

**Request for Proposals  
For Marketing, Advertising, Communications,  
Social Media and Website Services**



North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative  
PO Box 5459  
Tahoe City CA. 96145

December 27, 2019

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative (NLTCM), a cooperative agreement between the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association (NLTRA) and the Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau (IVCBVB), is soliciting a Request for Proposal (RFP) with the intent of contracting with an Agency(s) (Agency) for various advertising, marketing, communications (inclusive of: public relations, blog and newsletter content), social media management and website services. The successful agency(s) are responsible for the planning, development, creation and execution of various marketing, advertising and communications programs in support of the established goals of the NLTCM. Agencies can apply for any/all of the services listed in **Section 6.0** of this document. Additionally, an approved qualified list of specialty subcontractors will be developed to assist in various projects in support of the North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative.

Submit all inquiries regarding this RFP to:

Amber Burke, Director of Marketing  
North Lake Tahoe Resort Association  
P.O. Box 5459  
Tahoe City, CA 96145  
[amber@gotahoenorth.com](mailto:amber@gotahoenorth.com)  
Phone: (530) 581-8702

## **2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

2.1 The North Lake Tahoe Marketing Cooperative (NLTCM) is a cooperative agreement between the NLTRA and the IVCBVB to market and position the two-state North Lake Tahoe region as one tourism destination. The NLTCM is designed to present the North Lake Tahoe area under one brand umbrella, with one consistent creative execution, one call to action, and a single website for fulfillment and referrals to area businesses and constituents. The NLTCM is overseen by the Cooperative Marketing Committee consisting of 4 members from each organization. This committee, with input and direction from each organization, directs the implementation of the NLTCM marketing efforts.

2.2 The North Lake Tahoe Resort Association (NLTRA) is an association of related and coordinated services provided to our members and the community at large. These services include operation of the Tahoe North Visitors and Convention Bureau and the North Lake Tahoe Chamber of Commerce. The NLTRA has an agreement for services with Placer County. Through this agreement, the NLTRA receives Placer County Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) funds to provide “a full spectrum of management activities for tourism marketing and visitor services for businesses of the North Lake Tahoe area”. To guide its work, the NLTRA has developed and adopted the [2015 North Lake Tahoe Tourism Master Plan](#) (June 2015) which has also been adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

2.3 The Incline Village Crystal Bay Visitors Bureau (IVCBVB) is the public organization responsible for destination marketing for the North Shore, Nevada side of Lake Tahoe. Operating primarily from a percentage of lodging room tax collected by the Reno Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority allocated to the organization, the IVCBVB conducts advertising, promotions, public relations and special events programs to promote tourism for the Lake Tahoe portion of Washoe County, NV. The IVCBVB's mission is "to encourage tourist visits and ultimately enhance the occupancy and revenues for lodging facilities in the Incline Village and Crystal Bay areas". The IVCBVB offers the most current marketing and sales support, produces appropriate special events, publishes targeted advertising and collateral, and provides visitor services and information.

2.4 Once selected, the Agency(s) will be contracted for a three-year period, with the option to extend if NLTMC desires, to provide the scope of services outlined in Section 6.0. Additionally, a qualified list of specialty subcontractors will be approved for the need of fulfilling this contract and may be contacted to provide a proposal for specific projects to meet the needs of NLTMC. The resulting qualified list of sub-contractors will be in effect for a period of three years.

### 3.0 **CURRENT CAMPAIGN BACKGROUND**

The NLTRA created a [2-year Tourism Development Strategic Plan \(nltra.org/about/documents-library/\)](http://nltra.org/about/documents-library/) in conjunction with IVCBVB in 2018 which outlines strategic objectives, research, tactics and a competitive overview.

3.1 **Brand Position.** The current NLT brand campaign is "It's Human Nature" and has four seasonal brand positioning statements (listed below). The overall campaign platform is: Human nature is a powerful force. It's that innate sense of purpose that naturally draws us in, captivates us and is so instinctive to who we are that we can't ignore it. North Lake Tahoe creates that kind of reaction—its breathtaking landscape, countless activities and all-season appeal make it a destination that is more than a place to visit; it's part of who we are. North Lake Tahoe — it's Human Nature.

