the site with the Avectra CRM, which powers the membership database. Please detail any experience you have customizing or integrating websites with Avectra, if applicable.
- i. Integrate with Omnicontest, which powers the Pollies Contest system
- j. Integrate links to Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn profiles. Potentially include counters for Facebook Like and Twitter Follow buttons.

3. Core Site Map

- a. Home page
- b. About
 - i. Hall of Fame
 - ii. Foundation
 - iii. Chapters
- c. Join AAPC
- d. Member Resources
- e. Pollie Awards
- f. News & Events
- g. Membership Directory/Find Services
- h. Job Board
- i. [footer only] Contact & Privacy

Enhanced Membership Directory

Objective

Provide a significant member benefit, incentive to submit nominations to the Pollies, and an additional revenue stream for the organization.

Concept

Searchable database of AAPC Member and nonmember firms (with banner advertising and paid search result placements that we can sell as a bonus revenue stream) that would highlight members and Pollie Award winners. Essentially this would be a more sophisticated, more comprehensive and members-only version of the existing directory

(<https://netforum.avectra.com/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?Site=aapc&WebCode=IndSearch>)

This database serves as both a tangible benefit of membership (members have their information displayed when candidates and other campaign operatives search the database for vendors and solutions), and as a draw for non-members who are in need of political services. The secondary objective for the enhanced database is to create new revenue streams through banner ad placements and sponsored search results.

Please see APPENDIX A for a more detailed look at the structure and desired behavior of this component of the project.

Expected Process Order

Note: while this ordering is primarily focused on the website process, the membership directory will follow a similar path.

- Discovery/Planning
 - Further define the goals, audiences, objectives, look and feel, and technical requirements for the project, resulting in a comprehensive project brief.
- Information Architecture and Design
 - Extend the basic site map described above through all child levels, present at least two mockups of the home page and an interior page, and accept up to four rounds of feedback/changes from AAPC
- Development
 - Develop the approved design and site structure and implement the CMS
- Testing
 - All functional deliverables must be tested on major browsers, operating systems, and device sizes. All content must be correctly migrated from the former site and displaying cleanly.
- Training
 - Vendor must train two to four members of the AAPC staff to maintain and operate the website and membership directory
- Delivery
 - Deliver and upload the site to the host server

Qualifications

- List at least five websites (with URLs) your firm has produced that best reflect your work and ability to complete this project.
- Describe your experience producing a similar project.
- Describe your experience working with a membership organization (can be the same example as the above) or other, relevant non-profit organization
- Provide current references for at least three former or current clients.
- Provide a company profile including staff you expect to be assigned to the project

Contract Terms

The AAPC will negotiate contract terms upon selection. A project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract, which outlines terms, scope, budget, and other necessary items.

Proposal Requirements

Proposal Due date: March 25, 2014

Decision Date: May 15, 2014

Desired Completion Date: October 1, 2014

Expected Budget: \$40,000-60,000

Proposal elements should include:

- Company profile and background
- Discuss your proposed solution, including features, benefits, and uniqueness of your solution.
- Describe your preferred technical tools (hosting environment, CMS, database, etc)
- Qualifications (as detailed above)
- Proposed timeline
- Proposed budget
 - Estimate of budget should include breakouts for the major phases of the project.
 - The fees quoted should be inclusive. If your estimate excludes certain fees or charges, please provide a detailed list of these excluded fees along with an explanation for the separate listing.
 - Include estimated ongoing hosting and technical support fees separately

Send Proposal in printed or electronic format to:

Alana Joyce
Executive Director
American Association of Political Consultants
ajoyce@theaapc.org
8400 Westpark Drive, 2nd Floor
McLean, VA 22102
D: 703-245-8021

APPENDIX A: Enhanced Membership Directory components

Below is an outline of the desired features and behavior of the enhanced membership directory. We encourage respondents to offer alternative solutions to achieve the same overall goals if desired.

