



**Request for Proposal
Website Design and Development Services for www.sandiego.org**

Issued By:
San Diego Tourism Authority (SDTA)
750 B Street, Suite 1500
San Diego, CA 92101

Key Dates (*may be subject to change)

| | |
|--|-----------------------|
| RFP Released | July 28, 2023 |
| Questions/queries due to SDTA in writing | August 17, 2023 |
| Bidders Conference Invitations | September 2023 |
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| Bidders Conference (virtual) | September 28, 2023 |
| Proposals due | October 12, 2023 |
| Finalist presentations | October-November 2023 |
| Contract Awarded | October-November 2023 |

Purpose

The purpose of this request is to select a Web Design, Development & Interactive Agency to complete an overhaul of the San Diego Tourism Authority's website www.sandiego.org and associated digital properties.

San Diego Tourism Authority Background

The San Diego Tourism Authority (SDTA) is San Diego's umbrella destination marketing organization, charged with driving visitor demand and monitoring the health of the tourism industry. SDTA develops sales and marketing programs that promoted San Diego as a preferred leisure and meetings destination. In collaboration with San Diego's tourism industry partners, SDTA serves as the collective voice of the destination and aims to keep San Diego top-of-mind.

Incorporated in 1954, SDTA is a private nonprofit 501c6 corporation that is governed by a 19-member board of directors composed of industry and non-industry representative. Funding comes from the City of San Diego Tourism Marketing District, City of Coronado Tourism Improvement District and private source revenues (membership dues, advertising and events).

Investment by SDTA in sales and marketing of San Diego brand has resulted in San Diego becoming one of the nation's top travel destinations.

Vision

Leading San Diego to be the most desirable destination.

Mission

To drive visitor demand to economically benefit the San Diego Region.

Project Overview

We seek an agency to provide design, development and maintenance of a responsive website to update and/or replace sandiego.org and its associated digital properties and blogs using, ideally, an open-source solution.

Sandiego.org is the official travel resource of the San Diego region and generates more than 6.5 million users per year. The site generates private source revenue of \$350,000 in digital ad sales, plus \$100,000 in commissionable bookings revenue for the organization. It is also the anchor and destination for millions of brand advertising impressions. The current website was developed and custom-built in 2015-16 using the Sitecore platform.

The website balances multiple priorities:

1. Inspiring travel to the San Diego region. As the ultimate digital travel guide, the experience on sandiego.org is designed to inspire new, returning and potential visitors to come to San Diego, then to aid in planning their travel to the region and sharing their positive experiences and memories. Visitors include both leisure and meetings, conventions and business travelers.
2. Providing SDTA member businesses with opportunities for exposure to and engagement with qualified audiences, ranging from leisure travelers of all ages and stages to meeting planners and travel trade professionals, press/media and others.
3. Generating \$350K+ in private source revenue through e-commerce, affiliate marketing, advertising, sponsorship or other digital opportunities.
4. Ensuring that the SDTA maintains its position as the Official Travel Resource for San Diego.

The project also includes upgrading the MemberNet extranet user experience, including designing and implementing new features as well as reworking the existing system. This includes improving the online new membership registration, payment processing and digital onboarding process.

The project also includes deploying a robust search engine optimization program including improving performance and growing our organic traffic as demonstrated by industry standard KPIs.

In order to balance and optimize each of the multiple priorities, the SDTA engages several partners and tools.

CURRENT AGENCY & THIRD PARTY STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

- The current sandiego.org site is maintained and operated in-house and with contracted talent, using the Sitecore CMS, MemberNet extranet.
- The CRM SimpleView serves as our member database, which feeds to Sitecore via an API for display on the website.

- SDTA's Advertising Agency of record is The Shipyard, which is responsible for brand development and advertising.
- We also work with a number of 3rd party interactive tool providers including:
- Google Analytics 4
- Google Ad Manager aRES Booking Engine
- Weather and Surf Report Feeds
- MAPP Cloud (email service provider/data management platform)
- SimpleView CRM
- Sitecore CMS (current CMS)
- Tableau Server
- Publications Fulfillment (GTxcel)
- Authorize.net (online payment processing)
- Basecamp for internal project and process management

The selected Interactive Agency will be required to work within the brand guidelines set forth by our Agency of Record as well as collaborate with SimpleView and other third party providers as needed to deliver the overall interactive experience.