**Fall:** Secret Season. Fall is an amazing time to experience North Lake Tahoe. The crisp mountain air, bold colors and uncrowded towns make it the perfect place to escape. It's in our nature to make the most of life – to step outside of your day-to-day, experience something new and seize every minute. In North Lake Tahoe, our nature is your nature; a place that elevates all of life's moments. Amongst the backdrop of crystal blue shoreline and towering mountains is where you can connect with nature, clear your mind and uplift your spirit. Come up and breathe it in—experience why life is naturally elevated up here. North Lake Tahoe, It's Human Nature

**Winter:** Winter WOW. Welcome to a one of a kind, winter experience. Unified by 12 unique towns, the North Lake Tahoe adventurous spirit will open up your mind and awaken your winter soul. Home to North America's highest concentration of ski resorts, snow seekers will also discover budget friendly options for all skiers and riders. Heighten your senses and find your own comfort zone with local beer and cuisines crafted for comfort. The majestic lake view blanketed with pillows of snowflakes will create memories that last a lifetime. Discover a destination that's waist deep with winter wow. North Lake Tahoe, It's Human Nature.

**Spring:** Twice the Fun. They say good things come in pairs. Like late season skiing paired with an early afternoon paddle. Taking in the sights of a high sierra sunset and sharing laughter into the night while making s'mores around the fire. Uncrowded trails leading to an untouched lakeshore. Mountainside adventures with a calling for lakeside relaxation. In North Lake Tahoe, dual days thrive, elevating every spring day into an extraordinary experience. Take an easy drive up and discover how springtime adventures are twice the fun. North Lake Tahoe, It's Human Nature.

**Summer:** Summer's Official Playground. Most of us can't wait till summer to get away. It's that stirring deep inside each of us that longs to escape. School's out. The sun's out. And our desire to get out and enjoy it is human nature. Thankfully, North Lake Tahoe is the perfect mix of lakeside adventure and on-mountain activities. It's the ideal place to escape everyday life – with a thriving summer scene loaded with experiences meant to refresh, recharge and reinvigorate our souls. There is no shortage of activities to check off everyone's list – from a scenic paddle to a picturesque hike, to lounging on the beach to hitting up the gaming and dining scene – there's so much to do in Summer's Official Playground. North Lake Tahoe, It's Human Nature.

3.2 **Geographic Markets** - Target Geographic Markets/DMA's change based on seasonality. NLTMC focuses efforts on strategically driving tourism during non-peak periods, increasing mid-week visitation and increasing the visitor length of stay and year-round spending. To achieve these goals, the current geographic markets primarily focus on flight markets with some messaging to the Bay Area drive market during shoulder seasons.

- Fall/Spring - Consumer Media: San Francisco Bay Area, Southern CA (LA/OC/SD)
- Winter/Summer - Consumer Media: New York DMA, Southern CA (LA/OC/SD)
- Annual Public Relations Effort
  - Primary Markets: Southern CA, New York (tri-state area), Pacific Northwest, Houston/Austin/Dallas
  - Secondary Markets: Chicago, Phoenix

3.3 **Regional Activity/Messaging Pillars**

- Outdoor Recreation, Activities and Adventure
- Health and Wellness
- Culinary
- Arts & Culture
- Luxury
- Family and Multigenerational Experiences
- Meetings, Conventions and Groups

3.4 **Budget.** The NLTMC operates on a fiscal year budget (July 1 – June 30). The current 19.20 fiscal year budget totals \$2M - \$2.6M. Below are the average annual budgets for the following categories. While the NLTMC does not anticipate a significant change in budget moving forward, all

amounts are subject to change and are ultimately at the discretion of the NLTMC Board of Directors. Agencies should be aware that NLTMC strives to be as fiscally responsible as possible and would like to partner with firms that implement this contract as cost effectively as possible while still achieving NLTMC goals and objectives.

