



November 20, 2023

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT AND HOSTING SERVICES

See Monterey seeks to retain a qualified digital development agency to conduct a comprehensive website rebuild, including audit, design, development and ongoing maintenance, hosting and SEO services for [SeeMonterey.com](http://SeeMonterey.com). The overarching goal is a responsive, accessible and easily navigable website that promotes responsible travel to Monterey County, California for leisure, group and international visitation. Integration with a CRM and email marketing system is also strongly desired.

The selected agency will produce a website that:

- Drives overnight visitation for leisure, group, and international visitation
- Reinforces the principles of safe, sustainable, responsible, diverse, and inclusive travel
- Communicates the breadth and depth of the destination and travel experience through compelling content and exceptional user experience

The process for responding to this RFP is detailed within. **Submissions are due no later than 11:59 p.m. PST on Sunday, January 14, 2024, submitted via email to [Marketing@SeeMonterey.com](mailto:Marketing@SeeMonterey.com).**

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### INTRODUCTION

See Monterey is a 501(C)(6) Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for the County of Monterey. Monterey County consists of several jurisdictions and a vibrant hospitality industry that includes hundreds of hotels and resorts, major attractions, renowned wineries, restaurants, a thriving agriculture industry, and a variety of additional businesses that fuel the tourism economy. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in Monterey County.

**Mission:** To generate community prosperity for Monterey County through the responsible promotion and growth of the tourism economy.

**Vision:** A thriving tourism economy that enriches Monterey County’s economic vitality and quality of life.

# SEE MONTEREY

Monterey County stretches along California's central coast and includes Big Sur, the Monterey Peninsula (Monterey, Pacific Grove, Pebble Beach, Carmel-by-the-Sea, Seaside, Marina, Sand City), North County (Moss Landing, Castroville), Salinas Valley and South County (Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, King City).

Monterey County boasts major attractions such as Monterey Bay Aquarium, Cannery Row, Pebble Beach Resorts, WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca and hundreds of diverse and engaging offerings and events including the most iconic stretch of Highway 1, one of the most famous roadways in the world. Visit [SeeMonterey.com](https://www.see-monterey.com) to learn more.

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- [FY 2023 - 24 Business Plan](#)
- [Long Term Strategic Roadmap](#)
- [See Monterey Brand Guidelines](#)

## TEAM ROLES AND COLLABORATION

The selected agency's primary points of contact will be the Marketing team, including the Vice President of Marketing Communications, Lindsey Stevens; Director of Marketing, Leslie Chavez; Creative and Content Manager, Marliese Myers; and Digital Marketing Specialist, Hōkū Young; who work in tandem with the rest of the team and under the direction of the President and CEO.

The selected agency will also work closely with the Business Development team to meet the needs of [MeetInMonterey.com](https://www.meetinmonterey.com), including the Vice President of Business Development, Teresa Savage; and Director of Client Services, Marissa Reader.

The selected agency will be asked to work in partnership with See Monterey's existing partners, including branding/advertising and public relations/social strategy agencies.

## GOALS AND MEASUREMENT

The strategic objectives and KPIs for FY 2023 - 24 are outlined below and in the See Monterey's Business Plan (linked above).

- Build Leisure and Group travel in drive and short-haul markets; extend reach in long-haul markets
- Extend visitor stay and spend
- Grow awareness and drive Group and Meetings business
- Extend International and Luxury marketing reach
- Maintain sustainable and responsible travel messaging
- Create diverse and inclusive content and programming

Current KPIs specific to the website are as follows:

- [SeeMonterey.com](https://www.see-monterey.com) Sessions
- [MeetInMonterey.com](https://www.meetinmonterey.com) (SeeMonterey.com/Meetings) Sessions
- Partner Site Conversions (clicks from SeeMonterey.com directly to a member's website)
- Top Level Group Conversions (RFP Submissions, Clicks to Call and Clicks to Email from MeetinMonterey.com)

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- Virtual Visitor Center & See Monterey App Users

## TARGET MARKETS AND AUDIENCE

See Monterey focuses on three audience groups:

- **Leisure Travelers by Geography**
  - Drive Markets (90% of Monterey County visitors): San Francisco Bay Area, Central Valley, Los Angeles, Southern California
  - Direct Fly Markets (flights directly into MRY): Seattle, Phoenix, Denver, Dallas, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, San Francisco
  - Long-Haul & National Markets: Midwest/Chicago and East Coast including New York and Boston
- **Group & Meetings Travelers**
  - Group Type & Industry: Corporate and incentive groups, meetings and conference planners, and state and regional associations
  - Region: Similar to leisure markets including Northern California, Southern California, Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Nevada, Texas, Midwest, Northeast
- **International**
  - Tier I: United Kingdom
  - Tier II: Canada & Mexico
  - Tier III: Asia Pacific (China, Korea, Japan, India), Australia, Europe (France, Germany, Scandinavia)

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- **SeeMonterey.com FY 2022 - 2023 SEO Report** \*available upon request

## SCOPE OF WORK

See Monterey seeks to retain a qualified agency to conduct a comprehensive website audit followed by full website development, design and hosting services for [SeeMonterey.com](https://www.seemonterey.com) based on the organization's brand identity. The new website should be fully responsive, easily navigable, user-friendly and content-rich, and represent the diversity of Monterey County's landscapes, experiences and communities.

