Company Background

Social NewsLine [SNL] is a company committed to providing a new way for companies, non-profits, and governments to work with journalists across the globe and to spread news socially. We recruit, cultivate and support communities of independent journalists around the world and provide a platform for these journalists to receive customized pitches based on their areas of preference.

Project background

This project will implement a web-based system to cultivate communities of interest across the globe. Upon signing of a Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), further detail can be provided.

Technical Requirements

Third-Party Products:

Where appropriate, and in keeping with an easy to manage workflow, we would strongly encourage the use of off the shelf products or services for any component part of this project. For example: bulletenboards.com for a discussion component (this is an example only, not an endorsement of the product for this RFP) – as long as the recommended product/service meets the requirements of this project. Where off-the-shelf products are recommended a case should be made for one or more of the following criteria: it creates a better user experience, it lowers costs, and/or it reduces development time. Our expectation would be that, in most cases, a third-party product would lower total cost. Any use of third party products must have the use fully documented and the workflow diagrammed by the developer.

Hosting:

The developer is responsible for recommending a hosting environment and for hosting the product during development. The developer must also transfer the product to an identified permanent hosting environment at the conclusion of the project. Any commonly available hosting environment may be used as long as the end product is portable across similar hosting environments elsewhere without additional customization. Any hosting environment used must be fully patched and use industry standard security including a firewall and strong login credentials.

Databases:

Any commonly available database system may be used as long as the end product is portable to the same version database hosted elsewhere without additional customization. Any database must be fully patched and use industry standard security including a firewall, strong login

credentials and, if the database is queried across the open Internet, strong encryption must be used during the query.

Coding:

Any commonly available coding environments, scripting languages, API's etc. may be used. Any non-obvious functions used should be commented in the code. All files necessary for the operation of the product must be transferred to Social NewsLine at the completion of the project or at any time Social NewsLine requests them while the project is underway. Social NewsLine must have rights to modify any code that it sees fit after the project is concluded (with an exception for code licensed from a third party that cannot be modified by the developer).

Targeted Browsers:

All components must be tested and work with the following browsers:

- Internet Explorer 7 or higher
- Firefox 3.6 or higher
- Chrome 7.0 or higher
- Safari 5 on Mac or higher

Mobile:

While a mobile version of the project is not required, the end product should properly render and be functional on small screen, touch-based devices (such as the iPhone or Android phones) and on small screen browsers (such as mobile Safari).

Exclusions:

Flash and Silverlight should not be used as part of this project.

Project Overview

A complete project overview will be provided upon signing the NDA

Project component Description and Requirements

The end product will have the following components used together in a smooth workflow:

1. *Login system*– A login system to verify identity and establish user-based permissions.

- This system could use OpenID, Facebook, Twitter, Google, another third-party system, a developer-built proprietary system, or some combination of these.

- The login will determine access to resources.

2. *User Profile database* - Contains all relevant information about each user.

    - Information would include multiple fields of text, numbers and geographic information

    - The database entries need to be easily extensible by the Super Administrator to add additional categories of information.

    - When a profile is pulled the system also needs to be able to do an automated search for web posts and tweets related to the profile, and present the results of those searches (an external service could be used for this function if it can be integrated smoothly)

3. *Agency Administrator profile database* - Contains information on agency administrators.

    - Agency Administrators would only have access to certain types of users and certain discussion threads.

    - The data contained in the Agency Administrator profile database would determine which users they had access to based on matching it with user profile.

    - The database entries need to be easily extensible by the Super Administrator to add additional categories of information.

4. *Content submission system* - Allows agency administrators to submit content to users for them to determine interest.

    - The system will include a Rich Text editor and raw HTML editor. It will support photos (including the uploading and hosting on-site of photos), embedded video (but not on-site hosting of video), documents/files (including the uploading and hosting on-site of documents/files).

    - The requests will be submitted to the content matching system (described below) and passed along to the Super Administrator for action.

    - The content submission system could share an editing interface with the content hosting system (see below), but it is not a requirement.

5. *Content matching system* – A user Interface and database query system that allows agency administrators to locate based on elements in the user profiles (searches user profiles for key terms/criteria and returns sortable lists).

6. *User notification system* - Allows agency administrators to contact users based on the users preferences.

    - The preference would be stored in the users profile.

    - The platform would handle the contact automatically using the following service types: email, SMS, fax, Facebook mail, or Twitter (for Twitter the contact would take place using private direct messaging if at all possible, otherwise it could take place on the public twitter stream associated with Social NewsLine.)

    - The default action would be for the notification sent out to notify the user that a message was waiting on the server in the 'private messaging system' (not provide them with the message itself).

    - The Agency Administrator sending the notification would have the option of sending the entire message in the notification, at their discretion.

    - The notification system would allow text, html, video, audio and other rich media content to be part of the message.

7. *Private messaging system for notification messages* - The component where notification messages would reside on the system.

    - Notification messages would consist of content and any other message sent by an agency administrator or super administrator.

    - This component should contain a threaded discussion system attached to each message. The messages and discussion would be accessible to the contacted user and the Agency Administrator who sent the message.

    - The Agency Administrator would have the ability to invite additional Agency Administrators and additional users to join the conversation thread.

