



**Public Relations Agency**  
**Request for Proposal**

**February 2023**



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## Overview

The Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc, hereinafter referred to as the “BTMI”, by mandate of its charter, is required to periodically review the services of its public relations partners. This review should not be viewed as dissatisfaction with any of the current providers, but rather as a way to ensure that the country is performing due diligence with regard to its marketing activities and expenditures and, that the most appropriate and skilled partners are secured.

This Request For Proposal is intended to solicit the qualifications of those agencies who are interested in serving as the public relations partner for the BTMI in the United Kingdom. Thus, this Request for Proposal (RFP) intends to identify the appropriate agency to support the BTMI’s communications, media relations, and public relations priorities.

It is the BTMI’s desire to select an agency with existing knowledge of the travel industry and the Caribbean market. Similarly, we hope to choose a public relations agency that can provide a full range of integrated public relations, promotional and consultative services, which can help further build visitation from the United Kingdom to Barbados.

Strategic partnerships dealing with travel distribution channels, partnerships, loyalty and frequency programs, and other public relations disciplines is preferred. Having managed and worked successfully with other public-private organizations would be considered a major advantage.

All agencies responding to the RFP will have their submissions reviewed and judged by an appointed committee. A shortlist will be created and the agencies selected will be invited to Barbados to present their qualifications in person. The review committee will then make its recommendation to the Board of Directors of the BTMI for further evaluation and approval.



# About Barbados

Barbados is the most eastern of the Caribbean islands and offers visitors an unequalled array of geographic and cultural wonders. The island is 166 square miles and has a population of approximately 275,000 people.

Barbados has a stable and democratic system of government, becoming an independent Nation on November 30, 1966, after over three centuries of British rule.

Tourism is the main foreign exchange earner, with agriculture, oil and the financial services sector contributing to the island's economy.

Barbados is renowned for its social, political, and economic stability with a literacy rate of 97%. The country rates #57 out of 177 countries in the United Nations Human Development index, which is based on life expectancy, education, and standard of living. It is the highest ranked Caribbean nation. Barbados was also classified as a developed nation in 2010.

The island is a unique fusion of African and West Indian cultures that manifests itself in a festive street life, fresh spicy foods, and the inclusive warmth of the 'Bajan' people. Tourism in Barbados is a tradition as deeply rooted as the cultivation of sugar cane, and the island features an array of hotels, attractions, restaurants, golf courses, water sports, shopping and natural wonders that make it the ideally suited for today's discriminating traveler.

**For a more complete overview of Barbados, we suggest you visit [www.visitbarbados.org](http://www.visitbarbados.org), which serves as the official website of the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc.**



# About the BTMI

The Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. (BTMI) is a private sector entity, charged with the responsibility of the overall global marketing of Barbados as a tourism destination.

Headquartered in Bridgetown, the BTMI's policies are driven by a government appointed Board of Directors and a management team led by its CEO.

The mission statement of the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. (BTMI) is as follows: "To Position Barbados As The Premier Globally Competitive, Year-Round, Warm Weather Destination, Contributing To A Sustainable Quality Of Life For All Barbadians."

## The BTMI's functions are:

- To promote, assist and facilitate the efficient development of tourism;
- To design and implement suitable marketing strategies for the effective promotion of the tourism industry;
- To make provision for adequate and suitable air and sea passenger transport services to and from Barbados;
- To encourage the establishment of amenities and facilities necessary for the proper enjoyment of Barbados as a tourist destination;
- To carry out market intelligence in order to inform the needs of the tourism industry;

## OBJECTIVE

### Marketing Barbados

The BTMI oversees a very active multi-dimensional marketing program that includes direct sales, broadcast advertising, online advertising, consumer print, direct response, online marketing, sponsorships, partnerships and more.

The island has built its marketing around a strategic and creative platform that invites travelers to, "experience the authentic Caribbean", which showcases the many virtues of the island experience. Barbados targets the "authentic traveler" – a more affluent, experienced and educated consumer who finds virtue in the fact that we're a little further away and a little harder to get to.

