

FEBRUARY 24, 2023

CARSON CITY CULTURE & TOURISM  
AUTHORITY DBA VISIT CARSON CITY

# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AGENCY OF RECORD

WEB/DIGITAL MAINTENANCE AND  
DEVELOPMENT, CREATIVE CONTENT  
AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

RFP # 2023-002

ADDENDUM NO. 1

**REPLY TO:**

CARSON CITY CULTURE & TOURISM AUTHORITY  
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VISIT  
CARSON  
CITY  
NV

## RFP 2023-002 ADDENDUM NO. 1

Please make the following additions/changes/clarifications to the above referenced project due to questions received. The questions below are listed and shown as received.

**1. Are you currently happy with your content?**

*Overall, yes, our photo and video content, outside of our commercials, are done in-house. We always feel there are unique ways to keep evolving creatively though all our marketing channels and support more of what we are doing internally. We are really happy with our PR content.*

**2. Do you feel like you want or need more or less strategic video and photo content?**

*See question one. Since this is handled internally, it is an area where we need the least support, except for our commercial shoots and fully integrated marketing campaign assets. We are looking for a firm that can best collaborate with what we are doing in-house and/or improve upon it.*

**3. Would CTA Benefit from a more volume based digital content strategy.**

*This question is unclear. We are happy with our current digital strategy and feel like we have maximized our volume with the budget we have but are open to suggestions. Media buying is handled in-house by our Marketing & PR Manager with the help of a digital consultant. Using the agency as the consultant is an option if agency is willing.*

**4. Would CTA benefit from Digital Video and Photo assets for trade shows?**

*Yes, we are slowly building our content for our events & sales program. Photo and video are handled internally by our Multimedia Content Coordinator. Larger projects will require assistance.*

**5. What's a successful content plan look for you?**

*We're hoping you will tell us that. Something that is planned quarterly and executed monthly or planned the month before. We are open to what works best synergistically between both parties. Much of our agencies content creation is for special projects and marketing campaigns.*

**6. What does good creative writing mean to you?**

*Of course, this is important, our blog page is an important driver for our social ads and newsletter content. Whitty, creative, relatable writing is key for that page and any short form copy writing. We are an approachable, welcoming destination. Ad copy writing and video scripting is something we like to lean on our agency for special projects. We are not afraid to admit that creative writing is not one of our strongest assets internally.*

**7. Besides blog posts What are some of your creative writing needs? Short form? (ad copy, video scripting)**

*See question six.*

**8. For ongoing written "Long form content", how many deliverables are you looking for annually? 1 per month?**

*Blogs, usually 1-2 per month. We also have a local Carson City resident who writes one blog per month and creates content for us around that.*

- 9. What are some metrics you are looking to achieve this year, organic search traffic, user engagement?**  
*We would love to discuss this more with the awarded agency. A goal of ours is to decrease our bounce rate and make our website pages more efficient. Another would be to increase our engagement with content geared to more specific audiences and create multiple cuts for social channels and other digital channels with the beautiful footage shot in all seasons from our new commercial.*
- 10. What are some KPI's you are looking to achieve with content this year?**  
*One would be to increase our engagement with content geared to more specific audiences and create multiple cuts for social channels and other digital channels with the beautiful footage shot in all seasons from our new commercial.*
- 11. Are you interested in cross promotion? Between other Brands, DMO's or influencers?**  
*We collaborate often with other DMO's through the Reno-Tahoe Territory, but we are also very cognizant to not lose sight of our own brand. In short, yes, very open.*
- 12. Is CTA Happy with their influencer content?**  
*Yes, but that does not mean it cannot continually improve. We contract with a company that helps hire and vet influencers that come into market, but itineraries are planned and FAMs are usually led by our Marketing & PR Manager.*
- 13. Would VCC benefit from more influencer based content?**  
*More would never hurt, but we do feel like we have put the maximum amount of budget we can towards influencer relations in our media budget. We to continue to leverage the influencers we work with to produce multiple forms of content we can license or own.*
- 14. We do not possess 11.1 or 11.2 however have been working with clients such as the State of California, Wyoming and Colorado at this time. Would these be required or would we be able to work with yourselves like we do these various States?**  
*Both are required.*
- 15. Could you let us know what the budget is for this work both for agency services and that for paid media?**  
*Please refer to the cost proposal template for the overall estimated not-to-exceed value for the RFP itself. Paid media is purchased internally and not a part of the budget provided. There are instances of hard costs for projects like PR activations that will be run through the agency. Our current paid media budget is approximately \$200,000.*
- 16. What do you use as your underlying technologies, CMS, CRM, etc. for your digital communications and platforms?**  
*Mailchimp is used currently for CRM, and Wordpress for CMS.*
- 17. Could we request an electronic submission in light of the lifting of all delivery guarantees from all the courier companies?**  
*No, unfortunately, we must have hard copies.*

