

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS - Marketing Strategy & Social Media Support Stamford Downtown Special Services District

Overview

The Stamford Downtown Special Services District (Stamford Downtown) is seeking an experienced consultant or agency to provide strategic marketing guidance, hands-on digital and social media support, and professional development to the organization's Director of Marketing.

This short-term engagement is intended to add both strategic expertise and execution capacity. The selected consultant or agency will help plan, create, implement, and evaluate marketing initiatives, with a strong focus on social media, digital content, campaign support, and strengthening the Stamford Downtown brand.

The ideal partner will be comfortable providing high-level strategic recommendations while also assisting with day-to-day marketing execution.

Scope of Services

Marketing Strategy

- Review current marketing efforts, audiences, messaging, and digital presence.
- Provide recommendations to strengthen the Stamford Downtown brand.
- Support campaign planning, audience targeting, seasonal initiatives, and marketing calendars.
- Identify opportunities to promote Downtown as a destination to live, work, visit, dine, shop, and experience.
- Advise budgeting process to optimize ROI of investment in marketing.

Social Media & Digital Support

- Train the Director of Marketing to execute social media management, scheduling, analytics, and paid campaigns.
- Provide guidance on content calendars, reels, short-form video, stories, and digital content.
- Coach on event coverage, audience growth, and performance optimization.
- Provide ongoing technical support and troubleshooting as needed.
- Determine if Stamford Downtown is utilizing the appropriate mix of social media platforms.
- Track and report on performance of each marketing channel.
- Adjust channel strategy to align with overall marketing strategy
- Review and adjust channel and overall strategy based on analytics and conversion tracking (on an ongoing basis).
- Identify opportunities for strategic partnerships and develop creative strategies for implementing those partnerships.
- Implement conversion tracking so Stamford Downtown can identify origin of on-line and how to drive highest ROI.
- Set and track marketing goals with Key Performance Indicators.

Content & Campaign Support

- Train the Director of Marketing regarding the creation of copy and concepts for social media, email, website, events, and promotional campaigns.
- Promote Stamford Downtown events, businesses, restaurants, retailers, attractions, and public spaces.
- Support business spotlights, openings, promotions, and downtown storytelling.
- Coordinate photography, video, graphics, and other creative assets when needed.

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Support of Director of Marketing

The selected consultant or agency will work closely with the Director of Marketing and may assist with:

- Marketing calendars, deadlines, and campaign coordination.
- Technical support for social media and digital platforms.
- Research on marketing tools, trends, and best practices.
- Organization of digital assets and templates.
- Additional support during events and high-volume marketing periods.
- Special marketing projects as assigned.

Desired Qualifications

- Experience in marketing strategy and implementation.
- Strong social media and digital marketing capabilities.
- Experience with a diverse array of social media platforms including, but not limited to, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, short-form video, analytics, and paid social.
- Strong writing, editing, content creation, and project-management skills.
- Experience with events, destinations, downtown districts, businesses, or community organizations preferred.
- Ability to provide both strategic direction, hands-on execution and professional development.
- Ability to work collaboratively with the organization's in-house Director of Marketing and Branding.

Proposal Requirements

1. Background and Experience – Relevant marketing, digital, social media, and consulting or agency experience.
2. Proposed Approach – How you would support Stamford Downtown and work with the Director of Marketing.
3. Availability and Capacity – Proposed hours, staffing, meeting schedule, and availability around major events.
4. Work Samples – At least two relevant examples.
5. References – At least two professional references.
6. Fee Proposal – Proposed hourly rate, monthly retainer, or project fee and services included.

Contract Structure

Stamford Downtown anticipates a short-term engagement of approximately 3 – 6 months, with the possibility of extension based on performance, organizational needs, and available funding.

The selected consultant or agency will work directly with the Stamford Downtown Director of Marketing and is expected to provide an estimated 20 hours per week, with flexibility based on campaign and event needs.

Submission

Submit proposals electronically to marisa@stamford-downtown.com with the subject line "Stamford Downtown Marketing RFP" by 4pm on August 28, 2026.

Weekly Hours Estimate

The RFP estimates approximately 20 hours per week. How did you arrive at that estimate? Is that intended to be a guaranteed amount of consultant/agency capacity each week, or is it more an estimate of the level of effort you believe will be necessary to accomplish the scope?

The estimate of 20 hours per week is not intended as a guaranteed amount. This figure is only an estimate that Stamford Downtown anticipates is necessary to accomplish the scope. Stamford Downtown is open to revising the number of hours per week if additional time is needed to execute the scope.

Was the 20-hour estimate developed with more of a part-time individual consultant model in mind, or are you equally open to an agency model where you have access to multiple disciplines, and the hours may flex from week to week depending on campaigns, events, and priorities?

Stamford Downtown is open to either a part-time individual consultant or agency.

May the estimated 20 hours per week be delivered collectively across the proposed consultant team, provided Stamford Downtown has a consistent engagement lead and primary point of contact?

Yes. The consultant team may deliver the weekly hours utilizing multiple team members.

