

**2009 Advertising RFP
Q&A**

AMENDED and POSTED as of 10/16/09

- 1. Q. How many companies are currently responding to the RFP?**
A. Only the organizations that attend the mandatory pre-proposal conference will be able to respond to the RFP.
- 2. Q. How many agencies are included in this RFP? Is it open to all or were only companies with agriculture experience, like my company, invited to submit?**
A. There is one State agency client in this RFP, the Department of Agriculture and Markets. The primary focus is the State Fair, which is run by the Department. Any firm can submit a proposal, the RFP was not limited to firms with agricultural experience.
- 3. Q. How can a small Minority/Women Owned Business become involved in the project?**
A. By partnering with another agency to submit a bid, or by securing a subcontract with the winning bidder.
- 4. Q. Would it be permissible to build interactive exercises that would allow both "media opinion makers and younger audiences" to work together on some of the same issues around fostering a more competitive food and agriculture Industry in New York State?**
A. It is up to you as the Proposer to determine if this strategy is appropriate.
- 5. Q. Is there an incumbent who is eligible to bid on the advertising, marketing, promotion and public relations' services program?**
A. Yes, there is a current State Fair contract that expires 12/31/09.
- 6. Q. Why is the New York State Fair being promoted at this time--What's driving it?**
A. The New York State Fair is only one of the events held at the NYS Fairgrounds/Expo Center during the year and work on the annual Fair begins the day after the Fair ends.
- 7. Q. What do your surveys, case studies indicate are the issues with top down vs. bottom up external communications regarding a dialogue on fostering a more competitive food and agriculture industry in New York State.**
A. There have been no recent surveys conducted regarding the promotion of NYS agriculture by the Department of Agriculture and Markets.

8. **Q. What would "success" look like for 2010?**
A. Increased attendance at the State Fair, increased ticket sales for the Grandstand, increased utilization of the Empire Expo Center, increased website traffic, etc. Please see the Goals section of the RFP.
9. **Q. Web analytics has 2008-9 unique visitors* in July and August at 221,566. October through June less than 6K-50K per month. July/August peaking up to 200K again, does this coincide with your monthly metrics?**
A. Yes.
10. **Q. How many past attendees are in the current data base? How have they been data mined in the past?**
A. We do not have a database of attendees. However we do have certain data regarding concert goers, who are only 10% of fairgoers.
11. **Q. Will the Contractors interested in the RFP be able to attend the upcoming Press events for the Fair for a half-day, full-day?**
A. Press events are open to the public.
12. **Q. We noticed that the nysfair.org website is shut down (2:22 pm, 9/23/09). Is shutting the nysfair.org website down standard procedure each year after the event is over?**
A. The site is kept up all year long. Other events are advertised on it throughout the year. This was an unplanned network outage on that date.
13. **Q. Has the website <http://www.nysfair.org> had Graphic Usability Research and Analysis - Assessing information architecture, task flow, and match with user needs?**
A. We have not had analysis done for the current site.
14. **Q. Your document states that the advertising agency is expected to pay services, etc. prior to being paid and would need the funds and/or line of credit to pay for cost incurred. Does this mean all broadcast production (production company, editorial service, talent, casting, etc.) media? Please be so kind as to clarify the invoice/ payment portion. Also another phrase stuck out - "satisfactorily completed". Please be so kind as to interpret...can be misunderstood.**
A. All costs are to be met up front by the Proposer. In this context, "satisfactorily completed" means the service has been provided, with the prior knowledge and consent of the Department, and supporting documents are attached to the invoice clearly indicating that such service was performed.

- 15. Q. Page one - " all questions must be submitted by Monday October 5th..." However, some of our questions need to be addressed and answered prior to attending the mandatory pre-proposal conference on Thursday October 1st. Can this happen?**
A. Yes. We will be posting questions and answers starting today and updating them daily through 10/7/09.
- 16. Q. Will advertising efforts be directed mainly to the State of New York and nearby states?**
A. Advertising efforts will be directed mainly to New York State, but also regionally.
- 17. Q. Do you have numbers on out of state people visiting the fair? Which states feed the most visitors?**
A. No.
- 18. Q. Will there be an effort against food wholesalers from out of state?**
A. No.
- 19. Q. Page 4, Scope of Services, item 1.g. Could you further elaborate on the needs for the sponsorship recruitment package?**
A. We are currently working with a company to develop a new sponsorship program for the New York State Fairgrounds. The successful proposer will be expected to work with the Department to develop the promotional material necessary to implement that program.
- 20. Q. Page 4, Scope of Services, item 2.d. Could you explain how you envision the media center?**
A. The Empire Expo Center has meeting, banquet and theatre space that is leased by businesses and organizations for meetings. We are exploring whether video-conferencing capabilities would generate more lease business.
- 21. Q. Is there a separate budget to conduct surveys or would this come out of the \$1.5 million?**
A. The \$1.5 million is the budget for the New York State and Expo Center. At this time, there is not a budget for other programs outlined in the RFP. However, the Department is interested in a proposal that includes ideas for the other programs that might be funded in future years of the contract.
- 22. Q. Does the \$1.5 million budget include production costs and out of pocket expenses? If not, would it include mark-ups on production?**
A. The \$1.5 million is the total budget for all costs.

