



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI) Agency Services

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (MCCVB) is seeking an agency specializing in Content Marketing to support and assist in the development and execution of effective, integrated marketing programs that 1) reinforce Monterey County’s standing as one of the world’s premier tourism destinations; and, 2) grow overnight visitation. The agency will work with the MCCVB marketing communications team in planning and executing content marketing activations in keeping with MCCVB’s strategic business plan.

How this Works

We will identify and select a handful of agencies based on this RFI who we will request a response to a more detailed RFP. At this stage, we are just looking for qualifications and information – we want to get to know your agency. To that end, we are sharing a bit about ourselves in what follows.

Contents

MCCVB: About Us	0
Target Markets + Audience.....	1
Brand Positioning + Personality	1
What Matters Most to Us	1
Not To Be Overlooked.....	2
Budget and term	2
Timeline.....	2
Submission details	3
Additional submission information.....	3

MCCVB: About Us

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. 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).

MCCVB Strategic Plan:

Vision: *Inspire the world to experience our extraordinary destination*

Mission: *Drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to our guests, members and community.*

A PDF of the current MCCVB business plan can be downloaded at: [2016-17 MCCVB Business Plan.pdf](#)

Target Markets + Audience

The MCCVB focuses on three audience groups:

1. Leisure travelers-- 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 Regional Airport (MRY) that has non-stop flights from San Diego, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Los Angeles and San Francisco. Domestic short haul markets include Washington, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada and Oregon. Long-haul markets include Texas, Illinois and New York.
2. Group business: corporate and incentive groups, meeting and conference planners, state and regional associations.
3. International: FIT individual travelers (and travel and tour operators who facilitate such travel) and some Group -- Additionally, Monterey County has made strides in identifying itself as an international destination in markets including China, Mexico and Canada. Looking ahead, international marketing will shift to rely increasingly on regional partnerships with neighboring DMOs and will begin to include UK and Europe as part of long-term strategic growth strategy.

Brand Positioning + Personality

The Monterey County brand is based in the notion of "invigorating the soul". The experience is inspiring and life enriching that our taglines encourage making the most of every moment: "*Grab Life by the Moments*" and for group travel, "*Inspired Moments in Meetings*". The Business Plan referenced above provides some historical perspective on how our brand was developed.

What Matters Most to Us

A snapshot of our agency "must haves":

1. **Thought Partnership**—Creativity is critical, of course, but even bigger is a thought partner who can see the big picture of our vision and marketing strategy and translate that vision into a successful, measurable and tactical execution.
2. **Leveraging Every Media Dollar** —we've segued away from over reliance on paid media budgets, but not the expectation of making every penny count. Experience using Paid to drive Content is

critical. Experience with travel/hospitality industry, group meetings media and national/international media is important.

3. **Organization**—a team who can support and drive our content marketing efforts, i.e. make our lives easier. Part of this is integrating our marketing and PR efforts by taking a holistic approach to owned, earned, social and paid channels. Budget and invoices should be clear-cut and integrate seamlessly with MCCVB finance practices.
4. **Passion & Knowledge** for the travel and hospitality industry and understanding of MCCVB business objectives, goals, strategies and priorities.
5. **Proximity**—agency should be California-based and/or able to attend quarterly onsite meetings in Monterey at agency's expense.

Not To Be Overlooked

- 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)
- Ability to drive social media content through public relations efforts; In-house PR capabilities not required but desirable
- Track record in conducting successful experiential marketing
- Superior capabilities in goal setting, strategic planning, and ability to turn research/insights into innovative messaging
- Demonstration of budget management, experience delivering cost-effective solutions; ability to negotiate favorable media rates
- Turnkey administrative and account support, from strategic level planning to concise day-to-day communication to timely billing that aligns budget plans provided by MCCVB

Budget and term

While our terms are subject to evolve, the MCCVB's budget for content marketing services will be approximately \$1MM+ per year, inclusive of all fees, depending on final Scope of Work. A three-year contract is preferred and annual renewal option is required.

Timeline

- RFI distribution – Wednesday, November 1, 2016
- Agency questions deadline (submitted via email only) – Friday, November 11, 2016
- **RFI Submissions Deadline – Friday, November 18, 2016**
- Agency Selection for proposals, submit RFP – Friday, December 2, 2016
- Agency questions deadline (submitted via email only) – Friday, December 9, 2016
- Agency presentations (at agency expense) – Week of January 9, 2017
- Final Selection – Wednesday, January 25, 2017
- Agency Notified – Thursday, January 26, 2017
- Contract Development Complete – Friday, February 3, 2017
- Agency Start Date – Monday, February 6, 2017

Submission details

All information should be submitted in a PDF format via the [following link](#).

- **Due Date – Complete information intended for RFI consideration must be received by 5pm Pacific Time, Friday November 18, 2016.** Any submissions received after will be disqualified and deleted. MCCVB does not take responsibility for any technical issues related to agency submissions.
- **Any questions related to the RFP** must be sent to RFP@SeeMonterey.com and received no later than 5pm Pacific Time, Friday November 11, 2016. Questions will be addressed as quickly as possible and in the order received. We *strongly* encourage interested agencies to review SeeMonterey.com, MeetInMonterey.com and review the [MCCVB business plan](#) before contacting MCCVB with questions. The 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** – The MCCVB will contact all submitting agencies via email to notify of any revisions or cancellation relative to the RFI content or process. The MCCVB will make best efforts to ensure such emails are received but not take responsibility if for any reason they are not.

Additional submission information

The 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 RFI can be fashioned however interested agencies choose to respond with the following terms:

- Do not contact any MCCVB Board Member, employee, or members of the evaluation taskforce. Any contact with these will automatically disqualify the agency. All inquiries should be sent to RFP@SeeMonterey.com
- Any information, ideas and concepts shared with the MCCVB in this RFI process are submitted in a non-proprietary manner. Presented ideas and concepts are available to use by the MCCVB without any liability and do not constitute a formal agreement nor requirement for compensation. Materials submitted through the RFI progress will not be returned to submitting agencies.
- The MCCVB reserves the right to change any part of this RFI, 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 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 the MCCVB.
- All information (written or spoken) shared by the 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 RFI.