The new website should stand out across a competitive landscape of DMO websites and challenge the status quo of tourism websites. It should rival even social media channels like Instagram and TikTok as the go-to resource for a new age of travelers seeking things to do, places to stay and authentic and unique travel experiences in Monterey County.

The anticipated timeline for new website build and launch is March - September 2024.

The requested scope of work includes the following:

## WEBSITE AUDIT

- Conduct a comprehensive audit of [SeeMonterey.com](https://www.seemonterey.com) including [MeetInMonterey.com](https://www.meetinmonterey.com) and additional landing pages and microsites, including our Luxury microsite [SeeMonterey.com/Luxury](https://www.seemonterey.com/Luxury)
- Analyze the overall effectiveness of the current website

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- Limitations of current website:
  - Convoluted navigation
  - Complicated customer journey to lead conversion
  - Excess of pages, duplicate content and outdated information
  - Adherence to ADA and GDPR compliance
  - Mobile optimization
- Take inventory of high value / search engine optimized pages
- Identify existing content from the current website that can be repurposed for the new website and opportunities for improvement and expansion
- Conduct a thorough audit of the accessibility features of the current website and deliver recommendations to correct issues and ensure [SeeMonterey.com](https://www.seemonterey.com) is ADA compliant and provides an inclusive and accessible experience for all users:
  - **Visual:** Alternative text, use of keyboard not a mouse to navigate a page. Accessible to blind or limited-vision users
  - **Hearing:** Captioning, visual indicators in place of audio cues
  - **Cognitive:** An uncluttered screen and plain language
- Ensure [SeeMonterey.com](https://www.seemonterey.com) is GDPR compliant with all privacy requirements
- Meet with the See Monterey team to understand the needs and uses of all departments
- Benchmark current KPIs that will inform the redesign and determine data-driven objectives and goals
- Deliver an action plan with specific recommendations, strategies and tactics for the website redesign

## WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- Apply a research-driven process to create the new website's design and user experience
- Develop the organization and structure of the new website, resulting in a user-friendly site map and navigation menu
- Conduct an SEO transition program, including but not limited to meta tags, redirects, Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager and Google Search Console

## WEBSITE DESIGN

- Create the new website's visual design informed by See Monterey's brand identity including style, color palette, fonts and other design elements
- Conduct a period of quality assurance of the new website's functionality, including a beta testing period, de-bugging, and a means by which users can report glitches and user experience

## WEBSITE HOSTING AND SUPPORT

- Implement a robust CMS with capabilities including but not limited to:
  - Dynamic content
  - Image / video hosting
  - Alternative text
  - Alternative language
  - Map integration
  - Ad-units
  - Internal / external tags for team members and users
  - Integration with CRM platform

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- Integration with email marketing platform
- Integration with Visit Widget and See Monterey App
- Provide in-depth training on the CMS to ensure See Monterey team members are skillfully adept at managing the CMS
- Provide access to a knowledge base
- Ongoing optimization and monitoring of the website and maintenance of metadata including keywords, page titles, meta tags, etc.
- Search Engine Optimization (SEO) services should include:
  - Annual SEO plan that details search engine rankings, website traffic, conversions, etc.
  - Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager and Google Search Console support
  - On -age optimization
  - Competitive analysis
  - Keyword research and analysis
  - Redirects and friendly URLs
  - Campaign tracking
  - Recommended actions for improved website performance and content

## TRACKING AND REPORTING

- Work against set KPIs which are reported out to various stakeholders and the Board of Directors
- Schedule and participate in monthly calls, providing agenda and status reports in advance
- Deliver monthly SEO report
- It is also requested that the agency can take on special or out-of-scope projects, to be discussed and agreed upon on a case-by-case basis

## BUDGET AND TERM

See Monterey's budget for the website audit and rebuild is up to \$150,000. This includes fees for the development of the overall digital and website redesign action plans and is all-inclusive of agency time and internal resources.

The budget for ongoing website management, including SEO, ongoing development work and reporting, is \$100,000 annually.

The budget for CRM and email marketing platform support will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the course of action taken.