23. **Q. Page 7, Professional Services Component, item (vi). Can we submit more than one sample for each medium?**
A. Yes.
24. **Q. Do the samples need to relate to the case studies (3 successful campaigns) under that same item, or can we submit unrelated creative pieces?**
A. The RFP requires at least one radio, television and print ad each from three (3) campaigns. Additional items may be submitted.
25. **Q. Page 8, Cost and Fee Component, item 5, estimated budget for production costs in this program. Would this be over and above the \$1.5 million?**
A. The \$1.5 million is the total budget for all costs.
26. **Q. Page 9, Proposal Submission. You need one original and five copies of this RFP. Do you need each of them to be divided into three distinct envelopes?**
A. We require three (3) envelopes; one with one original and five (5) copies of the Minimum Qualifications, one with one original and five (5) copies of the Professional Services Component, and one with one original and five (5) copies of the Cost Sheet.
27. **Q. Page 11, Evaluation Criteria, item 4, Creativity and Connection. Are you expecting the agencies to present a marketing and media plan, as well as creative concepts? If so, where should we place this item? Under section Professional Services Component?**
A. We require proposers to present a plan and concepts under the Professional Services Component.
28. **Q. Page 13, Certification Pursuant to New York State Tax Law Section 5-A. Do agencies need to submit an affidavit certifying that they are registered to collect New York State and local sales tax in this RFP, or would that be something needed after the account is assigned?**
A. The Tax forms (ST-220-CA and ST-220-TD) are the certification. These completed tax forms should be submitted with the proposal.
29. **Q. Page 15, second paragraph, Form A. Is this something that needs to be sent out with this RFP or after the account is assigned?**
A. Form A should accompany the proposal.
30. **Q. Does the fact that MGSCOMM is not certified to pay taxes in the State of New York excludes us from pursuing this opportunity? If the**

answer is yes, can we partner with an agency that can supply the certificate.

A. The proposer does not have to have any type of certification unless they have made sales of taxable personal property in New York having a value of \$300,000.00 or more in the past 12 months.

31. Q. We are planning on attending the Pre-Proposal Conference on 10/1. My biggest concern however is on page 6 of your RFP under "Minimum Qualifications". Specifically #4 states...the Proposer has the economic resources to pay expenses including staff and administrative expenses in advance. We have no problem paying our staff and other fixed expenses, however paying the media vendors and production out of pocket prior to receiving payment from the State might be difficult for any ad agency to adhere too. Would it be possible to address this concern prior to our visit on Thursday. As an FYI, we are the agency-of-record for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the Port Authority of NY & NJ. Both agency's do not require such pre-payment.

A. The requirement that the successful proposer pay all costs up front cannot be waived or changed.

32. Q. We are considering partnering with another agency as either a prime contractor or sub-contractor. Please advise if attendance is required at the pre-bid conference if we enter into a sub-contractor relationship?

A. Sub-contractors are not required to attend the pre-proposal conference.

33. Q. Can we obtain the pre-bid conference attendee contact information to pursue a potential partnership?

A. The list is public information and will be posted as part of the Q & A's after the conference.

34. Q. On page 7 of the RFP, a sample marketing plan is requested to be submitted. As our clients view this as proprietary information we may not be able to supply this confidential information. Will the department disqualify a firm for not submitting this element?

A. If the requested information isn't supplied, the proposal would be materially incomplete and disqualified

35. Q. Can we have a list of the pre-proposal conference attendees?

A. Representatives from AdWorkshop & Inphorm, Ashworth Creative, BANDUJO, Cliff Freeman & Partners, Corporate Communications, Inc., Cult360, Della Feminia, Howell Liberator/Wickham Marketing Group, Kipany Pictures, L&P Media, Pinckney Hugo, PLUM Agency/The

Research Associates, Posner Advertising, Quinn Fable Advertising, Inc., SKM Group, The Creative Advantage, Inc., The EGC Group, and Trampoline Design attended the conference.

