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SAMPLE:

Affiliate Marketing RFPs

Guidance and Templates

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1. About Econsultancy

Econsultancy is the leading source of independent advice and insight on digital marketing and ecommerce.

Our reports, events, online resources and training programmes help a community of over 75,000 registered marketers make better decisions, build business cases, find the best suppliers, look smart in meetings and accelerate their careers.

Econsultancy is an [award-winning online publisher of reports](#) covering best practice, user experience benchmarking, market data and supplier selection aimed at internet professionals that want practical advice on all aspects of ebusiness.

Econsultancy also operates a highly popular [training](#) division, used by some of the world's most prominent brands for staff education, both in-house and via public courses. We provide training across all areas of digital marketing and at all levels from one day courses to diplomas to Masters in Digital Marketing.

In addition, we host more than 100 events a year, such as The Online Marketing Masterclass, regular Supplier Showcases and Roundtables, an annual Future of Digital Marketing event, Digital Cream and a range of social events.

The [Econsultancy](#) site now attracts 175,000 unique users per month where they access research, read the blog and take part in discussions in the forums. And as a portal to the digital marketing community, Econsultancy members can also link up with other members and digital suppliers through our directories, as well as find a new job or new digital talent using the job listings.

Some of Econsultancy's client-side members include: Google, Yahoo, MSN, MySpace, BBC, BT, Shell, Vodafone, Yell.com, Dell, Oxfam, Virgin Atlantic, TUI, Barclays, Carphone Warehouse, IPC Media, Deloitte and Touche, T-Mobile and Estée Lauder.

[Join Econsultancy](#) today to learn what's happening in digital marketing – and what works.

Call us to find out more on +44 (0)20 7681 4052 or [contact us online](#).

1.1 Contact

If you would like to know more about corporate membership and our roundtables or events then please contact us on +44 207 681 4053 or Peter.Abraham@Econsultancy.com.

If you have any comments or queries about this briefing then please contact Econsultancy's Research Director; Linus.Gregoriadis@Econsultancy.com

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2. Introduction

An RFP (Request For Proposal) is a document outlining the background to your objectives and a detailed list of business requirements for a given project. Typically, an RFP is sent to your likely group of suppliers/partners in order to solicit their proposals to work with you.

RFPs can be extremely valuable in optimising the chances that suppliers deliver the solutions that you need, encouraging the following:

- **Internal agreement:** allow you to discuss and finalise your requirements with all of the internal (and agency) stakeholders before involving a further supplier.
- **Accurate proposals:** allow suppliers to clearly understand your needs so they can provide you with the most accurate estimates of their best solution.
- **Comparable solutions:** ensure that each supplier receives the same set of requirements and therefore replies with a similar and comparable set of proposed solutions.

The purpose of this document is to outline some of the most important elements that might need to be considered by a Client Company (often known as a “Merchant” or “Advertiser” in the Affiliate Marketing world) when putting together a Request For Proposal from an Affiliate Marketing Company. The factors considered here are by no means exhaustive, but equally, depending on circumstances, not all of these will always need to be considered.

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2.1 RFP Differences

Different Types of RFPs: Differences between an RFP, an RFI, an RFQ and an ITT

Although you may see these terms used interchangeably, they are decidedly different documents. Consider where you are in your process and what you want to achieve out of the exercise and then start by being accurate about what sort of document you are asking your potential suppliers to answer:

- **RFI** (Request for Information)
 - This document can simply be a fact sheet, often being used for initial planning purposes. In the case of small projects, this document can be used for decision making as well.
- **RFQ** (Request for Quote)
 - This document is often appropriate if the requirement is to make a decision mainly based on pricing for a fairly commoditised product, such as Web hosting or print services. Normally an RFQ is used if you've already prepared your requirements and the decision will be made using a quantitative analysis of the bidder's pricing proposal.

- **RFP** (Request for Proposal)
 - The document that we are discussing here is slightly more complex. It often involves various evaluation criteria, based not only on price, but on the complete fit of the solution to the organisation's goals and objectives.
- **ITT** (Invitation To Tender)
 - This is a more formal version of an RFP, often used by Governments and large organisations when wanting to finalise a decision from a short-list of suppliers. Because responses to an ITT can be legally binding on the part of the bidder, these documents are often fairly prescriptive and can run to hundreds of pages.

The rest of this document deals with the RFP only and outlines the section headings and some of the factors to consider, in the form of a template. Text is often for your consideration of how to structure the content of your questions – and should always be replaced with your own text.

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3. Affiliate Marketing Template RFP

3.1 Summary

This gives you the chance to give the introduction and pre-amble to your RFP, distilling why you have put an RFP together and what you are intending to get from it.

As with all summaries, a first draft should ideally be put together at the beginning of the process and used as a guiding principle for the whole document – and then completely re-written to reflect the distillation of the finished document at the end of the process.

Typically, you might want to précis in a few lines:

- What the RFP process will be
- What you want to achieve from it
- Who the winning supplier(s) will be working with (departments / agencies)
- What the main evaluation criteria are
- What the timelines are

3.2 Background

This is probably the most important section of the RFP, as it gives you the opportunity to set out the background to your company and the brief for what this RFP process is designed to achieve.

3.2.1 Company

All companies are perceived differently in the external market to way that they see themselves. This first section enables you to reduce that difference and to describe the company to your suppliers in a way that sets the scene for the rest of the project brief.

Typically an overview of:

- Mission Statement / Company Objectives
- Company history
- Products and Services overview
- Client types and breakdown
- Basic Financials and growth
- Number of employees
- Competitors
- Brand Positioning / Core Values / Proposition

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3.6 Affiliate Network Specific Questions

Now we get to the point where you can be very specific about what you want to get back from your suppliers. A series of detailed questions divided into headings can be seen below.

These are not always all required and equally others may need to be included for your own RFP, but these are some of the relevant questions to ask of your affiliate marketing suppliers.

3.6.1 Background to the Affiliate Network

- Please give an overview of your company similar to the one we have provided for you in section 2 of this RFP, including answers to these specific questions:
 - Are you an affiliate network only or do you offer any other marketing services?
 - How many UK employees do you have and what is this as a percentage of your total number of employees worldwide?
 - What are your sales, account management, technical support and affiliate team structures?
- Please outline your experience in our industry, or if you have none, please outline how your experience in others industries could utilised and used in ours?
- What are your 5 largest customers in the UK?
- Please supply 3 customer references with information on services and results.

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