



GREATER MIAMI  
CONVENTION &  
VISITORS BUREAU



## **Public Relations Request for Qualifications Canada Market**

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## RFP INTRODUCTION

The Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB), the official sales and marketing organization for Greater Miami and The Beaches, hereby solicits Letters of Interest and Qualification Statements from responsible and qualified professional public relations agency service providers (hereafter referred to as the agency or agencies). The GMCVB is initiating the public relations review for **brand communications in the Canada market**. This Request for Proposal is a periodic review of the GMCVB's PR program and PR agency services.

### Canada

- Targets: Media in national and key feeder markets in the Toronto, Montreal and other Canadian markets
- Scope: Brand communications for the Miami and Beaches brand

## USE AND DISCLOSURE

GMCVB reserves the right to use information submitted in response to this document in any manner it may deem appropriate in evaluating the fitness of the services proposed. Materials that are submitted by the Agency that should be considered highly confidential should be marked as such. If confidentiality is requested but cannot be afforded, the Agency will be notified and will be permitted to withdraw its proposal.

Additionally, and at its discretion, the GMCVB agrees to maintain confidentiality of any product information developed by and offered by the Agency. Conversely, all information provided in this RFQ shall be deemed confidential and shall not be shared outside your Agency.

## GMCVB OVERVIEW

The Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau (GMCVB), is a not-for-profit Florida corporation, with its principal office at 701 Brickell Avenue, Suite 2700 Miami, Florida 33131.

The GMCVB is a sales and marketing organization. Its mission is to attract and encourage all persons and organizations to visit Greater Miami and the Beaches for conventions, business and leisure. Acting on behalf of its members, its government partners and the citizens of Miami-Dade County, the GMCVB markets and promotes all segments of the community as a preferred destination. In furtherance of this mission, the GMCVB will support and encourage actions and programs that enhance the desirability and attractiveness of Greater Miami and The Beaches for its visitors.

The GMCVB and its contracted agencies must work together in creating public relations strategies and programs that are integrated with GMCVB's marketing efforts and focused on accomplishing the stated mission.

The current PR agency of record for United States and Canada is **Current Lifestyle Marketing**.

## MIAMI AND THE BEACHES BRAND OVERVIEW

Research shows consumers travel based on motivations derived from the kind of vacation they envision for themselves. The GMCVB can create powerful marketing tools by speaking to consumers at this level. Travelers are increasingly taking the opportunity to explore new destinations versus tried and true locales. Therefore, the GMCVB is focused on attracting new travelers to grow Greater Miami's tourism in the long term. Culture and experience-motivated travel is a major trend among the traveling population as is Nature and Adventure. To grow visitation substantially, the GMCVB is focused on educating prospective visitors that Miami is a culture and experience-rich destination that also offers natural landscape full of adventure opportunities.

Going into 2019-20, the "Found in Miami" campaign will continue to evolve, highlighting the most unique aspects of the Miami and Beaches experience in order to attract culture seekers as well as adventure seekers - nationally and internationally.

The "Found in Miami" campaign was designed to be a multiyear, multipurpose brand campaign. The campaign stands for the GMCVB's understanding that the world is shrinking – that visitors to Greater Miami are more cosmopolitan and that they demand new experiences and flavors from their travels, all of which Greater Miami offers.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS OVERVIEW FOR UNITED STATES MARKET

### 2019-2020 MIAMI AND BEACHES BRAND PRIORITIES

- Utilize themes from the Found in Miami campaign and its neighborhoods to increase mass awareness of Greater Miami's unique offerings.
- Further segment and attract "Culture Seekers" and "Adventure Seekers" through targeted earned PR programs
- Leverage PortMiami's Cruise Capital of the World positioning as well as the port's location in the heart of downtown Miami, as a way to grow pre/post cruise travel in the destination.
- Leverage Miami and Beaches offerings in its natural surroundings to capitalize on wellness trends and travel
- Further position Greater Miami and The Beaches as a pioneer and leader in the area of sustainability and resiliency
- Increase awareness and desirability for Greater Miami's meetings and conventions package for the meetings trade press. This includes but not limited to: new expanded Miami Beach Convention Center (MBCC), future headquarter hotel connected to the MBCC, the MBCC campus and offerings.