36. **Q. Is the RFP requesting ideas on more than State Fair Marketing and if so is that included in the \$1.5 mil?**
A. Yes, the Department seeks consistency in its advertising approach across all programs. The \$1.5 million is the total budget for the State Fair program. At this time, there is no budget allocation for the other programs outlined in the RFP.
37. **Q. On the Cost Sheet, what is the difference between Professional and Non-Professional Service?**
A. The Professional Services are the cost of the professional staff of your firm, such as the Creative Directors, Account Managers, etc. The Non-professional costs are for administrative and support staff. The section on Total Creative/Account Service Budget should include the total estimated amount to be charged for your staff, expressed as hourly rates multiplied by the number of hours of work on our account.
38. **Q. Is the budget entirely for the promotion of the annual New York State Fair?**
A. No. The budget is also to promote the Empire Expo Center as a venue to host events, such as horse shows, craft fairs, athletic events, motor sports, musical acts, business meetings, conferences, trade shows, etc. The Empire Expo Center hosts approximately 300 events per year.
39. **Q. Approximately what is the break down of the \$1.5 million budget between the State Fair-time and the rest of the year?**
A. The break-down is approximately \$1.2 million for State Fair Advertising and \$300,000 for the rest of year.
40. **Q. With regard to the Pride of New York program, what was the percentage used towards printing in the past?**
A. Of the amount spent on advertising, approximately 50% was spent on media, about 10% to 14% of which was for printing. The percentage spent on printing varies for each program.
41. **Q. Could you tell us what has been good and not so good about past advertising? What has worked or not worked in the past?**
A. No. That is what we want you to do. We're looking for new ideas and don't necessarily have to continue the "Pride of New York" slogan.
42. **Q. One of your goals is to increase sales internationally?**
A. Many New York producers ship worldwide. New York products include processed foods such as cheese, sauces and wine. Additionally, the

demand for New York agriculture products as ingredients in processed food is widespread. For example, Philadelphia cream cheese is made solely from New York State milk. We're looking to increase demand internationally as well as encourage New Yorkers to buy local.

- 43. Q. Do you have any demographics as to who attends the New York State Fair?**
A. We have no demographics for Fair-goers, but we believe that Fair-goers are drawn from Central New York, the area from Buffalo to Albany, Lake Erie to the Hudson Valley, Pennsylvania border and the Watertown and St. Lawrence areas.
- 44. Q. How large is the Grandstand Venue?**
A. The Grandstand seats 17,000, and requires a paid admission fee.
- 45. Q. How large is the Chevy Court Venue?**
A. The Chevy Court holds 15,000, seated and standing, and hosts free events.
- 46. Q. Is there a reason only 7 concerts were booked for 2009 vs. the 11 shows in 2008?**
A. The number of concerts was reduced for two reasons. In 2008, only 10% of Fairgoers attended the paid concerts. Since the purpose of the concerts is to increase Fair attendance we are experimenting with the concert planning to gauge the impact on general admissions. Also, the Grandstand is an open-air venue. In the event a concert is cancelled due to rain, the Fair sustains twice the cost because it must pay the guarantee to the act and pay refunds for concert tickets. Reducing the number of concerts reduces the risk of loss to the Fair.
- 47. Q. Is there a combination ticket for the concert?**
A. Yes, Grandstand concert tickets include admission to the Fair for the day of the concert.
- 48. Q. Does NYSDAM / NYS Fair have public relations?**
A. Yes. We have a Director of Communications in the Department and a Public Information Officer at the Fair.
- 49. Q. What is the New York State Fair Ticket Cost?**
A. The tickets are \$10 per person at the gate and \$6 per person for advance ticket sales.
- 50. Q. Is the advertising budget intended to attract sponsors?**
A. We have a firm preparing a sponsorship program for us. Staff of the Department will promote the sponsorship package. We expect the advertiser to assist in the production of that package.

