

MONTEREY

COUNTY CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

Advertising Services Request for Proposal

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is seeking an Advertising Agency to assist in conducting effective advertising/brand marketing efforts that reinforce Monterey County's standing as one of the country's premier tourism destinations. The agency will work for and with the MCCVB marketing communications team and be selected based on the information that follows. The process for responding to this Request for Proposal (RFP) is detailed within.

I. Monterey County Overview

Monterey County is located 120 miles/192 km south of San Francisco and 345 miles/552 km north of Los Angeles along the classic California corridor. The region boasts 99 miles of prime Pacific Coastline, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, three historic missions, more than 43,000 acres of premium vineyards, 28 golf courses and over 250 lodging properties. Monterey County includes the Monterey Peninsula, Big Sur, North County and the Salinas Valley. Monterey County boasts major tourism attractions and resorts such as the world renowned Monterey Bay Aquarium, Cannery Row and Pebble Beach Resorts, as well as hundreds of other diverse and engaging tourism offerings and events (for a full review of all Monterey County has to offer visit www.SeeMonterey.com).

Target Markets

Most visitors to Monterey County are from San Francisco and California's Central Valley with a smaller percentage coming from Los Angeles and Southern California; 90% of visitors drive to the destination. Monterey County is serviced by the Monterey Peninsula Airport (MRJ) that has non-stop flights from San Diego, Denver, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Additionally, Monterey County has taken steps in international markets including China and Canada.

II. MCCVB Situation

The MCCVB is the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the county of Monterey that includes 10 jurisdictions and an industry that includes hundreds of hotels and resorts, major attractions, and a variety of additional businesses that fuel the tourism economy. Tourism in Monterey County generates \$2 Billion in spending and nearly 23,000 jobs.

In June of 2012, the MCCVB Board of Directors developed and approved a new Strategic Business Plan designed around a new Vision and Mission for Monterey County tourism:

Vision: *Inspire the world to experience our extraordinary destination*
Mission: *Drive business growth through compelling marketing & sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests and members*

A PDF of a MCCVB business overview can be downloaded at: <http://www.seemonterey.com/includes/content/images/media/MCCVB-Business-Brief.pdf>

The Monterey Brand Challenge

Monterey County encompasses a very large and diverse geographical footprint. From the agriculturally rich inland areas of Salinas to the outer edges where land meets sea such as Big Sur to world renowned golf courses and so offers a very wide array of travel experiences. One of the challenges for the destination is to take this vast expanse of experiences and reduce to a compelling, distinct and remarkable brand identity. This will be the principal task of the agency that is awarded this account.

III. Scope of Work

MCCVB has an internal Marketing Communications team with a range of responsibilities including (but not limited to): setting strategy and managing budgets; integrating all aspects of marketing communication including advertising, digital, PR, Branded Content, Social, Group Sales, sponsorships, etc.; liaising with Monterey County tourism membership; managing internal photography and video resources; guiding communication activities designed to showcase Monterey County's wide range of tourism experiences; targeting local, regional, national and industry market segments; and, tracking measurable outcomes from marketing communication activities and providing regular reports to the MCCVB Board of Directors. *MCCVB is seeking an Advertising Agency that will be an integral collaborator in these efforts.*

The initial task will be developing a new brand identity and from that creating a compelling integrated brand communications program. The qualifying agency will delve into recent consumer research to uncover the brand 'truths' that will be the basis for the new brand identity and from that work with the MCCVB team to develop a break out, integrated communications campaign that includes advertising, digital, direct and other disciplines.