**18. Is Visit Carson City looking to make a change? Will the incumbent agency be able to bid on this work or has their ability to work for Visit Carson City expired based on the rules of the contract?**

*The RFP was put out because the 4-year contracts with the current agency expire on 6/30/23. We are very happy with our current services, yet we are an open-minded team willing and eager to see what other agencies bring to the table so that we can make the best decision for Visit Carson City (VCC). The current agency of record can bid on this RFP.*

**19. Are you happy with the services provided by your current/previous agency? Where are the opportunities for improvement?**

*We are very happy with our current services, yet we are an open-minded team willing and eager to see what other agencies bring to the table so that we can make the best decision for Visit Carson City (VCC). Something we'd like to continue to improve upon is our uniqueness of our content and PR in comparison to our competitors. We feel like with our new campaign we've begun to do that and would like to continue that momentum with our content and unique PR opportunities and work with the best vendors that fit that vision. Standing out amongst the noise is a priority for VCC. Additionally, now that we're into the swing of post-COVID times, we would like to lean on our agency for more creative brainstorming sessions to keep all parties fresh. We've had a lot of ad-hoc projects due to the circumstance of the last 2 years and creating a really collaborative environment is something we'd love to continue to improve upon.*

**20. What would "success" look like for Visit Carson City as a brand? In what specific areas are you looking to grow?**

*Success is relative to what you are comparing. We are just getting traction on launching our brand and first fully integrated marketing campaign. Our current brand and website launched in January of 2020, with COVID, so we feel like this is just the beginning of great things to come for our brand. Our first ever fully integrated marketing campaign launched in July 2022. Driving Carson City as a year-round destination and increasing room-nights in our off-seasons are goals of our entire organization and something we continue to focus on. So, in all honesty, we are still evaluating what "success" looks like as many of our benchmarks are still being set. We are just getting started.*

**21. Regarding the length of the proposals, you say they must be 30 pages or fewer, "not including company brochures." Can you define "company brochures" a bit more specifically and clarify whether "case studies" are considered "brochures"? I.e. - Are we allowed to provide any written context within those "brochure" pages or should those only be visual samples of our previous work?**

*Company brochures refers to any company information and/or case studies, please include them in the RFP, but the more concise the better. You can assume the team reviewing the RFPs have reviewed many before. We are looking to avoid unnecessary "fluff" and want your visual examples and past work to speak for themselves. We will say, we appreciate and rely on great research at VCC.*

**22. Does the CTA have a preference for a local/in-state Nevada agency vs. an outside firm?**

*No, we do not.*

**23. Much of the RFP speaks to/focuses on "content," can you provide a definition of what "Content" means to Visit Carson City (it's a broad term). And, can you give insight on the content efforts to-date for VCC, and what areas under content you are looking to improve in?**

*New marketing campaign creation and development, rebranding, copywriting, website improvements and development, visitors guide, special social media cuts and projects, billboards, special ads, PR activations. We rely on our agency to be the creative brains and internally we execute and distribute the content.*

