

The logo consists of the letters 'USA' in a white, pixelated font, set against a solid blue square background.

VisitTheUSA.com

Brand USA

Request for Proposal

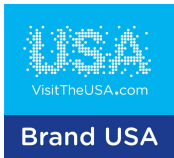


Brand USA

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Content Marketing Software

December 20, 2023



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.

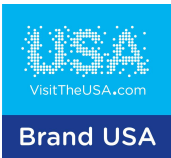
For industry and partner information about Brand USA, please visit TheBrandUSA.com.

For information about exceptional and unexpected travel experiences in the United States, please visit Brand USA's consumer website at VisitTheUSA.com.



PURPOSE

Brand USA seeks a central social content marketing platform to organize, edit, publish, execute community management, and track performance analytics from all posts including photos, videos, articles, infographics, and advertising creative. This software as a service (SaaS) product will be utilized by Brand USA and our global agencies.



BACKGROUND

WHY DOES A COUNTRY AS POPULAR AS THE USA NEED A MARKETING PROGRAM?

Although the United States remains one of the world's most popular travel destinations, during the first decade of this century, while the global travel market was booming, the USA's share of international travelers declined 37 percent—from 17.2 percent in 2000 to 12.4 percent in 2010. The resulting impact on the U.S. economy was an annual loss of 467,000 jobs and \$606 billion in lost revenue. In addition to being seen as unwelcoming (resulting from increased security measures that came following 9/11) and too familiar, the United States was also one of the world's only industrialized nations without a national tourism board to attract international travelers to its shores in order to fuel the nation's economy by inspiring the world to visit the U.S.A.—to see it again, or for the first time.

With the strength of a national marketing effort from Brand USA now in place, the United States is working to regain its share of the global travel market. By welcoming more international visitors to the USA, Brand USA is supporting U.S. economic growth, helping to spur job creation, and creating a more positive impression of the United States around the world.

WHY IS INTERNATIONAL VISITATION SO IMPORTANT TO THE NATION'S ECONOMY?

International visitation helps local communities.

On average, overseas visitors spend nearly \$4,500 per trip and generate tax revenue in communities across America without burdening local services, such as public schools and fire departments. When international travelers spend this kind of money in our communities, it lessens the tax burden on U.S. citizens.

International visitation supports American jobs and economic growth.

When international visitors come to the U.S.A., the money they spend directly supports more than 1 million American jobs and adds \$181 billion to the U.S. economy. (Source: US Travel Association and NTTO 2013 Data).

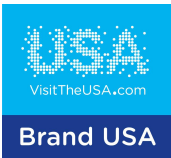
International visitation enhances the image of the United States worldwide.

Surveys show that international visitors to the United States are 74 percent more likely to have a favorable view of America and 61 percent more likely to support U.S. policies.



Who Pays for It?

International visitors and private contributions fund the work of Brand USA—with half of Brand USA's budget generated by contributions from the private sector and matching funds provided by a \$10 fee paid by travelers from markets that are not required to have a visa to enter the United States. These markets are designated as visa-waiver countries. As a result, U.S. taxpayers contribute \$0 toward Brand USA's marketing efforts.



BRAND USA IS BUILDING ON SUCCESS

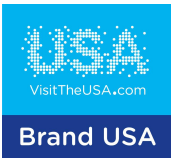
Brand USA is delivering on a dynamic marketing strategy that includes, but is not limited to, a global advertising campaign, earned media and public relations strategies, a robust social media outreach plan, promotional and incentive campaigns, trade shows and sales missions, and educational campaigns 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.

In 2013, we were fully deployed (consumer, co-op, and trade marketing) in eight markets (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Mexico, Japan, South Korea, and the United Kingdom)—and delivered a 47:1 return on marketing investment, 1.1 million incremental visitors, \$3.4 billion in direct travel spending, and \$7.4 billion total spending—which supported 53,000 new jobs. In 2014, Brand USA expanded the consumer campaign to China and Taiwan, and in 2015 will be fully deployed in 14 international markets (Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, France, Germany, India, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom). Every 1 percent increase in travel from these markets fuels the nation’s economy by generating 500,000 additional visitors and \$1 billion in international visitor spending a year.

