visit California

Questions & Answers

Global Content Marketing Services

Category		Questions	Response
Audience and Segmentation	1	What are your biggest pain points in targeted segmentation and personalization?	Ensuring effective segmentation and personalization due to the relatively smaller list size and our recent transition to a more structured strategy.
	2	What profile demographic data is there today?	Visit California currently collects names, emails, and zip codes, with additional demographic and behaviorial insights, such as gender and engagement trends, provided by our current email partner.
	3	What details are being used today for personalization?	Currently, our personalization strategy is limited to in-state and out-of-state consumers, as well as interests in road trips, family activities, and outdoor experiences.
	4	Describe your target audience and relevant segments.	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324 and https://assets.visitcalifornia.com/share/E1FFFDC0-D270-4EFC-A9BABE90C0C0987B/?viewType=grid
	5	What proportion of California visitors are domestic versus international?	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	6	Describe the customer segmentation scheme. How often is it updated and how is it being leveraged?	Visit California has created customer segments in the past. However, due to the rapidly changing travel landscape and visitor preferences, we are looking for the selected agency to help us evaluate new segments. You can find additional information about our target markets and audience segmentation in the Annual Workplan: https://assets.visitcalifornia.com/share/E1FFFDC0-D270-4EFC-A9BABE90C0C0987B/?viewType=grid
	7	Have personas and journey maps been developed for all key segments? Are they available for review?	These are not currently available for review. Visit California has created personas and journey maps in the past. However, due to the rapidly changing travel landscape and visitor preferences, we are looking for the selected agency to help us evaluate new personas and journeys.
	8	Describe your use of customer journey maps in context of your content strategy.	The Visit California research team is currently developing new iterations of journey maps. Those are not available for review yet, but they will be part of our content planning and creation efforts in the future.
	9	To what extent are current marketing programs organized around consumer segments?	Visit California has created personas and journey maps in the past. However, due to the rapidly changing travel landscape and visitor preferences, we are looking for the selected agency to help us evaluate new personas and journeys.
	10	Is there enterprise segmentation and do the marketing channels align to these segments?	We do have enterprise segmentation in place and marketing channels align to these segments. However, we are looking for the selected partner to implement more strategic owned channel segmentation strategies.
	11	If yes, on segmentation, is it behavioral, attitudinal or both? What data sources were used in the creation of the segments and/or personas?	This is proprietary information.
	12	If yes, on segmentation, when was your segmentation last updated?	This is proprietary information.
	13	Is current segmentation augmented by visitor research/surveys & interviews, behavioral data channel/affiliate data, OP,1P,3rdP data? Essentially what is informing current segmentation?	All of the above. We have a wealth of information.
	14	How do you qualify and prioritize leads?	We do not engage in lead generation.
	15	Are you using response modeling?	No.
	16	Do you currently have journeys in place?	Visit California has created personas and journey maps in the past. However, due to the rapidly changing travel landscape and visitor preferences, we are looking for the selected agency to help us evaluate new personas and journeys.
	17	If yes, on journeys, is it from Acquisition, to Welcome, to First visit to CA only or do you have a Retention/win back strategy (once trip has been taken)?	This is proprietary information.
	18	Are journeys/actions based on triggers?	Not at this time.
	19	What kind of personalization are you currently doing in marketing campaigns?	The only personalization being done in the newsletter program is location-based personalization. This includes in-state out-of-state and international markets. International markets include Canada, Mexico, UK and Australia.
	20	What are your visitors' lifecycle stages (funnel/consumer journey)?	This is proprietary information.
	21	Are you currently using or looking at any 3rd party vendors for personalization in marketing comms?	We are currently using Zeta Global.
	22	What types of consumer/visitor analytics, such as predictive modeling, lead scoring, and behavioral scoring, are being used today?	Visit California has a dedicated research team that has current visitor scoring metrics. We collaborate with them on next steps, as would the agency chosen for this RFP.
Budget	23	How is the $8.1M presently allocated across the key initiatives? Are there any areas that you think have gaps and need attention/resources allocated at a higher rate?	We do not have a set allocation for the budget across key initiatives. We are open to recommendations for how this budget should best be allocated.
	24	How is the budget allocated across sectors (accommodations, restaurants & retail, attractions & recreation, transportation and travel services, passenger are rental)?	Budget is not allocated across sectors.
	25	What is the current breakdown of the $1.5M media budget across distribution methods?	Previously, this budget was allocated toward Paid Content Development Programs through partners like Outbrain and Taboola, among others. We also utilize paid social media posts. Finally, we are open to recommendations for this program.
	26	Do you have an overall percent of budget range for Email Marketing based on the current program, or are you looking for budget recommendations on the more robust program outlined in the RFP.	We do not have an overall percent budget range. We are open to considerations.
