



Request for Proposals Marketing, Communications, and Website Management, Social Media

Proposal Submittal Deadline: May 15, 2015

Introduction

In 2011, the City of Arroyo Grande formed a Tourism Business Improvement District (T-BID). The TBID Board of Directors operates as a destination marketing organization under the name of Visit Arroyo Grande.

Spearheaded by Arroyo Grande hoteliers, Visit Arroyo Grande is comprised of nine (9) hotels and seven (7) vacation rental/home stays. It is governed by a Board of Directors representing the diverse make-up of the Arroyo Grande hospitality industry.

The City is seeking professional full-service integrated marketing, digital marketing, communications, and online media, website, and website maintenance services and is requesting proposals from qualified firms.

Candidates should have the capability and experience needed to provide comprehensive, strategic and innovative services on designated projects. The intended end result of the marketing program is to increase hotel occupancy and average daily rate.

The City's brand (e.g. logo, color palette, tagline, graphics, etc.) are already in place. The City wishes to build upon this identity in its future marketing effort with the selected firm.

Qualified firms shall make recommendations for the coming fiscal year (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016); the contract will be for one year with the option to extend additional years.

Proposal guidelines

Consultants are expected to prepare beyond the one year mark (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016) to implement certain projects; however projects beyond June 30, 2016 are dependent on the annual approved budget. The total budget for scope of services should not exceed \$95,000.

The successful agency or firms will coordinate all services under the Agreement with the City of Arroyo Grande or their designee(s). Firms may provide additional creative/innovative suggestions for deliverables identified in the proposal as “optional deliverables”.

Agencies may submit proposals for one, or both components of this Scope of Work.

Marketing and Communications:

Develop and implement a variety of promotional, publicity and advertising programs, and informational materials consistent with specifications provided.

Develop a comprehensive strategic marketing and advertising plan that addresses the following:

- Propose new, or expand current marketing programs to promote Arroyo Grande and submit time lines for development/implementation. Campaign may include but not be limited to, digital, print, video, radio, outdoor, online media, and direct marketing
- Plans for improving, updating and maintaining online media sites
- Recommendations on strategic marketing materials and publications
- Identify reasons to attract visitors to Arroyo Grande, and define specific visitor profile
- Identify strategies that increase overnight stays, especially during off-peak seasons
- Propose creative tactics such as advertising campaigns and events and packages
- Pinpoint emerging demographic and psychographic markets. Develop specific strategies to reach new markets
- Specific trade shows to attend
- Plan to attract FAM tours resulting in positive stories about Arroyo Grande
- Capitalizing on SEO and SMO, apps, and other new digital media opportunities to increase reach, access and internet visibility
- Updating and responding to internet-based tourism sites
- Collaborating with attractions and special events

Online Strategy

Develop and implement an online marketing strategy focused in conversion through the official Visit Arroyo Grande website. The main objective is to drive qualified visits to the site that will then turn “heads into beds.” The strategy includes management of all online

channels: SEM, Display, Mobile, Direct (database segmentation and email delivery), Meta-search and Affiliate programs.

- Develop and implement online strategy to include awareness metrics: likes, engagements, shares, interactions, as well as traffic to the Visit Arroyo Grande website
- Connect and interact with potential target audience
- Create a Brand experience in all messaging
- Engage audience in the five stages of the buying cycle: Dream, Plan, Buy, Experience, and Share
- Provide for committee management of all online channels
- Create written content, plan and publish content
- Execute content that requires timeliness (such as company breaking news, weather alerts and more), seven days-per-week.
- On-going online media monitoring, analysis, and reporting
- Complete reports to coincide with meetings of the committee - show metrics and report implications and suggested adjustments
- Report and recommend changes when there are updates/changes to platforms
- Plan for flagging both reactive and proactive opportunities for engagement in response to activity within online channels. Agency to specify hours when monitoring and engaging will take place.
- Explain what tools your agency has available for online media monitoring, reporting and analysis, and Brand/reputation monitoring
- Generate all images/creative assets to be paired with posts. Photographs and branding guidelines will be provided by Visit Arroyo Grande from internal marketing database, as well as iStockphoto. Agency will be responsible for resizing etc.
- Recommend best practices such as frequency of posts for online channels and other tactical recommendations

Agency should also provide the following information:

- Agency approach to online content
- Community management capabilities to ensure effective online media placement
- Overview of responsible team members including structure of crisis management team
- Examples of copy created for online platforms
- Examples of graphic content to be paired with editorial copy
- Sample of monitoring report format
- Best practices report, example of online data analysis and action items
- A description of how agency stays at the forefront of technology and emerging media

Website:

The agency will take responsibility for all aspects of the Visit Arroyo Grande website, content management system (CMS) and related hosting. The scope of services should include, but are not limited to, all software, hardware, administrator and end user training, hosting, SEO programming and other services required to implement and support the website and should;

- Promote community events
- Communicate news and information efficiently and effectively
- Utilize responsive, secure and reliable on-line services that are accessible from any operating platform (i.e. Windows, iOS, Android, etc.)
- Offer a robust CMS that allows administrator staff to easily update some portions of the website content
- Include Google and other analytics features accessible by Visit Arroyo Grande
- Allow for the addition of landing pages and/or future sub-sites
- Enhance the user experience when interacting with the website
- Enhance the website's information architecture to provide easy and intuitive navigation and search capabilities
- Enhance and expand on-line services
- Ensure a consistent look and feel across all pages
- Implement quick links feature
- Be consistent with current and future Americans with Disabilities Act accessibility guidelines and any other applicable state and federal accessibility requirements
- Include a privacy policy
- Be capable of capturing email addresses
- Include a blog if implemented

City/Chamber Involvement

The City and AGGB Chamber of Commerce will make every effort to provide demographics information, photos, existing information on economic development tools, pamphlets, resident guides, reports, etc. Consultant should strive to be self-sufficient to the extent possible.