- 51. Q. What would be the purpose of a Media Center?**
A. The goal is to promote businesses to attract business meetings and conferences to the Empire Expo Center by providing business technology, such as videoconferencing. The Fair is a great central location of the state, with easy access to highways and the thruway. The Empire Expo Center has 375 acres and 110 buildings. Only the annual State Fair utilizes all of the available facilities. Although the Empire Expo Center hosts more than 300 events a year, not all of its facilities are continuously in use. There is opportunity for improvement.
- 52. Q. Is there a special admission rate for children?**
A. Children 12 years of age and under are free. In addition, seniors age 60 and over are admitted free on certain days of the New York State Fair.
- 53. Q. Does the Department have any b-roll film the Proposer can use?**
A. There is approximately two hours of video footage from the 2008 Fair.
- 54. Q. Who is the entertainment promoter and/or booking agent for the New York State Fair?**
A. Triangle Talent from Louisville, Kentucky books the entertainment. The advertising agency is expected to be the promoter. Triangle Talent is one of the largest entertainment booking agencies in the country and specializes in the Fair industry. Their website is www.triangletalent.com. The Department had a one-year contract with Triangle Talent with an option to renew for two years, and we are exercising that option.
- 55. Q. How are the artists/concerts booked for the Fair?**
A. Booking is made based on who is available and who is on tour in the Northeast during the dates of the State Fair. The Grandstand has lost acts because the dates at the State Fair conflict with the artist's tour schedule.
- 56. Q. Assuming that Triangle Talent uses demographics to select entertainment for the State Fair, can we talk to Triangle Talent?**
A. Entertainment is selected based on a combination of national appeal and availability in the central New York area during Fair time. We have no demographics to provide to Triangle Talent or to the Proposers on this RFP.
- 57. Q. When is talent confirmed?**
A. Triangle Talent is already booking talent for the 2010 State Fair.
- 58. Q. Will we have access to sponsorship costs?**
A. Cash revenue from sponsorships was \$1,686,628 million, and trade value received was \$507,558 in 2008.

59. **Q. Regarding the Pride of New York program, how much was focused on kindergarten through 12th grade students?**
A. In the past few years we dedicated a modest amount of resources to a Farm-to-School program for grade school children. We also have some initiatives with other State agencies involving pre-kindergarten and college students.
60. **Q. The RFP mentioned the possibility of redesigning and building the website. Is the cost of the design and build in the \$1.5 million budget?**
A. Yes. Both designing and building of the website would come out of the \$1.5 million budget.
61. **Q. What content management system is used for the current website?**
A. The content management system on the fair web site is a custom developed PHP source code. There are a few "pre-fab" components but for the most part it was developed specifically for the fair.
62. **Q. What is the timetable for receiving payment?**
A. All standard vouchers must be approved by the appropriate division. Any vouchers over \$15,000 must go to the State Comptroller's Office for approval which takes approximately 2 weeks to receive payment. Vouchers under \$15,000 are referred to as Quick Pays which takes days to receive payment. Payment is only made once the contract has been executed by the State Comptroller's Office. The contract approval process takes at least two months and can span several months.
63. **Q. Is the \$1.5 million for 2009 or 2010?**
A. The funds are for the 2010 calendar year. This overlaps the State Fiscal Year which begins on April 1. The Fair generates the revenue that funds its operation.
64. **Q. What demographics do you have on who attends the Fair? Are you targeting urban residents?**
A. We do not have demographics on Fair-goers. We are looking to target everyone to the Fair and the Empire State Expo, including people from other states.
65. **Q. Are Fair tickets available in advance?**
A. Yes, through the State Fair box office and other outlets.
66. **Q. What firm has the current advertising contract?**
A. Pinckney Hugo has a two-year contract with the Fair, which expires December 31, 2009. There is no contract for the Pride of New York program.
67. **Q. What is the goal of the Buy Local program?**

A. To increase sales for local producers, and demonstrate the wide diversity of products that New York State has to offer. We want input as to whether we're approaching this the best way.

68. Q. Will a list of attendees be available?

A. Yes, the list will be posted as a separate document on our website under the Advertising RFP. (See response #35)

69. Q. Are there enough New York State products to meet demand?

A. That is part of our mission here at the Department, to help producers meet demand.

70. Q. Is there a correlation between Fair attendance and a successful concert?

A. There doesn't seem to be a correlation. This year attendance was up 50,000 over last year, but we had fewer concerts, seven instead of eleven.

71. Q. Could you please explain the cost sheet?

A. The Cost Sheet from the RFP is the only format permitted for presenting costs. This format will allow us to compare firms for the 20 points assigned to the cost component of the proposal.

