

Request for  
**PROPOSAL**



TRAVEL  
SOUTH  
USA

The logo for Travel South USA features the words "TRAVEL", "SOUTH", and "USA" stacked vertically in white serif capital letters. A stylized yellow sun with rays is positioned between the word "SOUTH" and "USA". The background of the logo is a gradient from blue at the top to orange at the bottom, matching the sunset scene behind the pier.

Travel South USA Annual Ultimate Advertising Challenge

# RFP Advertising Services

As a valued member of the national travel media, the Travel South USA Board of Directors cordially invites you to submit a proposal for consideration for the 14th Annual Ultimate Advertising Challenge (UAC). The competition will bring out the very best ideas for promoting travel to and within the 12-member states.



North Carolina

We are accepting exclusive digital, print, and event-focused advertising offers. We recommend you do not present proposals which you have already pitched to a State Tourism Office or their agency. We also are looking for pricing that is not available to a state based on their state programming.

**This program aims to have creative multi-channel programming that allows state tourism offices to collaborate and leverage monies.**

We are accepting proposals by invitation only and will listen to presentations from eight finalists in the competition. Submissions will be reviewed and scored by a Task Force comprised of Travel South USA's Advertising Committee. A single proposal cannot exceed \$50,000 gross. However, we **STRONGLY** encourage varied price points. You do have the option of offering two to three different proposals. Proposals that fall between \$40,000 and \$50,000 are not recommended, as it significantly limits the number of participating states you can attract.

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## RFP Advertising Services *(continued)*

You will bill Travel South USA the gross rate (100%) and receive payment for net rates (85%); therefore, the **rates offered in your proposals should be gross rates.** The 15% commission is for the State Tourism Offices, it is not a profit-center of the Travel South USA organization.

Each of the states has set aside a minimum of \$50,000 and will make an independent decision on how to invest their advertising dollars. Most State Tourism Offices look for programs and campaigns where multiple states' participation increases the reach, added-value, or return on investment. Many states spend more than the minimum amount, so bring your best proposals forward. There is no guarantee that your proposal will be selected.

### **All of the finalists are asked to contribute \$1,500 as a TSUSA Sponsor.**

This sponsorship includes an invitation to an exclusive VIP luncheon with state tourism officers and their agencies and attendance at the Global Marketing Summit the day following the luncheon and presentations. Should you decline to sponsor, you will not be invited to present.



Arkansas

## History



This program began in 2006 as a “smackdown” of magazine advertising publishers and has evolved over the past 13 years to become a key component in leveraging multi-state advertising campaigns in both print and digital channels.

## Purpose



Over the years, the Travel South USA states have cooperatively organized more than \$9 million in digital, print, home, and event-focused advertising that:

- Establishes the South as a top-tier global destination;
- Leverages resources and offer cooperative media program;
- Deploys storytelling that brand the South as a quintessential and authentic visitor experience inclusive and welcoming to a diversity of visitors, including underrepresented communities.

While the Ultimate Ad Challenge format has slightly changed, we will offer the same great opportunity to present and have the same excellent access to state tourism offices.

## Overall Objective



Travel South USA's mission is to establish the tourism industry as a leading sector of the Southern USA's economy and the South as a top-tier global destination through marketing, advertising, and strategic partnerships.

## Goals



- Turn-key style programs
- Measurable impressions
- Guaranteed inquiries/leads
- Return on investment

## Process

We invite a select number of media companies to develop a proposal. We accept submissions by invitation only, and you have until **February 5, 2021**, EOD, to submit a proposal. Submissions will be reviewed and scored by a Task Force comprised of Travel South USA's Advertising Committee. A single proposal cannot exceed \$50,000 gross. However, we **STRONGLY** encourage varied price points. You do have the option of offering two to three different proposals. Proposals that fall between \$40,000 and \$50,000 are not recommended, as it significantly limits the number of participating states you can attract.

## Notification

You will be notified on March 1, 2021, should your proposal move to the semi-finalist status. We select the top 8 proposals to present, at which time you will be asked to provide a \$1,500 sponsor fee for inclusion in the program.

## Presentation

Each of the eight finalists will have 20 minutes to present their offer. We suggest that you use 15 minutes for the offer's details and leave 5 minutes for questions. The state offices will have reviewed your written proposals in advance. Should you want to provide a video for viewing at your presentation, please provide either a Vimeo link with passwords or MOV. File link within the body of the document. These video links should be emailed to Meredith Wilkes – [Meredith@travelsouthusa.com](mailto:Meredith@travelsouthusa.com) 10 business days before the event.



Alabama



Louisiana

## Added Value

Editorial features, event-driven opportunities, print, and integrated digital campaigns will receive more significant points.

## The Markets

- US Markets East of the Mississippi plus Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Texas
- African American & multi-cultural niche markets

## Target

The primary target audience is between 30 – 65 years of age, take leisure trips at least twice a year, and have a household income of more than \$75,000.