For more information on the Miami and Beaches brand, reference the [2018-2019 Marketing Plan](#).

GMCVB develops and implements a year-round targeted public relations program in key feeder markets for the Miami and Beaches brand that effectively:

- Builds awareness for Miami and The Beaches through traditional means via communications with editors and travel writers but also using social media tactics to reach bloggers, amplify traditional media and use owned channels as a possible communication vehicle.
- Generates and maintains awareness of the Greater Miami & the Beaches area and the emotional and rational benefits of vacationing or conducting meetings in the destination
- Communicates the diversity of the Greater Miami & the Beaches travel experience via heritage neighborhoods and cultural offerings
- Ensures integration of all PR efforts with marketing/brand campaigns
- Emphasizes Greater Miami & the Beaches' diversity including unique niche markets such as Multicultural Audiences, Boutique Hotels, Gay & Lesbian Travel, Film/Fashion/Sports/Entertainment, Arts & Culture, Special Events, Cuisine, Heritage, Pre-Post Cruise Travel, Family Travel, Nightlife, Business Travel and Groups & Meetings.
- Although efforts are year-round, GMCVB expects Agency to put special emphasis on boosting shoulder/summer business via targeted media publicity.

#### GENERAL SCOPE OF MONTHLY SERVICES FOR BRAND COMMUNICATIONS IN CANADA

The Agency shall be the principal advisor and provider to GMCVB for proactive, Miami brand-supporting public relations efforts to a variety of target audiences including travel trade media, meetings and incentive trades, as well as consumer and lifestyle press—such as appropriate television outlets, radio stations, internet magazines, printed magazines and newspapers (national and regional). Agency shall also be responsible for advising GMCVB and major industry/government partners on issues management efforts which would impact the mission accomplishment of the GMCVB.

During the term of this agreement, the Agency will provide PR services that include but are not limited to:

1. **News Bureau Management**
  - Identify pitch topics that are timely and resonate with media while being on-brand

- Distribute monthly media newsletters to press list. GMCVB press team responsible for drafting the newsletter.
- Distribute 4 quarterly newsletters per year. GMCVB press team responsible for drafting the newsletter.
- Reactive: Timely respond to press requests including broll, photo, fact checking and general story assistance.
- Broadcast/Production: The PR agency of record will work with show producers (lifestyle, news, culinary, travel, etc) and broadcast decision makers to place Miami stories on broadcast programming.
- Create editorial calendar establishing relevant news topics for the destination to be pitched to targeted press at the appropriate time. Topics to include:
  - Promotional time periods (Mother's Day in Miami, New Year's in Miami, etc)
  - Meetings and Incentives Trade Messaging to support Convention Sales Team and initiatives
  - Travel Trade and Industry news stories to support the Tourism Sales and overall industry messaging.
  - Create synergies with major events in Miami and The Beaches
  - Miami Temptations program ([www.MiamiTemptations.com](http://www.MiamiTemptations.com))

2. **Social Media:** This area is a shared responsibility between the Communications division and the Digital Marketing division. Following are the expectations from the PR agency of record:

- **Earned Media:** The PR agency of record will have a principle role in securing earned social media placements by working with bloggers/influencers and increasing viral-ness of traditional press efforts. In addition, the PR agency of record will ensure that all press releases are written using SEO best practices to ensure digital amplification of destination messaging. Under the earned media strategy, the GMCVB will consider paid-for-placements (similar to wire distribution) so long as it is not advertising strategy. In addition, the GMCVB will look to the PR agency of record for content seeding strategy where it makes sense to increase viral media exposure. The PR agency of record will also monitor or "listen" to social chatter as part of media monitoring responsibilities.
- **Paid:** Paid media tactics such as advertising, creating banners, etc will not be required of the PR agency of record since it falls within the scope of the GMCVB Digital Marketing team.
- **Owned:** The owned media channels are a shared resource between the Communications and Digital Marketing team. The GMCVB employs an internal social media manager who is responsible for actively posting brand messaging via owned channels. The PR agency of record is expected to include recommendations for use of owned channels via editorial calendar as another source of information dissemination. The PR agency of record will make recommendations on how to use owned social channels for promotional purposes that support PR initiatives (publicity stunts, press missions, promotions with