**24. What is the annual budget for this work?**

*Please refer to the cost proposal template for the overall estimated not-to-exceed value for the RFP itself. We are looking for the agency to propose the dollars that should be spent in each category. We will not take any responses as the “end all” but would like to see where agencies would prioritize. The final allocation by fiscal year will be determined with the awarded agency.*

**25. Under e-marketing, the RFP states that the selected vendor must “provide a technical solution to produce and send emails that are more closely targeted to consumer interests.” Does this mean that the vendor is expected to host and manage the email distribution platform? Should this be included in the cost proposal or will the cost be handled on the VCC side?**

*The actual creation and sending of monthly newsletters are done by the Marketing & PR Manager internally. However, creating custom templates, content strategy, and setting up audiences would be needed from the agency. VCC handles the cost of the monthly Mailchimp subscription.*

**26. Are you hoping that the firm will include spec work (proposed concepts/campaign ideas or other sample work) in their response? If a firm elects to include spec work/concepts, will/could that impact their score?**

*It is welcomed but not required. Including spec work or not will not impact the score. We would love to hear ideas at least of where you think we could improve or see your creative chops. Use that as your time to shine.*

**27. “Assist the CTA in developing original content for social media platforms” is listed under the scope of work “Content” section. Can you clarify if this is just production of content or if the firm will be managing social media channels entirely, including community management, posting directly, etc?**

*All social media management and posting is done internally by the Marketing & PR Manager, what we are looking for is creative content ideas and unique edits of current or new content to fit social platforms, more for special campaigns.*

**28. Can you confirm whether ongoing placement and management of advertising is within the requested scope? Or are you looking for a firm to recommend advertising strategy and a media plan, but placement is handled separately?**

*We are looking for recommendations for advertising strategy and media planning. Actual ad buying and placement is done internally by the Marketing & PR Manager. How we do things is a little unorthodox, we know, so VCC is really searching for a collaborative team to work with, an agency that understand with our small team and budget, how to maximize the creativity and make the ad buys stretch as far as they can and can let us know where we can improve. Our egos are small and our ears are open so that we do what’s best for our organization.*

**29. In the Evaluation Criteria section of this RFP, CTA emphasizes the importance of appropriate staffing levels. In order to prepare an appropriately staffed approach, can you please quantify the website, creative, and public relations work CTA anticipates requiring in a given month, quarter or year? (ie: anticipated hours, URLs for all websites to be maintained under this contract, number of websites/social handles/media releases/creative design projects, etc.)**

*Our needs change, often monthly. We are not looking to nickel and dime per project and track agency hours "to a T". We just want to ensure that projects can be completed in a timely manner, that account managers are not overloaded, and communications are met with a timely response.*

*Consistent monthly recurring work includes website management of [visitcarsoncity.com](http://visitcarsoncity.com) and [visitcarsoncity.biz](http://visitcarsoncity.biz) and ongoing PR efforts. Though over the course of this contract that could change. Creative projects are usually by request. Social is handled internally. Before the end of the resulting contract from this RFP, we are likely to rebrand again and launch another marketing campaign.*

**30. Does CTA anticipate work under this contract must be completed locally, and are agencies outside of Nevada invited to bid? If so, how often would CTA request an in person meeting or board presentation?**

*Agencies outside of Nevada are welcome to bid. In-person requests would vary depending on the importance of the project. We do not anticipate in-person meetings being frequent. The awarded vendor may be required to present to our board a couple of times per fiscal year.*

**31. Has a budget been established for this contract by CTA? If so, can you share the anticipated budget for this project or share current budget information?**

*Please see the asterisks on the cost proposal sheet and question 24.*

**32. What tools is CTA using for its existing website CMS and CRM platforms? Is the organization happy with these existing systems or looking for recommendations on ways to optimize these functions?**

*Mailchimp and WordPress are currently being used and we are currently happy with both.*

**33. Does this RFP include Media buys for marketing advertising purposes or only marketing strategy? What advertising channels has CTA utilized to date?**