- Brand, Creative & Media Buying (Consumer & MCC): \$1M - \$1.4M
- Communications: Public Relations & Content (Consumer & MCC): \$200K - \$300k
- Social Media (Consumer & MCC): \$75K - \$90K
- Website Hosting & Maintenance: \$40K - \$50K

#### **4.0 RFP SCHEDULE**

The NLTMC has established the following target dates for processing the RFP. The schedule for evaluation and award of this RFP is subject to change and can be affected by various intervening events.

Release Date	December 27, 2019
Agency Q&A Opportunity	January 20 - 24, 2020
Qualified Proposals Due <i>*Date has been extended</i>	February 18, 2020 (5pm)
Evaluation and Interviews by Selection Committee (if required)	March 2 - 13, 2020
Selection Committee Recommendation for Approval to NLTRA/IVCBVB Boards	March 24, 2020
Execution of Agreement between the Successful Bidder and the NLTRA and IVCBVB	April 16 – May 20, 2020
Contract Start Date (Potential overlap with existing agencies for summer campaign)	July 1, 2020

#### **5.0 REFERENCE MATERIALS**

Reference materials and organizational information can be found on [www.GoTahoeNorth.com](http://www.GoTahoeNorth.com), [www.nltra.org](http://www.nltra.org) and NLT social media channels:

- Facebook: @LakeTahoeNorth
- Instagram: @TahoeNorth
- Twitter: @TahoeNorth
- Pinterest: Tahoe North
- Vimeo: North Lake Tahoe
- YouTube: GoTahoeNorth

Additional information and reference materials can be requested by contacting Amber Burke, as listed in **Section 1.0**.

## **6.0 GENERAL SCOPE OF ANTICIPATED SERVICES**

The Agency(s), on behalf of the NLTMC, shall be capable of providing those services customarily performed by a full-service agency. Services include, marketing, advertising and communications (public relations + content) which have included image/brand development and promotion, media planning and placement, collateral production, public relations outreach, content creation, social media management, and web development among others.

Additionally, successful Agency(s) will be required to provide professional consulting, strategy, market research and insights, comprehensive reporting and other services upon request by the NLTMC.

Below are the specific services NLTMC is currently accepting proposals for. Agency(s) is able to choose any or all of the services to apply for and are welcome to partner with other agencies for a more robust full-service experience. However, NLTMC holds the right to select certain agencies and not others whether they applied together or not.

### **6.1 Brand Agency Leader**

- **Brand Development.** Assist in the further development and evolution of the North Lake Tahoe brand identity and voice. Agency to assist in the consistency of the North Lake Tahoe brand message throughout all forms of consumer marketing programs.
- **Creative Development**
  - **Media Creative.** Produce creative for all mediums including print, digital, website, video, etc. to cohesively align with brand identity.
  - **Rich Content Development and Execution.** Includes complimentary rich content campaigns including video, creative, content, etc.
  - **General Organization Assets.** Includes but is not limited to destination videos, sales collateral, photo shoots, brand guidelines, organizational templates, etc.
- **Brand Cohesion.** Guarantee North Lake Tahoe has a consistent and cohesive voice throughout all consumer facing products. The selected Agency(s) will be responsible for seeing commercial production through to completion (conceptualization, production and trafficking to select media outlets) whether that capability is proposed as an in-house arrangement or as a subcontractor arrangement.

### **6.2 Media Buying**

- **Paid Media and Advertising - Consumer and MCC.** The ability to create and/or place advertising in print and digital media that reflects an appropriate image of North Lake Tahoe. Media buying and trafficking should keep an eye toward developing partnerships/promotions with other clients

and/or media outlets for the purpose of maximizing the exposure of, and minimizing the cost to, the NLTMC. Agency will provide a full range of account management skills and activities and must be familiar with many applications of advertising and design (i.e., commercial production, media buying/placement, direct mail, point of purchase, signage, etc.).