1) The first section, for "Total Creative/Account Service" should be the cost of your staff, expressed in hourly rates times the estimated number of hours to be worked on our contract.

2) The "Media Budget" is the estimated amount to be spent on buying airtime or placing print ads, etc.

3) The "Commission on Media" is the percentage, if any, of the markup you intend to charge for buying media.

4) The "Cost of Commission on Media" is the estimated media budget multiplied by the commission rate.

5) The "Production Budget" is the estimated amount to be spent on preparing print ads, filming ads, reproducing materials, etc.

6) The "Commission on Production" is the percentage, if any, of the markup you intend to charge for producing the ads.

7) The "Cost of Commission on Production" is the estimated production budget multiplied by the commission rate.

8) The "Travel, Other Expenses" should include estimated costs for travel or other business expenses expected to be incurred in fulfilling the contract.

9) The "Grand Total, All Costs" should total approximately \$1.5 million.

The cost categories of "Total Creative/Account Service," "Cost of Commission on Media," "Cost of Commission on Production" and the "Travel, Other Expenses" will be added together. The Proposer with the lowest total will be awarded all 20 points. All other Proposers will be scored as follows:

Lowest Total
ABC Co. Total X 20

Please see the Cost Sheet on our website, under the Advertising RFP.
There is a sample on the second page of the spreadsheet.

72. **Q. Will there be oral presentation?**
A. Oral Presentations may follow at the discretion of the Department.
73. **Q. If the selected agency is fronting the money for the media, will they be entitled to the commission?**
A. Yes
74. **Q. What items are required to be created and printed for the NY State Fair? The approximate number of pages in each document? The quantity printed for each.**
A. Fair guide (12 pages) 1.3million; Insiders guide (24pages) 162,000; Daily Maps (2 sided) 300,000; Advance Sale Posters - 1,700; Advance Sale Counter Cards - 2,500; State Fair Posters – 3,000; State Fair Concert Posters – 1,000.
75. **Q. Will the State possibly use the creative concept/s developed by a bidder that has not been chosen?**
A. Another proposer's creative will not be used – however we may build on a prior used concept.
76. **Q. Does the state own all past creative work?**
A. Yes, the Fair owns all past creative.
77. **Q. Can a list of last years 300+ Off-Season events at the Fairground be provided?**
A. See attached "Off- Season Events" list
78. **Q. Are there any attendance figures from last year by zip code from ticketing outlets?**
A. No, we do not track that information at this time.
79. **Q. Is there a group sales arrangement for the Fair in place?**
A. No formal policy at this time. We do sell approx 17,000 per year.
80. **Q. Will Triangle Talent provide a contact for the bidder to work with?**
A. Yes, through the Fair and Triangle.
81. **Q. Is there "B" Roll footage available of the Fair?**
A. There is approximately two hours of video footage from the 2008 Fair.

82. **Q. If we are partnering with another agency for specific aspects of this contract, should our partner also provide a letter from their CPA stating sufficient net worth?**
A. Yes, along with a specific description of the proposed partnership or joint venture.
83. **Q. Is media expected to be placed throughout the state of NY, or only in the surrounding areas of Syracuse?**
A. Advertising is expected to be placed around NYS, and regionally, for the Fair.
84. **Q. It was mentioned in the meeting that payment would not be dispersed for 6 months, does this cover media and production, or just the agency fee?**
A. Full execution of the contract may take several months, and may occur after January 1, 2010. Payments cannot be authorized until the contract is fully approved by OSC. The selected contractor is to cover all costs, as the Department will pay only the contractor directly.
85. **Q. Is creative to submitted in the original RFP, or only in the oral presentation.**
A. The written proposal should include some creative ideas to give us a basis to judge the Proposer's creative abilities. All Proposer's will be initially evaluated based on the written proposal, including creative, and only the Proposers rated the highest may have an opportunity to make oral presentations, which will be at the discretion of the Department..
86. **Q. How many agencies will be asked to present an oral presentation?**
A. The RFP indicates that three Proposers may be asked to make oral presentations. However, Department reserves the right to request as many or as few Proposers to make oral presentations as it deems necessary.
87. **Q. Please give examples of effective offers you have utilized in the past. For example, have you used offers such as buy one ticket, get one free?**
Q. What do you consider to be the biggest problem/obstacle you face in getting attendance to the fair?
Q. What do you consider to be the greatest opportunities to leverage for the 2010 Fair Marketing?
A. These questions relate to the post-award relationship with the new contractor and are questions/answers for you to put forward in your proposal.