

# FAX COVER SHEET

TO	MelissaPettrey
COMPANY	WV Purchasing Division
FAX NUMBER	13045583970
FROM	Lucas Thompson
DATE	2021-07-09 21:05:08 GMT
RE	CRFP-1300-STO2100000002-2 - Cerberus (VS0000038290)
	Proposal

## COVER MESSAGE


Hello:

Please find attached our submission for CRFP-1300-STO2100000002-2, the advertising and marketing services RFP from the State Treasurer's Office. We have included our cost sheet and proposal separately. Our WVOasis vendor ID is VS0000038290.

Best,

Lucas Thompson  
President, Cerberus Strategies

RECEIVED  
 07/12/21 08:48:59  
 WV PURCHASING DIVISION

	Department of Administration Purchasing Division 2019 Washington Street East Post Office Box 50130 Charleston, WV 25305-0130	State of West Virginia Centralized Request for Proposals Service - Prof

<b>Proc Folder:</b> 876247 <b>Doc Description:</b> Advertising/Marketing/PR <b>Proc Type:</b> Central Master Agreement		<b>Reason for Modification:</b> Addendum No. 1 - to provide responses to vendor questions and extend the bid opening.
<b>Date Issued:</b> 2021-07-01	<b>Solicitation Closes:</b> 2021-07-13 13:30	<b>Solicitation No:</b> CRFP 1300 STO2100000002
		<b>Version:</b> 2

**BID RECEIVING LOCATION**

BID CLERK  
 DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION  
 PURCHASING DIVISION  
 2019 WASHINGTON ST E  
 CHARLESTON WV 25305  
 US

**VENDOR**

**Vendor Customer Code:** VS0000038290  
**Vendor Name :** Cerberus Strategies LLC  
**Address :** Cerberus Strategies  
**Street :** 216 Paddington Road  
**City :** Baltimore  
**State :** MD  
**Country :** USA  
**Zip :** 21212  
**Principal Contact :** Lucas Thompson  
**Vendor Contact Phone:** 785.331.6688  
**Extension:**

**FOR INFORMATION CONTACT THE BUYER**  
 Melissa Pettrey  
 (304) 558-0094  
 melissa.k.pettrey@wv.gov

Vendor Signature X **Lucas Thompson**

 Digitally signed by Lucas Thompson  
 DN: cn=Lucas Thompson, o.ou,  
 email=lthompson@gmail.com, c=US  
 Date: 2021.07.09 03:09:45 -0400

**FEIN#** 85-4348206 **DATE** July 9, 2021

All offers subject to all terms and conditions contained in this solicitation

## SOLICITATION NUMBER: CRFP STO2100000002

### Addendum Number: 1

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The purpose of this addendum is to modify the solicitation identified as CRFP STO2100000002 ("Solicitation") to reflect the change(s) identified and described below.

#### Applicable Addendum Category:

- Modify bid opening date and time
- Modify specifications of product or service being sought
- Attachment of vendor questions and responses
- Attachment of pre-bid sign-in sheet
- Correction of error
- Other

#### Description of Modification to Solicitation:

1. To provide responses to vendor questions. See Attachment A.
2. The bid opening date has moved from 07/08/2021 to 07/13/2021. The bid opening time remains at 1:30 pm.

**Additional Documentation:** Documentation related to this Addendum (if any) has been included herewith as Attachment A and is specifically incorporated herein by reference.

#### Terms and Conditions:

1. All provisions of the Solicitation and other addenda not modified herein shall remain in full force and effect.
2. Vendor should acknowledge receipt of all addenda issued for this Solicitation by completing an Addendum Acknowledgment, a copy of which is included herewith. Failure to acknowledge addenda may result in bid disqualification. The addendum acknowledgement should be submitted with the bid to expedite document processing.

## CRFP STO2100000002 ADDENDUM NO. 1

### ATTACHMENT A

#### Questions:

Q1: Please name the vendor who currently holds this contract.

A1: There is no current vendor for this service. The previous vendor was The Manahan Group. That contract expired January 31, 2021.

Q2: Regarding 4.2.1.1. Please describe the programs to be digitally marketed, the audience to be targeted in relation to each program to be marketed and the desired goals and/or expected measurable results you are looking for from each programs marketing effort.

A2: Once a vendor is selected, the vendor will meet with WV STO ("STO") staff to discuss specific marketing projects and goals for each individual program. Over the course of the contract, programs to be digitally marketed and correlating target audiences may include:

- SMART529, West Virginia's educational savings and investment plan. The target audience includes West Virginia parents and grandparents of newborns and young children under the age of 12.
- WVABLE, West Virginia's savings and investment plan for qualified people with disabilities. The target audience includes qualified individuals in West Virginia with disabilities, their families, and their caregivers.
- Unclaimed Property, West Virginia's program for misplaced assets. The target audience is anyone over 18 years old who may be identified as having unclaimed funds in the state of West Virginia.
- West Virginia Retirement Plus, West Virginia's supplemental retirement savings and investment plan for public employees. The target audience is West Virginia public employees at the state and local level.
- The Jumpstart Savings Plan, West Virginia's new savings and investment program for individuals planning for a career in a vocational or technical field. The target audience is young entrepreneurs and West Virginians preparing for a career in a vocational or technical trade.
- The Hope Scholarship, West Virginia's new Educational Savings Account (ESA) program. The target audience is parents who may want to use the state portion of their child's education funding for alternative education opportunities.