The specific Scope of Work includes the following:

1. Work with MCCVB team to develop a comprehensive brand marketing strategic plan that includes: goals specific to the agency's scope; defined target markets, audiences and opportunities; strategies/tactics to achieve success; specific action steps that guide and track workload; and measurable outcomes.
2. Collaborate with MCCVB and its research company on using brand research to develop a comprehensive brand identity for the destination. Develop integrated advertising brand campaigns for both the leisure and group sales markets.
3. Develop and manage overall MCCVB brand image including conceiving and producing creative materials for the organization – this may include some or all of the following: print advertising, broadcast (TV, radio, video) assets, digital banners, signage, collateral, sales materials, etc. Agencies should submit their capabilities to develop a formal Brand Standards & Style guide.
4. Develop annual media plan. The initial annual plan will be reviewed and updated on a quarterly basis. Agency will plan and place traditional and online media placements. Agency will work with MCCVB to develop co-op media/advertising opportunities that members may participate in. SEO/SEM/PPC placements are currently managed separately; however MCCVB will consider proposals that incorporate such planning/placing, dynamic adjustments and reporting.

5. Collaborate with MCCVB on developing promotions and sweepstakes that drive web visits, social media engagement and database growth.
6. Reporting: maintain status report for all activities/production development, monthly budget reports on production and media on media placements, annual summary of all activities.
7. Participate in integrated strategic planning with other agencies supporting MCCVB marketing communication efforts. Such collaborations will be formal with periodic planning 'summits' and informal with day to day communication. Currently, MCCVB maintains agency relationships for Public Relations, Digital/Web Development, China Marketing, Research and Publications.
8. Develop proposals for sponsorship opportunities that extend the Monterey brand and create exposure opportunities for members. Support MCCVB efforts to identify and secure media driven partnership opportunities that leverage MCCVB budget and brand value and deliver ROI measured in terms of additional media value and/or direct dollar contribution to MCCVB brand development efforts.
9. Participate as needed in customer insight, creative testing and segmentation research.

IV. Agency Selection Criteria

Agency selection will be based on the following criteria:

1. Demonstrated track record in building uncommonly successful brands – proven ability to deliver integrated brand communication solutions
2. Ability to deliver exceptional, *break-out*, integrated 'work' (creative, media planning, etc.) while strictly adhering to ROI/KPI metrics; demonstration of *innovative*, proactive thinking and integrated approach (including integration with other marketing disciplines)
3. Ability to develop innovative and incredibly effective marketing promotions, sponsorships and media partnership programs
4. Highly creative and enthusiastic talent/people – in planning, media, creative, all parts of the agency (even accounting)
5. Experience in the travel/tourism/hospitality industry and/or associations and not-for-profit organizations is a plus – experience with both leisure and group sales/meetings advertising also a plus
6. Superior capabilities in goal setting, strategic planning, client/agency communication and measurable outcomes – proven ability to turn research/insights into innovative messaging
7. Demonstration of budget management, experience delivering cost-effective solutions; ability to negotiate favorable media rates
8. Experience with international markets is a plus
9. Ability to drive social media content through public relations efforts
10. Level of experience of agency personnel who will take active, day-to-day responsibility for this account
11. Fee/Cost proposal

V. Measuring Success

The #1 Goal for MCCVB as an organization is: *Increase overnight visits*. The Marketing Communications program is strategically focused on driving unaided brand awareness and intent to visit. In addition, relative to marketing communication efforts, MCCVB measures strategic and tactical success with the following metrics:

1. Web visits – while overall focus is to increase numbers (quantitative), qualitative considerations are also important. Conversion rates in signing up for the Monterey County e-newsletter is one qualitative measure and MCCVB is currently consider additional. The winning Agency will play a role in refining this and other metrics.
2. Database growth
3. Social Media growth and level of engagement
4. Advertising Effectiveness

VI. Budget & Term

The budget for advertising related activities for the 2013-2014 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014) will be between \$1.5MM and \$1.75MM – budget amounts subject to change. The all-inclusive budget includes Agency Fees, media expenditures, production, expenses and any other associated costs. MCCVB will consider proposals that demonstrate the ability to fulfill the requirements of this RFP within this range – agencies should submit specific budget considerations for fee, media, production, expenses, etc.

The term of the agreement with the selected agency will commence on or around July 1, 2013 and extend to June 30, 2014. The term may be extended in one year increments for a total of 2 years (thru June 30, 2016) based on an annual review of accomplishment and subject to approval by MCCVB CEO. Each annual review will allow for consideration of adjustments in agency scope and fees. MCCVB reserves the right to cancel contracted services for any reason with 60 day notice.