media outlets, etc). Lastly, the PR agency will regularly monitor and advise on influential followers on GMCVB social assets.

3. **Press Trips/Media Visits:** The GMCVB will host press trips that require media participants. The GMCVB internal press team is responsible for identifying the theme for the press trip as well as curate the itinerary and engage with local partners. The PR agency of record will pitch and secure the journalists scheduled to be part of the press trip. It is the responsibility of the PR agency to ensure there are journalists and/or influencers on appropriate press trips. In addition, the GMCVB can fly-in key media contacts into the destination if filing stories that justify their visit. The PR agency is responsible for fielding these opportunities and validating via MAR form (Media Assistance Request) form to be filled out by all press requesting travel accommodations in exchange for an editorial assignment. In addition, a member of the account team will be required to travel down for some of the press trips scheduled in order to assist the GMCVB team and escort press around the destination.
  
4. **Media Monitoring and Reporting:** Monitoring press sentiment and monitoring press results is crucial to the PR business. With several global PR agencies working on behalf of the GMCVB, all reporting results as well, it is imperative that all agencies follow the approved reporting templates. The GMCVB subscribes to media monitoring services that will be managed by the agency PR team in tracking press coverage. Following is a list of reports expected from the PR agency of record:
  - The daily media monitoring report: By noon each day, a media report capturing the major headlines for Miami and The Beaches in the specified market will be emailed to the GMCVB team. This provides the team with real-time look at the brand positioning on daily basis.
  - The monthly media report: This report is considered to be a reflection of the PR agency's work and should only include activities and press clippings resulting directly from the PR agency's work. The Key Performance Indicators should be prominently featured in the report. The GMCVB will provide the agency with an approved template to follow.
  
5. **Meetings and Status Calls:** As part of good account practice, the GMCVB requests that the account team have weekly calls with the day-to-day GMCVB director as well as a once-a-month call to review the monthly report with the GMCVB Communications Sr. Director and the Vice President. In addition, there are important meetings that take place in Miami that should include attendance by at least one of the Miami account team members:
  - Marketing Committee Meetings: These meetings take place each quarter and typically involve presentations by the GMCVB CMO as well as agency partners. The audience consists of marketing executives from major hotels and travel industry partners.

- GMCVB Annual Meeting: Each October or November the GMCVB will host the official annual meeting for the industry providing a look at the year's performance and industry data.
  - State of the Industry: May is national tourism month in Miami and the GMCVB president and CEO hosts an industry breakfast to provide a mid-year look at travel and tourism industry performance indicators.
  - Annual Partner Planning Workshop: Each summer the GMCVB leads a workshop and brainstorming session with hundreds of tourism partners in the community in preparation for next fiscal year planning.
6. **Industry and General Counsel:** As PR agency of record, it is expected that the agency maintain an on-going discussion on best ways to implement a strategic PR plan and that the account team regularly consult with the GMCVB team.
7. **Crisis Management** - Provide a 24 hours/ 365 days per year availability service for issues and crisis management and crisis PR. This includes advising GMCVB of potentially negative issues in the media and suggesting appropriate strategy, working with GMCVB on appropriate action to respond to the issue and media training session(s) as appropriate

The GMCVB requires a public relations agency team with extensive experience in the defined markets (Canada). The Agency must have demonstrated results in strategic placement of positive, brand-supporting stories on destinations in television, magazines, newspapers, radio, and internet magazines that target the GMCVB targeted audiences. The Agency should be able to use all the tactics above to create communications that define the breadth and depth of the destination to the target audiences for the purpose of extending the length of stay or creating repeat visitation. The Agency should also have the ability and experience to develop creative PR campaigns or stunts for implementation. The Agency should also have significant experience in destination issues management.

