REVISED 7/20/20
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
RFP 020-021
MARKETING RESEARCH SERVICES

QUESTION: Section 2.1 D includes "Leisure, Seasonal, Group" in the description of the requested scope, but in Section 2.2 D only Group is specified as a breakout, Do you require travel impacts breakouts by season and for leisure vs. business travel?

ANSWER: ***Leisure information is reported by season, but groups is only broken out in the annual report.***

QUESTION: Does the County currently subscribe to any tourism databases/Information sources and if so, which ones" For example, STR data on hotel occupancy, AirDNA information on peer to peer home rentals, PRIZM.

ANSWER: ***We currently subscribe to KeyData***

QUESTION: Section 2.2 Description and Timing of Work – is prescriptive in what should be accomplished for each study. Is the County open to other recommendations that can potentially enhance the overall project? For example, the Visitor Tracking Study calls for telephone interviews specifically. Are you open to other methodologies such as online or in-person?

ANSWER: ***Yes, we are open to other suggested methodologies.***

QUESTION: For the Visitor Tracking Study in particular, is there a targeted sample size you hope to have each quarter?

ANSWER: ***No, as long as there are enough participants to ensure a representative sample,***

QUESTION: What is the overall, annual budget for the ten items listed on page 10, Tab 4, Proposal Cost?

ANSWER: ***Our current budget for all research is $170,000 - $225,000.***

QUESTION: In the Scope of work there are a number of studies which are very inter-related and could benefit in terms of the quality of the resultant report, its usefulness, and its cost through some integrations. For example, brand advertising and market perception studies are often done in concert. Similarly, the Visitor Tracking Study could potentially serve as the inputs for the Product Definition Study. If we recommend combining and integrating these efforts, should we describe our approach in TAB 3 where we discuss our abilities to do this, or should this be done in some other fashion?

ANSWER: *Yes, that would be acceptable way to convey your proposal*

QUESTION: We have what we believe are better methodologies for some of the studies, such as the Visitor Tracking Study, which will provide better data at a lower price. Are you open to alternative methodologies?

ANSWER: *Yes, we are*

QUESTION: For the marketing alignment study, the scope of work indicates that it is an annual study, but the pricing asks for costs for a quarterly study. Can you please clarify?

ANSWER: *There should be a report, as well as seasonal studies (spring, summer, fall and winter visitor tracking)., The annual report combines the seasonal input for a general, overall view.*

QUESTION: In Section 2.2, in the timing and implementation there are some details that don't seem to align with the current methodologies. For example, in the Visitor Tracking Study section 2.2 talks about conducting telephone interviews, while the actual study indicates that it is a combination of on-line and in-person interviews. Can you please clarify?

ANSWER: *Best collection method is allowable for specific circumstances. This can include telephone combination online and in-person. It is generally considered best practice to include significant in-person collection to ensure quality/reliable results.*

QUESTION: What is the total budget for these projects?

ANSWER: *Current annual budget for all research activities is $175,000 - $225,000*

QUESTION: Are there separate budgets for each project? If So, what are the budgets for each project?

ANSWER: *Current annual budget for all research activities is $175,000 - $225,000*

QUESTION: In the budget proposal it asks for pricing for "Group Business Study" which isn't mentioned under the scope of work. And pricing is not asked for the Travel and Tourism Impact study. Can you please clarify?

ANSWER: *The travel and tourism impact study should be part of the annual report which combines the gathered data on seasonal travelers and does not focus on group travel. Therefore, we ask for a specific group business study to be conducted annually.*

QUESTION: The proposal asks for pricing for on-site visits exclusive of travel – does that mean travel is not reimbursed, or is it handled in another way?

ANSWER: *That does mean that travel is not reimbursed.*

QUESTION: If we propose combining some of these projects, how should that be handled in the Proposal Cost since each project needs an individual price?

ANSWER: *State your proposal, list price for each proposed element.*

QUESTION: The cost of marketing research efforts is generally a function of the methodological design used and such factors as the sample size and data collection methods. Are there some guidelines that you want to be followed? And, where in the proposal is it appropriate to present those considerations?

ANSWER: *We will want the study numbers and data collection methods to be easily defensible in terms of providing accurate, reliable data.*

QUESTION: What are the target markets for Walton County Tourist Development?

ANSWER: *Largely the Southeast USA, specifically w target high household income visitors. Visiting the research section of www.visitsouthwaltn.com will provide more specific data, as well as examples of previous studies.*

QUESTION: Does our organization need to be "Authorized to transact business in Florida" to propose, or can this be done if awarded the contract?

ANSWER: *Yes, you will need to be authorized to do business in Florida.*

QUESTION: Does VSW currently conduct a tracking study as described and how long has this tracking study be in place? If a tracking study process currently exists, in the interest of continuity in fielding methodology and questions and for the sake of analytical comparisons, would VSW be sharing a sample questionnaire with methodology once the project is awarded?

