



# **BIG ★ SKY**

MONTANA

## **Big Sky Convention & Visitor Bureau** **REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL**

FOR PROVIDING

### **WEBSITE REDESIGN**

FOR

**Visitbigskymt.com**

PROPOSALS ARE DUE BY MAY 31, 2017 | 5PM MDT

*Contact*

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

As requested by the Visit Big Sky board of directors, the Big Sky Convention & Visitor Bureau (hereafter referred to as Big Sky CVB) has issued this Request for Proposal (RFP) with the intent of obtaining proposals from interested and qualified agencies in accordance with the terms below.

### **1.1 Introduction and Background**

Big Sky CVB is seeking the professional services of a qualified agency to work as a sole or lead agency for the design, development and implementation of a customized destination tourism website, [www.visitbigskymt.com](http://www.visitbigskymt.com).

Big Sky CVB is tasked with inspiring, facilitating and orienting out-of-state residents' visitation to Big Sky, MT, through the content and experience on the website. The successful agency must demonstrate extensive knowledge and understanding of how to develop, implement, and evaluate a comprehensive website management system that will help this organization promote and support Big Sky as a leisure travel destination.

Supported by the Visit Big Sky board of directors, and administered by the Big Sky Chamber of Commerce, Big Sky CVB takes on an important marketing role for the community of Big Sky by planning and executing year-round consumer marketing based on research data, input from community stakeholders and key business activity measurements to ensure the best return on investment of public, state, and private funds. Big Sky is a premier destination mountain resort community boasting the Montana state brand pillars: spectacular, unspoiled nature and wildlife, breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night, all while preserving the character of our vibrant and charming small community. More about the Montana brand [here](#).

The primary objective of the website redesign is to provide content that will inspire customers to seek more information about Big Sky and increase the likelihood of conversion (i.e. booking of an activity, lodging, tour, etc.) through our partners' sites. Further, it is our job to assist the visitor in planning their trip. Familiarity with Montana is very low, and the majority of first time visitors are coming to visit either Glacier or Yellowstone National Park, so the more information we can provide to bring these visitors to our destination, the better. Finally, it is our responsibility on behalf of our tourism stakeholders to showcase the many offerings and experiences available to them in our community.

### **1.2 Brief Description of Product**

Big Sky CVB is interested in receiving proposals from agencies to provide a full website redesign. The agency will provide suggestions for seamless functionality and positive consumer interactions for destination marketing organization (DMO) websites.

### **1.3 About Big Sky CVB and Tourism in Montana**

The Big Sky CVB, working in cooperation with Visit Big Sky, is the official destination marketing organization for the Greater Big Sky Area, including the Big Sky Resort Area District, plus that area which extends twenty miles to the north and twenty miles to the south from the intersection of US-191 and MT Hwy 64. As a gateway community to Yellowstone National Park, collaboration with our Gallatin Canyon Corridor partners from Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport to YNP including the cities of Bozeman, Belgrade and West Yellowstone, is fundamental to our success. The mission of VBS is to promote economic development in the Greater Big Sky Area through (tourism) marketing promotion. VBS accomplishes this through:

- branding and marketing the world-class mountain resort destination of Big Sky, Montana, as a year-round regional, national and international visitor destination,
- supporting the development and growth of the tourism industry in Big Sky with an eye toward delivering

an outstanding visitor experience, and increasing tourism-related revenues and jobs which increases Resort Tax collections,

- raising public awareness of the positive impact of tourism on the economic vitality of Big Sky and Montana, and
- preserving the uniqueness and character of the Big Sky community.

The Montana Legislature created a dedicated four percent Montana Lodging Facility Use tax in 1987. These designated funds to Big Sky CVB support travel and tourism marketing programs for the destination. Tourism is one of the fastest-growing industries in Montana and it is the second-largest industry in the state comprised of primarily small businesses from a variety of sectors, including lodging accommodations, restaurants and bars, ski areas, etc. The industry also counts various state and federal agencies as critical partners. It is imperative that the Big Sky CVB continues to successfully market the area as a premier, year-round mountain resort destination.