The Agency should be able to lead a comprehensive discussion on the "Brand Essence" of Greater Miami & the Beaches and its further development and promotion as it relates to positioning within a campaign.

The Agency should be able to suggest strategies to expand the impact of advertising/marketing campaigns, leveraging them for enhanced editorial/advertorial coverage. GMCVB requires Agency to explore possible joint PR programs with appropriate industry and corporate partners, helping GMCVB to identify new partners.

## RFP SCHEDULE & PROCEDURE

The criteria for selecting the PR agency(s) include having full-service capabilities. Other requirements are identified in detail in the attachment.

The following are some of the key dates in this process (*subject to change*):

September 20, 2019:

Agency intent to respond due via email to **GMCVBRFQ@gmcb.com**.

September 27, 2019:

Deadline for submitting questions about the RFQ process. Inquiries must be made in writing to **GMCVBRFQ@gmcb.com**.

October 25, 2019:

Deadline for RFQ submissions. Note: Must provide 20 copies of the credentials package. Failure to do so will result in elimination.

Week of November 18, 2019:

Finalists notified and provided with assignment.

December, 2019:

Finalists presentations in Miami

To properly manage this process, we will require all interested parties to respond to the attached RFQ by **September 20, 2019**.

Questions re: RFQ requirements may be directed IN WRITING ONLY to **GMCVBRFQ@gmcb.com**

### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The Agency, if selected, must submit an agreement to not represent and/or terminate all conflict of interest accounts. The GMCVB will make a final decision if it is a conflict of interest. This may include, but not be limited to, a state, county, city, nation or region representing another sun/tourist destination during the term of the agreement. The GMCVB is to be advised of all new business solicitations by the Agency that could be perceived to constitute a conflict of interest. With regards to the matter of branch or subsidiary offices of an agency, it should be clear that all such offices are considered as part of the total corporate entity of the agency.

### **USE OF MATERIALS**

All creative ideas and campaign elements produced by the selected Agency for the GMCVB during the contract period shall become the property of the GMCVB, as will all materials.

### **OTHER RELEVANT FACTORS**

The agency should demonstrate a high inclination to use research (from GMCVB and other sources) in the development of strategic platforms for the basis of PR campaigns and have a strong methodology for measuring the effectiveness of PR programs and integrated marketing efforts. The agency should also demonstrate the ability to communicate professionally and effectively with the GMCVB and partners.

### ACQUISITION OF GOODS AND SERVICES/OFFICE EXPENSES

Any goods and services or monthly expenses over \$500 USD acquired by the agency on behalf of the GMCVB, must receive staffs' advance approval. For major purchases, actual specifications used to obtain bids/quotes should be provided as well. Sole service purchases, or selection or recommendation of a vendor that is not the lowest bidder should be supported in writing as to the basis for such a recommendation. Also, repetitive purchase of the same goods or services may be supported by only periodic bidding.

### LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

All corporations seeking to do business with GMCVB shall, at the time of submitting a proposal, be on file with their respective corporate licensing division as an active corporation in good standing in accordance with applicable Statutes. A statement shall be required indicating that the agency is a corporation or other legal entity. If subcontractors are used, a statement shall also be required, prior to entering into an agreement with that subcontractor, indicating that the subcontractor is registered with their State in accordance with applicable statutes and provide their corporate charter numbers.

