



USA

VisitTheUSA.com

Brand USA

Brand USA

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Global Media Planning & Buying



## INTRODUCTION

As the destination marketing organization for the United States, Brand USA's mission is to increase incremental international visitation, spend, and market share to fuel the nation's economy and enhance the image of the USA worldwide.

Established by the Travel Promotion Act of 2009 as the nation's first public-private partnership to spearhead a globally coordinated marketing effort to promote the United States as a premier travel destination and communicate U.S. visa and entry policies, Brand USA began operations in May 2011.

As one of the best levers for driving economic growth, international travel to the United States currently supports 1.2 million American jobs\* and benefits virtually every sector of the U.S. economy. Since its founding, Brand USA has worked with more than 900 contributing organizations to invite the world to explore the exceptional, diverse, and virtually limitless travel experiences and destinations available in the United States of America.

According to studies by Oxford Economics, over the past seven years Brand USA's marketing initiatives have helped welcome 7.5 million incremental visitors to the USA, benefiting the U.S. economy with nearly \$55 billion in total economic impact, and supporting more than 50,000 incremental jobs each year.

Brand USA's operations are supported by a combination of nonfederal contributions from destinations, travel brands, and private-sector organizations plus matching funds collected by the U.S. government from international visitors who visit the United States under the Visa Waiver Program.

For industry and partner information about Brand USA, please visit [TheBrandUSA.com](http://TheBrandUSA.com).

For information about exceptional and unexpected travel experiences in the United States, please visit Brand USA's consumer website at [VisitTheUSA.com](http://VisitTheUSA.com).



## PURPOSE

The purpose of this RFP is to identify the appropriate global media agency to provide planning and buying services in our target markets for integrated marketing and advertising communications.

## BACKGROUND

With the reopening of U.S. borders to international travelers in November 2021 and the subsequent removal of the pre-departure COVID testing requirement in June 2022, the U.S. travel and tourism industry is poised for a robust recovery.

Brand USA is delivering on a dynamic marketing strategy that includes, but is not limited to, a global advertising campaign, earned media and public relations strategies, a robust social media outreach plan, promotional and incentive campaigns, trade shows and sales missions, and educational campaigns about U.S. entry policies. Brand USA carefully selects its marketing tools and target markets and travelers after vigorous analysis of existing and original market research.

Over the coming three years, Brand USA will regain sustainable financial footing, drive economic vitality in communities around the country, and facilitate the industry's long-term (re)entry into established and emerging international markets. These overarching objectives will better position the United States in the fierce global competition for travelers and will allow Brand USA to continue to add value for industry stakeholders of all levels of budget and sophistication.

Brand USA will continue to deploy market-driven strategies to increase inbound visitor travel to the United States and drive tourism dollars to communities in all 50 states, the five territories, and the District of Columbia. These will include a wide series of approaches to engage travelers as well as those that target the channels through which consumers access travel information and make their bookings. Some of these approaches are time tested and build on the success Brand USA has found over more than a decade while others are new innovations with the potential to take the travel promotion space to new heights.



**FY23 Market Selection**

The following markets have been selected using Brand USA’s market selection model. These serve as the base for market prioritization for our paid media efforts. Objectives by market and additional factors are considered to determine campaign target markets, the channels and the type of marketing campaigns that would be deployed in each market.

- Canada
- Mexico
- UK
- Germany
- China
- Japan
- South Korea
- India
- Australia
- France
- Brazil
- Italy
- Spain
- The Nordics  
(Norway,  
Denmark,
- Finland, Sweden
- Netherlands
- Switzerland
- Ireland
- Chile
- Colombia

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Brand USA seeks to maximize the efficiency, effectiveness, cohesiveness and innovation of its marketing efforts through the selection of a global media agency. Our campaigns will include both Brand USA stand-alone and cooperative (multi- brand) messaging. Some campaigns will have global reach, others will be market specific. As such, it will be expected that the selected agency will work both with our in-market representatives and our Brand USA partners to develop integrated campaigns that will achieve the greatest reach. In addition, we also work directly with our partners through multi-channel programs; these programs may need management from a planning, buying and reporting perspective.

**FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Brand USA is seeking an agency with rich experience creating a full funnel media strategy, planning, buying, and executing for market-specific and/or global marketing campaigns. The agency must be able to demonstrate a firm understanding of best practices for placing and running media in optimal channels in our designated markets listed above. The agency must also be able to execute media across multiple markets, work collaboratively with various creative agencies, and manage ad ops seamlessly.

