

RFP-CASE-320670 Travel Marketing and Advertising Q & A:

1) Who is Pure Michigan's biggest competition (by target) and why?

For the brand's target, any out-of-state travel destination would be a competitor. With limited resources and vacation time it will be imperative for Michigan to be on the vacation consideration list.

2) Historical breakout of media mix/media spend by audience and channel?

<https://www.michigan.org/industry/researchandreports>

"Advertising effectiveness study"

3) Are there priority focus needs by city or area of the state?

Campaign promotes the entire state of Michigan as a travel destination.

4) How heavy is the focus on urban destinations vs. small towns/nature?

Both are an important focus of the campaign.

5) What goals do you have for 2022, 2023? How will they be measured?

See campaign measurement under section B of the RFP, Research Tools. Additional goals to be developed once budget is allocated.

6) Does this RFP need to include a creative campaign? Or any creative?

The proposal submission does not require the need to include a campaign. The RFP is requesting an agency to develop marketing and advertising campaigns for Pure Michigan.

7) Will there be a post-bid meeting to discuss our proposal submissions?

To be determined depending on number of proposals received.

8) Is there a specific format needed for the staffing plan and pricing proposal?

No.

9) Historical site traffic by month and by location

Overall site traffic on page 3 of RFP.

10) Busiest MI travel destinations by month, by location

<https://www.michigan.org/industry/researchandreports>

“2019 Travel USA Visitation Report”

11) Any travel patterns data on trips to Michigan and from where (from both in and outside of our state)

<https://www.michigan.org/industry/researchandreports>

“2019 Travel USA Visitation Report”

12) What would you say is the greatest challenge you face in attracting visitors to Michigan that you would like to see marketing efforts solve?

In 2021, the pandemic is the greatest challenge for the travel industry. Educating the traveler of the travel safely messaging and recognition that Michigan is naturally a vacation destination that embraces social distancing with the outdoor natural resources available. Economic recovery of the tourism industry in Michigan, over the next several years, will rely greatly on the ability to increase travelers to the state.

13) What prompted you to issue this RFP? Is your current AOR being considered? Current contract with agency to expire in 2021.

All submitted proposals will be considered.

14) What challenges have you faced with previous marketing agencies or campaigns in the past?

The current agency viewpoint is not relevant to submitting a proposal under this RFP.

15) What does success look like to you?

Achieving media KPI's, increasing overall traveler volume and spend on an annual basis to continue elevating Michigan as a premier four-season travel destination.

16) For the \$15MM marketing budget, assuming that \$8.3MM is working media placement, can you share what the split between event/activations, PR, creative/content, production, etc. might be? Is the current budget inclusive of in-market activations?

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17) What percentage of the budget is typically allocated to an influencer marketing program? Should this include influencer discovery and creative programming/activation?

Depends on the overall budget allocation, but it is a small allowance compared with other media platforms. Yes.

18) On Page 11, Point #4, a “detailed research outline” is asked for. Is this specifically related to the research project outlined on page 9?

No, those two points referenced are not the same. The research project outlined on page 9 is background of what the Travel Michigan team has previously done. The detailed research outline on page 11 is what you are proposing in response to the RFP.

19) On Page 11, Point #4, “timelines for accomplishing the work” is mentioned. Should we assume this is for all work in the scope, not just the research element?

The timelines apply to accomplishing the work proposed in response to the RFP.

20) On Page 14, Point #2b, the primary evaluation variable is “Statement of Work”. Is this specific to Points 2, 3, and 4 on Page 11?

Yes.

21) Should we assume that SEO staffing should be included in the proposal?

Yes.

22) Should we assume that only FTEs and hours allocated should be included in the Technical proposal? And rates/pricing + those corresponding FTEs/Hours included in the pricing proposal?

The price proposal should include all expenses covering each of the services and activities identified in your proposal, including proposed out-of-pocket costs.

23) Do you have a specific Annual Hours base that you typically work from? Havas typically works on an 1,800 hours base, but we adjust as need be for our client partners.

No, contract is on a retainer.

24) Are there any preferences on how media staffing is proposed? Retainer based, commission based, Hybrid Model? Or is that up to Havas to determine the best way to support your business?

Retainer based.

25) Should we assume that SEO staffing should be included in the proposal?

Yes

26) Regarding Subcontractors, is this inclusive of production companies that we might consider using?

Yes

27) Are the four target audiences built with any typing tools? Or built within any specific syndicated research tools (Simmons, MRI, etc.)?

Research tools

28) Is the Adventure Scouts audience segment considered your Growth Audience? And do you have revenue allocation goals for Adventure Scouts, Sentimental Travelers, and In-Market Travelers?

All target audiences are considered growth opportunities with the Adventure Scout be the newest target audience. No.

29) How much emphasis will be placed on your international markets in terms of time and resources? Do you have existing agencies in Canada, UK and German? Will content need to be produced in German?

Agency time allocation is very low and will not require creating new creative/materials. Yes, in UK and Germany. No.

