

**The following are answers to questions Brand USA has received to the RFP for Travel Marketing and Public Relations Services in Mexico 2017.**

Thanks to everyone who submitted questions regarding Brand USA's RFP for travel marketing and public relations services. Since many of the questions posed were similar, we have condensed and edited queries. Company names have been removed. If the answer to the question is already in the RFP, or if we were unable to understand a question, we did not provide an answer.

**Q: If awarded with the contract, will the selected firm take control over Brand USA's Mexican official channels, making constant efforts in social media to attract and grow new leads within trade and promote destinations (consumers)? Have we a proper understanding?**

**A:** Generally, the representation firm is expected to localize relevant content for the Mexican trade and consumer, but not control Brand USA's official channels. Representation firms are encouraged suggest interesting promotions or activations for Brand USA consideration.

**Q: Does consumer marketing support cover media buying and management? Are the channels on and off line? Does Brand USA have an estimated budget or does the selected firm have to estimate one?**

**A:** The representation firm is to adhere to an overall marketing and communications strategy developed by Brand USA. Generally, the representation firm is expected to localize relevant content for use in Mexican trade and consumer marketing efforts. Representation firms are encouraged suggest interesting promotions or activations for Brand USA consideration. Media buying and management will not be included in the scope of work.

**Q: Do MegaFam trips for the Mexican market have established dates? If so, when is the next date? What is the role of the representation firm in promoting, planning, and executing the trip?**

**A:** Dates for MegaFams to be scheduled for FY2018 and beyond will be set based on optimum timing for overall marketing strategies, seasonality, and flight availability. The representation firm's role will range from coordinating details for the overall familiarization trip to securing complimentary flights from sponsoring airlines to inviting and securing qualified participants to providing insight on the suggested itineraries to garnering media coverage regarding the MegaFam to hosting the participants during the itineraries to supporting the planning and execution of the finale event.

**Q: Are costs for event production (facilities, branding, collateral, catering) on a separate budget?**

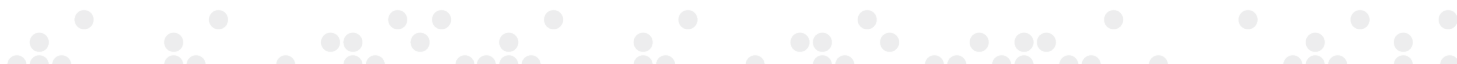
**A:** Sales missions, road shows, B2B sessions, training seminars, and any events proposed by the firm should be included in the budget presented in response to the RFP. There are separate budgets and resources for activation of other events such as trade shows.

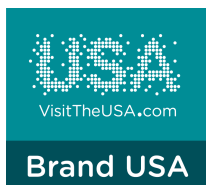
**Q: How much branded office space do you estimate will be needed to support trade and partner engagement, not including the dedicated team to Brand USA?**

**A:** We look to you to provide insight on your office space requirements and related costs if needed beyond your current office arrangements.

**Q: How many firms are confirming their participation in this RFP?**

**A:** This information is proprietary.





**Q: Would Brand USA share a sample or plan of a past Strategic Trade Plan and Annual Marketing Plan?**

**A:** Brand USA's business plans for FY2017 is available on the Brand USA website for review at <http://www.thebrandusa.com/about/reports>.

**Q: How much of the marketing material in general (including the training program material) would need to be translated? Does Brand USA provide materials in Spanish?**

**A:** Brand USA's Inspiration Guide is available in Spanish and, as indicated in the RFP, the following channels also are available in Spanish:

- URL: VisitTheUSA.mx
- Facebook: facebook.com/VisitTheUSAmx
- Twitter: VisitTheUSAes
- Hashtag: #VisitTheUSA
- Instagram: VisitTheUSA
- YouTube: YouTube.com/VisitTheUSAes

*There should be some budget allocated for translation as we include new partners into the USA Discovery program and for social media activation and other initiatives the representation proposes as part of the overall plan.*

**Q: Are you able to provide more information about the “develop marketing partnerships?” What is the scale of the amount of dollars that is matched by the Travel Promotion Fund?**

**A:** We look to your recommendation regarding marketing partnership programs that would be most impactful and bring results. Suggestions and evidence of relationships with travel industry entities and broadcasters/publishers that are well suited to work with Brand USA to reach consumers and drive inbound visitation are key. Funding may be made available depending on the nature of the opportunity.

**Q: What current criteria does Brand USA look at before deciding whether a partner is a valid marketing partner?**

**A:** We look to your recommendations regarding marketing partnership programs that would be most impactful and bring results.

**Q: Is there any expectation of social community management beyond the content calendar scope needs as part of this RFP?**

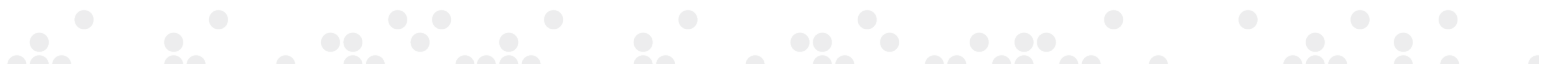
**A:** The representation firm is to adhere to an overall marketing and communications strategy developed by Brand USA. Generally, the representation firm is expected to localize relevant content for the Mexican trade and consumer. Representation firms are encouraged to suggest interesting promotions or activations for Brand USA's consideration.