1. Key Features

- a. Accessible to the public
- b. AAPC Members will be listed automatically; nonmembers may pay listing fee
- c. Results will be ordered as follows (this order will provide an added marketable benefit of membership and award submission):
 - i. Member (alpha by level)/Pollie Winners i.e.
 - ii. Platinum Orgs
 - iii. Gold Orgs
 - iv. Individuals
 - v. Young Professionals
 - vi. Academic/Associate
 - vii. APSA
 - viii. Student
 - ix. Nonmembers
- d. Mobile web version
- e. The ability to sell sponsored listings is desired. These sponsored listings would “upgrade” a non-member’s listing in the order of the displayed search results

2. CATEGORIES (INDUSTRY SEGMENTS)

- a. TELEVISION & CABLE
 - i. Media Consultants
 - ii. Media Buyers and Planners
 - iii. Video Editing/Production
 - iv. Camera Crew
 - v. Stock video/stills
 - vi. Jingles and custom audio
- b. DIRECT MAIL/PRINT
 - i. Direct Mail Consultants
 - ii. Direct Mail Design
 - iii. Direct Mail Production
 - iv. Stock Photography
 - v. Photographers
 - vi. Printing (union)

- vii. Printing (non-union)
 - viii. Direct Mail Fundraising
 - ix. Newspaper/Magazine Placement
- c. NEW MEDIA/NEW TECHNOLOGY/DATA
 - i. New Media Consultants/Strategists
 - ii. Online Ad Production
 - iii. Video Ad/Pre-Roll Strategy/Buying
 - iv. Voter Targeted Advertising
 - v. Cookie Targeted Advertising
 - vi. Search Engine Advertising
 - vii. Social Media Advertising
 - viii. Other Ad Networks
 - ix. Website Designers
 - x. Campaign Management Software
 - xi. Field Software
 - xii. Text Messaging Services
 - xiii. Data Providers
 - xiv. Online Ad Networks/misc providers
- d. TELEPHONES
 - i. Live Phones
 - ii. Telephone Town Hall
 - iii. Robo-Calls
- e. POLLSTERS
 - i. Live/Mixed Polling
 - ii. IVR Polling
 - iii. Other
- f. GENERAL CONSULTANTS
- g. CAMPAIGN MANAGERS
 - i. Democrat
 - ii. Republican
 - iii. Non-Partisan/Independent
- h. OPPOSITION RESEARCH
- i. COLLATERAL
 - i. Signs
 - ii. Stickers
 - iii. Lapel Pins
 - iv. T-shirts
 - v. Logo design

- j. POLLIE AWARD WINNERS
- 3. SEARCH CRITERIA
 - a. Pollie Award Winner – Checkbox
 - b. Industry Segment(s) – Multi-select (see above)
 - c. Type of Campaign – Multi-select:
 - i. Candidate/electoral campaigns and/or recalls
 - ii. Ballot Measures
 - iii. Public Affairs/Issue Advocacy
 - d. Type of Client – Multi-select:
 - i. Federal
 - ii. National
 - iii. Statewide
 - iv. County
 - v. Congressional
 - vi. Local
 - e. Party Affiliation
 - f. States that organization operates in
- 4. INDIVIDUAL FIRM PROFILES WILL INCLUDE
 - a. Party Affiliation
 - b. Industry Segment
 - c. Type of Campaign
 - d. Type of Client (level of campaign)
 - e. AAPC Member
 - f. Pollie Award Winner Y/N
 - g. Pollie Winner Icon with pop up to secondary listing of Awards that have been won --may be edited by individuals to include level (Gold/Silver/Bronze/HM) and name of category/campaign
 - h. States that the organization operates in
 - i. Leadership bios
 - j. Company description (character limited)
 - k. Address
 - l. Phone
 - m. Web Address
 - i. Web Address is linked and will open a new window to the site.
- 5. SEARCH FUNCTIONALITY NOTES
 - a. The search will need to do a keyword search of the Company Description for client type of Federal/National/Statewide/County/Congressional/Local. NOTE: Will want to let organization's know that this is occurring so that they can use

those keywords.

6. MOBILE COMPATIBILITY

- a. The directory must be mobile-optimized to provide a usable user experience to user on small-screen-size devices.