## Focus of Offers

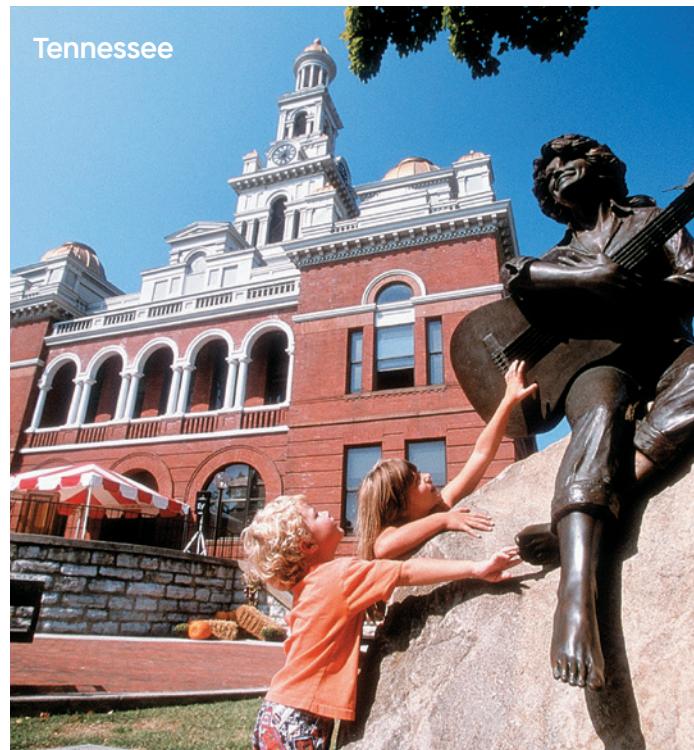
- Music, Culture, and Arts
- Outdoor/Adventure
- Small Towns/Road Trips
- Culinary
- History and Heritage



West Virginia



Tennessee



## Campaign Time Frame

**July 2021 - June 2022**



### Fall Campaigns

September - December 2021

### Spring Campaigns

March - June 2022



## 2021 UAC Time Frame

<b>January 11, 2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> RFP Mailed
<b>February 5, 2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Deadline to Submit
<b>February 8, 2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> All Proposals to Committee
<b>March 1, 2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Committee Members Report In
<b>March 8, 2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> TOP 8 published for States to Review
<b>March 8, 2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> TOP 8 Semi-finalists are Notified
<b>April 13, 2021</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ultimate Ad Challenge - Lunch & Presentations, Atlanta, GA



## On-site schedule

The 14th Annual Ultimate Challenge will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, on Tuesday, **April 13, 2021**, from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The Travel South USA Board of Directors, marketing staff, and advertising agencies will attend the presentations. After lunch, each vendor will be assigned a 20-minute time slot to present.

An Exclusive VIP luncheon reception will be held before the presentations to allow the eight finalists to network with state tourism officers and staff.

Media sponsors are welcome and encouraged to stay on April 14, 2021, for the 1st Annual Global Marketing Summit.

All events will take place at the Grand Hyatt Buckhead, Atlanta, GA. Discount rooms are available – find the reservation link on [www.TravelSouthUSA.org](http://www.TravelSouthUSA.org)



## Review Criteria

Proposals are reviewed by a panel of state staff and agencies and will be assigned point values on the following criteria:

- Cost Efficiency
- Target audience index and reach
- Creativity
- Price Structure variety
- Circulation penetration into key markets
- Added Value
- Prior Performance
- Digital Performance Measurements Available

Proposals are due **February 5, 2021**, and the Executive Summary recommended no longer than three (3) pages. Backup information will be allowed.

The Executive Summary **MUST** include these categories:

- Description (one to two paragraphs)
- Audience
- Program Type (Print, Digital, etc.)
- Publish dates ie – Fall 2021 campaign, Spring 2022 campaign, October 2021 issue etc
- Deadlines for commitment and creative material
- Pricing – include what percentage of discount off published rates
- Deliverables
- Added Value.
- Any other information can be submitted separately. The Executive Summary may not exceed three pages.

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## Review Criteria *(continued)*

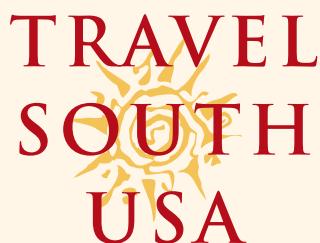
Please provide an electronic file of the proposal. We will only accept One File per submission – so we suggest you combine Word, PPT, Excel documents along with samples/collateral you would like the group to consider as a PDF and send. Send one copy electronically to Meredith and Darienne listed below.

**Your proposal will not be considered if the submission guidelines are not followed.**

Travel South USA  
Attn: Meredith Wilkes  
[Meredith@travelsouthusa.com](mailto:Meredith@travelsouthusa.com)  
404.231.1790

And email one copy of the proposal to:

Darienne Mobley  
Darienne Inc.  
[dmobley@darienneinc.com](mailto:dmobley@darienneinc.com)  
225.610.2685



## Proposal Checklist

- Executive Summary (additional information can be sent as well for back up)
- All rates must be gross rates
- All presenters must be sponsors of Travel South USA
- Issue deadlines (both sales and materials)
- Ad sizes should be stated (including materials specifications and delivery instructions)
- Media Representative contact information
- Special proposal inclusions:
  - If the publication is extending bonuses, clearly state them and the requirements to be fulfilled
  - If you are proposing an insert program, be specific about who picks up the cost of printing, postage rate increases, and limitations or requirements for insert programs in your publication

We strongly encourage you to share this RFP with any relevant sales managers or representatives within your organization. We wish you luck with your proposal and hope to see you in Atlanta next April.

Darienne Mobley, with Darienne Inc., is our contractor for this project. She is available to act as your liaison through the process. Feel free to reach out to her for advice or questions.

