



Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation Marketing Agency RFP Question Responses 6/18/21

We received questions from many agencies. As can be expected, a number of agencies asked the same or very similar questions. For the convenience of all proposers, our responses to similar questions are grouped together.

[RFP/selection process](#)

Can you provide a list of decision-makers/committee members that will be reviewing the proposals?

Who is on the review committee?

We have not finalized the committee yet, so this information is not available at this time.

The RFP notes that “Scoring will be weighted based on the agency selection committee’s priorities.” – would you be able to indicate details on how requirements will be weighted?

The RFP indicates that members of the WEDC's agency selection committee will separately score agency proposals according to the requirements listed in the RFP, assigning a score for each requirement. Can you please share the scoring rubric for each of the requirements?

What is your scoring process? Other than meeting all specified and financial requirements in the RFP, will additional points be awarded for Wisconsin-based, small, minority or women-owned businesses?

We have not finalized the weighting of our scoring criteria yet, so this information is not available at this time. Everything requested under Section IV of the RFP, “Proposal Requirements,” will be included in the scoring criteria. This includes office locations and whether the proposer is a minority-owned, woman-owned, disabled-owned, or veteran-owned business. WEDC will finalize the weighting of the scoring prior to the proposal due date.

What are the main drivers for your agency search and what is the main challenge you are solving for?

What led you to set out this RFP?

WEDC’s procurement procedures require that goods and services are procured through a competitive bidding process at least every five years. WEDC leadership also views our agency as a key strategic partner, and believes it is sound practice to review this critical relationship periodically.

Can we submit the proposals via email?

This is required. Please see Section VII, Paragraph E of the RFP.

Could the RFP be split into Media buying services and creative marketing services and, thus, be awarded to two separate companies?

THINK·MAKE·HAPPEN.

We do not intend to issue separate RFPs for media and creative services. However, if an agency would like to submit a proposal with additional firms as subcontractors to provide defined services, we are open to that arrangement. In this case, the agency submitting the proposal will be considered the “master” agency and must accept responsibility for the performance of its subcontractors.

Budget and financial administration

The 2020 Annual Report outlines a \$8,039,265 Budget for Marketing and Branding. Is the anticipated 2022 budget noted in the RFP of \$5.3 million is a reduction in the overall amount or an amount which is included in the overall budget?

The FY22 budget represents a reduction from FY21.

Are you able to provide an envisioned breakout of the \$5.3MM annual budget for agency professional fees, production, out-of-pocket expenses and paid media?

Will the full \$5.3M budgeted for marketing be expended on this contract? If not, where else will the marketing budget go?

What portion or % of the budget do you anticipate allocating to Media Planning/Buying?

What is the annual budget/spend anticipated within this contract for agency services as well as for media buys?

What is the historic percentage split of working media to non-working dollars?

A significant portion—but not all—of our budget is expected to be spent with our agency. Primary line items that we expect to spend through our agency include:

- Marketing planning—\$500,000
- Advertising production—\$750,000
- Media planning/buying—\$2,000,000
- Public relations—\$50,000
- Website—\$170,000
- Electronic media production—\$400,000

Note that our budget overall remains subject to final approval by the WEDC Board of Directors, and individual line items are subject to change.

Could you share your current paid media mix by channel and identify the spend per channel?

How do you prioritize your marketing budgets? Are they aligned with your different audience segments?

Budget allocations have not been determined and will be developed with our selected agency based on marketing strategy developed collaboratively.

What kind of contract do you intend to issue: a fixed price for everything, a fixed price for labor with other costs billed separately, labor billed hourly with other costs billed separately, or other? Any established parameters for the preferred commission structure of paid media?

Compensation structure is subject to negotiation with the selected agency. If you have a preferred pricing and commission structure, please include it with your RFP response. We are focused on achieving maximum value for the state of Wisconsin.

I wanted to know what the budget is for the open RFP for the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation.



Please refer to Page 3, Paragraph 2 of the RFP.

Is there an established budget for the international portion of this scope of work?