## **2.0 SPECIFICATIONS & REQUIREMENTS**

To achieve our directive, agencies will submit proposals to be considered for all disciplines as a single full-service agency or as a lead contracted agency with subcontractors rolling up to the lead contracted agency. Agencies submitting a proposal in the lead contractor/subcontractor model must clearly represent their capabilities as the lead agency and must identify in the proposal which Scope of Work elements would be subcontracted under the lead agency.

The requirements of this RFP include that the agency will be responsible for management of the visitbigskymt.com website including development and design.

### **2.1 Characteristics Contractor/Subcontractor(s) must Possess the following characteristics:**

- Knowledge and understanding of Big Sky as a leisure destination within the region of Yellowstone Country and the State of Montana.
- Team approach mentality, understanding that the Visit Big Sky board, staff and agency must all work together as a team.
- Be proactive in bringing opportunities or ideas for consideration to the Big Sky CVB that further achievement of marketing objectives.
- Clear lines of agency communication and responsibility.
- An understanding of emerging technology, trends, platforms and messaging opportunities and how to best leverage them on behalf of the Big Sky CVB with a relatively small budget.
- A reputation for taking calculated risks – backed by insights and research – to achieve success.
- Account representation available for meetings as needed, at the agency's expense, and responsive via telephone and e-mail.
- A commitment to transparency, trustworthiness and integrity.
- An understanding of the unique systems, timelines and requirements of Big Sky CVB's account.
- Previous agency and/or key staff experience working with DMOs.
- Willingness to carry on with existing successful partnerships and programs, such as Chamber Master if decided other alternatives stretch Big Sky CVB's resources.
- Provide thought leadership and best practices related to digital communications, targeting, and website optimization.

- Define and deliver against clear goals, success metrics, and ROI. Determine metric to measure newsletter sign-ups and visitor guide requests (i.e. by requiring sign in to download to capture data electronically).
- Knowledge and practice of best practices and analytical benchmarks within the DMO /tourism industry.

## **2.2 Working Relationship**

As a marketing entity, the Big Sky CVB is a service-intensive client, governed by an umbrella organization's volunteer board of directors and operated day-to-day under the management of a CEO.

The successful agency will be expected to understand the inner workings and needs of the Big Sky CVB and have the ability to provide a high level of quality account service. The Big Sky CVB intends to have a close working relationship with the successful agency. The successful agency will be required to provide:

- 2.2.1** Budget estimates for final approval prior to commencement of work on all approved projects undertaken on behalf of the Big Sky CVB.
- 2.2.2** Provide the Big Sky CVB an opportunity to review all draft materials relevant to a project.
- 2.2.3** Keep the Big Sky CVB informed as to the status and progress of all approved project phases through completion: budgeting, production, implementation, tracking, & final completion report. These reports shall include relevant accounting & bookkeeping information that tracks budget spending.

**Conflict Free:** The agency must not have any conflicts of interest with the Big Sky CVB.

## **2.3 Detailed Scope of Work**

Big Sky CVB intends to contract a qualified and committed professional agency to perform the following services to complete the full website redesign:

- Full service account management, including account staff coordination, budget management, project management, status reports, quality control, and client communications.
- Develop and maintain consumer-facing website that supports the marketing plan of the Big Sky CVB.
- Consolidation of two existing websites ([biggestskiinginamerica.com](http://biggestskiinginamerica.com) and [visitbigskymt.com](http://visitbigskymt.com)) with overall design and backend overhaul. Website must function seamlessly across major browsers, operating systems and devices. Integrate website content with Chamber-owned third party applications to incorporate stakeholder listing data, events, RSS feeds, etc. should a proprietary solution be beyond budget.
- Emphasis on automated, personalized marketing, user experience and interactive design, colloquially known as 'the consumer journey'.
- Research marketplace, target audience/users and develop strategies and fulfill their expectations of a travel destination website.
- Assist in monitoring website performance using Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager to achieve maximum marketing results and actionable key performance indicators.
- Work with Big Sky CVB staff to ensure there is a seamless social media experience within the website and other social media channels. Provide content advice where needed.
- Full ADA compliance (Section 508 Standards), as required.
- Identify and counsel as to how Big Sky CVB can maximize emerging technology and trends in mobile platforms including as tablets, smartphones and wearables to best support the marketing plan of the Big Sky CVB.

