



Dartmouth – Lake Sunapee Region

Participating Chambers of Commerce – Kearsarge Area Chamber, Lake Sunapee Region Chamber, Newport Area Chamber, Greater Claremont Chamber and the Upper Valley Business Alliance

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: Travel & Tourism Marketing Campaign for the Dartmouth Sunapee Region

Background:

The State of New Hampshire set aside funds for chambers of commerce from the federal CARES Act to assist New Hampshire's businesses and communities in responding to COVID19. Under the provisions of this State-Chamber program, chambers were tasked with working within their state designated tourism region and proposing programs or projects that address the needs of businesses and the communities within the region.

The Dartmouth-Sunapee Region is the tourism region for this proposal to conduct a comprehensive travel and tourism marketing campaign.

Tourism is an important element to the Dartmouth-Sunapee region's economy. The I-89 corridor from Warner to Lebanon is an important byway for tourists who come to the region to ski at Mt. Sunapee, Ragged Mountain or the smaller mountains of Whaleback and Dartmouth Skiway or visit Sunapee and Mascoma lakes for water recreation. Prospective students and their families visit Dartmouth College or Colby-Sawyer College or the private schools such as Cardigan Mountain School, Proctor Academy or Kimball Union Academy. Numerous lodging businesses rely on visitors, as well as farmstands, retail stores, art galleries, wedding venues and restaurants.



The Dartmouth-Sunapee region is one of the state's best kept secrets. Although tourism is important to the area, this region has never had a coordinated marketing campaign that truly highlights this area of New Hampshire as a destination. Our region's tourism looks very different than other regions of the state – there are no family attractions such as Storyland, or areas that are tourist meccas such as Weir's Beach or Hampton Beach. Therefore, our region doesn't tend to attract the out of state families on vacation. However, our region is attractive to those who value arts and cultural activities, outdoor recreation, great dining and foodie adventures. Our tourist persona is often couples in their 40s and older, who have plenty of disposable income, value authentic experiences, tend to stay in B&Bs or inns, and love scenic vistas, fine dining and arts. This area is home to terrific live theater with renowned companies such as the New London Players and Opera North in Lebanon/Cornish, live performances at the Lebanon Opera House and Hopkins Center at Dartmouth, museums such as the Hood Museum at Dartmouth and St. Gaudens National Park, as well as a strong artist and craftsmen community.

In addition to attracting tourism, this region needs to attract a talented and skilled workforce. Prior to the Pandemic, the Upper Valley region of New Hampshire had the lowest unemployment rate of all the

regions of the State. Although the pandemic has caused significant increases in unemployment, several companies in the Dartmouth-Sunapee region area are still hiring and projecting growth – including Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, BioXCell, Novo Norodisk in Lebanon, Red River Computers in Claremont and Sturm Ruger in Newport. These companies are still in need of a talented and skilled workforce. In March, the Upper Valley Business Alliance launched the Upper Valley Medtech Collaborative with a kickoff event of over 60 companies in the MedTech field. Medical and biotechnology are two areas projected to grow, and with research collaboration from the Thayer, Geisel and Tuck Schools at Dartmouth, the region is well-positioned to help these companies succeed.

Our proposed marketing campaign will have an overall theme of “Come to Play, Come to Stay,” with a dual purpose of highlighting the Dartmouth-Sunapee region as great place to visit and a place of opportunity to work, raise a family or start a business. Many of the same amenities attractive to tourists make a location a highly livable and desirable location. Our goal is to focus on our main drive markets of greater Boston and New York.

Vendor Requirements:

1. Ability to provide full marketing and design capabilities
2. Ability to provide attractive and cohesive branding carried through all components of campaign
3. Ability to adhere to the schedule and timing of program – ad buys and website must be completed before Dec 30, 2020. Some design work may be done early 2021.
4. If using subcontractors, they also must provide deliverables in adherence to the schedule outlined.

IMPORTANT -Timing: September – December, with advertising buys committed before December 30. According to the provisions of the CARES ACT, **all funds must be committed and spent no later than December 30, 2020. This is non-negotiable.**

BUDGET: \$125,000

RFP DEADLINE: September 14 at 5 PM. Applicants will be notified by September 25.

Marketing Components:

1. Develop distinct branding for the region compatible with overall Visitnh.gov branding
2. Develop a Website for the Dartmouth-Sunapee Region
 - a. A collaborative tourism website for the region with links to each chamber's website
 - b. Website will highlight visitor services, activities, four seasons, events calendar
 - c. Social platforms – YouTube Channel, Facebook, Instagram connected tied back to website
 - d. Blogs and Vlogs added to the website about the region
 - e. Website will also have a relocation/workforce component
 - f. Website will incorporate visitor tracking software and social media tracking
 - g. Provide site hosting of website/maintenance schedule.
 - h. Must be ADA compliant.
3. Radio campaign

- a. Radio ads highlighting the region focusing on the drive market of 1-2 hours, including southern New Hampshire (Concord – Salem – Keene).
- b. Radio ads focused on Greater Boston market, Worcester, Providence, Hartford CT – I 95 and I – 91 corridors
- c. Provide copy, production and recommendations of air buys, stations,

4. TV/Video/Commercials

- a. Commercial Creation: 5 separate videos for each chamber coverage area (1-2 minutes)
- b. One larger all-inclusive video/commercial: covering all areas in the region (3-4 minutes)
- c. These videos would be part of our tourism website, each chamber promotion, digital advertising, social platforms all full integration.
- d. Commercial distribution & visibility through NH (i.e. WMUR) **and** larger New England stations as well (Boston, Providence, Hartford)
- e. Provide video production, distribution ad buys.

5. Print Campaign

- a. Develop print campaign to include magazine and newspaper
- b. Provide ads, copy, recommendations on placement and frequency beginning in October 2020 to March 2021
- c. Purchase ad buys and placement.

6. Billboard

- a. Design billboard for region that incorporates “come to play, come to stay” messaging
- b. Obtain any professional photography if needed
- c. Locate and procure billboard space in desirable location
- d. Oversee installation

7. Trade Shows

- a. Design tradeshow booth materials such a video, branding, set up

Evaluation:

Proposal should include dollars allocated to each component, timeline for deliverables, and basic concept for branding – an overall theme or scheme.

Proposal will be evaluated based on creative concept, adherence to scope of project, professionalism, prior projects, and references.

Submission Process:

Please upload proposal and any creative to

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/600b8e5n6bdqtpt/AADkj5V0h9G3FfUk7bas89oma?dl=0>

Point of Contact:

Tracy Hutchins, Upper Valley Business Alliance
603.448.1203
tracy@upervalleybusinessalliance.com