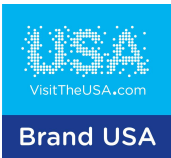
SCOPE OF WORK AND FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

The selected vendor's product will:

- Interface with META, TikTok, X/Twitter, Threads, Pinterest, Snapchat, WeChat, Sina Weibo, Douyin, Red (Xiaohongshu), YouTube and our Drupal 9 websites.
 - Noting that TikTok's API is limited at the moment, but at a minimum we should be able to connect it to the tool for analytics/performance tracking.
- Function in English, Spanish, German, French, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and Chinese.
- Allow for a content approval process at various stages prior to publication and for custom approval paths for each page with tier approvals and custom user groups?
- Clearly map workflow.
- Schedule postings in advance of time and visibility to an editorial calendar that can be filtered by account, campaign, channel, and status.
- Optimize publishing times for best engagement by market and platform.
- Ability to tag content with as many custom fields as needed around specific topics, easily allowing us to tag each individual post with all key information needed to make reporting more seamless. For example, we should be able to tag content as global, hyperlocal, rural/city/gateway, or choose location tags that include city and state in a dropdown menu, etc.
- Index our content and then search the web and social to source relevant user-generated pieces.
- Contain an editing tool geared toward specific channel push.
- Have the ability to easily edit images including sizing and caption layering in our languages.
- Have a robust cross-channel, collaborative editorial and campaign calendar that allows for different market permissions/layers with custom access configuration. For example, in-market teams should only have access to their specific page, whereas the global team should manage all pages both across publishing and community management.
- Have user level permissions, with a minimum of 45 user seats.



- Generate performance analytics reports. At minimum, reporting capabilities need to include:
 - Metrics based on account (keyword), channel name, quantity of posts by dates, reach, shares, clicks, comments, and views.
 - Ability to set up dashboards with the key information we track month-to-month.
 - Customizable data widgets.
 - Template dashboards and widgets for quick data pulls.
 - Clear data sources.
 - Asset library views to allow searching for posts based on destination or keywords.
 - Track all incoming and outgoing comments and DMs, and automatically track sentiment across posts.
- Provide a community management governance system that allows us to pull comments, DMs and mentions from all platforms including META, Instagram, TikTok, X/Twitter, Threads, Pinterest, Snapchat, WeChat, Sina Weibo, Douyin, Red (Xiaohongshu), and YouTube. Features need to allow for easy outgoing responses, and track replies to comments.
- User-friendly UX.
- Be available for use via a mobile app for iOS and Android.
- Provide emergency technical support.
- 24/7 for issues and be easily accessible to answer product questions during normal business hours.
- Integrate an API with our MediaValet digital asset management (DAM). Have the capability to easily pull assets from our DAM to build posts and also be able to save social assets to the DAM directly from the platform created posts.
- Have enterprise level security protection and permissions structure.



CORE OBJECTIVE

To efficiently manage Brand USA's social media content marketing across channels.

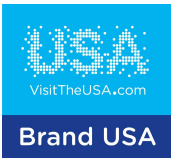
OUR QUESTIONS (Direct answers are required):

- Does your product utilize artificial intelligence? If not, how does A.I. fit into your future development?
- Does your product allow for the creation of content approvals dashboard as well as community management dashboards to manage inbound comments and direct messages?
- Do you provide a link in bio store and a link shortener?
- Does your product allow Instagram reel and story publishing? Can your product generate a quiz, or contest?
- It is possible to delete posts and if so, from which platforms?
- Are we able to monitor our brand and others across our international markets with social listening? If so, on which platforms?
- Do you offer UGC content curation? Including rights request and tracking.
- Which social media advertising platforms interface with your product?
- Does your product integrate with Google Analytics?
- Is uploading content in bulk – for example, through a spreadsheet, possible?
- Does your tool permit us to see which author performed a content edit on a post and who replied to community comments or direct messages?
- Does your product allow us to break out reporting between organic, boosted, and paid performance?



YOUR QUESTIONS

Questions you have concerning this RFP must be submitted to rftadmin@thebrandusa.com by the date listed in the schedule. Answers to questions will be published on <http://www.thebrandusa.com>. Company names will be removed. We do not accept questions via phone calls and do not conduct interviews or have conversations prior to selecting finalists.