*Media buys are handled internally and has its own budget outside of this contract. Our current paid channels include paid search, display remarketing, YouTube advertising, OTT, paid social on Pinterest, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok, billboards, print ads, airport terminal advertising, OTA's and some TV opportunities.*

**34. What function does CTA IT staff currently play in the management of CTA websites and how can the selected vendor best collaborate on these functions?**

*This is a blended effort. Internally, day-to-day new page creation and updates are done internally. We are looking for the agency to work with special requests that require coding and improvements to content and functionality. We own our URL's, but the Consolidated Municipality of Carson City hosts our websites on their servers. There are many nuances that come with the City managing our IT. However, they are very responsive and have been great to work with.*

**35. Is your scope both domestic as well as international?**

*Almost all is domestic, although we have an events & sales program that focuses internationally but in a limited scope. We do partner with the Travel Nevada, Reno-Tahoe Territory and our peer DMO's when international media/influencer opportunities arise.*

**36. Can you clarify the required documentation for the “State of Nevada Business License” if the bidder is based in Arizona?**

*Please refer to the following website regarding the Nevada Secretary of State business license process:  
<https://www.nvsilverflume.gov/startBusiness>*

**37. Can you clarify the required documentation for the “Consolidated Municipality of Carson City Business License” if the bidder is based in Arizona?**

*Please refer to the following website regarding the Consolidated Municipality of Carson City business license process:  
<https://www.carson.org/government/departments-a-f/community-development/business-license-division>*

**38. Do you have in-house teams that focus on content creation, or do you need to have estimates for that work to be performed?**

*We have an internal Multimedia Content Coordinator who specializes in video. For large projects and commercial creation, we will need assistance from the agency.*

**39. The visitcarsoncity.biz domain appears to be a vanity URL only that redirects to the /travel-industry subsection on the leisure site. Are there any other marketing concerns or usage of that domain besides the vanity redirect?**

*No.*

**40. What specific level of WCAG accessibility compliance are you seeking for the new site?**

*We are just looking into this; we would like to develop this over the length of the contract. We are seeking recommendations for this from the agency.*

**41. “The contracted vendor will be responsible for the development and maintenance of the website properties, plugins and mobile applications, if necessary” - your website lists no mobile apps - do you currently have any that require support, or is this a potential future endeavor?**

*No, we do not anticipate having an app again. That was more to reference the mobile-friendly version of the site.*

**42. What amount of digital advertising pricing do you require as part of this RFP response?**

*The actual digital media buying is separate from this contract and is done internally. We are seeking consultation or audits, or if the agency proposes a great strategy, we are not opposed to having the agency manage that. We are a small organization, optimizing budgets and time with the best strategies are priorities. We are not afraid or opposed to making changes.*

**43. You indicate that your current websites are hosted on scalable servers through the city - are you looking to continue that, or do you want proposals to include hosting options?**

*We will remain on the City’s servers.*

**44. Are all current partner listings and events managed directly in the WordPress CMS, or do they pull from external sources?**