Limited research on the San Diego visitor profile and the website's record of conversion to travel metrics is available upon request.

Scope of Work:

Design Requirements

- Work with SDTA internal teams to define user needs and site structure. Propose information architecture and content structure to maximize user experience and engagement.
- Provide recommendations and strategies on how to best incorporate rich media, dynamic content, enhanced mapping functionality, email capture and social media engagement throughout the site.
- Solutions and recommendations for how to incorporate member content that meets user needs while highlighting member products and services through business profiles, articles, events and offers.
- Offer recommendations on how to incorporate site sponsors affiliate sponsors and a booking widget on the sites.
- Solutions on how to maximize private source revenue from SDTA's digital landscape including traditional and emerging advertising opportunities.
- Offer recommendations on how to incorporate International localized content and stand-alone International sites with multiple languages.

- Under the brand platform established by our agency of record, produce comps and wireframes that detail the design look, feel, and functionality of a responsive design website in a variety of environments including desktop and smart phone. Items that must be visualized include, but are not limited to:
- Overall site navigation with sample interior page sub navigation – three categories deep (i.e. What to Do > Sports & Recreation > Golf)
- Page Templates
- Home Page
- Landing Page
- Article Page
- Promotions Page
- Member Profile Page
- Events Page
- Offers Page
- Member Directory Page
- Content block templates/layouts
- Generic text and image
- Filterable list of members/offers/events
- Dynamic offers
- Dynamic Events
- Dynamic Members
- Dynamic Articles
- Maps
- Multiple featured content/highlights/call-outs
- Standard ad (Google Ad Manager)
- Native Ad (Google Ad Manager)
- aRes booking
- Video
- Media gallery
- Forms
- Maps
- Upon project completion, provide a detailed style guide of templates and layout options including class names, etc. for future implementation design consistency.
- Reconsider the SDTA Blogs, blog.sandiego.org and connect.sandiego.org and how they should (or should not) function within the new responsive website.
- Provide a NEW e-commerce solution and page with the latest fulfillment functionality.

Development

- Produce comprehensive and detailed functional requirements for the project.

- Ensure all existing functionality present on the sandiego.org, blog.sandiego.org and MemberNet extranet is maintained except where directed by SDTA.
- Implement new features/components including, but not limited to, dynamic and/or prioritized content, content tagging and related content (user experience and/or native advertising), improved rich and multimedia integration and other site features.
- Code the site as required upon completion of the functional requirements, wireframes and creative design process. Provide clarification on code source and whether it is custom code or open source.
- Develop a comprehensive search engine optimization (SEO) plan and execute throughout development and launch of the new website. Identify shifting search engine priorities and set KPIs for on-going SEO project evaluation.
- Work with SimpleView to modify the business information data feed for any new or altered functionality as required during the design/build process.
- Provide website integration with third party partner systems such as aRES, social media properties, live weather, surf report and others as required.
- Integrate the Google Ad Manager with tagging for targeted and elevated ad placement as identified in Part 1 of the project. Provide a feed from the Ad Server to individual member MemberNet dashboards for advertising performance reporting.
- Design and implement a tracking implementation plan and code to tag all pages and interactions to ensure accurate reporting and accountability using Google Analytics 4 and Tableau.
- Transition all current web tags in Google Tag Manager to reproduce the same functionality.
- Create and implement a detailed migration plan from the existing website to the new responsive design site including redirects, etc.
- Implement an advanced site search solution – recommend search tag and filter structure for improved user experience. Allow for modified search results including elevated and excluded content.
- Develop a test plan to address usability, functional, load and performance for the new website, including the new features and components. Monitor and repair potential issues that arise during a post-launch “warranty” phase (define time).

- Provide documentation, including updates to existing user manuals, staff training and support on systems developed for this project.