We will spend in international marketing as needed, but that budget is not defined at this time.

Brands, marketing planning and strategy

On the WEDC website, it states that your “collaborative marketing approach leverages a statewide network of partners to amplify the unmatched opportunities Wisconsin offers for business, career and personal success.” Can you share the names of those partner organizations?

Our primary economic development partners are Wisconsin’s regional economic development organizations; a list is available on our website: <https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/regional-economic-development-partners>. We also work closely with a number of minority business development organizations, Main Street organizations and local chambers of commerce, industry associations and the University of Wisconsin System.

What is the existing WEDC brand message?

Please review our websites at wedc.org and inwisconsin.com for insight. You can access our Brand Guidelines for the InWisconsin brand by [clicking this link](#).

Could you share what you consider your most successful marketing efforts to date, from both a results standpoint as well as engagement with key audiences?

Could you share some examples of your recent marketing efforts and the results of them?

We can provide examples of marketing campaigns executed in FY21. Our current agency, Nelson Schmidt, received two 2021 Elevation Awards for campaigns produced on our behalf:

- <https://www.b2bmarketing.net/en-gb/resources/b2b-case-studies/awards-case-study-how-nelson-schmidt-won-gold-best-multichannel-campaign>
- <https://www.b2bmarketing.net/en-gb/resources/b2b-case-studies/awards-case-study-how-nelson-schmidt-won-gold-best-multichannel-campaign>

For marketing purposes, what are the programs and services provided by WEDC that should be prioritized in any advertising, PR and integrated marketing campaigns? Entrepreneurship? Business expansion/relocation? Rural prosperity? Etc.

These are all priorities, along with community development and minority business development.

Are there milestone or tentpole dates in the calendar that will be important to activate around?

Not at this time

Have you conducted any surveys with existing Wisconsin businesses and/or prospective businesses to understand the reasons they chose/will choose Wisconsin as the location for their business/business expansion?

Has there been any market research conducted in the past that you currently use for your marketing efforts?

Yes. These studies will be supplied to the selected agency. Based on the selected agency’s recommendation, we may decide that additional research is warranted.



I did a quick review and am curious to understand more about your current brand strategy and integrated marketing strategy. Do you have any existing documentation that you can share for us to review?

We do not have current documentation to share.

Can you share additional insight on your international audiences?

Please review the following sections of our websites for insight into our international focus:

<https://inwisconsin.com/invest-in-wisconsin/>

<https://wedc.org/export/>

How do you see international playing a role in social media?

We do not have an opinion on this, but we are open to advice and recommendations.

How do you see the current “We’re All In” campaign playing into WEDC’s strategic goals for their marketing over the next year?

“We Are All In” was designed as a specific pandemic-response campaign. We currently plan to phase this out with the end of the pandemic.

Do you want to continue the “Think, Make, Happen in Wisconsin” creative platform or are you looking to have a new platform?

Will the agency selected be responsible for continuing any existing marketing efforts and campaigns, such as Made In Wisconsin, Think-Make-Happen, or the Talent Marketing Toolkit? Is there an opportunity to rethink those campaigns and/or propose new campaign concepts? Is WEDC interested in rebranding or keeping with the same overall branding strategy with new marketing strategies and deliverables?

We intend to determine the future of our campaigns with our selected agency. We are open to rethinking, improving or revising campaigns.

What are your main goals and objectives for the investment into?

WEDC’s mission is to advance and maximize opportunities in Wisconsin for businesses, communities and people to thrive in a globally competitive environment. This includes encouragement of both investment into existing Wisconsin businesses as well as responding to new projects/proposals from both U.S.-based and international investors.

Is media planning done on an annual basis (1x per year) or on a different frequency? If not annual planning, what is the cadence?

Media planning is generally conducted on a campaign basis with the goal of moving to an annual cycle.

Is the WEDC Marketing and Branding team in the process of developing a new Operating Plan and Marketing and Branding Strategy for 2021?

Is there a 2021 WEDC Strategic Plan and Marketing Plan to review?