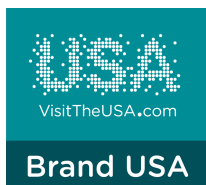
**Q: Would it be important to have both a USA office contact and an in-market Mexico contact for this scope?**

**A:** We look to you to provide your insight on where you think Brand USA is best served in this marketplace.

**Q: Is there a guide or cap for administrative expenses?**

**A:** We look to you to provide insight into business expenses and cost of doing business in Mexico.





**Q: Are third party expenses part of the overall administrative expenses? Is there a guide or cap for the third party expenses?**

**A:** While third-party expenses are not typically part of the overall administrative budget, representation firms are encouraged to include estimated expenses for recommended events in their proposals. There is no set cap.

**Q: Could Brand USA provide the current Brand USA messaging as it relates to this scope in order to comply with a schedule of possible social media content relevant to the market?**

**A:** Brand USA's messaging and marketing approach is a welcoming one, which is designed to put each person at the center of their trip—allowing them to immerse themselves in their USA experience—see the diversity of experiences and destinations that are available in the United States, and the value inherent in the proximity of those experiences and destinations. Key themes include, but are not limited to, the great outdoors, pop culture, and road trips. Wherever possible, we also offer travel itineraries and trip suggestions.

**Q: Should any of these be considered as out of pocket expenses and therefore not be a part of the maximum budget?**

**A:** Note: The responses below are guidelines only and subject to change:

- Third party marketing activity costs: Not part of out-of-pocket expenses
- Trade mission in-market expenses: Part of in-market expenses
- Third party translations, production and adaptation material costs: Part of out-of-pocket expenses
- Fam trips and Brand USA's visiting Journalist program costs for travel to U.S. destinations: Part of in-market expenses
- Board meeting expenses (rental of venues, catering, collateral etc.): Part of in-market expenses
- Specific materials for media relations (infographics, videos, photographs, brochures and collateral, wires, etc.): Most are part of in-market expenses
- Production and adaptation of collateral materials: Not part of out-of-pocket expenses

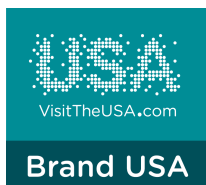
**Q: Page 6 of the RFP mentions at least two fam trips. Is one trip to one destination with one company participating considered a Fam Trip? If not, what are Brand USA's thresholds for a Fam Trip?**

**A:** The RFP states "Develop and execute a travel trade familiarization program with the goal of highlighting every region of the country. Create itineraries in conjunction with Brand USA staff. Requirement: Minimum of two familiarization trips per year (not including MegaFams)." Familiarization trips are defined as travel trade visits (less than 10 members of the travel trade) to one or more destinations with multiple experiences, but unlike MegaFams do not include simultaneous itineraries with large groups (50 or more).

**Q: When the RFP refers to "billable services," what type of services do these encompass?**

**A:** Billable services are any services the selected firm designates as being part of the overall budget.





**Q: Is the representation firm responsible for providing market measurements of USA's share in the Mexican outbound market and other strategic market information and should it be part of the maximum budget?**

**A:** The representation firm will be expected to provide accurate and adequate market intelligence from which they can guide the Brand USA team to create and implement the appropriate marketing, public relations, and digital strategy in the Mexico market.

**Q: On page 3 it states the following: "Brand USA does not expect the representation firm to do consumer website development, e-marketing and social media management as part of the scope of work." However, the RFP also notes on page 13 that RFP responses must include a "2-month (6-8 posts per month) schedule of possible social media content" relevant to the market. Are these posts being provided only as recommendations for content based on market intelligence, or will the selected representation firm have to design this overall program?**

**A:** The representation firm is expected to provide recommendations for content based on their understanding of the market.

**Q: Please confirm if the selected representation firm will have to deliver: one full trade plan, one media and PR plan, one plan for partner marketing support, one plan for consumer marketing support, and media intelligence for one year.**

**A:** Yes. As stated in the RFP, the selected representation firm is required to:

- Create and implement an approved annual, integrated strategic travel trade plan aimed at increasing visitation and visitor spend to the USA
- Create and implement an annual strategic consumer and trade communications plan to increase awareness through earned media coverage
- Implement a corporate communications plan that adheres to Brand USA's communications strategies and standard operating processes
- Identify and help build strategic partnerships with key distribution partners selling and promoting the USA in order to drive traffic across the portfolio.
- Develop a year-long market specific editorial calendar, based on the global prototype developed by Brand USA's Consumer marketing team.

**Q: How many consecutive terms or for how long can the contract between Brand USA and the selected representation firm be extended?**

**A:** Brand USA does not expect to rebid the contract, until 2019, but reserves the right to so based on a number of factors including satisfaction with the services delivered at any time during the course of the contract.

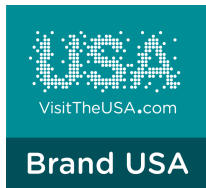
**Q: Which brands and destinations does Brand USA consider as competitors for the Mexican market?**

**A:** We look to the guidance of the representation firm to advise who they think are the major competitors in the Mexican market.

**Q: Could you provide the Brand USA KPIs as mentioned in the document?**

**A:** The KPIs per market will be established upon confirmation and appointment of the representation firm and finalization of Brand USA's business plan.





## MEXICO TRAVEL MARKETING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICES RFP Q & A

**Q: In the Travel Trade section on page 6 the RFP states “Manage the USA Discovery online training program in market, including translation, development, and promotion of the program by working with the travel trade to increase subscription base, participation, and earned badges.” What activities do you expect to be carried out by the agency related to “development”?**

**A:** Development includes translating and proofreading training materials managed by a third-party vendor. The firm will be expected to promote the program to travel agents and tour operators to increase the number of registered users and the number of badges earned by registered users of the program.

**Q: Do you have the content translated into Spanish or should we consider translation for all of the site’s content?**

**A:** Existing content is already translated. Newly added content will need to be translated. There should be some budget allocated to translation as we include new partners into the program.