	27	What portion of the overall email marketing budget (if any) is earmarked to go to platform costs (capital costs) and list growth (acquisition)?	We are currently re-evaluating how budgets are allocated across the entire owned program and are open to recommendations. Our current allocations should not guide your suggestions.

	28	Are there specific budget guidelines for platform management, list hygiene, and new toolsets (i.e. machine learning and AI personalization tools)?	No.
Data Analytics	29	Are you in compliance with GDPR, CCPA, etc.?	Yes, we are currently in progress on updating our privacy policy in compliance with GDPR, CCPA, etc. for all legal matters dealing with user data management. We are also working with Verasafe who acts as our "DPO" and OneTrust to advise on these implementations as it pertains to cookie policy and opt-in requirements on the website.
	30	Is there a role in place today that oversees the end-to-end needs for incremental marketing data?	That specific role is not in place today.
	31	Who administers your analytics (internal/external/combo)?	We have a combination of internal and external partners.
	32	Do you feel that your current reporting, analytics, and dashboards provide robust insights, or are you looking to evaluate and improve them?	We are looking to evaluate and improve reporting and analytics.
	33	What are the sources and types of data available to the agencies you currently or plan to work with? 1st, 2nd, 3rd party? Demographics, behavioral, past transactions with VC or its partners?	All of the above. We have a wealth of information.
	34	Can you provide a sample of a data dictionary, prospect profile, etc.?	No, that is proprietary information.
	35	What platform currently houses and activates that data?	We do not currently have one centralized platform that activates data.
	36	What kind of metrics are available in terms of engagement, through the process of actual travel? Can we learn what the prospect does, when, in what areas?	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	37	Are you able to track the effectiveness of your marketing campaigns? Booked hotel from site etc.	Our research team conducts extensive research on the effectiveness of Visit California's marketing campaigns. More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	38	Are you currently using any modeling techniques such as Look Alikes, Next Best Action, Response modeling, etc?	Not at this time.
Editorial Content Planning, Creation, and Management	39	Are you able to share the current Visit California style guide/brand book?	The Owned team does not currently have a style guide. Please visit the industry website to access brand guidelines. https://assets.visitcalifornia.com/guidelines/guide/800db652-d180-4f30-85dc-614e443a68ba/page/f14ac10c-58af-468f-8733-c46d4ffd9ac9
	40	Should another partner(s) be selected for Email Marketing (section 4) and/or Paid Content Distribution (section 5), is Visit California's expectation that the content creation partner will still take the lead in developing the editorial calendar in those channels? Or is the expectation that the two (or three) agencies would work together to develop the calendar for the channels?	We're open to input from agency partners on calendar management, but our starting expectation is that the agencies will work with each other and the in-house team to ensure the integrated editorial calendar is fulfilling all channel needs.
	41	If another partner is selected for website content strategy, is the expectation that they would provide KPIs to the content creation partner for digital web content? And the content creation partner would establish KPIs alongside Visit California for the print and podcast programs?	Because Visit California is the ultimate owner of the website content strategy, we will be responsible for providing and setting KPIs for all channels, in partnership with all agencies selected. The expectation is for all partners to work together on achieving KPIs set through collaborative content efforts.
	42	For performance dashboards, does Visit California already have a preferred dashboard in place, or will the partner be responsible for developing the dashboard? Is the requirements document that will be provided supposed to inform how performance and insights are ingested into an existing dashboard? Or for the development of a new one(s)?	Visit California does not have a preferred dashboard in place. We are open to any and all dashboard recommendations that can leverage Google Analytics as the source of truth.
	43	For website content experience planning and activation for campaigns, is Visit California looking for the selected partner to provide UX and/or design recommendations to the website development agency for content hubs? Or is the role of the content strategy partner to provide web content best practices, insights, and recommendations that will inform the website development agency's recommendations?	The role of the content strategy partner in this regard is to work collaboratively and in tandem with our in-house staff and website development agency to ensure website design aligns with content strategy.
	44	When you talk about rights to photography in perpetuity, do you intend these for use above the line or only below the line?	Regardless of where the images are used, we need rights to them in perpetuity.
	45	Are there any usage/rights restrictions on the content you currently have?	Yes. Our in-house and agency teams are responsible for ensuring we are in compliance with usage and rights restrictions.
	46	Could you provide further clarity on the role of Oomph in relation to the appointed content partner?	Oomph is Visit California's website development and user experience agency. Appointed content partners and Oomph will collaborate when necessary on the website and the digital expression of Visit California's content. Visit California will always be at the center of the discussions.
	47	Please clarify who performs the website content updates and page building (i.e., internal teams, another website partner, the selected agency partner, etc.).	Both internal teams and agency partners update web content and build pages.