30) What has your traditional investment allocation mix been between Local, National, and International media?

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“Advertising effectiveness study”

31) How have you worked in partnership with OTAs or other travel aggregators in the past? Are there set terms in place that we should be aware of?

Yes, have worked with OTAs. No set terms.

32) Can you share what you have done in the Connected TV space thus far? Direct Buys? Programmatic Buys? Engagement placements?

Yes, all have been part of the media strategy.

33) What are the success metrics and KPIs of your media campaigns? Is purely traffic driven to Michigan.org?

Note Research Tools section of RFP, increasing overall trips to Michigan.

34) In addition to the existing research study, has you ever conducted any Marketing Mix Modeling to work in concert with this research study?

Yes.

35) Do you have a preferred cadence for media and creative performance reporting? Real-time Dashboards, Monthly, Quarterly, Campaign end, etc.?

Ongoing and campaign completion. As frequent as possible is the requirement.

36) In working with Brand USA for international efforts, does the Pure Michigan message remaining 100% intact in those campaigns? Or is Travel Michigan aggregated together with other US destinations?

Yes. No.

37) Is the Pure Michigan campaign and creative carried over into all Partnership programs?

Yes, for digital partners. TV partners have Pure Michigan destination-specific creative.

38) Can you provide some past examples of “branded experiential marketing opportunities” so that we ensure we are planning appropriately for this need? Is there a target number of experiential activations that should be considered?

Past creative included artist murals, theater take overs, tour bus wraps, but looking for ideas and recommendations for development in this area.

39) Is there a content and asset summary that includes the type of content and number of assets created by your current agency in 2020 and/or historical?

No.

40) Does creation of campaign content for industry trade events also include booth production/visual design?

No, not required.

41) Beyond the “Pure Michigan” campaign, are there any other planned advertising activities rolling out in 2021/2022 that we should be aware of?

No.

42) Is MSF open to working with agencies outside of Michigan?

Yes.

43) What percentage of the contract value (labor hours) needs to stay with Michigan businesses?

There is not a requirement.

44) How favorable is MSF’s current relationship with McCann and Weber Shandwick? Are they eligible to recompute this contract?

The current contract is ending and an RFP is required. All submitted proposals will be considered.

45) Funding for this contract appeared to be up in the air during the COVID pandemic. What is the current status of those funds?

Funding was provided in fiscal year 2021.

46) What other state tourism campaigns do you admire? Why do you admire them?

Any brand campaign is admirable that stands apart in their strategic messaging and emotionally connects with their intended audience in an unexpected level.

47) What is the total anticipated budget for this contract?

Actual budget for fiscal year 2022 will be dependent on the overall State of Michigan budget.

48) Is there a priority in who to reach amongst the target audience breakouts or is it an equal percentage of spend against each target audience?

Equal spend.

49) Would each of these audiences have their own defined timeframes for targeting?

Depends on development of the media plan and budget.

50) Are there specific regions of interest regarding targeting "Adventure Scouts"?

Depends on budget allocation and planned media approach by market.

51) Are there geo-specific priorities for specific regions that are outlined in the RFP?

No.

52) What is the current percentage of paid vs. organic content created on social media?

There is a greater percentage of organic content created than paid content on social media currently.

53) As a four season tourism state, are there specific weighted breakouts based on seasons or is it more based on regional tourism within the state itself?

Summer has the highest breakout followed by fall and winter.

54) Can you provide a current breakout of your media mix based on percent of investment in each channel? If not a percentage, can you provide based on priority?

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“Advertising effectiveness study”

55) How are qualified referrals being tracked and measured back to paid and organic media channels?

Pixel tracking and research platforms.

56) Are the specific channels of interest as part of the proposal?

Yes, all recommendations should be outlined.

57) What, if any, are the mandatory KPIs have to measure? Will our team be responsible for placing and QAing appropriate tags, or working with your team to do so?

Yes, that would be the agency’s responsibility.

58) What types of out of home media is currently a part of the campaign? Is that a continued consideration for this RFP?

Digital/vinyl. Yes.

59) How is out of home media defined by region?

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60) Is there a defined list of trade events for upcoming participation or would that need to be defined by a chosen partner?

To be defined by Travel Michigan.

61) Social media continues to evolve, is there an appetite to explore new mediums and expand the Pure Michigan brand to platforms such as TikTok, Clubhouse, etc?

Yes, the PR/social media agency will be expected to have awareness of, and provide recommendations around trends and best practices in social media, new channels, changes in consumer behavior on social, etc.

62) Does the Michigan Economic Development Corporation currently utilize any sort of social media staging/publishing software such as Opal or Khoros?

We utilize Sprout Social in addition to native functionality for scheduling and publishing content across the Pure Michigan social channels.

63) Are there benchmarks for growth for the current social media channels?

Yes, social growth is a KPI.

64) Are there additional corporate partnerships anticipated beyond the list that was provided in the RFP?

No, not right now, but the list continues to expand on an annual basis.

65) What channels of creative development will be needed to assist Travel Michigan with the partnerships?