Our efforts are largely targeted to consumers in our major feeder markets and those markets in which we have direct air service namely the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, The Caribbean, Europe and Latin America.

### **The BTMI would look for guidance and participation from our agency partner:**

- To bring new and dynamic creative to the Barbados message
- To reach new customers through an enhanced messaging campaign
- To build increased customer loyalty among current visitors and the travel trade
- To expand our relationship with select trade partners who can drive share
- To add guerilla marketing activities and other buzz builders to the portfolio of tactical resources
- To help create and market product packages in a timely and proactive fashion to minimize seasonality

### **Current Positioning**

The BTMI is seeking to move away from the everyday perception of sea, sun and sand and to differentiate Barbados from other competitive island destinations.

### **Partnership**

We see our agency as a true business partner and wish to work with someone who can add value not only through promotions and public relations, but across our entire marketing and sales enterprise.

### **Public Relations Budget**

The BTMI currently has an annual budget of approximately BDS\$500K or UK£200K for PR Projects and Media Visits, inclusive of all agency fees, etc.

### **Competitive Conflict of Interest**

Our global competitors include Mauritius, the Maldives, and tropical islands throughout the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Our regional competitors include Bermuda, Bahamas and the other islands of the Caribbean region as well as the Cruise Industry operating in the Caribbean. Equally, we would consider both Disney and Las Vegas to be within the competitive set. We expect our partnership to remain free of any and all competitive conflicts.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

Mentioned below are some essential areas which the BTMI hopes the successful agency will possess:

- Brand management: Ability to drive brand consistency with appropriate localized nuances across the United Kingdom.
- Media experience demonstrated by the execution of integrated media strategies that result in positive media coverage.
- Planning and execution of media: agency must be able to react quickly to tight turnarounds.
- Proven travel/tourism or hospitality industry experience is a plus.
- Ability to create and establish high level strategic partnerships and unique collaborations for retail opportunities. Examples include House and Garden, and Grazia Magazine.



# Evaluation and Selection

## Evaluation Procedures

BTMI will establish a committee to evaluate and rate all proposals based on the criteria prescribed in Attachment 3. Proposals may be rejected if minimum requirements are not met. All proposers seeking clarification of this RFP must submit questions in writing to BTMI, no later than January 29th, 2023 (due by 4:30 PM) and sent by email to [UKprrrfp@visitbarbados.org](mailto:UKprrrfp@visitbarbados.org).

## Basis for Contract Award

A contract will be awarded to the organization whose proposal is determined to be the most advantageous to BTMI, taking into consideration the criteria set forth in this RFP.

## Post Selection

Upon completing the selection process under this RFP, BTMI will notify the winning proposer and all other proposers who were not selected. BTMI's evaluations of proposals are confidential and as such, BTMI is unable to respond to any questions and/or requests for information as to why a company was not selected.

## Budget

Tenderer must submit an appropriate and realistic budget, outlining each of the duties.



# Scope of Work

The following categories represent core responsibilities of the Representation Firm in support of the BTMI's mission and annual business plan:

## 1. Media & Public Relations Services

### **The selected Agency will execute the following:**

- The media & public relations plan in accordance with the direction from the BTMI communications department.

### **This will include but not be limited to the following:**

- Coordinating relationship building and in-person meetings with media, executive speaking opportunities and thought-leadership positioning.
- Developing and maintaining a targeted media list.
- Cultivating and maintaining relationships with reporters, editors, and bookers at key media publications, outlets, programmes, etc.
- Proactively pursuing positive stories and responding to inquiries - targeting all forms of media: broadcast, digital, podcasts, print, etc. (consumer lifestyle and travel, travel/meetings trade outlets) as appropriate for each opportunity.
- Supplying an accurate and reliable system for all PR and promotional programmes.
- Supporting collaborations and sharing of information between stakeholders via the BTMI's tools and platforms.
- Collectively working with BTMI's corporate communications department and Ministry of Tourism and International Transport on any issues surrounding corporate communications and public policy.
- Developing and maintaining both electronic and printed media kits, as needed.
- Vetting BTMI media calls, as needed.
- Drafting press materials including, but not limited to, news releases, messaging documents, talking points, FAQs, media Q&As, blog posts, etc.
- Producing creative content including photography, videography and graphic design to support BTMI's channels.
- Planning and executing turn-key media and stakeholder events.