- Identify counsel as to how the Big Sky CVB can maximize emerging technology and trends in digital marketing, design and development.
- Update, edit and create various graphics where required for the website.
- Implement and monitor website security against intrusion, malicious or inappropriate use and social media postings regarding inappropriate comments.
- Maintain integration with Big Sky MobiManage kiosks, mobile app (Big Sky on the Go), and Chamber Master.
- Provide option(s) to:
  - Integrate a member extranet instead of relying on Chamber Master
  - Incorporate artificial intelligence into site,
  - Host site, manage SEO, and manage analytics.
  - Utilize a “mock” central reservation system that shows availability of lodging in Big Sky area.

**Big Sky CVB’s Rights Reserved:** While the Big Sky CVB has every intention to award a contract resulting from this RFP, issuance of the RFP in no way constitutes a commitment by the Big Sky CVB to award and execute a contract.

### **3.0 COST PROPOSAL: Services and Hourly Rates**

The Big Sky CVB will accept flat fee and hourly proposals. For hourly, please provide the amount per hour for each service: account planning/strategy, account management, creative services, research/analytics services, accounting, budget research and estimates, travel time, others (please list as appropriate).

Agencies must list the blended rate for all categories of services listed below and the amount per billable hour you would charge. The Big Sky CVB operates on a project basis; all projects have a finite budget. Include all items on the worksheet provided and any others that are relevant to the proposal that the Big Sky CVB would be expected to pay.

Separately from the above cost proposals, identify and list any and all additional costs, including: ongoing maintenance costs, software, subscriptions, pass through costs, etc. Indicate whether the cost is a one-time “set up” fee, ongoing fee for each usage, or an annual fee.

#### **3.1 Additional Compensation Requirements**

##### **3.1.1 Minimum Timekeeping Requirements**

- The agency must maintain a monthly record of time expended per project.
- The agency will report usage of hours to the Big Sky CVB on a monthly basis.
- The contractor must maintain an internal control system that protects the integrity of the payroll system.
- The contractor must maintain an accounting system that has the capability to segregate labor hours and resultant costs by contract, project or work order when appropriate.
- The Big Sky CVB and its grantors reserve the right to audit any or all of the above-described records at any time, with or without cause.

### **3.1.2 Travel Reimbursement**

- Travel expenses are estimated in advance and are approved prior to scheduled travel. Out-of-pocket expenses (lodging, meals, etc.) must be pre-approved by the Big Sky CVB and will be reimbursed at actual cost; itemized vendor receipts will be required.

### **3.1.3 Net Pricing**

- All media, outside production costs, subcontractors' costs, or out-of-pocket expenses incurred will be invoiced at net cost. A reasonable net commission will be allowed for media and print costs.

### **3.1.4 Other**

- List all services for which you do not charge with an explanation of how non-billable services are determined.
- Please provide a schedule of fees, should the Big Sky CVB need to request special assignments outside the scope of services outlined in this RFP.

**Costs and ownership:** Agency is solely responsible for all costs it incurs prior to contract execution. Big Sky CVB shall own all materials and work submitted in response to this RFP and from resulting work under any contract.

## **4.0 EVALUATION OF SUBMITTED PROPOSALS**

Please address the items detailed below in your proposal in the order shown. Each section should be clearly labeled, with pages numbered. Failure to include all listed items may result in the rejection of the proposal. All submissions will be evaluated by a Website Re-Design Committee comprised of up to three (3) Visit Big Sky Board members, Big Sky CVB staff, and two (2) Big Sky community representatives, based on the following utilizing the Website Re-design Evaluation Form on Page 8 of this RFP:

### **1. Cover Letter / Management Summary (5%)**

- Provide a cover letter that is maximum 500 words, signed by an authorized officer of the agency, indicating the overall philosophy on developing a DMO website strategy. Include the name(s), telephone number(s) and email(s) of the authorized contact person(s) concerning this proposal.