Need for Capacity Building

What is driving the need for this engagement right now? Is it primarily a need for additional capacity and support for the Marketing Director, or are there larger brand, digital, destination marketing, revenue/sponsorship, or other organizational initiatives underway that you see this work helping to support?

The purpose of the engagement is two-fold.

The selected vendor will assess Stamford Downtown's existing suite of marketing tools including social media accounts and other subscription-based services to determine their necessity and/or possible need for additional tools. The selected vendor will then upskill the Director of Marketing so that person is proficient in use of these tools and tracking respective outcomes.

The selected consultant will also assist the Director of Marketing with the creation of a branding strategy for Stamford Downtown. The vendor will guide the Director of Marketing through the steps of assessing market data and the organization's program priorities to define Stamford Downtown's unique identity and steps to leverage this identity.

Note, Stamford Downtown has not completed the exercise of identifying its competitive set. Stamford Downtown will defer to the vendor regarding the need for such an exercise.

How do you envision the balance between professional development/coaching for the Director of Marketing and Branding and hands-on execution by the selected partner? Are you primarily

looking to build internal capacity, or do you anticipate the partner taking ownership of a meaningful portion of the ongoing execution as well?

Stamford Downtown's social media activity was overseen by its Director of Event Production, however the individual in that role now serves as a free-lance consultant. Stamford Downtown now wishes to shift social media production to the Director of Marketing. The vendor should anticipate partnering with the event-based, free-lance consultant until the close of the first week of October 2026. The selected vendor will execute much of the social media implementation until the Director of Marketing is fully capable of assuming this role.

The creation of a marketing strategy will run concurrently with the vendor's role in executing social media.

Are there particular areas where you feel the team needs the most additional capacity right now strategy, content creation, day-to-day social execution, paid campaigns, analytics, event coverage, or something else?

Stamford Downtown seeks capacity building for all elements of marketing production including strategy, content creation, day-to-day execution of social media, and use of analytics to build strategy.

Do you have an incumbent and would they be participating in this RFP?

Stamford Downtown does not have an incumbent vendor in this role.

Need for Photography, Video, Graphic Design, and Other Creative Assets

For photography, video, graphic design, and other creative assets, do you currently have resources or partners in place, or should we anticipate providing or coordinating those capabilities as part of the engagement?

Stamford Downtown typically engages outside vendors for photography, graphic design and video production. Stamford Downtown is asking the selected vendor to instruct the Director of Marketing on how to use a mobile device to record, edit, and produce content on behalf of Downtown.

Budget

Is there an anticipated budget range for the 3 – 6-month engagement? Given the breadth of the scope and the estimated weekly commitment, that context would be helpful as we determine the best way to structure our response.

No, there is no budget range suggested. Stamford Downtown is seeking a suggested budget for the full cost of strategic planning assistance and capacity building.

Role of Existing Marketing Strategy

Does the current Stamford Downtown plan include a marketing strategy that this engagement must fulfill?

Stamford Downtown does not have a formal marketing strategy in-place. The organization seeks the technical assistance needed to create such a strategy.

Role of Past Consultants

Has the organization worked with consultants in the past?

Stamford Downtown has worked with consultants in the past. Most recently, a consultant was retained to oversee a short-term refresh of the organization's website. Consultants have also been used to design and produce the organization's banner program.

Expected Outcomes

What would success look like at the end of the engagement?

At the completion of this contract, Stamford Downtown expects its Director of Marketing to have full competency with use of the organization's social media and digital tools. The Director of Marketing will also have the acumen to execute and analyze the effectiveness of the marketing strategy created with the selected vendor.

Need for Event Support

Does Stamford Downtown anticipate requiring regular in-person attendance or on-site event coverage from the selected consultant? If so, please identify the anticipated frequency or major events that will require on-site support.

The selected vendor will focus its efforts on up-skilling existing staff and assisting with the creation of a marketing strategy.

Stamford Downtown may seek on-site physical assistance with event production. Stamford Downtown asks interested vendors to provide an hourly cost for events management support.

Geographic Origin of Prospective Vendor

Could you let us know if you have a local preference or are you open to a Canadian agency that has done similar work with clients across the United States, with some currently being the States of California, Hawaii, Michigan, Virginia, Colorado and Wyoming?

Would Stamford Downtown consider a Montréal-based consultant delivering the engagement primarily remotely, with any essential on-site requirements agreed upon in advance?

There is no restriction on the origin of a prospective vendor, though knowledge of Stamford, Connecticut and the local and regional market is preferred. If Stamford Downtown selects a remote vendor, the parties will identify on-site requirements in advance.

Role of References

The RFP requests two professional references. Would you consider one senior professional reference, supported by two relevant work samples and documented case experience?

Yes. Stamford Downtown will accept references as proposed above.

Copywriting or Content Migration Services

Could you let us know if you need copywriting or content migration services? If yes, could you quantify the requirement?

Stamford Downtown does not envision the need for copywriting or migration services.

Role of Existing Branding

Should campaign creative align with existing branding or establish a unique visual identity?

No. Stamford Downtown does not have an existing branding strategy. Stamford Downtown is seeking assistance from the selected vendor to establish a branding strategy.