

## 1. Budget & Compensation

- What is the estimated/annual media budget?
- What agency compensation structure do you anticipate?
- Should we assume flat, increased, or decreased budget?
- Are media fees net-billed or commission-based?
- Is the media budget separate from agency fees, and what have fees been historically?
- Are co-op dollars incremental to the primary budget or drawn from it?

**Response:** CAEDC anticipates a retainer-based compensation structure for account management, strategic planning, campaign development, and production services. The budget is \$425,000–\$475,000 for media and \$160,000–\$180,000 for agency fees.

For media buying, agencies should disclose whether they work on a net-billed model with a separate planning/buying fee, or a commission-based model. Both are acceptable, and agencies should clearly outline their preferred structure and any associated markups, rebates, or vendor incentives in their proposal per the requirements outlined in Section 6.0.

Co-op advertising opportunities are incremental to the primary media budget. When cooperative opportunities arise, whether from the Pennsylvania DCED or from tourism partners, those dollars supplement the existing media plan rather than replacing or reducing the primary budget allocation.

## 2. Incumbent Agency & Reason for Search

- Who is the incumbent agency?
- What prompted the decision to conduct this search?
- What aspects is CAEDC seeking to improve or evolve?

**Response:** CAEDC's current AOR contract is set to expire at the end of 2026. Agency of Record partnerships are rebid every three years. CAEDC is not disclosing our current AOR as part of this process.

### 3. Research & Supporting Materials

- Access to Appendix B research materials
- Recent media plans and performance benchmarks
- Current state of photo/video asset library
- Attribution methodologies and tools currently in use
- Access to platforms like GA4, Datafy, STR

**Response:** Please note that additional marketing research, data and performance benchmarks are only available to agencies who have expressed an intent to respond. Currently CAEDC uses Datafy for attribution analysis. Access to data platforms like GA4, Datafy and STR will be granted to the contracted agency.

### 4. Brand & Creative Direction

- Is "Recreational Recovery" positioning fixed, or open to evolution?
- How much creative evolution vs. continuity year to year?
- Was the current campaign effective? What must carry over?
- How much of the current asset library will remain relevant?
- Will spec creative be requested?

**Response:** CAEDC's current "Recreational Recovery" positioning is not fixed and is open to its evolution. However, the positioning is still relatively new; this is only the third year using it. Any changes should be carefully considered and supported by insights and data. Spec creative will not be requested.

Regarding creative assets, the selected agency will have access to existing photography and videography; however, new asset development is anticipated as part of this engagement.

## 5. Scope Clarifications — Earned Media

- What deliverables are expected under earned media strategy?
- Is the agency role primarily strategic, with pitching handled in-house?
- What assets are expected for earned media (press releases, social adaptations, etc.)?
- How comprehensive should the earned media strategy be in the proposal?

**Response:** Upon review of the questions received, CAEDC has decided to remove earned media from the formal scope of work. In practice, earned media consultation would be handled on an ad hoc basis as a special project if and when the need arises. Past examples of this type of support have included creative assets and general consultation for media pitches. Agencies should not include earned media strategy in their proposal. Any earned media support should be considered part of Special Projects for the purposes of pricing.

## 6. Scope Clarifications — Media & Channels

- Are all paid media channels in scope, including paid social?
- Are there existing channel-specific partners beyond SEM/SEO?
- Any pre-existing contracts or legacy vendor partnerships to factor in?
- Co-op advertising: initiated by partners or by CAEDC?

**Response:** Paid social is currently part of CAEDC's media mix and should be considered within scope. The selected agency is encouraged to make recommendations on channel allocation based on their strategic assessment. Paid search is contracted with a separate vendor outside of this scope. CAEDC also partners with additional vendors for SEO and web design.

Co-operative advertising opportunities are generally initiated by CAEDC's partners. They are not guaranteed or recurring, and the selected agency should not assume them as a fixed part of the annual media plan. The selected agency will be responsible for evaluating opportunities, making recommendations to CAEDC's marketing team, and managing execution upon approval.

## 7. Audience & Strategy

- How do you define "engagement"?
- What metrics measure "consumer planning activity"?
- Priority: new visitors vs. increased spend vs. repeat visits?
- Who ensures consistency between AOR-managed primary and in-house secondary audiences?
- What are the biggest challenges/gaps in reaching primary audiences?
- Dedicated co-op partner program interest?

**Response:** CAEDC evaluates campaign success across the full visitor funnel, so engagement looks different depending on where a prospective visitor is in their journey. Primary engagement KPIs include ad click-through rate, website sessions, social media follows and shares, newsletter sign-ups, experience trail sign-ups and check-ins, and overnight hotel stays. Consumer planning activity includes actions such as downloading a visitor guide or using our Visit Widget tool to research or build an itinerary.

CAEDC's primary focus has historically been attracting new visitors. However, having built a strong top-of-funnel presence, CAEDC is looking to prioritize repeat visitation and increased spending per trip among existing overnight visitors, while continuing to maintain awareness among new audiences. CAEDC welcomes agency perspective on how to best balance these objectives.

CAEDC staff will ensure alignment between the AOR's primary audience work and in-house secondary efforts. The selected agency will be expected to share campaign assets, messaging frameworks, and brand guidance that inform in-house work.

Cumberland Valley's greatest marketing challenge is also its strength: the breadth of experiences offered makes it difficult to distill into a single compelling narrative without defaulting to 'something for everyone' messaging. Finding a distinctive, ownable creative approach is the central challenge of this engagement.

Currently, CAEDC is not looking to develop a formal cooperative advertising program.

## 8. Process & Administrative

- How many agencies were invited/are participating?
- How important is the PA agency preference in scoring?
- Is the page limit inclusive of front/back cover?
- How much detail is expected in the proposal for strategy, media plan, creative?

**Response:** Eleven agencies have committed to submitting proposals. While being a Pennsylvania-based agency is preferred, it is not required. Being based in Pennsylvania only accounts for 5% of the Evaluation Criteria. The front and back covers are not included in the overall proposal page count.

Please provide enough detail for strategy, media plan and creative to reflect an understanding of CAEDC's goals, challenges, target markets and audiences.