	48	How far back does web content go?	Some web content goes as far back as 2014.
	49	Has the website been audited since COVID-19?	Yes.
	50	How are website contributors currently sourced and vetted?	Currently, website contributors are sourced and vetted by the content creation agency and approved by the in-house team.
	51	For the 12 months of web content, will there be new video assets created as well as the 1,200 images annually? Or are we working with what we currently have?	New video and images will be created.
	52	Has SEO been a priority in the past, or is this a new focus?	SEO has always been a priority, but there is now a heightened emphasis with shifting algorithms and the emergence of new traveler research, planning, and booking behaviors.

	53	Is the amount of content on your website/social channels indicative of how much content you plan to create moving forward or do you have a different intent?	We rely on agency partners to help assess website and social media performance and efficacy and recommend content creation volumes and cadences.
	54	Do you know what content has performed the best for you historically? What is it and what is your hypothesis for why it's the most effective content?	Content performance is largely dependent upon traffic medium and time of year. However, we know from analytics and past performance insights that website visitors seek detailed and informative vacation planning insights and resources.
	55	How do you personalize or create context-aware content now?	The website has a robust tagging system that is used.
	56	Are there other channels where you publish content in addition to the ones listed in the RFP?	Yes. Other teams at Visit California publish content on a variety of other channels.
	57	As you move toward a more integrated approach, what steps have already been taken to develop an integrated content strategy?	Among other steps, an Editorial Manager position has been added to the in-house team to help facilitate editorial planning, calendaring, and reporting.
	58	Describe your current CMN content strategy.	The objectives and strategies can be found in the RFP in section X.X, as well as Visit California's Annual Work Plan: https://assets.visitcalifornia.com/share/E1FFFDC0-D270-4EFC-A9BABE90C0C0987B/?viewType=grid
	59	How is the content strategy currently leveraged to ensure cross-channel integration/governance?	We are currently in the middle of creating a new iteration of the owned team's overarching content marketing strategy. All channels are included, but we also welcome governance feedback and recommendations.
	60	Will the agency be responsible for the publishing of the content to channels (website, social, etc.)?	Yes, the agency will work with Visit California's channel managers to publish content to different channels. Visit California will review all content before being officially published, but agency partners will post to channels for Visit California review.
	61	Are there any recent successful initiatives that you would want to maintain in the next scope?	Delivering engaging content that inspires the consumer, meets their needs and drives their interest in visiting California.
Email Marketing	62	Will sponsored content appear in every email, or only in specific campaigns? How should it be presented (e.g., native, banners)?	Sponsored content does not appear in every email. Visit California works with sponsors on a 1:1 basis to ensure the best campaign fit. We're open to any and all recommendations for how sponsors should appear in email communications with subscribers.
	63	Will email marketing be a significant revenue driver through sponsorship, and how should that impact content?	Sponsored emails and newsletter content is in high demand today and it will continue to be a priority and focus for Visit California and its industry partners. However, we always want to ensure sponsored content provides value to our subscribers.
	64	What is the send volume for the sponsored emails?	We send sponsored emails once a week on Tuesdays to our 230K active subscribers.
	65	Breakdown of in-state vs out-of-state vs international markets	In-state: 112KOut-of-state: 383KInternational Markets: 99K (Canada, Mexico, UK, Austral
	66	Are any email rendering tools being used today?	Currently, Zeta is the only email platform we're using.
	67	What triggers (e.g., page views, downloads, purchases) should initiate email automation?	We're open to recommendations for how triggers can better inform email automation.
	68	What is working well and what areas are underperforming?	Currently, the email program has widespread buy-in from our industry partners and there is high interest for sponsored newsletters and email content. However, we are open to completely re-evaluating the entire email strategy and program when it comes to increasing value for subscribers.
	69	What is the list size?	Our list size is approximately 600,000 subscribers.
	70	What specific goals does Visit California want to achieve through email marketing? Increase engagement? Expand subscriber base? Improve personalization? Increase conversion rates (e.g., intent to visit)?	All of these. This year there is a specific focus on developing a segmentation strategy, a reengagment series and in increasing the subscriber base.
	71	What is the breakdown of the "active" vs the "in-active" listed for dormant subscribers?	Active: 230K Inactive: 366K
	72	List Growth - what activities are being done today to drive growth?	We utilize email best practices, with reengagement campaigns, paid media targeting, and more. We're open to growth recommendations.
	73	Are there plans to re-evaluate Zeta as the email sending vendor?	We are open to considering all email platform recommendations provided.