Additional Scope: Membernet

The SDTA is a member-supported organization, and members have direct access to the website backend via an extranet. This project includes upgrading the MemberNet extranet user experience, including designing and implementing new features as well as reworking the existing system. This includes improving the online new membership registration, payment processing and digital onboarding process.

- Design and execute new features and upgrades to the MemberNet extranet including the following:
 - Display member analytics, by member, on individual account pages using Google Analytics.
 - Rework cumbersome member user interface including improved image editing, uploading and management. Simplify workflow including a streamlined onboarding process and providing consistent draft and submission tools.
 - Update and rethink tag manager system for promotions and campaigns.
 - Work with the internal business unit and third party to determine and implement the best financial implementation method to streamline and automate the payment process connected via API through Simpleview and potential integration to the ERP Oracle Fusion cloud applications 23B (11.13.23.04.0)
 - Display of Google DFP advertising reporting, by member, through Google DFP.
 - Provide user category for external content providers.

Maintenance

- Provide hourly costs, by position or blended rate, for ongoing site maintenance. This will be negotiated and billed under a separate contract.

The project partner will be expected to take the lead during all phases of the project, working with direction from the SDTA Digital Marketing Team.

Supporting Data and Analytics Available Upon Request

- Traffic and user behavior data (Please specify date range)
- SEO and SEM keyword data
- Membership referral metrics
- Intent to Travel metrics
- Social media engagement data
- Content audit (2017)

- Sitemap
- Monetization study and recommendations (2016)
- Affiliate revenue reports (2012-2022)

Our Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Statement

In San Diego, all are welcome and differences are celebrated. The San Diego Tourism Authority is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility to promote unique San Diego experiences and elevate voices in the community that speak to travelers from around the world. We aim to be a thought leader in our industry, city, and community.

Proposal Requirements:

In a digital format, please provide the following information:

Company Background

Please include the following items:

- A letter of interest;
- A description of your company's primary services;
- The year in which your company was formed;
- The address from which the primary work on the contract would be performed;
- Numbers of total employees and contractors; and
- A current and past client list.

Conflict of Interest

Please list all tourism-related clients for whom you have acted during the past 12 months. Please include a brief description of the type of activity and services you provide.

Company Management & Staff

Please include the following items:

- The contract manager for this scope of work;
- Project manager
- Lead Developers / UX/Ui designer lead
- Solution Architect

For all individuals assigned to this account, please provide:

- Current resumes/biographies demonstrating qualifications related to this RFP; and
- Length of time with your company

Case Studies

Showcase studies (minimum of three) with demonstrated results relevant to San Diego Tourism Authority (scale, industry, and/or similarity).

Travel and Tourism Industry Expertise and Experience

- Provide case studies of other travel and tourism websites previously developed or currently in development.
- Show e-commerce experience or past projects.
- Provide examples of any membership or association website development or maintenance work.
- Provide insights into trends, best practices and emerging digital innovations within the travel and tourism space as it relates to websites and digital presence.

Miscellaneous

- Please describe your familiarity with San Diego and experience working with Destination Marketing Organizations.

General project questions

- Please describe your process for design and production, including how you establish goals, select partners and approach targeting given the estimated budget.
- List the project phases and key milestones typically used when developing a comprehensive, industry-leading website.
- Please describe your approach to optimization during the span of a project.
- Please describe your approach to client service, including your process for handling one-off requests, your average response time, and escalation process. Comment on the process used when beginning a relationship with a new client.
- Please describe your approach to reporting and how you work with custom reporting requirements.
- Please describe your access to industry-based research.
- Please provide an overview of your capabilities to provide creative/digital production support if needed.

Budget

The current budget for this project is \$500K+.

- Please provide an overview of your fee structure for services.
- Demonstrate financial viability for maintaining a budget of this size.
- Please provide method of billing for work.

Proposal Evaluation + Bidders' Conference (virtual)

The SDTA Review Committee will evaluate the written proposals first. The criteria for the scoring of the proposals is included as Attachment A. The committee may at any time during the evaluation process seek clarification from Proposers regarding any information contained within their proposal. Final scores for each Proposer will reflect a consensus of the evaluation committee. Any attempt by an agency to contact a member of the evaluation committee outside the RFP process, in an attempt to gain knowledge or an advantage may result in disqualification of Proposer.

