



**REQUEST FOR PROPSALS
PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENCY OF RECORD
October 5, 2012**

Services Desired

The New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau is seeking a public relations agency of record to coordinate national media relations and reputation management designed to manage overall perceptions of our destination and increase visitation to the city of New Orleans. We anticipate awarding an annual contract beginning in January 2013. If the successful agency is based outside of Louisiana, they will be required to have a local partner located in the New Orleans area.

About the Organization

The New Orleans CVB is a nationally accredited, 1,100-member destination marketing organization and the largest and most successful private economic development corporation in Louisiana. The CVB and its members influence thousands of decision-makers and millions of visitors to choose New Orleans through direct sales, marketing, public relations, branding and visitor services at our New Orleans headquarters and offices in Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, Phoenix and four foreign countries (France, Germany, UK and Mexico). Tourism is New Orleans' largest industry, employing nearly 80,000 people and generating \$5 billion annually. Consistently recognized as one of the top five CVBs in the country, the New Orleans CVB is celebrating its 52nd anniversary in 2012. For more information, please visit www.neworleanscvb.com.

Communications and Public Relations Department Mission and Objectives

The mission of the Communications and Public Relations department is to manage, leverage and expand the attractiveness of New Orleans as a destination and of the New Orleans CVB and hospitality industry brand as it is represented across all communication platforms and the mainstream, trade and social media.

- Aggressively pursue and secure positive media coverage with local, national and international mainstream print, broadcast and online media, to drive leisure and convention tourism
- Aggressively pursue and secure positive media coverage with leisure and meeting trade publications and mainstream business publications to influence business customer perceptions and enhance CVB sales efforts
- Create a destination best practice social media program. A strategic, joint social media program with the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation and an agency partner help us speak with one voice to potential and current visitors, drive member value, boost attendance at meetings and conventions, attract leisure visitors and preserve the brand.
- Execute a local advocacy campaign to educate New Orleanians and policy-makers about the work of the CVB and significance of tourism to the economy, job creation and quality of life
- Support corporate and association customers by providing customized marketing tools and counsel
- Combat negative media coverage and manage crisis situations to protect the destination's image

Primary Responsibilities of Selected Agency

- Proactive media outreach and story development which will result in positive media coverage of the destination in national media outlets and among key audiences
- Reputation management
- Strategic counsel, particularly during crisis situations
- Brand integration with CVB partners, including a social media firm and the advertising agency partner of the New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation

Submission Elements

1. What kind of a partner will you make?

- Give us a snapshot of your agency: size, scope, areas of expertise, global presence and industries of focus.
- Describe the team you'll put together.
- Out-of-town agencies must partner with a New Orleans PR agency. Describe how the local and out-of-town firm will work together.
- Tell us about your billing procedures, account management, hourly rates and mark-ups.

2. What have you made happen for your clients?

- Give three examples of your greatest PR successes/case studies that demonstrate expertise in tourism / destination marketing.
- Tell about one PR approach you executed that people are still talking about.
- Describe the two biggest PR crises you've handled, and what you did to address the problem.
- Give us examples of how you worked with a client and their other agency partners, such as an ad agency or social media agency.
- List three client references with contact information.

3. What can you do for us?

- What would you do for New Orleans to drive visitation and enhance the city's reputation?
- Which national journalists do you know? Do you have the relationships and contacts to get us mainstream media coverage?
- Explain how you define and measure success for your clients.

Scoring System – 100 total points

- Your specific approach to tourism public relations and primary program elements; and benchmarks for success – 30 points
- Three case studies that demonstrate experience in tourism/destination marketing – 25 points
- List of team members to be assigned to the project, with bios and client history (Out of town agency must include New Orleans agency partner) – 20 points
- Explanation of agency's billing procedures including hourly rates, mark-ups – 15 points
- Compatibility with New Orleans culture and CVB team – 10 points

Budget

We anticipate a 2013 budget of approximately \$200,000 for agency fees and expenses.

Schedule (subject to change)

RFP issued: October 5, 2012

Proposals due: 5 p.m. Friday November 2, 2012 (No email or online submissions. Mail or hand-deliver 12 printed, bound copies to the attention of Kelly Schulz, New Orleans CVB, 2020 St. Charles Ave., New Orleans LA 70130, USA 504-566-5019)

Finalists selected and notified: November 19, 2012

Finalist presentations heard: December 6, 2012 (in New Orleans at CVB offices) A backup day of presentations is being scheduled on December 11, 2012.

Agency selection/notification: December 14, 2012

Contract start date: January 14, 2013

Judging Panel (subject to change)

CVB:

- Fred Sawyers, Chairman of the Board, Hilton Hotels
- Stephen Perry, President and CEO
- Kelly Schulz, Vice President of Communications and PR
- Jenn Lotz, Manager of Communications
- Kim Priez, Vice President of Tourism
- Nikki Moon, Vice President of Convention Sales (or designee)

Mark Romig, APR, President and CEO, New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation
McKenzie Coco, Owner, FSC Interactive (social media agency for CVB and NOTMC)
CVB Board of Directors Representative: Aaron Dirks, Limousine Livery
CVB Board of Directors Representative: Bonnie Boyd, BBC Destination Management

Questions/For More Information

Please contact Kelly Schulz at 504-566-5045 or kschulz@neworleanscvb.com. Agencies should not contact the judges. All questions about the RFP process or the CVB's PR goals will be answered by Kelly Schulz to ensure that no agency has an advantage over another.

###