In collaboration with our selected agency, we will develop a marketing and branding strategy for FY22.

How does Wisconsin stand apart from neighboring Upper Midwestern states?



Please review our website, inwisconsin.com, for a clear presentation of the differences that Wisconsin offers to business.

Which industry or sector do you feel represents the next biggest opportunity for meaningful economic growth in the state?

What business sectors and industries tend to thrive in Wisconsin? Are there priority industries that the state would like to attract?

Our primary industry sectors are:

- Manufacturing
- Food and Beverage
- Biohealth
- Water Technology
- Energy, Power and Controls
- Forest Products

Audiences

Do you have identified target audiences that you are trying to reach? If so, who are they?

What are your target customer segments and categories?

Which key audiences are the most important to reach via WEDC's marketing efforts? Are there specific geographic areas that you want to target?

How do you define and prioritize your business audiences? How do company size, industry sector and geography in WI factor into your priorities?

Who is your most important target audience? Is it... Wisconsin companies looking to expand?

Future start-ups/entrepreneurs? Out-of-state companies looking to relocate?

Our audiences are:

- Businesses within the state of Wisconsin looking to expand or grow through exports
- Businesses from outside the state, domestically within the United States and internationally, to attract investment within the state
- Local officials to support community economic development and revitalize commercial districts
- Start-up companies, to nurture growth from early development through commercialization
- Rural citizens and businesses

These are all high priority audiences for WEDC.

What is the biggest barrier to drawing highly skilled talent to the state?

Likewise, what seems to be the biggest reason that highly skilled individuals choose to stay?

Previous campaigns targeted millennials. Are they a key target audience? Why? Will they continue to be a priority? How successful have you been with this audience?

Wisconsin companies are challenged by not having enough workers to fill manufacturing and service jobs. Is solving this problem a key goal for WEDC?

What are the most important messages about working and living in Wisconsin that you want your audiences to know? Do they differ by audience? In what way?

Developing effective Workforce Solutions that address three challenges are a high priority for WEDC.

Those challenges are:

- Attracting talent to Wisconsin



- Activating workers who are not currently participating in the workforce
- Retaining graduates from high schools, technical colleges, and colleges and universities, as well as graduates currently employed within our state.

Although we have targeted both millennials and veterans in past campaigns, we have not determined if either group will be a target audience in future Workforce Solutions initiatives.

In broad terms, Wisconsin’s primary attraction features for talent are outdoor recreation, cost of living below the national average, culture of opportunity and strong work ethic, nationally recognized education system, quality of life and overall health care quality. Additional research will be supplied to the selected agency based on the Workforce Solutions strategy once adopted.

How do you work with community chambers of commerce from around the state?

We seek to work closely with Wisconsin Main Street Communities and other local chambers. For examples of that collaboration, please see this page on our website:

<https://wedc.org/community/places-blog/>.

Our primary economic development partners are Wisconsin’s regional economic development organizations; a list is available on our website: <https://wedc.org/programs-and-resources/regional-economic-development-partners>.

What has traditionally been the biggest draw when corporations look to invest in the state?

- Workforce. We deliver the second-highest concentration of experienced manufacturing workers in the U.S., often three to four times higher in critical industry sectors than competing states.
- Central location. From the center of the U.S., we offer quick access to markets throughout North America. Chicago and its O’Hare Airport are less than an hour from our border. And our well-developed logistics sector moves your goods to market efficiently via rail, road, air or water.
- Academic excellence. We push the boundaries of theoretical and applied science—and prepare talent for the future. At more than \$1 billion annually, our flagship University of Wisconsin-Madison ranks #8 in the U.S. for research spending; the University of Wisconsin System awards more than 36,000 degrees annually.
- Low risk of natural disaster. We offer remarkably low risk for every imaginable type of disaster, from earthquakes and wildfires to climate threats like heat waves, tornadoes and hurricanes.
- Fiscal responsibility. From our fully funded state pension system—one of only two in the U.S.— to our extraordinary credit rating, we offer a politically stable, low-tax, low-regulation, business-welcoming environment.