	74	Is Visit California considering the expansion of email programs in any tier 2 international markets? Or is the expectation that the partner chosen for section 3 (international content planning) will provide this level of insight and direction to the chosen email marketing partner?	We are considering expanding the email program. However, we are also relying on our agency to help strategically guide how the email program expands, and in what directions.
	75	Can you share examples of the current newsletters?	To view our most recent newsletters, we welcome you to sign up for them on our website: https://www.visitcalifornia.com/newsletters/
	76	Would the appointed partner be able to sell into the emails or is this solely the responsibility of VC's content sales team?	The appointed agency partner would be selling sponsored emails. Visit California does not have a content sales team.
	77	Can you share any current email marketing strategy documentation or reporting?	No.
	78	Please confirm the types of emails that are currently being sent out (newsletter, automated series, coop, etc.?).	We have an automated welcome series, a weekly editorial newsletter, a weekly sponsored email, and annual reengagement campaigns. We also have a newsletter promoting the California Now podcast, published biweekly from approximately September through May each year (15 episodes). We also have our international newsletter in the following markets: Canada, Mexico, UK and Australia.
	79	Can you confirm the number of emails that are deployed annually by email type?	We currently have a list size of approximately 600,000 subscribers.
	80	What email lead-generation tactics are you currently employing?	Website signups, social signups, and some paid media campaigns
	81	Please describe how you see your selected partner collaborating with your internal team on the email marketing program.	We envision working collaboratively together, making data-driven decisions. Visit California will ultimately own and drive the email marketing strategy, but the agency should be a trusted collaborator and constant advisor. In addition, there should be one dedicated team for Visit California, not only from an operational standpoint but also from a strategic level. We envision the vendor bringing the latest thinking on any program, including email, to Visit California.
	82	What is driving you to suggest that email is an untapped opportunity? Describe the current email technology stack.	Visit California's current email marketing program has not seen any major changes or strategic re-evaluations over the last several years, due to limited internal resources. Now that the email marketing program is fully staffed again, new opportunities have become clear, especially after digging deeper into recent segmentation tests (on a small scale).

	83	What is your current email list size?	Our current email size is approximately 600K.
	84	Is your list broken out by the US and each country or some other sort of combination?	It is broken out by in-state, out-of-state, and international. International includes Canada, Mexico, UK and Australia.
	85	Do you have any emails in automation?	Only the welcome series when consumers sign up.
	86	What are your current KPIs to measure success in the email marketing channel?	We look at all email KPIs.
General	87	Are incumbent agencies and technology partners participating in the RFP?	Yes.
	88	How many agencies are participating in the RFP?	We do not disclose the number of Intents to Bid.
	89	Is there a limit to the number of pages in the RFP submission?	No.
	90	Will proposals be disqualified if the recommended budget exceeds the $8.1M total budget shared in the proposal?	No. Proposals will not be disqualified. However, its mandatory have an $8.1 M budget which should include as many of the program aspects as possible. Any revenue share should be disclosed and increased revenue over the minimum could be reinvested into the program.
	91	What are your specific pain points in the current process that you would like improved or removed?	Please reference the RFP for information on areas where we see improvement opportunities.
	92	How much in-person contact with the team do you anticipate/require, e.g., weekly, monthly?	There is no set standard for in-person visits, but Visit California usually ends up meeting in-person with its current agencies at least once per quarter. There are often weekly Zoom calls, at a minimum. That said, agency contact and check-ins are dependent upon current initiatives and efforts for each channel. During critical launch periods, check-ins could be as frequent as daily, depending on campaign and channel needs.
	93	How do Visit California initiatives tie in with initiatives at the city or specific destination level?	We have extremely close working relationships with DMOs across the state and partner with them frequently. We also cover things to do and places to visit, across every California city and destination.
	94	Are there other destinations (domestic or international) whose content marketing you particularly admire - and if so, why?	Not at this time.
	95	Do you want the staffing plan broken out by project/category scope? E.X. Email marketing staff, Website content staffing and so on.	Yes.
	96	Should we include specific content ideas for California's brand and creative as well as talent/creators/influencers specifically for VCA or should we limit our proposal for high level capabilities non-specific to California's brand.	Visit California brand creative and brand campaigns are headed up by the Visit California marketing team and their partner agencies. While the owned team collaborates closely with the marketing team to bring brand campaigns and creative to life on owned channels, content ideas for this RFP should be specific to Visit California's owned channels and ones that help promote the existing Visit California brand.
	97	Is there currently a shared editorial calendar that all channels can access?	The editorial team currently works closely on content ideation and calendaring and is in the process of creating a more robust integrated editorial calendar.
	98	Is the single agency that handled all aspects of editorial part of this RFP?	This RFP is open to everyone, including incumbent agencies.