*They are all managed on WordPress.*

- 45. Will you be looking to preserve the Bandwango integration in the new site?**  
*For now, but this could change. It's just an embed code on a landing page so integration is not complex unless this is misunderstood internally.*
- 46. Are there any external or 3rd party APIs or integrations outside of Bandwango that need to be conveyed?**  
*Yes, the Instagram feed, which is managed with a plugin.*
- 47. What existing email marketing platform(s) do you utilize?**  
*Mailchimp.*
- 48. What existing CRM platform do you utilize?**  
*Mailchimp.*
- 49. "Create a framework for greater customization within remarketing and digital advertising, as well as email communication efforts." - Will this be done in conjunction with your team and any current email marketing efforts, or separately?**  
*In conjunction with the team. The capabilities internally include only email and audience creation and management. We're looking for best optimization of our email marketing.*
- 50. "Vendor will assist in the creation and automation of newsletter templates when needed." - approximately how many newsletters do you send annually?**  
*One to two newsletters per month outside of automated emails. However, the monthly emails and content are done internally.*
- 51. "Create a vibrant retail environment within the digital outreach programs that includes coupons and offers (from Carson City tourism partners) delivered to consumers based on known preferences. Offers and coupons may be delivered via computer, tablet, and mobile devices." - Can you expand on what you envision this environment to be? Is it fully encapsulated in email marketing efforts, or will this also include ecommerce?**  
*We don't have this ironed out yet. The vision is to work with our local partners and lodging partners to create packages and offers that can be purchased through our website or directed to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party purchasing platform and promoted and optimized with our email marketing.*
- 52. "Create a vibrant retail environment within the digital outreach programs that includes coupons and offers (from Carson City tourism partners)" - will you be responsible for gathering and coordinating these partner offers?**  
*Yes, this would be handled internally.*
- 53. How many press releases/newsletters do you expect to send annually?**  
*Newsletters are created and sent monthly internally, press releases vary per month. We have a lot of events. It would likely average out to one per month. Find more resources in our Communications Plan here: <https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/tourism-research/>*
- 54. Are hard costs for hosting journalists (transportation, lodging, etc.) included in the agency budget or allocated from a separate budget?**  
*They are allocated in a separate budget.*



- 55. Do you expect agency representation for media marketplace representation (i.e. IMM, IPW)? If so, do you have a list of anticipated shows for 2023?**  
*No, we do not, unless the Marketing & PR Manager is unavailable, however, our budget doesn't usually allow for both our Events & Sales Manager and Marketing & PR Manager to attend tradeshow. The only conference to attend would be Travel Nevada's Rural Roundup, which happens annually in April.*
- 56. If possible, please provide a copy of your current media reports and/or most relevant KPI's.**  
*This fiscal year-to-date (beginning July 1, 2022) we've acquired over \$800,000 of publicity value. Our annual goal is \$500,000. Find more resources here: <https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/tourism-research/> or You can find Marketing and PR board presentations in which many have monthly updates here: <https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/meetings/?date=past&category=#main>*
- 57. Please provide a breakdown of expected number of media to be hosted in-destination and the breakdown percentage of influencers to traditional media.**  
*We're hoping for the agency to provide what they think is possible within the budget. Right now, we have a separate budget for influencers and hosting media outside of this contract. We hope for five of each at minimum.*
- 58. If possible, please provide the number of expected media activations you would like to hold and the percentage breakdown of in-market vs target market.**  
*One to two activations per year, ideally these are in our target markets.*
- 59. Do you expect agency representation on group press tours?**  
*No, but this will be determined in conjunction with the awarded vendor.*
- 60. What has led to this RFP? Why now?**  
*The RFP was put out because the 4-year contracts with the current agency expire on 6/30/23. We are very happy with our current services, yet we are an open-minded team willing and eager to see what other agencies bring to the table so that we can make the best decision for Visit Carson City (VCC). The current agency of record can bid on this RFP.*
- 61. Will your incumbent agency be bidding to retain this work?**  
*Yes.*
- 62. Will you be sharing all the Q&A with all respondents?**  
*Yes.*
- 63. What other DMO tourism sites/campaigns do you admire? Why do you admire them?**  
*Honestly, our goal is to not look like the other DMO's to distinguish ourselves from our DMO partners. Our goal of our content is to stand out and take an approach that differs, as many DMO's have begun to look similar, especially as many local agencies use the same vendors. Visit Lex has done some incredible campaigns that have been truly out of the box with both content and public relations.*

**64. Can you provide additional information regarding key competitors?**

*Our key competitors are also our partners, Virginia City, Carson Valley, Reno/Sparks, North and South Lake Tahoe, but also all western DMO's. Find more resources here: <https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/tourism-research/>*

**65. What have been your biggest pain points with past/existing partners?**

*As it relates to tourism partners, it is getting to our small business owners, to foster a relationship to provide comps for activities and meals for media or influencers. Second, working with lodging partners to provide referral links so that we can track actual bookings that resulted from someone who visited our site. We don't have a true conversion to track when it comes to room nights, we're looking to improve that.*