CONSIDERATION/MEETING REQUIREMENTS

The qualified consultant should be prepared to meet directly or confer over the phone as needed. The consultant will be required to attend committee and Board meetings, and make presentations.

CONTRACT

The project contract will be based on the final scope of work that is mutually agreed upon between the City and firm(s). The contract will be negotiated for the project for the extent of services to be rendered and for the method of compensation. Consultants are requested to submit a line-item cost estimate that is realistic for the proposed approach. The budget should cover all costs including consultant fees, mileage and production costs. Firm(s) shall not perform any work on the project prior to execution of a written contract by both the City and the Firm(s), and furnishing of all required insurance certificates and business license by the Firm(s). The City requires a minimum insurance limit of \$1,000,000 each for general liability, automobile and errors and omissions. The draft Professional Services Agreement is attached and should be reviewed prior to the RFP submittal.

KEY DATES

- Release of RFP J
- Submittal of questions
- Response to questions
- Deadline for submittal
- Interview for finalists (if needed)
- Award of contract
- Targeted contract commencement

QUESTIONS

All questions regarding this RFP shall be submitted in writing to Judith Bean, AGGB Chamber of Commerce, 800A W. Branch St., Arroyo Grande, CA 93420, or via email: judith@aggbchamber.com. The date and time when questions must be submitted by are shown in "Section VII. Key Dates" of this RFP. Questions with their answers will be posted on the City's Website by the date and time set forth in this RFP.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Format – The proposal should include a table of contents and numbered pages. The document should be standard (8½" x 11") letter-sized paper. Please include only requested materials.

The proposal should include the following information:

The name and resume of the responsible person who would be in charge of the project, information on team members by role, an estimate of the time required to complete the project; disclosure of billable rate for each task.

An executive summary of the proposal being submitted.

The proposed fees. The fees are to be broken down by task demonstrating how the fee was calculated. Cost proposal shall provide a specific fixed cost estimate and a “not to exceed” cost ceiling. The proposal shall address all hourly wage rates, including all reimbursable expenses and overhead.

Describe the Consultant’s experience, especially as related to completing similar projects as being discussed in this RFP.

Identify and provide resumes of any sub-consultants who will be utilized on this project.

Explain in detail how your firm will accomplish the items specified in the Scope of Work.

Provide information on past or present projects concerning budgeted costs versus actual costs, scheduled completion dates versus actual completion dates, and other relevant information concerning your firm’s ability to deliver the project. Include references

A proposed project schedule for the fiscal year shall be included in the proposal with verifiable references.

SELECTION PROCESS

The AGGB Chamber Marketing Committee will review responses to the Request for Proposal based on the evaluation criteria below, and make a recommendation to the TBID Board of Directors which will then forward their recommendation to the City Council for final contract approval.

Qualified firms will be invited to make an oral presentation on their proposal, at the discretion of the Marketing Committee and/or TBID Board of Directors.

The City reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and to award contract(s) for any or all aspects of the Scope of Work.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

A. Suitability of the Proposal – the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria presented in the RFP.

B. Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as demonstrated by the proposal and references.

C. Aesthetic Capabilities – Prior work reflects artistic and innovative, user friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.

D. Proposal Presentation – The information is communicated in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. The City reserves the right to request additional information from any or all of the respondents.

B. The City reserves the right to reject any or all of the proposals. Late or incomplete proposals may not be considered. The City shall have sole discretion in determining the completeness of each proposal.

C The City shall reserve the right to contact past clients for references.

D. The terms and scope of the contract will be determined on the basis of professional negotiations between the City and the prospective Consultant. If the City and the prospective Consultant fail to reach a contractual agreement, the City may negotiate with any other highly ranked consultant.

F. The City reserves the right to waive minor discrepancies and to reject any and all proposals for any reason.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS

Quantity - Four (4) copies (three bound and one unbound), plus one electronic copy in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format.

Deadline for Submittal - The filing deadline for submittal of the above proposal is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 15, 2015. The City reserves the right to extend the deadline date. All documents should be sent in a sealed package, clearly marked "RFP AGTBID" to Judith Bean, AGGB Chamber of Commerce, 800A W. Branch St., Arroyo Grande, CA 93420

Specific Deliverables

The consultant shall develop a comprehensive portfolio that addresses, at a minimum, the following:

1. Develop strategy to quantify success on marketing campaign through initiatives that measure return on investment.
2. Next phase brand identity that includes but is not limited to advertising campaigns.
3. Develop tourism incentives that include package deals for hotels.
4. Enhance social media presence in Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Youtube and other social media outlets as they arise. Integrate social media with visitarroyogrande.org and create other strategies to boost internet traffic visibility.
6. Build a feeder market strategy to increase traffic from cities LA and SF.
7. Respond to TripAdvisor, Travelzoo, and other internet-based tourism sites.
8. Collaborate with major attractions and special events.

Firms may provide additional creative/innovative suggestions for deliverables identified in the proposal as “optional deliverables”.

Meetings

The consultant shall meet with the members of Visit Arroyo Grande as needed.