The See Monterey Marketing team manages the overall budget for the website. Any external resources required for a particular program will be reimbursed at net cost and based on See Monterey's pre-approval. See Monterey may request ad hoc projects that are outside the scope of the contract - in those instances, the agency will be allowed to estimate a project.

See Monterey operates on a July - June fiscal year. The contract renews on a yearly basis, subject to approval by See Monterey President and CEO.



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The following are specific areas See Monterey would like to learn about from submitting agencies:

- **Executive Summary:** Brief overview of agency history and philosophy, including the agency's core capabilities, differentiators and track record of success. Include primary team members assigned to the project, roles, bios, location proposed for this account and overall organizational chart.
- **Relevant Experience:** Include a current client list and outline any long-term relationships and why they've been successful. Identify relevant projects completed by your agency that demonstrate expertise in the development of travel and tourism websites.
- **Overview of CMS:** Brief introduction of your Content Management System and onboarding process.
- **CRM Capabilities:** Does your agency have its own proprietary CRM platform, or do you have experience integrating with existing CRM platforms (if so, which)?
- **Email Marketing and Automation Capabilities:** Does your agency have its own proprietary email marketing platform, or do you have experience integrating with existing email marketing platforms (if so, which)?
- **Project Approach and Scheduling:** Detailed summary of your approach to website design processes. Additionally, a definitive timeframe for completion.
- **SEO and Site Migration:** Specify best practices in optimizing websites and ensuring site migration minimizes impact on organic search.
- **Competitive Analysis:** Complete a competitive analysis of our destination. Demonstrate the agency's experience as it relates to Monterey County.
- **Fees:** Outline the total, all-inclusive costs and payment schedule. Please include costs for ongoing website maintenance and hourly rate for out-of-scope projects.
- **Beyond the Scope:** While this RFP is specific to the detailed Scope of Work and intended only for such work, feel free to share more about your capabilities.
- **DEIA Framework:** Agency must have a policy of non-discrimination and commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, please include yours in your response.

## TIMELINE

The following is the complete timeline and process for agency solicitation, evaluation and selection. See Monterey reserves the right to alter this timeline and will provide participating agencies notification of such adjustments.

- RFP Distribution – Week of November 20, 2023
- Agency Questions (submitted via email) – Sunday, December 10, 2023 @ 11:59 p.m.
- RFP deadline (submitted via email) – Sunday, January 14, 2024 @ 11:59 p.m.
- First round selection and notifications (2-4 agencies) – No later than Friday, February 2, 2024
- Finalist presentations (via Zoom) – Week of February 5 and 12, 2024
- Final selection and notifications – Week of February 19, 2024
- Desired launch date – September 2024

Note, the selected agency will be asked to attend See Monterey's annual All-agency Planning Meeting the week of March 4, 2024 held in-person in Monterey County. This meeting serves for all agency partners to come together in person to strategize upcoming marketing communication goals.



**All questions and proposals should be submitted to [Marketing@SeeMonterey.com](mailto:Marketing@SeeMonterey.com) in accordance with the timeline above.** Questions will be addressed as quickly as possible and in the order received. Any questions and proposals received after the stated times or via any other channels may be disqualified and deleted. See Monterey does not take responsibility for any technical issues related to agency submissions nor receipt confirmation from See Monterey.

Agencies that are selected for presentations will have the opportunity to submit questions prior to presenting and during a Q&A portion of the presentation.

### **SUBMISSION DETAILS**

Agency responses to the RFP can be fashioned however interested agencies choose to respond. Submitting agencies signify understanding and agreement with these terms by responding to the RFP and will adhere to the following terms:

- Do not contact any See Monterey Board Member or See Monterey staff member. Any unsolicited contact with these individuals will automatically disqualify the agency. All inquiries must be sent to [Marketing@SeeMonterey.com](mailto:Marketing@SeeMonterey.com).
- All information (written or spoken) shared by See Monterey is deemed confidential and shall not be shared with outside parties.
- See Monterey reserves the right to change any part of this RFP, the process and/or altogether cancel at any point and for any reason without any liability to submitting parties.
- Agencies understand that any information provided in a proposal that is found to be untruthful or otherwise a misrepresentation will automatically disqualify the submitting agency. In addition, should untruths or misrepresentation be found with the selected agency after contracting, such would be grounds for immediate termination of the contract without any liability from See Monterey.
- See Monterey represents many members in the tourism industry. The agency may have some of these members as clients. This is not necessarily a conflict of interest so long as the agency pre-identifies in its proposal any potential conflicts of interest and its ability to ensure there will not be a conflict (i.e., firewalled account management).
- Any information, ideas, and concepts shared with See Monterey in this RFP process are submitted in a non-proprietary manner. The presented ideas and concepts are available to use by See Monterey without any liability and do not constitute a formal agreement or requirement for compensation. Materials submitted through the RFP process will not be returned to submitting agencies.