	99	Can we change our answers about which parts of the RFP we intend to respond to after seeing the answers to these questions?	Yes. In signaling your intent to bid, you are not signaling which pieces of the RFP you are responding to.
	100	Does Visit California have a preference for California-based content marketing services firms to perform the scope of services in this RFP?	No, preference is not given. Visit California is open to all agencies, regardless of location.
	101	The RFP asks agencies to not bid for sections of the RFP where we don't have expertise. Does the same guidance apply to specific bullets within each section?	Yes. However, if it is an area where you are intending to hire to acquire the expertise, we are open to that, as long as that is remarked upon and detailed in your RFP response.
	102	Is getting California residents to explore other parts of the state a goal?	No. Our stated mission is to draw consumers from outside of California to the state.
	103	What do you consider the most successful component of the current Visit California content marketing program, and why?	We have a robust library of resources for all types of travelers who are interested in visiting California. This is driven by an always-on content creation effort that aims to bring the latest and greatest information to visitors.
	104	What destinations in the US and outside the US provide the greatest competition among your target audience?	Please refer to the Marketing Work Plan and Strategic framework for information about Visit California's competitive set.
	105	Describe "premier travel destination."	Please refer to Marketing Work Plan and other materials to assess what that means. https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324 and https://assets.visitcalifornia.com/share/E1FFFDC0-D270-4EFC-A9BABE90C0C0987B/?viewType=grid
	106	Who are the key stakeholders that the AOR will be engaging with regularly	The AOR regularly engages with internal teams across Visit California as well as other agencies and consultants who work with Visit California.
	107	There's a robust Visit California Internal Team. Will this team work with the selected agency/agencies in a collaborative manner on content planning, development, distribution and reporting, or is the role of the Visit California Internal Team primarily to manage the selected agency/agencies?	The internal Visit California team will work closely with the selected agency/agencies in a collaborative manner across these areas.
	108	What is the preferred method for communication/collaboration? E.g., single point of contact on the agency side, "all hands on deck" weekly status meetings. Quarterly relationship check-ins etc.	We currently conduct regular meetings ranging from all hands to channel-specific groups. We are open to recommendations on communication and collaboration cadences and format.
	109	What does success look like in year one?	Our objectives are outlined in the RFP.
	110	Are you looking for a refresh to the look & feel of your communications?	We are open to ideas on refreshing the look and feel of communications. However, we are primarily focused on the content initiatives laid out in the RFP.
	111	Who are the ultimate stakeholders for success? The state, voters, other travel-promoting entities, etc.?	The Owned team is accountable to several stakeholder groups including Visit California leadership and the state's tourism industry partners. We are also accountable to the consumer for having content programs that serve their needs.
	112	In terms of strategies outlined and skill sets sought, how closely does the RFP reflect current programs and efforts vs. a vision for the near future?	It reflects both. Our channels see successes today, but we are always optimizing our approach and re-evaluating our strategies.

	113	Do you currently have a documented omni-channel marketing strategy?	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	114	What would the expectation be after a 1-year term in regards to marking progress toward a future vision? Strictly performance metrics? Strategic innovation? Marketing enablement?	All of the above.
	115	Based on the RFP, it appears as though content is the primary value used to motivate prospects to visit California. Does Visit California also use special travel packages, offers, access opportunities, events, openings, and more to provide such value-adds? Create or coordinate offers with partners? Leverage Visitor Bureaus from various regions to create greater interest?	We have ongoing and very collaborative relationships with DMOs throughout the state. We are in regular contact with them about content opportunities and content improvements. We sometimes feature travel packages, offers, but these are selectively included, based on our audiences and their interests. However, we do not foresee or have an interest at this time in turning Visit California's owned channels into booking engines.
	116	What partnerships does Visit California currently have that help promote your content and value adds? Are you interested in securing, increasing any of those?	We currently have partnerships with other DMOs throughout the state of California, a robust creator and influencer program, and celebrity partnerships. We are interested in securing and increasing partnerships that are relevant to our audiences and align with increasing tourism to California.
	117	Do you have any major marketing campaigns/initiatives planned for 2025, 2026 that we should be aware of and take into consideration?	Visit California plans major campaigns on an annual basis. These campaigns typically launch in February/March of each year, with planning starting each September/October across all agencies.
	118	Do you have a multi-year roadmap at this time?	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	119	What are your overall marketing KPIs?	We look at all traditional marketing channel metrics, but our overall KPIs are to promote and support travel and tourism to California. More information can be found in the Marketing Work Plan: https://assets.visitcalifornia.com/share/E1FFFDC0-D270-4EFC-A9BABE90C0C0987B/?viewType=grid
	120	Should we be a finalist and want to demonstrate use cases, would a stakeholder from the CRM team be able to provide information on the current personalization schema?	Visit California's personalization schema needs re-evaluation, so we would actually prefer for you to present a recommended personalization schema.