# Scope of Work

## Crisis & Issues Support

- Collectively working with BTMI's corporate communications department to monitor news coverage for issues which may impact destination Barbados or the BTMI.
- Providing advice on a strategy to include media and PR responses as well as partner support.
- Developing and implementing a crisis communication plan to support BTMI's crisis communications strategy as directed by the corporate communications department.

## Media Training

- Providing media training for executives and senior staff, as needed.

## 2. Account Administration & Overhead

- Provide written weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual and campaign-specific reports to show status and/or results as compared to goals. Details included in the Metrics & Reporting section.
- Develop strengths, weaknesses, opportunities & threats (SWOT) analysis for key initiatives and campaigns.
- Providing detailed back-up and appropriate receipts for all monthly expenses related to billable services and out-of-pocket purchases. This documentation shall be submitted monthly along with monthly invoice and report, and will be subject to audit at BTMI's discretion.



## Metrics, Reporting & Evaluation

- Weekly status reports should be received each Friday at Noon.
- Monthly reports should be received by 5th of the succeeding month.
- Quarterly reports should be received by the 10th of the first month in the next quarter.
- Annual report should be received by Jan. 31, 2024. This report should also include a comprehensive analysis of the state of the industry, BTMI's position in the market, and issues that could adversely or positively affect the organization's strategic position going forward.
- Campaign-specific reports should be received by the last day of the following month.



## The Pitch

### Specific Information to be addressed in your Response

The following questions and information should be included in your response. Please prepare your response in the same order that the questions are presented here. While we encourage you to provide complete answers that effectively illustrate the capabilities of your firm, we request that you do not create additional questions or modify the questions we have written below.

### Information to be addressed in your Response

The following questions and information should be included in your response. Please prepare your response in the same order that the questions are presented here. While we encourage you to provide complete answers that effectively illustrate the capabilities of your firm, we request that you do not create additional questions or modify the questions we have written below.

#### A. Company Information

##### Company Name

Address

Internet URL

Telephone

##### Primary Contact

Name

Title

Telephone

Email

#### B. Offices

1. List all offices and total full time staff
2. Which office would handle this account and what is the full time staff number?

**C. Clients/brands**

1. List clients (w/brands) and how long they have been with the agency.
2. For the office that would handle this business please list the clients (w/brands)
3. List all the travel brands and/or tourism accounts handled by your agency in the past three years.
4. List new clients gained in the past two years. Provide comment on why your agency was chosen for these accounts.
5. List accounts lost or resigned in the past three years. Provide comments on why lost or resigned.

**D. Conflicts**

Please list any destinations or travel accounts that you think might potentially represent a conflict of interest. It should be noted that the BTMI will not work with any agency that is currently engaged as the agency for any other Caribbean destination or other island/country that is viewed as a direct competitor.

**E. Agency Positioning, Vision, Philosophy: What makes you different?**

1. What makes you different from other agencies? Please list at least four criteria which you believe create such differentiation.
2. Do you provide consulting services and if so, in which areas of specialization.

**F. Agency Strengths and Special Experience**

1. Key Strengths. Describe the kinds of travel accounts or categories in which you believe you have special strengths.
2. Special Experience. Is there anything special about your agency experience, expertise or modus operandi that a new business prospect should know about?
3. Public-Private Experience. Please share any recent history you have of working with public –private entities, and describe things you’ve done that have successfully addressed this unique dynamic.