**66. What would you say is the greatest challenge you face in attracting visitors to Carson City that you would like to see marketing efforts solve?**

*Understanding our proximity to Lake Tahoe and using us as a basecamp to explore Northern Nevada. Also, that we are so much more than the capitol building. You can find more in our communications plan and guiding principles here: : <https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/tourism-research/>*

**67. Would you be willing to share any previous research or marketing strategies?**

*<https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/resources/> and our industry page ([visitcarsoncity.biz](http://visitcarsoncity.biz)) in general has more resources as well.*

**68. Are you able to share your existing content strategy?**

*We have a monthly blog and social content strategy, but we are looking to improve this.*

**69. How are you currently evaluating the success of PR efforts?**

*Cision is used measure mentions, publicity value, UVPM and reach. PR activations are evaluated individually.*

**70. The cost proposal form lists, "Public Relations (including Content like PR Boxes)." Can you further define PR Boxes?**

*This means press boxes or media kits to send to potential media/journalist to increase awareness and interest in visiting Carson City.*

**71. What are your current target markets?**

*You can find our communications plan here with our current markets: <https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/tourism-research/>*

**72. Describe your current audience. Is that your aspirational audience? If not, what is your aspirational audience?**

*You can find our target audiences in our Guiding Principles Document: <https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/tourism-research/>*

**73. Regarding "Assist the CTA in coordination of media attendance and management at events" – are these events planned/executed by the PR partner? Or are these events that the CTA is attending like IMM or Travel Nevada-organized events?**

*This is dependent on the size of the event and the Marketing & PR Manager's availability to attend. This is mostly referring to already organized events and our own PR activations.*

**74. The existing sites appear to be on Wordpress but other open source CMS are mentioned in the rfp. Is it the expectation to manage the existing sites and add improvements within the existing Wordpress instances vs a new build?**

*Yes.*

**75. The RFP states a requirement to develop new sites in the future to keep pace with technology and marketing demands in the future. Has a lifecycle been defined on the existing Web properties as to when these redesigns are expected to take place?**

*No timeline has been set, but it is anticipated a redesign will likely happen around FY26.*

**76. Do you have a defined budget you can share in regard to maintaining the existing properties as well as new site creation when that time comes?**

*We do not have a defined budget for that yet.*

**77. What third party tools of SAS products are the sites currently using? Specifically for deals and packages.**

*We are unfamiliar with SAS products, but right now our deals and packages don't exist, we're hoping to develop that.*

**78. Is there an existing CRM in place? If so to what extent is this CRM being leveraged? For data collection only or are email programs, nurture flows and email list management also part of the CRM? If not what services are you currently using to manage email lists?**

*See previous answers.*

**79. What types of segmentation do you currently have with your email lists?**

*High engagement, outside Nevada, Nevadans, low engagement, and audience who opened last five campaigns.*

**80. Can you share the numbers of contacts you are currently managing with your CRM and email tools?**

*Just under 9,000 subscribers. We continue to add approximately 100 subscribers per month generated from our social ads.*

**81. Have you begun transitioning analytics from Universal to GA4?**

*Yes, this will be completed before this contract begins.*

**82. Do you have samples of current analytics and reporting dashboards you can share?**

*You can find Marketing and PR board presentations in which many have monthly updates here:*

*<https://visitcarsoncity.com/travel-industry/meetings/?date=past&category=#main>*

**83. What tools of platforms are you currently using to manage organic SEO and keyword performance?**

*SEO is something we have been slowly working to improve. We have Yoast SEO within the website and Google Search Console. This is managed internally but we are open to having this go under the agency. It is not an internal strength of ours.*

**84. Do you have existing media assets (photos, videos, etc.) that can be leveraged for the content creation requirements of the RFP?**

*Yes, a large amount of video and photo assets managed within our PhotoShelter and on external hard drives.*