### 6.3 **Communications**

- **Public Relations/Media – Regional, National, International & MCC.** Develop and implement a year-round, targeted public relations program that effectively builds continued public and media awareness of the NLT region as a desirable four season, year-round destination highlighting the regional pillars. Create and maintain relationships with key press and media partners within the consumer, travel and conference industries while strengthening media’s knowledge of the destination through programs that include, but are not limited to, seasonal updates, events, crisis communications on an ongoing, consistent and relevant basis.
  - **Influencer and Media FAM Coordination and Management.** Identify, coordinate and host target journalists and influencers in-market to showcase all aspects of North Lake Tahoe. Contracting with influencers and ensuring deliverables are met.
- **Content**
  - **Blog.** Create content for NLT owned blog while incorporating organic and paid SEO content strategy to build a strong online reputation for North Lake Tahoe. Highlight a variety of regional offerings, keeping in mind brand pillars and seasonal objectives. Strong knowledge of the region, business community and NLT stakeholders required.
  - **Newsletter Content Development and Management.** Manage NLT consumer database that encompasses over 30,000 subscribers. Create relevant, inspiring and enticing newsletters to drive web traffic including calls to action and trip planning content.

### 6.4 **Social Media**

- **Social Media Day-to-Day Management.** Manage NLT social media channels on a day-to-day basis with real time and inspirational images and messaging incorporating both owned and UGC. Closely manage interactions, messages and stakeholder messaging for opportunities to partner and engage. Manage a boosting budget to expand reach of targeted messages. Strong knowledge of the region, business community and NLT stakeholders required.
  - **Contest/Giveaway Management and Execution**
  - **FB Lives and Stories Management and Execution**

### 6.5 **Website Backend Management & Development**

- **Backend Management of GoTahoeNorth.com.** Provide insight, maintenance and technical support for GoTahoeNorth.com to maintain overall site health.
- **Development.** NLTMC is not looking to completely overhaul the GoTahoeNorth.com website. However, as new website strategies are researched and/or implemented, NLTMC needs an Agency to provide input on both the user experience and SEO ramifications. Agency will then

implement necessary website features and infrastructure as needed. Website development is not limited to but will include, content development, design, programming, coding and scripting.

- **SEO Management.** Monitor GoTahoeNorth.com SEO analytics, provide recommendations and execute solutions to continually increase SEO results.

#### 6.6 **All Agencies Are Responsible for the Following:**

- **Market Research.** Assist in the development and implementation of various market research programs designed to provide insight into the effectiveness of the advertising and marketing campaigns.
- **New Initiatives.** Agency to advise the NLTCM on appropriate opportunities that may help communicate the North Lake Tahoe brand message to targeted audiences.
- **Effective and Regular Communication.** All agencies will be required to regularly and effectively communicate to NLT staff and any additional agencies and/or stakeholders. This is crucial to a cohesive and effective campaign.
- **Reporting.** At the discretion of staff, agencies should be prepared to report monthly, seasonally, and annually at a minimum.
- **In Person and Phone Presentations.** Periodic presentations to staff, committees, BOD's and stakeholders.

#### 6.7 **Procedures and Protocols**

The NLTCM or its designee will review and sign off on all projects and work prior to release or use. The NLTCM or its designee shall have complete and total approval of any proposed plan or any part thereof and shall have the express right to modify, change or delete all or any part of the plan at any time.

The Agency(s) shall communicate the progress of work to the NLTCM through preparation and submittal of written status reports, including anticipated project completion dates, and through periodic meetings with the NLTCM or its designee, at intervals as specified by the NLTCM.

The Agency(s) shall promptly notify the NLTCM of events which have a significant impact on contract work, including (1) problems, delays or adverse conditions which will prevent the meeting of time or work schedules, and (2) favorable developments which will enable meeting time or work schedules sooner than anticipated.

The Agency(s) shall agree that from time to time the NLTCM or its designee may provide copy or creative concepts for advertisements. In such cases, the Agency(s) shall perform those necessary functions identified herein for media placement of advertisements as directed and supplied by the NLTCM.

