

August 4, 2025

RE: IHS Marketing Agency Services RFP

To Interested Marketing/Creative Agencies,

The Indiana Historical Society (IHS) is seeking a qualified, full-service agency partner to promote its mission, assets and extensive offerings to both niche audiences and the general public.

This is a pivotal time for IHS, and the selected agency will play a significant role in the development and execution of integrated marketing strategies and initiatives. IHS seeks a 3-year agreement with the selected agency partner.

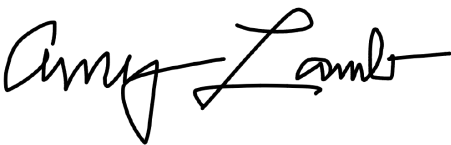
Marketing goals for the partnership include increased brand awareness and digital reach, with a significant emphasis on conversion and increased revenue through admissions, memberships, retail sales, facility rental fees and other streams.

The selected agency will have a solid understanding of not-for-profit institutions and cultural attractions. Data reporting, analytics and measurable ROI will be key factors in measuring success of the partnership.

As the ideal “scope of work” list within the attached Request for Proposals is significant, we welcome the opportunity to answer questions and discuss your organization’s available offerings/capabilities prior to submission. Please see the RFP for timeline information.

If you are interested and have questions, please feel free to reach out to me via email. A phone call can be scheduled upon request as well.

Best regards,



Amy Lamb
Vice President, Marketing and Sales
Indiana Historical Society



**Indiana Historical Society
Request for Proposal
Marketing Agency Services**

Proposal Deadline: September 12, 2025

**INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
MARKETING AGENCY SERVICES**

The Indiana Historical Society (IHS) is seeking a qualified, full-service agency partner to serve as an extension of IHS staff and efforts to promote its mission, assets and extensive offerings to both niche audiences and the general public. The selected agency will play a significant role in the development and execution of integrated marketing strategies and initiatives.

TERMS

IHS seeks a 3-year agreement with the selected agency partner. If either partner wishes to terminate the agreement, notice of at least 90 days prior to the termination date must be provided.

ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

Founded in 1830 as a private, not-for-profit, non-governmental organization, IHS is the oldest non-governmental organization in the state and one of the oldest and largest historical societies in the nation. It is headquartered in the 165,000-square-foot Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center in downtown Indianapolis. IHS is funded by investment returns, sponsorships, grants, donations, membership dues, facility rentals, retail sales and other earned revenue efforts.

IHS is the steward of more than 8 million collections items—including photographs, manuscripts, books, maps, sheet music and other archival items—that tell Indiana’s history. These items are made available through the William Henry Smith Memorial Library (in person and online), which works with researchers, documentarians, authors, family history enthusiasts, students of all ages and other members of the public. IHS is also home and public access point to the collection of The Remnant Trust, an educational foundation that has collected rare and important manuscripts dating back to 2500 BC (including early printings of the Magna Carta, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and more).

In addition to its archives, IHS also connects people to the past through immersive time-traveling exhibits, innovative programs, statewide historical services, student and educator resources, and more. It also publishes books and magazines, which are sold through both a wholesale operation and through IHS’s in-building store and online retail presence (powered Shopify). IHS also offers popular signature events to the public, such as Festival of Trees and Concerts on the Canal. Together with the Indiana Historical Bureau, IHS appoints and trains Indiana’s 92 County Historians.

In accordance with our 10-year strategic plan (2020-2029), IHS is prioritizing four key areas: Be Indiana’s Storyteller, Serve Hoosiers Across the State, Leverage Technology Opportunities and Steward Resources Responsibly. A link to the plan details can be found at https://indianahistory.org/wp-content/uploads/Strategic_Plan_11-18-20.pdf.

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MISSION STATEMENT AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The Indiana Historical Society (IHS) collects and preserves Indiana's unique stories; brings Hoosiers together in understanding and sharing the past; and inspires a future grounded in our state's uniting values and principles.

Authenticity and Integrity—We will honestly and authentically tell Indiana's stories in meaningful ways, illuminated by the evidence housed in our collections.

Innovation and Service—We will continually look for new media and methods for reaching people in order to effectively serve our members, visitors and the citizens of Indiana, as we strive to broaden participation in and improve access to history.

Inclusion, Diversity, and Empathy—We will include, represent, and work to understand and appreciate multiple perspectives in our interpretation of history, so that everyone's story is told and their voices are heard.

Stewardship—We will emphasize the responsible use of our human, financial, and historical resources toward achieving the fullest impact of our mission.

GOALS AND EXPECTATIONS

Marketing goals for the partnership include increased brand awareness and digital reach, with a significant emphasis on what those can generate—increased revenue through admissions, memberships, retail sales, facility rental fees and other streams. Data reporting, analytics and measurable ROI will be key factors in measuring success of the partnership.

The selected agency will have a solid understanding of not-for-profit institutions and cultural attractions. It will also be well-versed and have in-house capabilities to build and maintain necessary technology with regard to web support, API between data systems, etc.

WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH IHS STAFF

The primary point of contact for the agency will be IHS's Vice President, Marketing and Sales. However, regular, direct communication with several other members of IHS's staff and executive team will be expected and encouraged based on particular projects/tasks at hand.

IHS's in-house Marketing and Sales team includes two full-time graphic designers, who will also work in tandem with the agency team to develop visual branding that can be successfully applied across a multitude of platforms and will provide consultation on exception projects such as INPerspective (see Scope of Work).

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SCOPE OF WORK

Ideally, the selected agency will supply proactive, creative, comprehensive service in the following areas:

- Demonstrate commitment to becoming familiar with IHS's mission, brand and logistical operation—including individual staff members and their areas of responsibility for purposes of content creation, consultation and approval process for projects/initiatives.
- Plan, implement and manage traditional and digital advertising—including campaign building, creative prep, negotiating agreements with media outlets, placing targeted digital advertising, providing continual monitoring and optimization for campaigns, and providing reports and analysis (including ROI data)
- Provide copywriting and editing for promotional collateral (programs, membership, etc.)
- Provide copywriting, editing and design for *INPerspective*, IHS's 24-page bimonthly member magazine*
- Provide copywriting and editing for email communications with members and other constituents, both regular (weekly and monthly newsletters) and sporadic (e.g. invitations, special events/programs, admission or membership promotions)
- Create and/or edit website and blog content
- Audit and manage IHS online/video/media assets across multiple channels (e.g. website, YouTube, Roku, Amazon Fire)
- Create and implement membership acquisition campaigns (message, design, audience targeting)
- Organize schedule and distribution of all electronic communications
- Write press releases and manage distribution, including pitches to mainstream and niche outlets
- Field media requests and coordinate contact/logistics with appropriate IHS staff members/contacts for information, interviews, etc.
- Provide media training and advice to IHS staff when needed
- Provide crisis communications when needed
- Monitor IHS media coverage, share clips and provide regular reporting
- Utilize content generated through *INPerspective*, press releases and other efforts throughout additional platforms (web, social media, etc.)
- Provide proactive social media services—writing and creating organic and paid posts, create and manage editorial calendar, monitor interactions and provide responses (in consultation with IHS staff when appropriate), analyze and optimize use of IHS resources in posts/ads, provide detailed analytics, etc.
- Provide ongoing reputation management, including tracking/monitoring/updating online business listings (e.g. Yelp, Google)
- Position IHS staff (particularly CEO) as leaders/authorities in the community
- Manage IHS main website (www.indianahistory.org), including maintenance/upgrades, content updates/additions, data organization, and connections with ancillary IHS sites (Online Exhibits/Culture Connect, Destination-Indiana.com, Shopify online retail)
- Conceptualize/shoot/edit/produce videos for online promotional purposes, including custom animated opens/closes, and distribute assets through appropriate channels
- Coordinate with outside providers for high-end/commercial video production needs

**If management of INPerspective is not within an agency's capabilities, it should be noted in the application. If capabilities do exist, breakout pricing will be requested.*

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PROPOSAL STRUCTURE GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

Please share the following information within your submitted proposal:

- Agency name, street address, web address and phone number
- Year agency was established (if a subsidiary, please note parent firm information as well)
- Company background, including how your agency differentiates itself
- Information on company leadership and day-to-day staff who would be working on IHS account
- Current client list, with notations on those in the non-profit and/or cultural attractions space
- Outline the agency's/staff members' experience and understanding of tourism, non-profit and history-related industries
- Why agency wants to work with IHS, along with ideas of how they would position IHS in the public eye
- Pricing structure/How services are billed—flat fee, hourly rate, commission, etc. (including breakout pricing for *INPerspective*, as noted above in Scope of Work)
- Capabilities with regard to use and management of data—working with/between multiple systems to leverage records and individual information
- What services are provided/financially covered by the agency (e.g. monitoring, clipping, email distribution) vs. items that are client's responsibility
- List of in-house capabilities vs. services that your agency sub-contracts
- Three current client references (which IHS would have permission to contact) and a basic summary of services provided to them

SUBMISSIONS

All proposals should be submitted in PDF format to Amy Lamb, Vice President, Marketing and Sales, at alamb@indianahistory.org by Friday, Sept. 12, 2025. If desired, hard-copy proposals and additional materials can be mailed or delivered to: Indiana Historical Society, Eugene and Marilyn Glick Indiana History Center, 450 West Ohio Street, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46202.

TIMELINE*

- RFP distributed—Tuesday, Aug. 5, 2025
- Agency questions deadline (via email to alamb@indianahistory.org)—Friday, Sept. 5, 2025
- Proposals due—Friday, Sept. 12, 2025
- IHS notifies finalists—Friday, Sept. 19, 2025
- One 30-minute call for agency questions available (upon request)—Sept. 22-26, 2025
- Agency presentations (at agency expense)—Oct. 6-10, 2025
- Final selection/notification of agency—no later than Oct. 24, 2025
- Contract signed by—Nov. 30, 2025
- Agency start date—Jan. 1, 2026

**Dates after proposal deadline are subject to change based on IHS schedule and other needs.*