The agency must demonstrate experience with incorporating strategic research, market insights, and innovation (e.g., marketplace and landscape insights, budget allocation, market prioritization, and channel mix recommendations) into media plans. Agency must have proven measurement strategies and cost-effective tactics.

The agency must be an established leader with expertise and capabilities in:



## Media Planning and Buying

### Required:

- Social – defined as media/advertising, both paid and organic, across any interactive social channel. Must have a deep understanding of global platforms and innovative methods to communicate directly with consumers
- OLV – defined as an engaging online video ad format
- Traditional offline – defined as broadcast TV, broadcast radio, print, and Out-Of-Home media (both static and digital)
- Digital – Defined as display/banner advertising, both static and animated
- SEM – defined as global search engine media planning and buying
- SEO – defined as search optimization for our VisitTheUSA and GoUSA websites
  - Must have multi-language experience and capabilities
- Preferred:
  - CTV + OTT – defined as advertising on internet-connected TVs (CTV) and advertising on video content streaming platforms (OTT)

## Reporting, Measurement, and Optimization

- KPI Development – KPI development and measurement framework. Identify primary and secondary KPIs based on channel and/or optimization tactics. Determine appropriate metrics based on our business goals and channel strategy.
- Help create and build metrics dashboard that houses all present and historical data that can be accessed internally, independently of media vendors. Dashboard should be updated on a frequent basis and used as a tool to provide campaign readouts and optimization/strategy discussions.
- Regular reporting on media performance against established campaign KPIs in each market
- Monthly digital optimization recommendations and reporting across all media and channels
- Post-campaign analysis that includes performance metrics + insights in collaboration with creative agency
- A comprehensive competitive analysis will be required. Traditionally, this analysis has included the performance of the top global spenders in the tourism industry (where, when and how much they spend) as well as our direct competitors in our current markets.
- Reporting on market-specific insights regarding demographics, psychographics and media usage.



## Ad Ops and Ad-Server Management

Brand USA uses Doubleclick Campaign Manager (DCM) for ad-serving. Agency must have proven experience and capabilities in DCM execution and management including, but not limited to:

- Digital campaigns across multiple channels (display, native, paid search, online video, etc.)
- Ad/creative tagging and pixeling
- Generate site tags
- Creative, tag, and site tag QA
- Troubleshooting

In addition to proven experience in DCM, the agency should be able to execute paid search campaigns within Google Adwords and Sprinklr as well as social campaigns using Facebook's ad manager.

## Logistics & Coordination

- Cross agency work – collaboration with creative, social, content, and web agencies to build fully integrated, cross-channel campaigns
- Weekly status calls with agencies and Brand USA
- Monthly budgeting and billing
- Provide post-buy auditing and monthly reconciliation of media

## Competitive Analysis & Market Insights

As part of the planning process, a comprehensive competitive analysis will be required. Traditionally, this analysis has included the performance of the top global spenders in the tourism industry (where, when and how much they spend) as well as our direct competitors in our current markets. The agency will also be responsible for regular reports on market-specific insights regarding media usage. The expectation is that our media agency would work directly with our creative agency to provide an integrated analysis of media spend and messaging.

## QUALIFICATIONS

- Global network to execute fully integrated campaigns in most, if not all, of our markets
- Strong negotiation capabilities and buying power
- Co-op marketing experience
- Knowledge of in-kind and value-added funding preferred
- Strong recommendations from international consumer brands, preferably tourism and/or experiential
- Local perspective in our core markets, to include messaging restrictions and potential clearance issues
- Targeting expertise per market based on established consumer segmentation and media consumption habits



## BUDGET

Based on the RFP requirements, the proposer must submit a detailed, realistic budget with an estimated execution timeline. The budget should include a detailed rate schedule for the proposed team, an estimate of the level of effort to plan, buy, track, and report on the Q1 media plan.

## MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

Proposals may be rejected if they do not include all deliverables. Proposers wishing clarification of this RFP must submit questions in writing to Brand USA, no later than **September 20, 2022**, and sent by e-mail to [RFPAdmin@TheBrandUSA.com](mailto:RFPAdmin@TheBrandUSA.com). Questions will not be answered on calls, with the exception of meetings with scheduled finalists during, or after the meeting. Company names will be removed from the published question/answer document. Duplicative questions, irrelevant questions and questions already addressed in this RFP may not be published. Pitches will not be accepted outside the RFP process.

Costs for developing proposals are entirely the responsibility of the proposer and shall not be reimbursed by Brand USA.

1. **Notice of Intent to Bid** must be received by **September 30, 2022** (due by 5:00 PM EDT).

