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Algonquin Park, Almaguin Highlands, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka, Parry Sound
www.explorersedge.ca



Expression of Interest: Strategy Consultant for Consumer Marketing & Commercial Air Service Communication Plans

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture created 13 Regional Tourism Organizations (RTOs) in the province to identify and implement regional priorities, allowing for more consistent marketing of Ontario's tourism regions. The RTO12 area includes Algonquin Park, the Almaguin Highlands, Loring-Restoule, Muskoka and Parry Sound.

RTO12 is a not-for-profit agency that is governed by a volunteer board of directors. The mandate for RTO12 includes: providing industry leadership and strategic planning, developing strong, collaborative partnerships and packages, marketing, developing the workforce and skills training.

RTO12 is the administrative name for the region that is known in the consumer marketplace as Explorers' Edge www.explorersedge.ca.

Executive Summary

As an outcome of the June 23, 2016 deputation to the District of Muskoka Planning & Economic Development Committee regarding the report "*Muskoka Airport Designation: Security Screening & Commercial Air Service*," Explorers' Edge seeks to hire a Strategy Consultant who will develop two communication plans (not mutually exclusive) to further inform the commercial air service project. The strategies will target 1) potential visitors from international markets and 2) commercial airlines that may be interested in landing at CYQA should this airport be sanctioned for commercial flight by the federal and district governments.

The Opportunity

Working closely with the Executive Director and the Director of Communications for RTO12, the successful candidate will recommend a communication strategy that will engage international travellers at all points of the trip planning and visitation process, from researching a visit to Canada and the Explorers' Edge region in particular, to returning home and sharing experiences of their vacations with more potential visitors (i.e. broadcasting positive reviews).

The Consultant will also develop a business case for choosing which airlines to approach about potentially landing at CYQA, and a corresponding strategy for approaching and negotiating with the selected airlines in order to secure the introduction of commercial air service into CYQA.

Objectives

- 1) To identify all steps in the consumer travel experience regarding booking a vacation to the Explorers' Edge region (including international flight) in order for the RTO to ensure these steps are optimized for success. The necessary steps may include but are not limited to identifying the target audiences, determining best booking channels, defining what the visitor's terminal experience is like (Muskoka or Toronto), determining what transportation will be available during their stay, what kind of packages and itineraries will attract them, etc.
- 2) To identify all steps needed to approach an airline to negotiate potential commercial air service into the Muskoka Airport and to project manage the implementation of these steps.
- 3) Recommend roles and responsibilities of various tourism stakeholders regarding the visitor experience, including the District of Muskoka, Muskoka Tourism, area chambers of commerce, local BIAs, etc.

The final report (including two communication plans) would be completed in time for the RTO to commence negotiations with airlines in Fall 2016.

The proposal, at a minimum, will break out the percentage administration costs for an estimated \$20,000 project budget.

Your proposal will form an integral part of the contract and will be considered the Scope of Work for the Initial Term.

Corporate Information

- A description of previous planning and training for comparable clients and for RTO12 if applicable
- A description of the respondent's company, including location(s), business operations, financial security, and corporate history
- A standard contract proposal

Note: Proponents shall identify, within their submission, all excluded items.

Please forward all documents and request for further information to Kate Monk, Director of Communications, at kate@explorersedge.ca on or before Friday, July 22, 2016 at 4.00pm.

Note: Submitting a reply to Explorers' Edge does not automatically guarantee that your company will be receiving future correspondence during the process.