Due to changing fiscal and economic conditions, the Agency(s) may be required to change, modify, or totally revise any or all of the above assignments including the advertising plan, the strategy and objectives, media schedules, and/or budget allocations.

The Agency(s) shall assist the NLTMC in maintaining a system for measuring the results of all advertising efforts, including tracking of responses from specific placed media.

#### 6.8 **Threshold Criteria**

Agencies with more than 5 years of experience in providing advertising and marketing services in the tourism destination space are preferred and may be scored higher in the Evaluation Criteria (**Section 9.0**).

### 7.0 **PREPARATION OF SUBMITTAL – REQUIRED CONTENT**

Each response to this RFP shall include the information described in this section. Failure to include all of the elements specified may be cause for rejection. Additional information may be provided but should be succinct and relevant to the goals of the RFP. However, descriptions that tend to be excessive, not “to the point” or too wordy may not be considered favorably. Document pages shall be 8 ½” x 11” in size or folded to such a size.

All submittals shall contain the following elements, and in the order given:

#### 7.1 **Cover Letter.** The following information must be included.

- Name and mailing address of your firm (include physical location in addition if mailing address is a PO Box).
- Contact person, telephone number, fax number and email
- A statement that the submitting firm will perform the selected services as described in the Scope of Services.
- List of which services the Agency is bidding on as identified in **Section 6.0**.

#### 7.2 **Signatory Requirement.** The Cover Letter must be signed by an officer empowered by the Agency to sign such materials and thereby commit the Agency to the obligations contained in the RFP response. Further, the signing and submission of a proposal shall indicate the intention of the Agency to adhere to the provisions described in the RFP. As such, submittals which are signed:

- For a partnership, shall be signed in the firm name by a partner.
- For a corporation, shall have the correct corporate name thereon and the actual signature of the authorized officer of the corporation.
- By an individual doing business under a firm name, shall be signed in the name of the individual doing business under the firm name and style.

#### 7.3 **Agency Description.** A description of the Agency, including the year the Agency was established, type of organization (partnership, corporation, etc.), and the number of employees. This section shall include the pertinent qualifications of personnel (including subcontractors) to be used. An organizational chart shall be submitted depicting the project team proposed by the Agency and

resumes (no more than one page per person) for key personnel including length of service with the Agency.

7.4 **Experience and Expertise.** Provide a summary of the Agency's (including subcontractors) experience as it relates to the required services. Respondents should clearly identify and address major areas of expertise (as identified in **Section 6.0**) for which they are responding and clearly demonstrates their expertise in said areas. Provide descriptions of previous projects that relate to the services required in this RFP. Identify each project by name and include a brief description of the project.

7.5 **Methodology and Creative Abilities.** Provide a general methodology for accomplishing the selected services as described in **Section 6.0**. Provide a brief response for each that demonstrates an understanding of the key elements of the project as they relate to the services required herein including development and administration.

7.6 **Facilities and Resources.** Provide a complete description of your facilities including equipment, software/design programs and resources available to accomplish the tasks requested herein. Provide separate descriptions of sub-contractor's facilities and resources to be used (if applicable).

7.7 **References.** List references, including current contact name and telephone number for at least three different relevant projects. Reference should be individuals who have direct experience with the Agency on the project cited. References will be contacted for information relating to the preceding sections as well as reliability information.

7.8 **Tourism Clients.** Provide a list of all current clients and any relevant past clients (it is important to the NLTMC that responding agencies fully disclose current, potentially conflicting tourism, hospitality or ski resort clients).

7.9 **Draft Scope of Work.** Provide an outline of how the Agency plans to tactically achieve NLT objectives and goals as it relates to the selected services outlined in **Section 6.0**.

7.10 **Price Schedule.** Provide a complete fee schedule for all services to be delivered including hourly rates for all proposed staff. The fee schedules provided in the proposal shall be the maximum rates to be charged during the first year of the effective period of the Agency(s) and Qualified List. Any requests for rate increases after the first year shall be submitted in writing to the NLTMC or its designee no less than 30 days in advance of such a rate increase, and shall not exceed an increase of over 5% from the prior year.

