

Canada RFP - Q/A

Canuckiwi

1. We understand California has been invested in the market for a fifteen-year period. How long has the incumbent held the contract for?

Our AOR has been with us for 9 years.

2. How many current Canadian agents have completed the California STAR program?

This is proprietary to Visit California.

3. Outside of the budget managed under the scope of work in this RFP does Visit California have an additional consumer marketing budget and/or consumer marketing team that invests in Canada as part of an extension of a domestic campaign and to what value?

Yes, we have our global brand agency and media agency handles brand activities in market. Budget levels vary each FY.

4. Does Visit California have a content vault of social media assets and/or website stories that your Canadian partner can access to assist them in building out a content calendar or is all new content written fresh by the selected marketing firm?

We have a domestic editorial calendar and various assets that have select usage rights internationally.

5. Does Visit California currently have subscriptions to any market research services for Canada that can be extended to the incoming agency (ie Travel Market Insights, VisaVue, Other?)

Yes

6. Does Visit California currently have a media monitoring service that would be made available to the incoming agency and/or does this need to be budgeted for?

This is done in-market via agency and should be considered in the country budget.

7. We assume airfares and in-destination costs (hotels, meals, local transportation, etc.) for media & trade visits should be included in this budget?

This budget reflects the retainer and all activations in the market.

8. What are considered “adequate amounts of Visit California collateral and promotional items” to be stored?

The amount of promotional and collateral varies by need. Traditionally, collateral is 1,000-2,500 pieces of brochures and promotional items varies in size/timing (depending on events and in-market needs) but could be 10+ boxes.

Pulse Travel Marketing

9. Does Visit California currently have a clipping service that could be extended for use in Canada (Cision, Meltwater etc.)?

This is done in-market via agency and should be considered in the country budget.

10. Can you share the 2019 Canadian visitation numbers and spend? In the RFP we noted that the 2020 numbers were shared however, the 2019 numbers would be more reflective of pre-pandemic travel.

Visit California has a 2-year plan for the international markets. Marketing plans can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

11. Does Visit California issue collateral via a Canadian distribution center? Can you advise the amount of collateral distributed in Canada over the past 2 years?

The amount of promotional and collateral varies by need. Traditionally, collateral is 1,000-2,500 pieces of brochures and promotional items varies in size/timing (depending on events and in-market needs) but could be 10+ boxes.

12. Can you provide an updated list of Visit California partners represented in Canada?

We don't have a list; individual DMO's may have this information published on their website.

13. What has the prior expected percentage allocation of funds to the following line items in the budget for Canada looked like? Communications/Public Relations? Travel Trade Product Development? Retainer?

The scope of work listed is there to help present guidance to determine your total costs. We are interested in understanding your approach to each of the targeted segments.

14. Has Visit California's global media buying agency Havas Media, conducted any localized research, insight studies or initiatives in Canada either directly or via a collaborative partner?

All existing research can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

15. Is there a breakdown of the 12 regions in California as to the percentage of the most visited areas by Canadians? Are there any regions that Visit California would like to focus on a bit more?

We are interested in understanding your approach to the regions.

16. Can you tell us more about your "Always On" consumer global strategy as it relates to Canada?

Marketing plans can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

17. Can you confirm that the two major social accounts for Canada are Instagram, Facebook and a localized .ca website?

We only have a localized Facebook account.

18. Who does Visit California currently use to extend the reach of your owned channel platforms, paid SEM and social media activity employed to support traffic, acquisition, and engagement strategies?

Any use of vendors is proprietary to Visit California. We do have a global social agency.

19. Which platform does Visit California currently use to distribute your monthly e-newsletters to your 18,069 subscribed users?

Any use of vendors is proprietary to Visit California.

20. We noted your requirement in the China RFP Q & A recommending keeping the proposal to a maximum of 30 pages. Are you firm on this maximum requirement? Are we permitted to include several attachments with samples of work, bios, B2B, B2C and media campaign or promotional partnership ideas?

We are requesting that you keep the written proposal as concise as possible. 30 pages is not a requirement but more of a guideline. Yes, you are permitted to include any attachments that you feel would best augment your proposal.

Zero Trillion

21. Within the Marketing Proposal section (8.3) it states “Please submit programing for a 12-month period of activity at 2x funding levels”. Can you provide additional context around how specific our responses should be against each budget tier throughout the Marketing Proposal?

We are depending on your market expertise and recommendations of programming to be included in your written proposal.

22. Would it be possible to share a previous marketing plan with us, in order to allocate requested services in an appropriate split?