Outlined in RFP, under Partnership Program. Also, dependent on budget allocation and recommendations provided by the agency.

66) Can you outline your paid search KPI's?

Outlined within RFP, and dependent on the campaign parameters to ensure alignment.

67) Is website content and keyword optimization managed by an in-house team for organic search results?

Managed by Travel Michigan and coordinated with the agency.

68) What are the PR goals associated with the Pure Michigan campaign?

Proposed strategies and activities must:

- Promote Michigan as a world-class business location and four-season leisure travel destination.
- Generate new business prospects to the state through improved perception of Michigan as a desirable place to do business.
- Increase awareness of the full suite of services MEDC offers to Michigan entrepreneurs, businesses and communities.
- Increase the visibility of Michigan as a regional and national leisure travel destination.
- Strengthen the perception of Michigan as a desirable place to live, work and play.

These objectives meet the strategic focus of the MEDC to market the state and promote Michigan's image as a world-class business and leisure travel destination.

69) What level of creative development will be executed by chosen agency vs. in-house capabilities and/or other creative development partners?

Request is for agency to develop campaign creative.

70) Is there an abstract or summary of the research findings that can be used to help inform RFP submissions? Was it both qualitative and quantitative?

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71) Will the contractor be responsible for developing the strategy for international outreach? or will Brand USA handle the strategy and the contractor will deliver the media plan and creative based on their developed strategy?

No, Travel Michigan defines the international strategy with in-country representation. The agency will be required to assist as noted below.

For Canada only...Media strategy, buying and placement of the creative is needed as part of the agency contract. Creative for Canada is the same creative used domestically. The media team will coordinate the media buy with BUSA to leverage the partnership program that Travel Michigan secures on an annual basis.

For BUSA programs, in Canada, UK and Germany, Travel Michigan works with BUSA in securing international programs which includes the development of campaign elements. The agency will be required to assist with creative assets (photography, digital OLA's, etc.) for use within these campaign elements.

72) Would you be willing to share any previous research or marketing strategies?

<https://www.michigan.org/industry/researchandreports>

73) What research/data do you currently use?

<https://www.michigan.org/industry/researchandreports>

74) Does the media budget include group or trade show support for creative?

No.

75) Regarding UGC, are you looking for the agency partner to manage a platform?

Not for the marketing and advertising campaign.

76) Do you plan to keep the same co-op model that you had in 2019? If not, how do you expect it to change?

Currently using in 2021, unknown in the future.

77) Will there be an opportunity for virtual presentations?

To be determined based on the number of proposals received.

78) Do you currently have an Agency of Record or are your marketing capabilities managed in-house? Have you used an agency before?

Yes.

79) What led you to set out this RFP?

Current contract with agency to expire in 2021.

80) How will you all manage the Agency relationship?

Daily basis with close ongoing partnership.

81) Do you consider an agency that works for another state's tourism board to be a conflict?

Not within the state of Michigan. Other Midwest states, or states with similar travel offerings or industry focus may present a conflict, but all proposals will be considered.

82) Do you currently have robust audience research on each appropriate segment?

Yes.

83) What have been the biggest obstacles to success for the MEDC in the past five years?

The biggest challenges the organization faces today are having enough resources to support Michigan's small business recovery efforts and overcoming historical business climate misconceptions amongst our national target audience set.

84) Will there be reporting, and analytics work necessary to prove campaign success? If so, what level of reporting are you anticipating?

Yes, and detailed reporting required.

Agency will work with research vendor, selected by Travel Michigan, to provide campaign details for campaign evaluation annually.

85) It is noted that "Many of these promotional avenues are managed by other contractors." on page 3 under "Tourism Industry" - which of these are going to be covered in separate RFPs/other contracts and which would be awarded to the winner of this RFP?

The agency for this RFP will be required to work with other Travel Michigan partners that are not part of the marketing and advertising RFP.

86) Any established parameters for the preferred commission structure of paid media?

Retainer-based contract.

87) Could you let us know if you are open to a Canadian agency or do you have a location preference?

No location preference.

88) Could you let us know what the budget is for this work from agency to media fees?

Determined once budget is established.

89) We have been trying to get Pure Michigan and its magazine in our hundreds of displays through Michigan, from Sault Ste Marie to Chicago to Detroit to Grand Rapids to Lansing, etc.. We are Michigan's largest tourism distributor.

Recently read the MEDC RFP for Travel Marketing and Advertising. We fit exactly what is needed for getting the magazine out to the public and our coverage is spot on. But we are only part of what and full scale advertising agency would be doing and part of a proposal.

Looking for guidance on how we can be part of each proposal, as it sounds like you will only be selecting one vendor to cover the entire umbrella. Or can we send in a proposal with just our distribution services and some how integrated or exposed to the large advertising agencies as an option??

With State Welcome Centers closed in 2020 and no end for 2021, getting the Pure Michigan magazine out into travelers hands has always been limited.

This question is not applicable to this particular RFP. Please refer to the Travel Guide RFP.