### QUESTIONS, REQUESTS FOR CHANGES AND CONCERNS

From the date this RFQ is issued until a determination is made, **no contact related to this RFQ will be allowed** between any Agency employee and any employee of GMCVB or the Agency Review Task Force (with the exception of the RFQ Manager). Any contact with GMCVB may only be directed to the **RFQ Manager** in writing (via email) only. Any unauthorized contact may disqualify the respondent from further consideration. All questions must be submitted to the RFQ Manager in writing (via email). Questions will be answered on an individual basis (not shared with other parties unless it's a question asked by multiple parties). Consistency will be maintained in the answers provided to all agencies.

### CONTRACT TERM

GMCVB seeks to contract with the selected agency(s) effective December of 2019 and continuing through September 30, 2023, subject to an annual review of Agency's performance. The terms of the contract will be set forth in a definitive agreement to be signed by GMCVB and the selected Agency, which will contain usual and customary terms for transactions of this type, including standard representations, warranties and termination provisions; and any contract terms set forth in this RFQ will be merged into and superseded by the terms of such definitive agreement. Upon GMCVB's determination that the agency is performing in an exemplary fashion, GMCVB may negotiate an extension of the contract for a period not to exceed one (1) year. If an extension or renewal occurs, any changes in contract terms must be agreed upon by both parties at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the new contract or extension. The agreement may be terminated with or without cause by either party delivering (by certified or registered mail) written notice of such intention to the other party not less than sixty (60) days in advance of the specified termination date. This agreement shall automatically terminate upon the insolvency of Agency or Client's reasonable determination that Agency may not be able to pay its debts as they become due.

## BUDGET

Please provide your Agency's proposed fee structure (i.e. minimum monthly retainer and monthly expense estimates, as well as hourly rates for staff according to level and position) for managing a high-profile destination account requiring full service. This must be provided or RFQ will not be considered.

## RFQ PROCESS

The PR Agency Screening Committee will review the RFQs and make recommendations on which firms to pursue with RFPs and presentations. GMCVB will notify selected Agencies. Selected Agencies will be required to conduct comprehensive presentations.

## SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

All interested parties must return the RFQ Package by **5 p.m. on Friday, October 25, 2019**. Agencies must indicate which market they are interested in submitting for RFQ.

Agencies should submit answers to the questions contained within the RFQ, as well as any additional materials they may wish to submit, to be received at the GMCVB offices. The replies should be as brief as possible. **The interested agency should submit 20 copies of their qualification package.** A PR Agency Screening Committee comprised of GMCVB staff and industry partners will then review these responses and other submitted materials for sufficiency and ability to perform in order to develop a list of finalists.

The top ranking 3-5 PR agencies during this RFQ process, will be selected as a finalist and invited to Miami for a formal presentation as part of the last round in the selection process.

Please submit 20 copies of your qualifications to the following address:

**PR Agency RFQ Manager  
Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau  
701 Brickell Avenue, Suite 2700  
Miami, Florida 33131**

Please send questions to:

**GMCVBRFQ@gmcb.com**

## STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

Responses submitted must contain, at a minimum, the following information. The evaluation of the proposals and presentation will consist of, but not be restricted to, these points. Please respond to each numbered section in order. The Agency should number the responses in the same sequence as below to make the review process easier.

### **1. CORPORATE BACKGROUND**

Details on the corporation background and each known subcontractor, its size, and resources.

Date established.

Company registration

Name(s) and Type of Ownership (public company, partnership, subsidiary, etc.).

Primary business.

Total number of full-time employees including ethnic/race/gender breakdown

Number of full-time employees in Miami (if applicable)

List and provide bios for the key individuals in the agency (not necessarily those that would work on this account).

Physical locations including addresses of all branches.

### **2. CORPORATE EXPERIENCE**

Listing of major accounts including current tourism/leisure/hospitality accounts and/or corporate communications & corporate communications.

Details of client experiences within the last three (3) years relevant to the services requested in this RFQ

List any other relevant experience of the agency (including knowledge of the travel, tourism and meeting industry and/or corporate communications/community relations).

List experience in corporate communications and/or brand marketing and experience in developing and implementing PR programs in Canada.

All clients added and lost in the past five years.

