REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

SEM SERVICES FOR JACKSON COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (JCTDA)

I. OVERVIEW

The Jackson County Tourism Development Authority (JCTDA) is soliciting proposals from qualified Search Engine Marketing (SEM) agencies to provide expert SEM services, including strategy, implementation, optimization, and reporting, for promoting Jackson County, North Carolina as a premier tourist destination. The objective of the SEM campaign is to increase brand visibility, attract more visitors, and boost tourism-related revenues in the county.

II. BACKGROUND

Made up of the distinctive towns of Cashiers, Cherokee, Dillsboro, Sylva, Balsam, Cullowhee, Glenville, and Sapphire, Jackson County is ideally situated in Western North Carolina’s Blue Ridge Mountains and known for shopping, dining, culture, and charming locales. Jackson County is the North Carolina Trout Capital® and home to the nation’s first and only fly-fishing trail as well as majestic mountains and miles of scenic hiking trails and waterfalls.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

The selected SEM agency will be expected to provide a comprehensive range of services, beginning July 1, 2023, including but not limited to:

SEM Strategy Development

a) Utilize data platforms (Zartico) to identify target audience segments and their search behavior.
b) Develop a comprehensive SEM strategy that aligns with JCTDA’s overall marketing objectives and budget ($10,000 SEM Spend / month)
c) Identify appropriate keyword sets, ad groups, and bidding strategies for maximum return on ad spend (ROAS).

Campaign Creation and Management

a) Set up and manage search and display advertising campaigns on Google Ads and other relevant platforms, adhering to best practices for ad structure and targeting.
b) Create compelling ad copy that effectively communicates the unique selling points of Jackson County to target audiences.
c) Implement ad extensions, sitelinks, and other features to enhance ad visibility and improve click-through rates (CTRs).

Performance Tracking and Optimization

a) Monitor campaign performance daily using tracking tools such as Google Analytics and Google Ads conversion tracking.
b) Continuously optimize campaigns based on data-driven insights to improve key performance indicators (KPIs) such as CTR, cost-per-click (CPC), and ROAS.
c) Conduct regular keyword research to identify new opportunities and refine the keyword portfolio.

**Reporting and Analysis**

a) Provide monthly performance reports that include detailed analyses of campaign performance, trends, and insights for continuous improvement.
b) Offer strategic recommendations for future SEM initiatives based on campaign results and market trends.

**IV. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS**

Proposals must include the following:

1. Provide a concise overview of the agency, encompassing its history, organizational structure and staff, the team's proficiencies, and the organization's track record in destination marketing. In this outline, kindly detail the qualifications and pertinent experience of the dedicated account manager assigned to our partnership, as well as their tenure within the agency. To guarantee exceptional results, we require that the designated SEM lead maintain oversight of our account for the entirety of our contractual agreement and that the responsibility not be delegated to junior associates or other team members. Please provide bios of anyone who will service our account.
2. A detailed plan for executing the scope of work outlined above.
3. Case studies of relevant SEM projects, demonstrating the agency's ability to drive successful results.
4. Letters of references or contact information from current comparable clients.
5. A proposed project timeline, outlining milestones and deliverables.
6. Pricing structure and budget estimate for the services.

**V. EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The JCTDA will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

1. Agency's experience and expertise in SEM and destination marketing.
2. The clarity, comprehensiveness, and innovation of the proposed SEM strategy.
3. The credentials and longevity of the individual assigned to manage our account.
4. Proven track record of success in similar projects.
5. Competitive pricing and value for money.
6. Responsiveness and ability to work collaboratively with the JCTDA team.

**VI. SUBMISSION DEADLINE**

Please submit a PDF proposal via email to Director@DiscoverJacksonNC.com by Friday May 5, 2023 at 5 p.m. Late submissions will not be considered.

**VII. QUESTIONS**

For any questions or clarifications related please submit by email to Director@DiscoverJacksonNC.com. The deadline for questions is May 1, 2023 at 5 p.m. To learn more about Jackson County, visit www.DiscoverJacksonNC.com.