**G. Agency History, Ownership, Current Size and Key Employees**

1. Founding Date. When was your office opened?
2. Mergers and Acquisitions. List any subsequent mergers, acquisitions or name changes.
3. Current Ownership. Who are the current owners of your agency?
4. Key Executives. Provide a short biography of no more than six of your office’s key executives and describe their current roles. Please indicate who would handle this account and please include their bio’s.

## **H. Scope and Nature of Agency Services**

1. Agency Services. List the various services offered by your agency and the number of full time employees dedicated to each department (e.g. account management, creative, media, research and/or account planning, broadcast production, print production, public relations, etc.) Please provide the total number of employees.
2. Other Specialized Services. List any other specialized services your agency offers to its clients, either directly or indirectly through its parent or sister companies, subsidiaries or network of affiliations.
3. Ranking: Please list where the BTMI will rank in terms of size within your agency

## **I. Agency Work Process and Case Histories**

1. Work Process and Practices. Describe your agency's work process (if you use a specific discipline), and any particular practices you employ that help you produce consistently effective advertising and marketing programs. How do you see your clients' role in the strategic and creative development processes?
2. Please Share Two (2) Travel Related Case Studies. Please share two distinct case studies that you think would be most relevant to the BTMI. This could include an interesting marketing partnership, introduction of a new product or market launch, brand positioning work, etc. As appropriate, please illustrate the case studies with examples of the advertising and marketing work that you created. For each case study please provide an overview of the goal, challenges, insights you identified, marketing and media activities, and results.
3. Creative Work. In addition to the case studies, please share a sampling of other work that your agency has done that will serve to illustrate the depth of your creative abilities. Please do not include hard copy samples – as we will not be responsible for the return of any items.

## **K. International Tourism & Travel Experience**

Please provide detailed evidence of your travel & tourism experience

1. Clients
2. Travel and tourism experience
3. Office and administration support

## **L. Agency Compensation Policies and Practices**

1. Compensation. What is your philosophy towards agency compensation? Do you have any preferences regarding commissions vs. fees? How do you normally like to structure compensation?
2. Fee Schedule. In what areas do you charge fees in addition to commissions on media and production and what is your fee schedule for these services.
3. Compensation Range: given that our overall budget is approximately USD \$250K, what range of net fees would you reasonably be expected to have go to your agencies (this is fees directly to the agency, not including printing, videography, etc. that would be considered external expenses). Please express this either as a percentage of the overall budget or in a dollar figure.

## M. References

1. Current Client references. List at least 3 client references (name, title, company, address, telephone and fax number) the BTMI might speak with about the effectiveness of your creative product, strategic thinking, account management, and overall excellence of your service.
2. Past Client references. List at least 2 client references (name, title, company, address, telephone and fax number) the BTMI might speak with about the effectiveness of your creative product, strategic thinking, account management, and overall excellence of your service. Please provide the relationship you had between this individual and your agency and the reason they are no longer a client.

## Submission Terms

Please know that all costs related to the presentation and submission of your RFP response is the responsibility of your agency. All agencies selected to present to the BTMI in Barbados will be responsible for funding their own transportation to and from the island.

## Timeline

We would like to have the contract begin on 1st April 2023, with agency briefing and strategic planning sessions to take place in April 2023, see below:-

<b>Agency Expression of interest due</b>	March 1st 2023
<b>Finalists selected for final presentation</b>	March 3rd, 2023
<b>Barbados Induction &amp; briefing of finalists</b>	March 6th to 9th, 2023
<b>Agency pitch: Presentation in Barbados</b>	March 21st to 22nd, 2023
<b>Agency selected and notified</b>	March 24th 2023
<b>Contract negotiation and signature</b>	March 27th to 31st, 2023
<b>Agency to be in place on the account</b>	April 1st, 2023

## Due Date and Questions

All submissions must be received no later than 5 p.m. (EST) in PDF electronic format on Wednesday, March 1st, 2023.

Please send these by email to –

**UKprrfp@visitbarbados.org**

Further details and information may also be obtained by sending a REQUEST FOR INFORMATION to

**RFPEnquiries@visitbarbados.org**

On behalf of the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. we thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

