The following are answers to questions Brand USA has received to the RFP for USA Discovery Program.

Thanks to everyone who submitted questions regarding Brand USA's RFP for USA Discovery Program. Since many of the questions posed were similar, we have condensed and edited queries. Company names have been removed. If the answer to the question is already in the RFP, or if we were unable to understand a question, we did not provide an answer.

Q: On the spectrum of rebuild (same functionality, new platform), vs. rethink (new platform, new experience), where do you see this engagement?

A: As a completely new experience. If you already have an Ed Tech website that can be modified to meet our needs, we are also open to this approach.

Q: May we have access to the existing portal to ensure we understand the scope, and review?

A: Yes, send an email requesting access to: SShepard@TheBrandUSA.com, and copy Dhickson@TheBrandUSA.com.

Q: Where you state 'Minimum Requirements', are these ALL listed on the document? For example, is the 'Knowledge Forum' a minimum requirement? Can you clarify?

A: Prior to contract, the selected candidate will conduct discovery sessions to ascertain a final list of requirements. For the purposes of your proposal, address the stated requirements.   The bi-annual report contains user usage data. Those points list the "knowledge forum," and "communication data" and other items – all data points.

Q: Will any of our staff need to travel to the USA for meetings? If so, how often?

A: For the purposes of this RFP, assume not. We will discuss this possibility during contract negotiations.
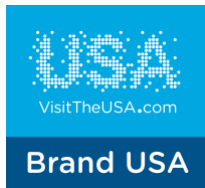
Q: In evaluating the tenders, can you indicate which are the most important matrix items (e.g. CRM, price, etc.)?

A: The scoring matrix was inadvertently removed from the posted RFP. It has now been added to the new version. View it towards the end of the document.

Q: Is Brand USA looking to be GDPR compliant?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you clarify the 'translations connector' product. Is this a particular product, or are you looking for the tender company to provide this?

A: The translations connector is provided by our translations company. It's currently configured for Drupal, but may be leveraged for other languages.

Q: Can you please elaborate on the need for an advertising video? Are you looking for professional video production, one in each language? If so, how many languages and how long should the videos be?

A: We are looking for a high-quality video that showcases how to use the USA Discovery Program in an effective, straightforward way. It is intended for the end user, the travel agents. The video should be in the 8 mentioned languages.

Q: One part of the RFP states 20 page limit while the last page states 30 pages. Could you kindly remove the page limit restriction?

A: We apologize for the error. It has been corrected to 30 pages.

Q: The current USA Discovery Program consists of 70 +/- chapters/learning modules with the first 16 being Brand USA, and the remainder being partner modules. For the first 16 chapters, when was the last time the content was updated?

A: The first 16 chapters need to be updated and refreshed.

Q: And are you looking to re-work much of that content, chapter structure, etc. for a full refresh and upgrade?

A: Recently added partner modules do not need refreshing, but the Brand USA content needs a refresh and upgrade.

Q: For the partner microlearning's which are currently translated, are those units needing to be re-written and re-translated, or just ported over to the new platform?

A: They will require transition to the new platform.
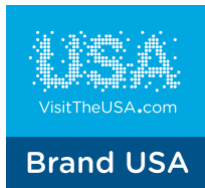
Q: When adding new modules for destinations and tourism partners, will the provider be contracting and working the build/content directly with the partner or through Brand USA?

A: The provider will work via Brand USA, or via its marketing agency and the partner.

Q: Are there currently any post-grad sales enablement resources available for advisors to facilitate selling to their clients?

A: This is an education center strictly for those credentialed in the travel industry. Brand USA facilitates new users of the platform.

Q: As Brand USA sunsets the existing platform and stands up the next iteration, has there been any thought as to where in the past you draw the line to grandfather versus recertify existing advisors? Or will previous graduates keep their status and move forward as they were?

A: We have been responsibly purging Inactive users on a regular basis. We Intend for the current users to maintain their status and move forward on the new platform.

Q: The RFP mentions both translated content as well as a connection to your translation provider. Please clarify if translation will be handled by Brand USA language lab partner, or in-market teams, or whether the new platform provider will handle translations moving forward?

A: Translations are provided by Brand USA's translation company.

Q: Is the 350 pages of existing content referred to in the RFP the total of the current training content, or is it in addition to the training content?

A: It is an estimate of the current training content.

Q: The RFP refers to a 'community' aspect or element in some of the individual markets. Is this a simple message board functionality? Is it successful enough to scope for the new platform?

A: Simple message board functionality is enough, but we will consider any new ideas or updates on how to create a community aspect between travel agents on the platform.

Q: Has there historically been a rewards or loyalty component to the Discovery program?

A: No, but we would consider this possibility.
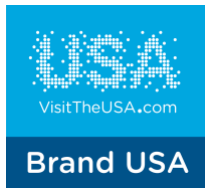
Q: What about the past program makes you feel you would need 45-80 hrs of monthly support? Can you clarify the type of support this has entailed or might in the future?

A: Support ranges in its definition and includes hours in creating new badges, updating content, and managing communications as well as addressing bugs within the system, and providing user support (such as password resets).

Q: Will there be a dedicated Product Owner from your team with the authority to make decisions about what to build and priorities?

A: Yes.

Q: What types of existing content would need to be migrated (text and images, rich media, interactive charts, forms, calculators)?

A: Mainly text, images, and videos (YouTube embeds).

Q: What are the user management needs of the new program? Would this require user authentication or single sign-on capabilities?
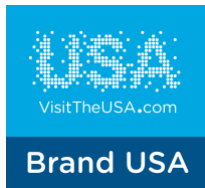
A: User authentication.

Q: Are you open to a combination of off-the-shelf and custom tools to create the new solution?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have preferred tooling around technology, for example Microsoft, AWS, etc.?

A: Our sites are primarily hosted with Acquia. We are open to hearing your perspective on other hosting environments.

Q: Once the contract is awarded, what is the timeline expectation for starting and launching the new program?

A: We would work with you to inform this decision after you conduct discovery with us.

Q: Will the content framework (ie. focus areas for each state or destination) be provided or will the supplier need to work with individual tourism boards across the country to identify the content?

A: This will be provided.

Q: How are travel agents introduced to this program?

A: Brand USA's global trade development team and in-market representation agencies work with the global travel trade community to promote and incentivize enrollment and participation. Promotion and marketing of the platform is not included in this RFP.

Q: Drupal development capabilities mentioned - is this the preferred platform, or would a review/audit of the platform against the criteria be required?

A: Drupal is preferred, but you may make a case for others.

Q: Is there an initial understanding of the quantity of pages that will need to be rewritten out of the 350, or is this part of the discovery phase.

A: For the purposes of this RFP, assume 50.