Marketing plans can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/>

23. For the final submission – do all files need to be attached via email, or are downloadable links (such as Dropbox) acceptable? Is there a max file size we should take into account?

Your final proposal can be embedded in a downloadable link such as WeTransfer or DropBox. There is not a file max that needs to be considered but be mindful of keeping the written proposal as concise as possible.

24. On Page 2, it mentions the total budget for this RFP is not inclusive of brand advertising dollars. Can you please define difference between how your team views “Media” vs “brand advertising dollars”?

Historically, we have had direct to consumer brand activities via linear TV and digital platforms to reach the Canadian consumer. Media and brand advertising are aligned and handles by our global media and creative agency.

25. We’re curious from where the creative content and assets will originate for the Canadian market. Are there existing creative campaign assets that have already been created for Visit California, which will then be adapted for Canada? Or is the expectation that the selected agency will be creating new creative assets?

We have English speaking assets that we localize as needed.

Zeno Group

2022 Forecast & Focus

26. What is your forecast for Canadian visitors to California in 2022? Can you share how many Canadian visitors you’ve had in 2021?

Visit California international market research can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard>.

27. Of the 12 tourism regions within the state, are there priority destinations? Are there regions that contribute more dollars into the campaign and should therefore receive more prominence/coverage? How would you weight them by region?

All regions must be considered for any opportunities when creating any sort of campaign. There is no weighing or priority given to one region over the others.

Existing Research/Insights

28. Page 7 references a Havas audience study that measures consumers' interaction and engagement with a broad range of media touch points. Can you please share the results?

Visit California international market research can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard>.

29. Do you have specific audience personas you can share for your target travelers in Canada? If so, who have you established as your primary and secondary audiences? What do we know about them?

We are interested in understanding which key audience you recommend should be targeted and why.

30. Have you zeroed in on specific markets/provinces of interest within Canada?

We are depending on your market expertise and recommendations of which specific markets should be targeted.

Challenges & Opportunities

31. What have been your biggest barriers to attracting Canadian visitors in a non-Covid year?

Visit California international market research can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard>

32. Who is your most common visitor profile and who would you like to attract in 2022? In 2022 will you put a greater emphasis on a younger demo (Gen Z and Millennials) or a more mature demo (Gen X and Boomers) or equal weight?

We are depending on your market expertise to identify these target groups.

33. While we know there is a wealth of experiences and activities in California for leisure and business visitors, are there any types of travel experiences you'd like to spotlight in 2022?

We are depending on your market expertise to suggest what types of travel experiences should be spotlighted.

34. Historically, what seasons or moments in time have you prioritized within the calendar year as key moments to engage and attract Canadian travelers?

We are interested in hearing your suggestions to which times of year would be ideal to engage and attract Canadian travelers.

Creative & Media Buys

35. Can you tell us more about your planned advertising activities and creative for 2022? Can we see hero creative assets? What sorts of assets will we be able to leverage in our programming?

We are just in the beginning phases of our FY 22/23 marketing plans. We will have new creative assets debut in February 2022, targeting the US audience. Use of assets and specifics will be shared after the RFP has been awarded to an agency by our global brand agency.

36. Is there a specific tagline and theme for 2022 we should factor into our proposed plans? If so, are there any materials we can review?

We don't have a final creative to share.

37. What media buys have you secured or are you planning for 2022 in Canada? Can you please share the booked or anticipated media partners and timing?

We don't have a final media buy details to share. We do anticipate a small media buy, approximately 1 million USD, for the Canadian market in winter 2022.

38. When it comes to creative concepts, how much is directed by your ad agency? Are you open to new creative campaign ideas that come to life through PR, experiential, digital and social from the PR agency?

Yes

39. Considering your PR efforts over the last 3 -5 years, what's working best from a PR standpoint and what could be improved?

We are hoping to learn what you recommend Visit California do to improve PR in the Canada market.

Partners

40. Who are your current airline and marketing partners in Canada?

Visit California engages with many endemic and non-endemic partners in market including airlines, OTA's and retailers.

41. Are there any organizations that you would like to secure partnerships with in 2022 beyond airlines?

We are looking forward to your recommendations as to whom you would co op partnerships with.

42. Looking back, which endemic and non-endemic brand partnerships were the most successful and why? Which endemic and non-endemic brand partnerships have you executed that fell short of expectations and why?

This information is proprietary to Visit California. Past work can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

Agency Division of Work

43. You mention that a third-party agency is handling DTC brand advertising to complement trade, PR and owned channel efforts. What are the digital activities this agency handles and on which platforms? What is the division of work between this agency and the PR agency when it comes to these tactics.