What has traditionally been the biggest shortcoming that the state presents to corporate investors?

This varies on a case-by-case basis.



WEDC offers a lot of services, expertise and solutions to Wisconsin companies. What percentage of companies engage with WEDC? What percent would you say are familiar with everything WEDC does?

We do not have this information available.

Are there specific geographies or areas that you are focused on reaching?

We serve the entire state.

How important is it to WEDC to reach/attract diverse and minority-owned businesses? Have those efforts been prioritized in the past?

Very important. Yes.

Agency services and administration

Describe how the WEDC Marketing and Branding team will interact with the prospective agency?

How do you like to meet? What are the number of in-person agency meetings anticipated with your team? Weekly? Monthly? As needed?

How many and what WEDC marketing staff will be involved working with award contractor daily?

Our marketing program is large and complex and we expect frequent interactions by multiple team members, with some contact anticipated almost every day. While many of those interactions can take place via Microsoft Teams (our preferred collaboration platform), we also value and are eager to meet in person on a frequent and as-needed basis. Over the course of a month, we expect that nearly every member of the Marketing and Brand Strategy division will interact with the agency.

What functions do you see the contractor as taking most of the responsibility for and which will be more closely supervised?

All work by the agency will be supervised and approved by appropriate WEDC staff. Under our supervision, we expect our selected agency to design, implement and analyze marketing research; recommend branding and campaign strategy; develop creative materials; develop and execute integrated marketing plans; plan and execute paid media campaigns; and report results.

Are there any special issues working with the legislature and other Wisconsin agencies you'd like us to be aware of?

No.

What is the scope of work needed for the website? i.e. Maintenance, technical support, revise, content?

Will this website work be inclusive of both wedc.org and inwisconsin.com?

We are preparing to transition to primarily in-house maintenance and administration of all web properties in FY22, which includes wedc.org, inwisconsin.com, and other websites. We expect our agency to recommend and develop changes and improvements to our websites; develop new content (up to and including potential redesign) of our websites in step with overall brand strategy efforts; and provide staff augmentation resources for our websites to include continuity and optimal functionality.

What elements of marketing will WEDC team manage separate from this contract?

In-house managed elements will include:

- Routine website maintenance and administration



- Email marketing execution
- Routine (non-campaign driven) social media
- Events planning and execution
- Thought leadership development
- Editorial developing, including writing, editing and proofreading
- Routine creative design (including, but not limited to, PowerPoint presentations, marketing collateral
- In addition, we engage independent/freelance resources for routine design work, editorial support, photography, videography and audio production

The one-year contract term concludes on June 30, 2022 and is renewable for up to four years thereafter. How will you evaluate the agency and renewal terms? Will this contract be automatically subject to a new RFP in 2-4 years when the contract expires?

WEDC staff will determine whether or not to offer a renewal of the contract in eligible years based on its review of the agency's performance. WEDC's procurement procedures require that goods and services are procured through a competitive bidding process at least every five years.

Associates may be added to an agency if selected. What is your definition of a staff person? Will you accept a contract employee, subcontractor or freelance to be part of the agency team?

We do not dictate staffing arrangements to our agency partners and recognize that such arrangements are common in the agency sector. However, to the extent that personnel who are not employees of your company work on our business, they must be subject to all of the terms and requirements of the relationship between our organizations. You will be expected to supply documentation, if we request, demonstrating the compliance of staff who are not employees.

You request a copy of the proposer's standard contract documents. Can you clarify, are you looking for a copy of our MSA?

Please supply copies of all standard contract documents you require as part of client relationships. If your MSA is one such document, please supply it.

Do you have a local preference or are you open to a Canadian agency that specializes in economic development marketing and works with clients internationally?

Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this? (like, from India or Canada)

Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA? (like, from India or Canada)?

Do you consider an agency that works for another state's tourism board to be a conflict?