### **2. Website Proposal (50%)**

- Budget and design.
- Ability to provide and execute all items listed in the "Detailed Scope of Work" section.
- Address the most significant/important function of a DMO website.
- Process for website content development detailing how you ensure website content is on strategy and maintains strong integration with annual consumer marketing campaigns.
- Approach to data, research, and measurement regarding website performance and functionality. Outline of recommended KPIs with insights from past/current client experiences.
- Dashboard reporting.
- How to fit visitbigskymt.com into the planning process for a user by discovering the state of Montana (MOTBD), Yellowstone Country, then Big Sky. Branding and identifying with Big Sky, region and state.

### **3. Quality and Capacity of agency and Personnel (25%)**

- Qualifications, experience and training of staff to be assigned to project.
- Ability to work with the Visit Big Sky board and Big Sky CVB staff as a team.
- Provide a case study within the past 18 months illustrating website development and maintenance including database management, linking programs, social media integration, and a summary of

integrative strategies aligning with a digital advertising campaign. Clearly identify the challenges, goals, and results of this project. Note: This case study should be where the agency was responsible for web design and personalization strategies.

#### **4. Record of Past Performance (20%)**

- Provide references that can attest to your quality of work, your team mentality, on-schedule performance, cost performance and return on investment.
- Industry experience: similar project success and awards gained by the agency in the past four years.

As an appendix to your proposal response, you may include any other pertinent, concise information you believe would be valuable for the Big Sky CVB to consider in evaluating your agency.

##### **4.1 Agency Presentations**

After completion of Evaluation of Submitted Proposals by the Website Development Committee as detailed above, should it be necessary, the Big Sky CVB may determine to invite up to three finalists to make a presentation to the team.

**Questions:** Agencies having questions about this RFP must address these issues via e-mail in writing to the contact listed above on or before **May 24, 2017**.

**Responses:** Big Sky CVB will share questions and answers with all who have expressed interest in responding to the RFP.

## **BIG SKY CVB WEBSITE REDESIGN RFP EVALUATION FORM**

Firm Submitting:

Primary Contact:

Highest Number: Most Value/Rating Column: 1-5 points

	<u>Rating (1-5)</u>	<u>x Weight</u>	<u>= Total</u>
<b>A. Availability and Quality of Proposal –5%</b>			
1. Clarity of agency's response and understanding of requirements	_____	0.5	_____
2. Overall philosophy for DMO website strategy	_____	0.5	_____
<b>B. Website Proposal – 50%</b>			
1. Strength of proposal	_____	2	_____
2. Budget: effective and efficient uses of funds	_____	2	_____
3. Most significant function of DMO website	_____	2	_____
4. Data, research, measurement of performance and functionality	_____	2	_____
5. Branding/Identifying in discovery process	_____	2	_____
<b>C. Quality and Capacity of Agency – 25%</b>			
1. Quality/capacity of agency/personnel and ability to work with Big Sky CVB team	_____	3	_____
2. Relevant and accurate case study	_____	2	_____
<b>D. Record of Past Performance – 20%</b>			
1. References: Scheduling, Cost, ROI performance	_____	2	_____
2. Tourism Industry Experience	_____	2	_____

**TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**(100 possible)**

## **SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS**

RFP Proposals Due on or before: Wednesday, May 31, 2017 | 5 PM MDT

Submit proposals to:

Amelia Smith, Marketing Manager

Big Sky Convention & Visitor Bureau c/o Big Sky Chamber of Commerce  
55 Lone Mountain Trail Road  
PO Box 160100  
406-995-3000  
amelia@bigskychamber.com

Proposals are preferred electronically however you may mail seven (7) copies of your proposal to the PO Box above for evaluation by the Website Re-Design Committee.