The notice shall be sent by e-mail to [RFPAdmin@TheBrandUSA.com](mailto:RFPAdmin@TheBrandUSA.com). The NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID, is nonbinding; however, it ensures the receipt of all addenda related to this RFP. Proposals will be accepted only from applicants who submitted a timely NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID.

2. **RFP Responses**

Proposal format is open to presentation style. Proposals must be delivered electronically and it must include the following information:

- Company history and background in global media planning and buying
- **Media Plan for FY23 Q2 based on the brief that will be shared with interested parties (please email [RFPAdmin@thebrandusa.com](mailto:RFPAdmin@thebrandusa.com) if interested)**. Please include methodology, strategic rationale and assumptions.
- Case studies (minimum of three) with demonstrated results relevant to Brand USA (industry, geographic or scale similarity)
- Overview of technology and methodology used for media planning and buying
- Illustration of how the agency team and Brand USA interacts as a part of the continuous planning, buying, and improvement process
  - o Include details on development, execution, optimization of plans with cross agency collaboration
- Reporting process proposed with example
- Overview of staffing plan that would work with Brand USA
- Rate schedule for proposed staff and other staff or fees that may be relevant to the account

3. **Certification Form**: Must be signed and accompany all RFP Response submissions.



## TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This tentative schedule may be altered at any time at the discretion of Brand USA. Brand USA reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or any part thereof; waive an informality in the proposals and accept the proposal that best meets the needs of Brand USA.

A. Proposal Released	September 8, 2022
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	September 20, 2022
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA website	September 24, 2022
D. Notice of Intent to Bid Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	September 30, 2022
E. Proposal Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	October 17, 2022
F. Proposal evaluation by scoring committee	October 24, 2022
G. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	October 26, 2022
H. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	November 7 - 9, 2022
I. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	November 14, 2022

## DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

Proposals should be e-mailed to [RFPadmin@TheBrandUSA.com](mailto:RFPadmin@TheBrandUSA.com). We will acknowledge receipt, so if you do not receive a receipt notification within two business days, please contact us. If the file size of your proposal is too large to email, or send via a FTP service, contact us and we will make arrangements.

## EVALUATION AND CONTRACTING

All proposals satisfying the requirements of this Request for Proposals will be evaluated to establish which of the providers best fulfills the needs of Brand USA and this project. This Request for Proposals in no way commits Brand USA to award a contract, to pay any costs in preparation of a proposal, or to contract for the goods and/or services offered.

Brand USA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, to negotiate with all qualified providers or to cancel this Request for Proposals. After awarding the contract, the schedule will include a period of collaboration between Brand USA and the selected Contractor to better define, elaborate upon, and fix the Contractor's final Scope of Work and general Terms and Conditions.



**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID**

Due: September 30, 2022

SEND TO: [rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com](mailto:rfpadmin@thebrandusa.com)

NAME OF BIDDER / COMPANY:
CONTACT PERSON:
MAILING ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE:
FAX:
E-MAIL ADDRESS:
SIGNED:



**ATTACHMENT 2**  
**CERTIFICATION**

*Please include this statement as part of the Proposal*

**Certification Statement**

By submission of this proposal and authorized signature below, Proposer certifies that the undersigned corporate officer has authority to bind the bidder to the terms of this Proposal and hereby certifies on behalf of the bidder that:

1. He/she has read and understands all commitments and terms of this Proposal.
2. The information contained in this Proposal is accurate.
3. Proposer's quote is valid for at least 120 days from the date of proposal's signature below.
4. Proposer understands that if selected as the successful Proposer, he/she will have ten (10) business days in which to complete contract negotiations, if any, and execute the final contract document. Date of execution can be extended by mutual agreement of contractor / Brand USA.

\_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Typed or Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Title

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**Official Contact**

Brand USA requests that the Proposer designate one person to receive all communications for clarification and verification of information related to this proposal. Please identify this point of contact below:

\_\_\_\_\_

Official Contact Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_

Official Contact Title

\_\_\_\_\_

Facsimile Number

\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address

\_\_\_\_\_

Street, City, State, Zip



**ATTACHMENT 3**  
FOR BRAND USA USE ONLY

Bid/Proposal: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluated By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation committee will judge each written proposal based on the following criteria:

	MAX. POINTS	SCORE
Global media planning and buying capabilities	30	
Reporting and optimization capabilities	30	
Ad ops and ad server management	15	
Logistics and coordination	15	
Cost effectiveness	10	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>100</b>	