VII. Timeline

The following is the approximate timeline and process for agency solicitation, evaluation and selection. MCCVB reserves the right to alter this timeline and will provide participating agencies notification of such adjustments.

- RFP distribution – Wednesday April 17th, 2013
- Agency questions deadline (submitted via email only) – Friday, May 10th
- RFP deadline – Friday, May 17th
- Agency 1st round selection (2-4 agencies) – Friday May 31st
- Agency presentations (at agency expense) – Week of June 17th
- Final Selection – Monday, June 28th
- Contract Development Complete/Agency Start – Week July 8th

VIII. Request for Proposal

MCCVB is seeking proposals crafted by the information contained herein. Agencies are encouraged to review on their own any relevant tourism information through secondary sources to provide additional support for submitted proposals. Agency responses to the RFP can be fashioned however interested agencies chose to respond with the following terms:

- Do not contact any MCCVB Board Member, employee, or members of the evaluation committee. Any contact with these will automatically disqualify the agency. All inquiries should be sent to RFP@SeeMonterey.com
- All ideas and concepts shared with MCCVB in this RFP process are submitted in a non-proprietary manner. Presented ideas and concepts are available to use by MCCVB without any liability and do not constitute a formal agreement nor requirement for compensation. Proposals will not be returned to submitting agencies.
- MCCVB reserves the right to change any part of this RFP, the process and/or altogether cancel at any point and for any reason without any liability to submitting parties.
- Agencies understand that any information provided in a proposal that is found to be untruthful or otherwise a misrepresentation will automatically disqualify the submitting agency. In addition, should untruths or misrepresentation be found with the selected agency after contracting, such would be grounds for immediate termination of the contract without any liability from MCCVB.
- All information (written or spoken) shared by MCCVB is deemed confidential and shall not be shared with outside parties.
- Submitting agencies signify understanding and agreement with these terms by responding to the RFP.

The following are specific areas MCCVB would like to learn about from submitting agencies:

Agency Overview

- Overview of agency history and philosophy
- List primary agency address and any satellite office locations
- List of agency capabilities
- Describe how agency differentiates itself from competitors
- Current client list and outline any long term relationships and why they've been successful
- List any current clients that might pose a conflict to managing MCCVB account
- Describe industry experience; case studies to illustrate your capabilities
- Provide initial ideas that demonstrate how your agency's experience can benefit Monterey County
- Provide overview of how agency measures impact of brand marketing activities
- Please provide written client references with the expectation that MCCVCB will contact – agencies understand that by providing references they are giving MCCVB permission to contact

Agency Team

- Describe team structure and how resources would be allocated – provide overall agency organizational chart
- Provide brief bios for assigned team, describe their relevant experience
- Please list any media, analyst or online influencer relationships you have within target market

VIII. Submissions

All proposals should be submitted in a PDF format via email with a file size not to exceed 5MB.

- **Due Date – Proposals must be received in email to RFP@SeeMonterey.com by 5pm Pacific Time, Friday May 17th 2013.** Any proposals received after will be disqualified and deleted. MCCVB will confirm receipt of emailed proposals, but not take responsibility for any technical issues related to agency submissions through email nor receipt confirmation from MCCVB.

- **Any questions related to the RFP** must also be sent to this address and received no later than 5pm Pacific Time, Friday May 10th, 2013. Questions will be addressed as quickly as possible and in the order received. We *strongly* encourage interested agencies to review SeeMonterey.com and review MCCVB business plan located at <http://www.seemonterey.com/includes/content/images/media/MCCVB-Business-Brief.pdf> before contacting MCCVB with questions. MCCVB will not take responsibility for the completeness or timeliness of answers. Agencies that are selected in the 1st round will have the opportunity for verbal Q&A.
- **Notifications** – MCCVB will contact all submitting agencies via email to notify of any revisions or cancellation relative to the RFP content or process. MCCVB will make best efforts to ensure such emails are received but not take responsibility if for any reason they are not.