Agencies outside the State of Wisconsin and outside of the United States of America are invited to participate in this RFP. We suggest that you consider the following:

- Office locations will be among the criteria considered when evaluating the RFPs. We expect our selection committee to prefer agencies who staff our engagement from within the State of Wisconsin.
- We will expect our selected agency to be available for in-person and online meetings at times and locations that are convenient for our staff.
- We will not reimburse the selected agency for time nor travel expenses for travel for client meetings.



Events

Does the scope of international work include any meeting planning or just exposure at trade shows or conferences?

WEDC has an internal staff of three meeting and exhibits professionals who do the bulk of event and meeting planning logistics for events in general as well as specifically at international tradeshows based in the U.S. Very rarely, WEDC does participate or exhibit in trade shows based outside the U.S., typically once every three years or so. The chosen Marketing Agency could possibly support these event and trade show efforts with graphic design work, communication or social media strategy, advertising and attendee engagement. Engagement by events team members with an agency is generally limited to the above and coordinated closely with the events team/VP of Marketing and Brand Strategy. Attendance at tradeshows does not typically include marketing agency staff.

Where do these conferences and trade shows typically take place?

Our meeting and event management team works with both external and internal clients to manage events (including trade shows) primarily in Wisconsin, but also include trade missions to Canada, Mexico and China, for example. Event logistics are managed internally.

On an annual basis, how many conferences or trade shows do delegates of WEDC typically attend internationally? Are travel plans coordinated by WEDC, the Governor's office or included in this RFP?

Annually (pre-pandemic), WEDC manages and leads about 6 international events or trade missions. Occasionally, WEDC staff (outside marketing) will travel to attend (but not exhibit at) events or tradeshows managed by other organizations throughout the world. WEDC's event team works with various external partners and clients, including the Governor's office, to support and plan events that include economic objectives such as, but not limited to, Governor's Trade Missions and foreign direct investment-related events held overseas. As such, travel planning is not included in this RFP.

Who is responsible for selecting the conferences and tradeshows WEDC delegates will attend, host or sponsor?

The Marketing department as well as the events team housed within works with our internal clients to identify, research and maximize attendance at specific events and tradeshows. Our colleagues are the experts in what they hope to accomplish and have a sense of what tradeshows and events would be effective for them. Occasionally, in addition to the internal client's judgment, our Meetings and Exhibits manager will make recommendations to internal clients as to where to engage and reach a collaborative decision. If our contracted marketing agency has recommendations on this front, we would expect their team to share that idea with WEDC marketing team members, but at this point, we do not actively seek this type of consultation from our marketing agency of record.

Measurement

What are the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are currently tracked and measured related to conversion, growth, and success for the website as well as email newsletters? What are the current baseline results and are there any gaps in your ability to track or measure these core metrics?

How do you measure the big-picture success of your marketing effort? What types of KPI do you track to measure ROI? Are calls or leads to the WEDC a key metric?



How does WEDC define success and what are the metrics?

How do you define success in promoting Wisconsin as a premier location for business, personal, and professional fulfillment? Are there specific business or media KPIs you all traditionally have used to measure success?

What does success look like for WEDC in a year?

We will establish new KPIs and measures of success with the selected agency, based on the marketing strategy that we develop collaboratively. All such measures will be specific to each audience and campaign.

We are currently tracking the following KPIs:

Talent Audience Impressions	Online: Measure of the number of times an ad is seen, whether it is clicked on or not. Each time an ad displays it is counted as one impression.
Business Audience Impressions	Online: Measure of the number of times an ad is seen, whether it is clicked on or not. Each time an ad displays it is counted as one impression.
InWisconsin.com Sessions	A session is the period of time a user is actively engaged with your website.
InWisconsin.com Engagement Actions	Specific to the time that a visitor is active with the job/location/home search tools.
WEDC.org Sessions	A session is the period of time a user is actively engaged with your website.
WEDC.org Engagement Actions	File downloads, form submissions, video views
Insource	Number of people who subscribed to the newsletter.
Insite	Number of people who subscribed to the newsletter.
Inbound	Number of people who subscribed to the newsletter.
Invest	Number of people who subscribed to the newsletter.
WEDC LinkedIn Followers	Total number of LinkedIn Followers
WEDC LinkedIn Organic Impressions	Total number of impressions based on organic media.
TMH LinkedIn Followers	Total number of LinkedIn Followers
TMH LinkedIn Organic Impressions	Total number of impressions based on organic media.
TMH LinkedIn Paid Impressions	Total number of impressions based on paid media.
WEDC Twitter Followers	Total number of Twitter followers.
WEDC Twitter Organic Impressions	Total number of impressions based on organic media.