The Review Committee will invite finalists to a VIRTUAL bidders' conference to gather additional information and answer additional questions. The SDTA will provide at least 7 working days

notice before scheduling the meeting. All questions for the SDTA review committee must be submitted in writing prior to the bidders' conference. All questions and answers will be made public during the virtual session. There will be limited time allowed for follow-up or clarification live during the session.

Please note: Upon completing the selection process under this RFP, San Diego Tourism Authority will notify the winning Proposer and all other Proposers who were not selected. San Diego Tourism Authority's deliberations are confidential. Accordingly, while we understand that non-selected proposers may wish to ascertain reasons for their non-selection, San Diego Tourism Authority cannot respond to any subsequent questions and/or requests for information as to why a company was not selected.

Reserved Rights

All proposals submitted shall become the property of San Diego Tourism Authority and shall not be returned to the Proposer. San Diego Tourism Authority also reserves the right to:

- Reject any and all bids;
- Cancel this RFP;
- Revise the amount of funds available under this RFP;
- Amend this RFP as needed; and
- Not select a vendor and award a contract from this RFP

Submission Instructions

Preferred Delivery: Electronic (PDF); however, if hard copies are sent, please include three copies.

Deliver to: esmith@sandiego.org, or if sending by mail:
Erin Smith
San Diego Tourism Authority
750 B Street, Suite 1500
San Diego, CA 92101

NOTE: If an extension to the response deadline is needed, please send an email to the contact above with a brief statement on why the extension is needed.

Inquiries

All inquiries regarding this RFP should be directed via email to:
Erin Smith
San Diego Tourism Authority
750 B Street, Suite 1500
San Diego, CA 92101
e: esmith@sandiego.org

Attachment A

PROPOSAL EVALUATION

FOR REFERENCE ONLY

WRITTEN PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals will be reviewed, evaluated and scored by an evaluation committee based on the criteria below to the degree of responsiveness present in the written proposal submitted.

| | Proposal Criteria | Max Score | Score |
|---|--|-----------|-------|
| 1 | Overall Experience of Firm Our evaluation will include an assessment of such items as the history of your company, your experience as it relates to the requirements within this RFP, evidence of past performance, and related items. | 20 | |
| 2 | Scope of Work Our evaluation will include an assessment of the quality of proposed strategies, creativity, detail of plan, and related items. | 20 | |
| 3 | Familiarity with San Diego Brand and Product Our evaluation will include our assessment of your understanding of our organization and how you integrated this knowledge into your proposal, cultural fit, and related items. | 10 | |
| 4 | Qualifications of Team Our evaluation will include an assessment of the qualifications, experience, and creativity of your managerial team, staff, and subcontractors, and related items. | 10 | |
| 5 | Technical Capabilities Our evaluation will include an assessment of your technical talent as related to this RFP. | 20 | |
| | Creative Solutions Our evaluation will include an assessment of the innovative and creative solutions and ideas presented as related to the goals and priorities of sandiego.org . | | |
| 6 | Cost Effectiveness The maximum services provided in relation to the service fee charged and the value of the overall project. The budget is reasonable and appropriate. | 20 | |

TOTAL

100

Attachment B

PRESENTATION EVALUATION

FOR REFERENCE ONLY

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Presentations will be reviewed, evaluated and scored by an evaluation committee based on the criteria below to the degree of responsiveness presented.

| | Presentation Criteria | Max Score | Score |
|--------------|---|------------|-------|
| 1 | Quality and creativity of proposed work plan. Professionalism and staff technical expertise, innovation factor and ratio of personnel assigned to the account. | 30 | |
| 2 | Market knowledge and industry relationships. | 10 | |
| 3 | We will assess your understanding of our organization, the digital landscape of travel and tourism and how you integrated this knowledge into your proposal, cultural fit, and related items. | 15 | |
| 4 | Quality of proposed strategies, tactics and work samples. | 30 | |
| 5 | ROI, budget recommendations and cost effectiveness | 15 | |
| TOTAL | | 100 | |