QUALIFICATIONS

- A minimum of three years providing content marketing software as a service.
- A minimum of three years working in a multi-language/international environment.
- Demonstrated experience working with major brands that require an enterprise level tool.
- Significant project management experience.
- Superior references from large consumer brands currently utilizing your services.
- Excellent training and support system with fast response times.

FORMAT AND SPECS

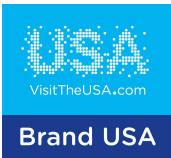
Proposal format is open to presentation style and delivery of the proposing team, but it must include the following information:

- Provide background information on your company, including a list of current clients.
- Demonstration of an ability to meet the qualifications and specific answers to the questions presented.
- State unique selling proposition over competitors.
- Show case studies (minimum of three) with demonstrated results relevant to Brand USA (scale, industry, and/or similarity).
- Illustrate how we will interact for execution and optimization.
- Describe your experience working in a multi-agency, fast-paced and integrated marketing environment.
- Note employee retention rate.
- Provide three client references.
- Proposal shall not exceed 35 pages.



BUDGET

Based on the RFP requirements, the proposer must submit a detailed, realistic budget with an estimated execution timeline.



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 **January 8, 2024**, and sent by e-mail to 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.

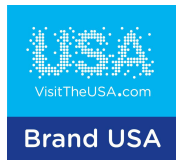
1. **Notice of Intent to Bid** must be received by **January 11, 2024** (due by 5:00 PM EDT).

The notice shall be sent by email to 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** must contain the following information:

- a. Executive Summary.
- b. No Conflict of Interest: Client relationships that could potentially be considered a conflict of interest must be listed.
- c. Contract Manager/Team: Identify one individual on the proposer's account team who will manage the account. Include resumes, or descriptions of anyone to be involved with providing this software as a service (SaaS).
- d. Case Studies.
- e. Direct answers from the "Our Questions" section. Include the question and your answer. Do not assume we will locate answers to these questions spread throughout your proposal. Failure to provide direct answers may negatively impact your submission.
- f. Specific Monthly/Annual Budget.

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



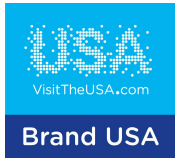
TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

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	December 20, 2023
B. Written Questions (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	January 8, 2024
C. Written Questions Answered and posted to Brand USA website.	January 10, 2024
D. Notice of Intent to Bid Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	January 11, 2024
E. Proposal Due (due by 5:00 PM EDT)	January 24, 2024
F. Proposal Evaluation by Scoring Committee	February 16, 2024
G. Notification and Scheduling of Finalist Interviews	February 17, 2024
H. Finalist Presentation/Interviews	February 22 & 23, 2024
I. Notice of Intent to Award Contract and Public Posting	February 25, 2024

DELIVERY OF PROPOSAL

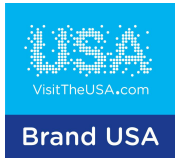
Proposals should be e-mailed to RFPadmin@TheBrandUSA.com. We will acknowledge receipt, so if you do not receive a receipt notification within two business days, please contact us. If the file size of your proposal is too large to email, or send via an FTP service, contact us and we will make arrangements.



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.



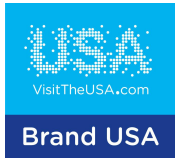
ATTACHMENT 1

NOTICE OF INTENT TO BID

Due: January 11, 2024 5pm

SEND TO: rfdadmin@thebrandusa.com

NAME OF BIDDER / COMPANY:
CONTACT PERSON:
MAILING ADDRESS:
TELEPHONE:
COMPANY WEBSITE:
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

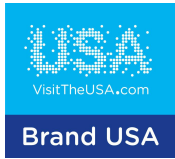
Phone Number

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
Ability to manage and publish to Brand USA's desired social and digital platforms	25	
Ability to scale across many users and markets	25	
Intuitive user experience	25	
Ease of configuration	10	
Customer support and training	10	
Cost Effectiveness	5	
TOTAL POINTS	100	



ORAL INTERVIEW/DEMONSTRATION CRITERIA	MAX. POINTS	SCORE
Provider demonstrations will be judged on the same criteria - prorated – as listed in Attachment 3 “Proposal Evaluation Criteria”.	50	
TOTAL POINTS	50	