ANSWER: *Please refer to our online research, which will continue to be available going forward. It may not be possible to access the original questionnaires:*
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/resources/industry-research/
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/reports/

QUESTION: Once awarded, would VSW share historical lodging catalogs to aid in defining yearly and seasonal trends and enable forecasting of future lodging demand and inventory to meet the demand?

ANSWER: *The research (and more) is available, though specific lodging information would have to be shared directly between the lodging partner and research firm (to prevent the business' private information from becoming public record).*

QUESTION: Once awarded, would VSW provide historical marketing goals, marketing budgets, visitor growth numbers and ROI by media? Does VSW currently employ

any analytical tool (s) that track consumer engagement with its messaging through its website and by media?

How does VSW market itself currently including SEO, website, social media ads, paid search, travel magazines, blogs, travel influencers, and traditional media and in what proportions?

Which metrics are tracked - cost per conversion, cost per acquisition, return on ad spend, customer lifetime value, branded search lift, click thru rate, etc.?

ANSWER: ***Some of this information would be available. Please refer to the industry research links for examples of current metrics (which will need to be continued):***
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/resources/industry-research/
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/reports/

QUESTION: On what attributes does VSW market itself? What is the current proportion of Leisure, Seasonal and Group travel to VSW? What is VSW's primary appeal? What travel association membership does VSW have? How do visitors typically arrive to VSW – drive or fly?

ANSWER: https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/resources/industry-research/
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/reports/

QUESTION: Does VSW advertise now? Has VSW have defined value proposition and brand positioning? What is it? Does VSW currently track its advertising for breakthrough, impact on brand image and intention to visit based on its advertising? Does VSW have a marketing/advertising agency?

ANSWER: https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/resources/industry-research/
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/reports/
Current ad agency of record is Zehnder Communications.

QUESTION: What is the current perception and appeal of VSW as a destination and among which demographic is this strongest? Which destinations are strong competitors for visitors to VSW?

ANSWER: https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/resources/industry-research/
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/reports/

QUESTION: What is the mechanism or process through which brand partners provide or align with VSW information access needs?

ANSWER: ***Our current research firm reaches out to partners – VSW staff assists in making the initial introductions, and often follow up reminders.***

QUESTION: What is VSW's target visitors - the primary demographics that VSW attracts – solo, family, friends, group? What generation is drawn most to VSW?

ANSWER: https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/resources/industry-research/
https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/reports/

QUESTION: Given the cultural diversity of travelers today, would VSW be open to exploring other complementary segmentation models – i.e. Claritas Geoscape or Simmons Market research which provide a view to multicultural segments?

ANSWER: ***We would be open to exploring segmentation models deemed necessary or offering new insights.***

QUESTION: How has Covid – 19 impacted visitor trends in VSW?
How is the hospitality industry in VSW being affected?
How was VSW trending / meeting visitors' goals prior / after Covid-19?

ANSWER: ***Months impacted by restrictions on travel or booking (March, April, May) showed significant decreases in visitation. Once short-term rentals were again allowed by the state, numbers rebounded to higher visitation rates than in 2019.***

QUESTION: Assuming an ongoing threat of the Covid-19 pandemic, is this project likely to be postpone? Would VSW expect the consulting to team to travel to Walton County

for meetings, workshops, presentations while the Covid-19 threat is high, or would online meetings be acceptable?

ANSWER: ***Our research needs will continue schedule and we will expect our research partner to be able to deliver our normal studies on schedule. We will consider alternate meeting and info.***

QUESTION: For the Visitor Tracking Study, on average, how many email addresses, of visitors are provided by the participating properties each session? And, on average, how many visitors are provided by the participating properties with a telephone number, but no email address, each season?

ANSWER: ***Contact information is currently sourced by the active research firm, and we do not keep records of the number of email addresses and/or telephone numbers of visitors provided to then by the participating properties. Some insights may be gleaned by reviewing the posted research on the Industry Research section of our website. https://www.visitsouthwalton.com/vsw-resource-center/resourses/industry-research***

QUESTION: For the security bond, will the County accept a business check as the $1,000 security bond, rather than a bond of this amount from a bond provider? If not, will the County accept a cashier's check as the $1,000 security bond rather than a bond of this amount from a bond provider?

ANSWER: ***A cashier check is preferred, but we will also accept business check.***

This Question/Answer now becomes a part of the original RFP. Acknowledge receipt of this Q&A and include in your submittal. Failure to do so may result in your proposal being found non-responsive.

Proposer _____   By: _____

Address: _____   Phone: _____

City, State: _____   Date: _____

_____
Authorized Signature, Title