### **3. FINANCIAL BACKGROUND**

Financial statements for the applicable legal entity(ies) (prime bidder and known subcontractors) to sufficiently demonstrate the capability to perform this contract shall be provided for each of the last three (3) years. These should include:

- Balance sheet
- Statement of income
- Statement of changes in financial position
- Notes to financial statements
- Auditor's reports

Financial information required:

1. Dun & Bradstreet Credit Reports
2. Most recent Annual Report

The agency must agree to permit complete audits of its records relating to the GMCVB's account by any authorized representative of the GMCVB at the CVB's discretion.

### **4. AGENCY BILLINGS**

The total gross billing of the agency in each of the previous five (5) years.

The average billing of the agency accounts.

### **5. CREATIVE ABILITY**

The agency shall submit examples of past publicity results and indicate the approach taken for the development of those examples. The work should show the breadth of capabilities for the Agency, including not only samples that highlight work for the leisure travel market, meetings/convention market, travel trade market, as well as niche markets such as Multicultural Audiences, Boutique Hotels, Gay & Lesbian Travel, Heritage Neighborhoods & Diversity, Film/Fashion/Entertainment, Arts & Culture, Special Events, Cuisine, Family Travel, Heritage, and Nightlife would also be desired. Also, may provide examples for creative for other industries and clients. Agency should include any demonstrated use of creative technology including social media to implement PR programs. Agencies submitting for Corporate Communication/Community Relations must show examples of creative work in this area.

## **6. STRATEGIC THINKING**

In order to provide an insight into the strategic capabilities of your Agency, please provide one appropriate example for each of the following (this does not necessarily require creative, but samples are welcome):

- Media Placements in Canada
  - Travel Trade/Meeting Industry Placements
  - Issues Management Examples
- Please state what research affiliates or internal research resources the Agency has available
  - Please state how the Agency approaches identifying the key target audiences for its clients and how it then determines the appropriate media to best communicate with those audiences
  - Please share what the agency's experience is in influencer engagement and social media strategy
  - State what experience the agency has with measurement of PR results
  - State what experience the agency has in developing strategic PR and issues management plans. (Examples may be shared, and results may also be included)

## **7. MEDIA KNOWLEDGE**

The Agency must indicate its overall experience in various media, demonstrating its solid media relationships and innovative abilities, particularly to negotiate and develop cooperative PR programs and non-traditional PR plans. Brand-supporting PR and/or Corporate Communications is particularly important depending on which portion of the RFQ is being submitted.

## **8. RESOURCES**

The agency must provide a full-time Account Supervisor to handle all day-to-day contact with GMCVB, with appropriate support and resources to handle a demanding and diverse destination account. In addition, a Senior Level Account executive with deep strategic communications expertise should be on the account to shepherd and guide the team as well as provide client counsel.

Also:

State any services the Agency would need to subcontract on GMCVB's behalf.

The Agency should detail the account team and include the number of experienced staff in all departments that will be working on this account. Experience and training relevant to this RFQ should be specific.

## **FEES**

State all services that the Agency would be willing to perform as part of the retainer; and list any services that would not be included. State what routine expenses would need to be covered monthly by GMCVB (on average).

## **8. CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

The agency must disclose any accounts that it currently services which may be perceived to be a conflict of interest (see Conflict of Interest section). The agency must submit an agreement to terminate all conflict of interest accounts, if selected. List any accounts the agency would perceive as a potential conflict.

## **9. REFERENCES**

The agency shall furnish at least three (3) corporate references with the proposal. The references shall include the company name, contact person and their telephone number. The reference shall describe where services similar in magnitude and scope to that requested in this RFQ are currently provided and have been provided for at least six (6) months. Employees of GMCVB may not be used as corporate references. The GMCVB reserves the right to contact references or clients not listed in the RFQ.

***All the categories above should be answered completely; and the PR Agency Screening Committee will evaluate the responses from each section. Particular attention and weight will be given to responses for the sections on Strategic Thinking, Resources and Fees.***