InWisconsin Twitter Followers	Total number of InWisconsin Twitter followers.
InWisconsin Twitter Organic Impressions	Total number of impressions based on organic media.
TMH Facebook Followers	Total number of TMH Facebook Followers
TMH Facebook Page Likes	Total number of TMH Facebook Likes
TMH Facebook Organic Impressions	Total number of impressions based on organic media.
TMH Instagram Followers	Total number of TMH Instagram followers.
TMH Instagram Organic Impressions	Total number of impressions based on organic media.
TMH YouTube Views	Total number of YouTube video views.
Event Audience	Number of people who saw our brand at an event, trade show, etc. Measured by looking at the full attendee numbers from a WEDC-organized event or booth. If the event is larger, WEDC uses an industry standard equation to calculate views. [Views = Impressions/Net registrants/Net attendees]
Event Engagement Actions	Number of engagement actions from the event audience.
Event Earned Media Placements	Number of placements initiated
Event Earned Media Impressions	Number of impressions based on the placements initiated.

General

Are there any state level economic development campaigns you particularly admire? Please list – and let us know what appeals to you in those campaigns.

Is there marketing from an economic development organization from another state that that you look at and admire? What about the work do you like in particular?

We are currently refreshing our competitive review of the marketing activity of other states; we are not currently prepared to provide comparative opinions and observations.

What tools and/or resources does WEDC already have available to assist the selected firm in gathering necessary input? (list of EDOs across the state, list of Chambers of Commerce across the state, list of nonprofits across the state, etc., any existing recurring surveys that are done, etc.)?

We have previously completed quantitative and qualitative research studies and will provide access to experts within and outside of our organization to the agency that is selected as a result of this RFP.

How many CRM records are in your database and how do you currently use this information?

WEDC currently has approximately 179,900 CRM records in our database. These records are used for record retention purposes as they relate to business relationships with WEDC. Only a small portion of this database is used for marketing messaging.



The 2020 WEDC Marketing and Branding team has a Digital Marketing Manager, Marketing Project Manager, Marketing Communications Manager, Events Director (and team) and a Senior Designer. Do you anticipate that these positions will remain for 2021 and forward?

What is the size of the internal WEDC marketing team?

The Marketing and Brand Strategy Division also houses an events team, including an Events Director, Senior Events Manager and Senior Events Coordinator. We are also recruiting to fill a vacant position for a Digital Content Marketing Manager. We anticipate that this structure will remain largely the same in FY22, although it may not be entirely static.

Are you currently working with a marketing firm?

If yes, how long has this relationship been in place?

Do you currently have an Agency of Record or are your marketing capabilities managed in-house?

Have you used an agency before?

If no, is this the first time that you are seeking to partner with an agency? Or has there been a historic relationship previously?

Our current agency of record is Nelson Schmidt. Nelson Schmidt has served WEDC for about 10 years.

Thinking of the services you provide businesses, which ones tend to be most interesting/important to businesses?

Businesses are generally most interested in financial support in the form of grants, loans and tax credits.

Are there certain services that businesses and other audiences tend not to be aware of, but should be?

Not that we are aware of.

Do you feel you have a solid presence in social and earned media and public relations?

We see significant room for improvement, particularly in reaching small businesses.

Is there any seasonality to your efforts, or is year-round presence desired?

No seasonality and yes, year-round presence is desired.

What role does the WEDC board play in approving campaign strategy and work?

The board does not play an active role in approving campaign strategy and work.