All marketing plans can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

Website

44. Will the PR agency be responsible for developing blog and podcast content in addition to ongoing website updates and maintenance?

No, at this time, we don't have local market create any blog or podcast material.

Social Media

45. Are you open to establishing localized Visit California channels beyond Facebook such as Instagram, Twitter, TikTok or Pinterest? Why haven't you activated localized Canadian channels to date beyond Facebook?

We would be interested in hearing your recommendation regarding activating these channels.

46. Will the PR agency be responsible for the posting of content to the Canadian page and community management in addition to the development of annual localized content calendars? Or are there only certain activities the PR agency would own?

The in-market agency manages the social content, under the guidance of Visit California and our editorial team.

47. Do you currently amplify any of your in-feed content on Facebook, or is it organic only?

A combination is done, depending on budget and market programs.

48. What content pieces or creative formats have you found to be previously successful?

This information is proprietary to Visit California. We welcome your suggestions in your proposal on what you think is best for the market.

49. You mention your goals for paid social include traffic, acquisition and engagement. Are you able to share KPIs for these objectives?

No, this information is proprietary to Visit California. We welcome your suggestions in your proposal on what you think is best for the market.

50. With the existing Canadian Facebook page and opportunity for future social platforms, would you look to post in both English and French, or English only?

We look to you for a recommendation.

SEM

51. When it comes to targeting, are you currently trying to reach those searching for California-related queries, those searching for other travel destinations (conquesting), or both?

We can share in more detail with the awarded agency this internal information.

52. Are you able to share target CTRs for paid search?

No, this information is proprietary to Visit California. We welcome your suggestions in your proposal on what you think is best for the market.

E-Newsletter

53. Are you able to share what email marketing platform you currently use?

Yes, we have a platform for media needs – Airtable.

54. Would you look to our team to both develop the content and deploy the monthly newsletter?

Yes

55. Is this distributed in English only or English and French?

We look to you for a recommendation. We currently don't have localized French Canadian materials or content.

Influencer

56. Are there any Canadian influencers you are currently partnered with, or who you have partnered with previously and would like to reactivate?

Marketing plans and past activities can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

Co-Op Program Activations

57. Can you please provide details on past Co-op programs that were successful?

This information is proprietary to Visit California. We welcome your suggestions in your proposal on what you think is best for the market.

Events

58. Can you share a list of Canadian events that Visit California participated in this year?

Marketing plans and past activities can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

59. Are there any events you've already secured for 2022?

This information is proprietary to the current agency of record in market. Marketing plans and past activities can be found at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

60. What was the most successful event you've run to date and why?

This information is proprietary to Visit California.

Budget

61. Can you please share the typical percentage of the total budget allocated to each of the desired service areas below in a non-Covid year. And do you anticipate these allocation percentages will remain roughly the same?
- a. Market intelligence
 - b. Media and PR services and activations
 - c. Travel & trade training and marketing activations
 - d. Travel Trade and Partnerships
 - e. Co-Op program activations
 - f. Owned channel management
 - g. Account administration and overhead

The budget represents retainer and all activations in market. % allocations for each individual budget line should be determined by the scope of work you are proposing.

Objectives

62. In your RFP we noted the following objectives below. Is there anything else you'd add to the list for PR?
- a. Increase the number of Canadian visitors to CA with a focus on travel by air
 - b. Reinforce CA's position as the ultimate vacation destination
 - c. Inspire and educate key travel audiences: travel agents, tour operators along with industry decision makers

We would like your thoughts about other achievable objectives for the Canadian market.

Measurement

63. How do you currently measure the effectiveness of your communications efforts?

Results of past programs can be found at:
<https://industry.visitcalifornia.com>

64. Can you please share benchmark results for PR from prior years that could serve as a baseline for future campaigns and to set expectations for our proposal?

This information is proprietary to Visit California.

65. Beyond visitors and dollars spent, are there other KPIs we should consider?

Major KPIs are incremental visitation and spending from the Canada market. Historical visitation and spending data can be found at
<https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard>

66. Next fiscal year, what does success look like?

We would like you to define what success looks like if you were be awarded this account.

RFP

67. How many agencies are participating in the RFP?

This information is proprietary to Visit California.

68. What will make the winning agency standout?

We look forward for you defining this in your written proposal.

69. Are you looking for spec creative as part of this proposal?

No, we have a global media agency for creative and media buying. This RFP is not for a creative agency.