	121	Do you have an NPS score? If so, can you share it?	We do not have an NPS score.
	122	Under "minimum requirements" it states that we will need to provide financial statements. I wanted to clarify if there is a minimum revenue threshold required for agencies to participate before we start the process. We are a small business, and our total revenue in 2024 is projected to be €1.3 million. Considering the size of the contract, I wanted to point this out and see if it would still make sense for us to take part. Note: We have been in business for 8 years and have a lot of experience in travel and tourism, so we do meet those minimum requirements.	There is no revenue requirement.
	123	We are highly specialized in content creation and localization for international markets. There are aspects of this project we feel would be a great fit for us (especially running the local social media channels across 11+ markets) and other parts (such as web development) that are outside our wheelhouse. In the RFP, it states: "If bidding on a single section, explain how your specialized services could integrate with other potential partners in a multi-agency model." I wanted to clarify whether we would need to have specific partners in mind to include in a joint proposal, or if we would just need to present hypothetically how we would see it working.	When explaining how your agency might integrate with other agencies, you do not need to include specific partners unless you are submitting a joint bid with them. Instead, you can share how your philosophy for successful integration in a multi-agency model.
International Editorial Content Planning & Creation	124	For international evergreen content creation, is the expectation that the selected partner would be creating net new content pieces each year? Or does this number include the overhaul of existing in-market content?	The international agency partner will be responsible for content strategy in each market, including the creation of new pieces and updating existing in-market content. The translation of those content pieces is not a part of this scope, as Visit California uses Google Translate and its in-market agency network.
	125	Is there an expected number of social posts/videos that need to be created or adapted on a weekly and monthly basis? Or is the expectation that the selected agency provides their recommendation of posts per country/channel?	The international agency partner will provide recommendations on the ideal volume and type of content to be created and updated for each international market.
	126	Is the expectation that the international editorial agency will be responsible for the in-language translations of captions, subtitles, and text overlays for social posts?	No. That will be handled by utilizing Google Translate and Visit California's in-market agency representation.
	127	How long are typical evergreen content articles, or could you share some examples? What is the approx. frequency they are currently published?	Please see our website and blog for examples of content and publishing cadence: https://www.visitcalifornia.com/
	128	To what extent is content generated/originated in-market vs translated/localized from the English source?	Currently, most content is translated from an original English source.
	129	We can see confirmation of languages for website content and can review social profiles for languages used there. However, there is an absence of Chinese or Arabic mentioned even…	We prioritize content creation based on identified priority international markets. We currently do not have presences on any social media channels in the Middle East. Our Chinese social media channels are run through our in-market agency partners that you may potentially partner with at some point to help optimize their posts, cadence, and assets.
	130	If volumes of content are not available, are you open to delivery or word based pricing? which may change month on month depending on Visit California's needs? Or are you expecting a fixed/retained team for delivery?	We would prefer a set and clearly defined annual retainer for content creation. While we are flexible with how that retainer is used across the year and each month to create content, word-based pricing and/or delivery-based pricing unfortunately doesn't provide the flexibility our channels and teams need.
	131	Can you explain how the agency of record interacts with the in-market agencies?	Currently, our agency of record interacts with in-market agencies on an as-needed basis. However, we are looking to grow the international content program and anticipate more collaboration between the international content agency and in-market agencies.

	132	How are the in-market agencies leveraged in each of the 12 international markets?	Each in-market agency develops specific plans centered around Visit California's objectives in that market.
	133	What is the relationship between the AOR and these in-market agencies?	Currently, the content AOR has limited contact with these in-market agencies. However, as we are expanding international content marketing efforts, we anticipate the selected international content agency partner will work more closely with the in-market agencies.
Paid Content Distribution	134	Can you share anything about the current channels through which this is done?	Previously, this budget was allocated toward Paid Content Development Programs through partners like Outbrain and Taboola, among others. We also utilize paid social media posts. Finally, we are open to recommendations for this program.
	135	Are you able to share approx budget split across markets?	The bulk of the budget is spent in the United States with about $250K spent in Canada.
	136	What KPIs are tracked today outside of email clicks and opens, etc.?	We look at all standard and available email KPIs.
	137	What is being used to judge email performance success? What is the conversion metric?	We look at all standard and available email KPIs. List health is a priority, though.
	138	It's mentioned in Section 1 (Website Content Strategy & Experience) that Google Analytics 4 is being used for website performance tracking, is it also being used for email performance tracking?	Not directly, but it's used to help paint a broader marketing program picture.