8. *Threaded discussion system* – Provides threaded topical discussion areas (like a standard forum system).

    - Access to each topic would be accessible by Agency Administrators and users with access permission (permissions would be: read, post, edit/delete, and create new sub-topics) to each topic.

- Permissions would be controlled by the Super Administrator based on information in the Agency Administrator or user profile (For example, permissions could be segmented by geography). Super administrators could also grant access to any area directly to any user or agency administrator.

9. *Content hosting system* –Allows for editing of content and for the permanent publishing of content online. Somewhat similar to a blogging platform (for example: a modified third party blogging platform could be considered for this system)

    - The system will include a Rich Text editor and raw HTML editor. It will support photos (including the uploading and hosting on-site of photos), embedded video (but not on-site hosting of video), documents/files (including the uploading and hosting on-site of documents/files).

    - The system will also include a system to forward and promote published content (for example, content would have buttons for email forwarding, promoting on Facebook, Google+, tweeting, Google +1, etc. Off the shelf products would likely work well for this.).

    - Content would be edited and saved without publishing until a publish command is given.

10. *Content distribution system* – When content is published, the content notification system publishes it.

    - The system would publish to key web Social Newsline channels and to the user personal channels which will include: Facebook wall post, Email, Twitter, rss, XML, SMS, google+.

    - The list of distribution channels must be updatable by the Super Administrator in the future.

    - Published content would include: the link to the full content hosted on the 'content hosting system, a short description, and an image or video thumbnail if available.

11. *Analytics* – The analytics component will track two areas.

    a. Internal usage will be tracked: How many interactions are taking place via the content request system, the content hosting system and on the threaded discussions.

    b. Various web and social data including the following:

- Basic Visitor Traffic Analytics: Pageviews, Unique Visitors, Repeat Visitors, Bounce Rate, etc.
- Social Engagement Analytics: Users & Demographics, Sharing, Page Likes, Like Sources, Tab Views, Post Impressions, etc.
- Promotion-specific Analytics: Likes, Sends, Comments, Clickthroughs from shares, Conversion Funnels and Rates, Abandonment Rates, etc.
- User Tracking Analytics: User Lifecycle including origination point, interactions during current and future visits.

This data will be aggregated and segmented into reports that can be accessed by agency administrators, users and super administrators based on access level.

User Interface / User Experience

Social NewsLine has an internal designer that the chosen developer can work with, however, if the developer wished to provide a separate design bid from their internal development team or a design partner, we would consider their design bid on its merits.

The designer will solicit feedback from the developer to help inform the design and they will work collaboratively to come up with a clean, clear utilitarian layout. The designer will provide .psd files to the developer, but will not be providing functional code.

There will be four user types, each with somewhat differing user interface requirements:

- *Users*: Should have an attractive landing page with a login box. Should have easy access to: updating their user profile, messages and discussions on the User notification system that they are a part of, the threaded discussion system in areas that their profile allows, and the content hosting system.
- *Agency Administrators*: Should have an attractive landing page with a login box. Should have easy access to: the content submission system, messages and discussions on the user notification system that they are a part of, the threaded discussion system in areas that their profile allows, the content hosting system, and analytics related to published content.
- *Super Administrators*: Need to have access to all components of the system, including the ability to edit and delete all content.

- *New users:* There will be a set of marketing pages that will be the public face of Social NewsLine. These pages will attractively explain the service and why users should sign up for it. These pages will be created by Social NewsLine's in-house designer, but any coding for integration with the main system will be done by the developer (such as login functionality). This page will also feature a live Twitter feed of Social Newline users. The developer will be responsible for integrating this live feed into the page.

Typical Workflow Example:

Example workflow will be provided after the NDA is submitted

Assumptions and agreements

- All work product, acquired assets, domains, hosting accounts, third-party (off the shelf product) accounts, and any other components required to execute, edit and enhance this product will be the property of Social NewsLine. All login credentials, API's, and installation keys required to execute, edit and enhance this product will be provided to Social NewsLine.
- Any proposal may include whatever partner/s the bidder would like to include, however, all partners must be identified in the proposal and must sign a non-disclosure.
- RFP must be delivered as a PDF to socialnewsline@gmail.com by close of business on November 21st, 2011 (11/21/11).
- RFP Q&A Period: Questions can be sent to socialnewsline@gmail.com during the Q&A period up through November 17th, 2011 (11/17/11). All RFP questions and answers will be shared with all RFP participants. The identity of the asking party will be kept confidential.
- Parties submitting:
    - may not discuss pricing information with other bidding parties
    - must disclose any relevant conflicts of interest or pending lawsuits
    - should provide background on qualifications and experience
    - should provide relevant references
    - should provide biographies of key team members
    - should provide examples of relevant work

Estimated Project Duration

Ideally we anticipate the project taking approximately 3-4 months to complete, however please include your realistic assessment of what you think would be necessary to complete a project of this size and scope.

Please provide the hourly rate that will be charged for post-delivery support.

Basis for awarding the contract

- The proposal must meet the requirements of the RFP
- The developer awarded the contract must have the resources and experience to execute on the RFP within the timeframe outlined and must be able to provide support post-final delivery, as needed.
- Price will be a consideration but will not be the determining factor (we want the best ideas and understanding of how to facilitate the type of interactions this project requires)