7.11 **Required Statements.** Include statements of assurance regarding the following requirements: Non-substitution for the designated members of the team without approval by the NLTMC (**Section 11.0**), non-conflict of interest (**Section 13.0**), and non-collusion (**Section 14.0**).

## **8.0**            **SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS**

8.1        One original and six (6) copies of the proposal shall be received no later than the date and time indicated in **Section 4.0** at the office of the North Lake Tahoe Resort Association, 100 North Lake Blvd., Second Floor, Tahoe City, CA 96145 (no USPS delivery to this address) or at PO Box 5459, Tahoe City CA, 96145.

8.2        Proposals submitted to a location other than the above will not be considered duly delivered or timely. Neither the NLTRA nor the IVCBVB will be responsible for re-routing proposals delivered to a person or location other than specified above.

8.3        Acceptance of late proposals will be at the sole discretion of the NLTMC.

8.4        Cost of preparation of proposals will be borne by the offerors.

8.5        The NLTMC reserves the right to waive minor defects and/or irregularities in submittals and shall be the sole judge of the materiality of any such defect or irregularities.

## **9.0**            **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Each proposal submittal will be rated using the following criteria:

- Experience and Expertise (**Section 7.4**)
- Methodology and Creative Abilities (**Section 7.5**)
- Facilities and Resources (**Section 7.6**)
- Draft Scope of Work (**Section 7.9**)
- Price Schedule (**Section 7.10**)

## **10.0**          **SELECTION PROCEDURE**

10.1        Proposals will be reviewed for responsiveness and responsive submittals may be further screened by an evaluation committee in accordance with the criteria listed above. The Agency(s) submitting the most highly rated responses may be invited for interviews.

10.2        The NLTMC reserves the right to make an award without further discussion of the submittal with the offeror(s). Therefore, the proposal should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms that the responding Agency may propose.

10.3        The NLTMC reserves the right to award a contract to the Agency(s) who, in the sole judgment of the NLTMC, provides the most favorable response(s) to the RFP pursuant to the Evaluation

Criteria listed above. The NLTMC also hold the right to only award select services from an Agency's proposal, and are not required to award all services that are being proposed.

10.4 The NLTMC reserve the right to reject any or all proposals, or to waive minor irregularities in said proposals, or to negotiate minor deviations with the successful Agency(s).

#### **11.0 ASSURANCES OF DESIGNATED TEAM**

Responding Agency(s) shall assure that the designated staff, including sub-contractors, is used for the work described in the proposal. Departure or reassignment of, or substitution for, any member of the designated team or subcontractors shall not be made without prior notification to the NLTMC.

#### **12.0 NON-APPROPRIATION**

NLTMC may terminate any resulting contract at the end of any fiscal year, June 30<sup>th</sup>, without further liability other than payment of debt incurred during such fiscal year, should funds not be appropriated by each governing body to continue services for which the contract was intended.

#### **13.0 NON-CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The Agency shall warrant that no official or employee of the NLTMC has an interest, has been employed or retained to solicit or aid in the procuring of the resulting contract, nor that any such person will be employed during the performance of such contract without immediate divulgence of such fact to the NLTMC.

#### **14.0 NON-COLLUSION**

Agency(s) submitting proposals shall warrant that their offer is made without any previous understanding, agreement or connection with any person, firm or corporation submitting a separate proposal for the same project and is in all respects fair, without outside control, collusion, fraud or otherwise illegal action. This condition shall not apply to proposals which are submitted by firms who have partnered with others to submit a cooperative proposal that clearly identifies a primary contractor and the associated sub-contractors.

#### **15.0 ADDITIONAL SERVICE**

Agency agrees that from time to time the NLTMC, independently and separately, may require additional services to be performed that are outside of this contract with the NLTMC. These services will be estimated and billed separately.