	139	What dashboard reporting platforms/tools are you currently utilizing across your paid, owned and earned channels?	Current reporting platforms and tools include Google Analytics, Zeta, Sprout Social, Contentsquare, Semrush, and Google Search Console.
Podcast Program	140	Can you provide more details on the current podcast strategy?	It's designed to be an engaging and inspirational content offering that enables consumers to be immersed in California for an extended time period. It also serves to help consumers plan as it showcases California destinations, activities and lifestyle, while also supporting the California tourism industry.
	141	Do you have any paid efforts behind your podcast distribution efforts?	Paid Content Distribution.
	142	Can you share any current reporting? Is the podcast only produced and distributed in English?	We will not share any reporting. The podcast is only produced and distributed in English, however it has a global listenership.
	143	What's the listenership of the current podcast in terms of number of listeners and geography?	We cannot share this information, but we can share that the podcast has more than 1 million lifetime downloads.
Print Publications	144	Are you open to new ideas for print titles here, or just the three listed?	We are open to new ideas.
	145	How many distribution points do the print titles currently go out to?	We currently have a flexible distribution setup, making it challenging to provide an exact number of distribution points at any given time. However, we are actively looking to refine, and possibly expand, our distribution plan and are open to new ideas. Currently, around half of each print run is bound with our current provider's print publications, another 10% are sent to California Welcome Centers and the bulk are distributed direct-to-consumers or other organizations who request them.
	146	Can you share where the State Map is distributed to - and is that the responsibility of the appointed partner (the RFP appears to only talk about the distribution of the…)?	We currently have a flexible distribution setup, making it challenging to provide an exact number of distribution points at any given time. However, we are actively looking to refine, and possibly expand, our distribution plan and are open to new ideas. Currently, around half of each print run is bound with our current provider's print publications, another 10% are sent to California Welcome Centers and the bulk are distributed direct-to-consumers or other organizations who request them.
	147	Is print production management a component of this RFP?	Yes.
	148	What currently drives the approach to the number of pages for print productions? Likewise, what drives the volume specified for daily posts across your active social channels?	For Print Publications, we look for an Ad/Edit ratio of 30/70 for the Visitor's Guide and 45/65 for the Road Trips Guide. For posting across active social channels, we use a combination of best practices and individual platform engagement metrics, but we are open to re-evaluating posting cadences.
Program Measurement	149	What are the KPIs for this engagement?	Currently, there are a variety of KPIs specific to organizational and team objectives, a well as specific channel metrics. We anticipate working closely with the selected agency or agencies to assess and update these KPIs.
	150	Where are the gaps in your current reporting methods?	Please see page 25 of the RFP for guidelines on the improvements we would like to see in reporting methods.
	151	What is the role of the AOR concerning program measurement and the partner agencies? Is the AOR the "quarterback" and charged with providing a holistic lens? Other?	Our agencies work together in an ecosystem, owning their respective areas and collaborating when needed. We expect each agency to review and be an expert in their areas, but engage in discussion with other program owners to better understand dependencies and implications.
	152	What is the performance history across all key activity (paid, owned, earned efforts)?	This is proprietary information.
	153	Do you presently have a dashboard that needs to be refreshed or are you looking for the agency to create a net new dashboard based on requirements?	Visit California does not have a preferred dashboard in place. We are open to any and all dashboard recommendations that can leverage Google Analytics as the source of truth.
Program Monetization	154	Can Visit California elaborate on how they wish to use influencer partnerships to drive revenue?	We are looking for the selected partner to create a strategy that grows sales/revenue and may include recommendations for influencer partnerships.
	155	Is the $1.44m a minimum target for overall revenue or for revenue to be shared with VC?	The full $1.44M is the minimum share of revenue paid to Visit California.
	156	Can you be more specific about exactly what assets/inventory are open for monetization?	Please visit our Advertising Hub for more information on existing advertising inventory.
	157	Can you share a current rate-card for these assets?	Please visit our Industry site for information on current rates.
	158	Understanding that all advertisers would need to be a good brand fit, are there any specific category exclusions or blacklists?	We follow all advertising best practices and legal requirements as a 501(c)(6). We also do not provide advertising opportunities to DMOs outside of California or anything political in nature or deemed unsafe for our brand. Visit California reserves the right to decline an advertisement or advertiser.
	159	Describe your current monetization strategy.	This is proprietary information. Please visit our Advertising Hub for information on our current offerings. and our Industry site for information on current rates.
	160	What consumer research has been conducted and is it available for review?	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	161	How often do you connect with your target audience to ensure the experience is meeting their needs?	We connect with audiences regularly via an always-on onsite survey. In addition, we also use UserTesting.com to gain feedback on specific use cases.

Research	162	Do you presently have any standing research efforts in place that we should be aware of (e.g., brand tracker, trends research etc.)?	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	163	Do you have any findings from your Smart Insights survey on the website?	More information can be found here: https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/researchdashboard and here https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/marketing-communications/year-in-review-fy2324
	164	How frequently do you conduct audience research?	We connect with audiences regularly via an always-on onsite survey. In addition, we also use UserTesting.com to gain feedback on specific use cases.
	165	Is research conducted in-house or by a third party?	Research is led by our in-house research team and conducted by a third party agency. In addition, we also use UserTesting.com to gain feedback on specific use cases.
Social Media	166	How many social assets are typically produced for the tier 1 + 2 markets monthly? Any more details on the split of assets (video vs static) welcomed for pricing	Currently, asset types are based on performance per channel. For Facebook, the majority of assets today lean heavy on images and light on videos. However, for Instagram, the majority of assets are Reels with carousels posted intermittently. Most international markets currently post on each channel about 3-5 days per week, but we are looking for the selected international agency to recommend and optimize posting cadences, schedules, and asset types.
	167	Can you share some example short-form video assets?	Please visit our website and social media account for examples of short-form video assets.
Technology Stack	168	What technologies, outside of Zeta, are being used today?	Zeta is our primary platform for email marketing.
	169	What personalization tools and features are in place today?	First-party data and interests. But we're open to personalization tools and features recommendations.
	170	To what extent - if at all - have you already integrated AI into your content workflow?	AI is not currently part of the current workflow, but we are actively testing various platforms now and getting close to making an AI platform decision soon.
	171	What tech platforms do you currently use for analytics and reporting?	For the owned team, we use Google Analytics, Contentsquare, UserTesting.com, Sprout Social, Google Search Console, Semrush, and Zeta.
	172	Could you provide more detail on your current first-party data infrastructure?	Visit California has analytics platforms in place for every channel, and the data we collect through interactions with out audiences through each channel is reviewed on an ongoing basis. This includes industry standard measurement platforms like GA4. In addition, we also have several supplemental tools that help provide first-party data, such as on-site quiz functionality, audience journey and behavior platforms, and direct user feedback and testing platforms.
	173	What existing data sources will we access as part of our personalization efforts?	Existing data includes analytics from across the website, social media, email and other channels. The selected partner will also have access to internal dashboards and consumer journey research to guide data efforts.
	174	Are you currently using a CRM or customer data platform (CDP)? If so, which?	Salesforce is the organization's CRM platform, however it is currently only utilized for maintaining information about our industry. The Content team also uses various channel-specific programs to manage data and user relationships. We house our consumer data with our current email provider.
	175	Who is currently managing it?	We do not currently have a dedicated Content data resource. We work with an integrated team to manage data at the organizational level.
	176	What CMS are you currently using for the website? Is all content housed within this CMS?	Drupal is the CMS and working DAM for web content.
	177	Describe your current database and where you see opportunities. (breakdown by channel, responsiveness across channel, advocacy across channel, etc.)	We have different databases for different channels. We are looking for the selected agency to help us tie the data together to find new, unidentified opportunities.
	178	Is there a DAM/ Image library of current images and videos?	We currently use a number of libraries to store assets including images and videos, including Crowdriff and Bynder.
	179	How are you presently leveraging data to connect with your target audience(s)?	We proactively review and analyze data from across the owned channel landscape to help inform what content should be created and when. This process is always evolving, and we are open to recommendations for ways to better leverage data to connect with target audiences.
	180	How customizable is your trip planning offering?	Currently, there is limited trip customization. We are open to re-evaluating our trip planning offerings and the user experience we provide.
	181	How effectively are you presently leveraging your CRM platform?	Zeta is our current CRM platform and we are proactively looking at new ways to leverage the platform and data. We are open to new CRM recommendations and strategic approaches.
	182	Describe your current efforts to uncover the optimal use of technology to deliver contextually relevant content.	We prefer to have right-sized platforms in place. We are always evaluating our current tech stack and proactively testing new platforms.
	183	What analytics tools are currently being used?	For the owned team, we use Google Analytics, Contentsquare, UserTesting.com, Sprout Social, Google Search Console, Semrush, and Zeta.
	184	What Zeta products make up the MarTech Stack?	We currently only use Zeta for email marketing.
	185	What is your current Customer Relationship Management platform?	Salesforce is the organization's CRM platform, however it is currently only utilized for maintaining information about our industry. The Content team also uses various channel-specific programs to manage data and user relationships. We house our consumer data with our current email provider.
	186	What is your current Customer Data Platform?	We do not currently have a CDP.
	187	What is your current database of record?	We do not currently have one centralized database of record.
	188	Do you use a Content Management System to store and promote content?	We use Drupal as our CMS.