For each program and/or specific campaign, there are two main goals: 1) Brand awareness and 2) increased participation. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) would include quarterly increased website traffic and conversion rates. The vendor may be asked to help determine additional KPI for specific campaigns. Ultimately, measurable metrics may include: CTR, website traffic, average time on page, low bounce rates, and conversions.

- Q3: Regarding 4.2.1.2. Please offer a few examples of “program specific messages” and the intended “target appropriate audience”.
- A3: The STO administers various programs and services that may appeal to different demographics. “Program-specific messages” simply means marketing campaigns and messaging will be unique to each individual program. “Appropriate audiences” to be targeted will vary and are detailed in Specific examples of “program-specific” messaging and the respective “target audiences” may include: a holiday gifting campaign targeting grandparents age 50+ for SMART529 contributions; a SMART529 campaign for parents (ages 21-35) of newborns; a lost assets campaign for adults 50+ to visit the unclaimed property website and conduct a free search; etc.
- Q4: Please describe the dollar amounts spent by WVSTO on the type of services described in the RFP in fiscal years 2018, 2019, 2020.
- A4: The total dollar amounts spent annually by the STO for various services with the contracted vendor for advertising/marketing/public relations are as follows:
- FY18 \$355,769.66  
FY19 \$366,092.90  
FY20 \$384,331.61  
FY21 \$127,243.09 (July to December 2020)
- Q5: Regarding 4.2.1.5. Please describe the types of video productions produced in fiscal years 2018, 2019, 2020 and the dollar amounts spent on these productions.
- A5: Video production services were not received in FY18 through FY20.
- Q6: Regarding 4.2.1.9. Please describe the dollar amounts spent on media buys in fiscal years 2018, 2019, 2020.
- A6: This breakdown is not immediately available, but the total dollar amounts spent annually by the STO on all billable services in these years is available in Answer 4 above.
- Q7: Is the bid opening date/time the same as the bid due date and time (7/8/21 at 1:30PM EST)?
- A7: The bid opening has been moved to 7/13/2021 at 1:30 pm.
- Q8: If the submitting firm can provide all service types in the cost sheet in-house, how will that comparison be made to firms who have to outsource/subcontract those services and may list \$0 as the cost in the service rate sheet?
- A8: Vendors may choose to list \$0 on any of the hourly rate sections or 0% on any of the percentage charged sections. If \$0 is listed on the cost sheet, it will be included in the cost evaluation and determination of the percentage necessary for cost evaluation. Information regarding the Evaluation process can be found in Section 6, titled Evaluation and Award, in the Request for Proposal documentation. In regards specifically to Cost Evaluation, each cost proposal will have points assigned using the formula found in Section 6. The lowest cost of all proposals is divided by the cost of the proposal being evaluated to generate a cost score percentage. That percentage is then multiplied by the points attributable to the cost proposal to determine the number of points allocated to the cost proposal being evaluated.

- Q9: Will any WV in-state preference be made?
- A9: Please see Sections 15 Preference and 15A Reciprocal Preference in the General Terms and Conditions portion of the CRFP documentation.
- Q10: Which service type does website design, development and support fall under?
- A10: Website design, development and support requested from the vendor should be billed under "Digital Production." However, please note the STO (and program administrators for SMART529, Unclaimed Property, WVABLE and WV Retirement Plus) currently design, develop and maintain all websites.
- Q11: Will the ongoing support and management of websites and hosting infrastructure put in place by prior vendors be part of the services provided by the vendor? If so, can you share details on those services and content management systems/platforms?
- A11: No.
- Q12: Can you please define what is meant by managing member or director?
- A12: In sections 4.3.2.1. and 4.3.2.2. managing member or director may be defined as anyone within the agency with a supervisory position. While at least one individual or "a" managing member or director within the agency must meet the criteria stated in sections 4.3.2.1. and 4.3.2.2. it is not required that "all" managing members or directors meet the criteria.
- Q13: In section 4.3.2.3., 'Vendor's supervising staff member assigned to this account must possess a bachelor's degree...', can you please define 'supervising staff member'? Is this considered the account executive/manager?
- A13: Yes, in section 4.3.2.3., the vendor's supervising staff member should be considered the account executive/manager assigned to the STO account.

#### **OTHER INFORMATION:**

1. The bid opening date has moved from 07/08/2021 to 07/13/2021. The bid opening time remains at 1:30 pm.

**ADDENDUM ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**  
**SOLICITATION NO.: CRFP STO210000002**

**Instructions:** Please acknowledge receipt of all addenda issued with this solicitation by completing this addendum acknowledgment form. Check the box next to each addendum received and sign below. Failure to acknowledge addenda may result in bid disqualification.

**Acknowledgment:** I hereby acknowledge receipt of the following addenda and have made the necessary revisions to my proposal, plans and/or specification, etc.

**Addendum Numbers Received:**

(Check the box next to each addendum received)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 6  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 2            | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 7  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 3            | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 8  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 4            | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 9  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 5            | <input type="checkbox"/> Addendum No. 10 |

I understand that failure to confirm the receipt of addenda may be cause for rejection of this bid. I further understand that that any verbal representation made or assumed to be made during any oral discussion held between Vendor's representatives and any state personnel is not binding. Only the information issued in writing and added to the specifications by an official addendum is binding.

Cerberus Strategies

Company  
**Lucas Thompson**  
Digitally signed by Lucas Thompson  
 DN: cn=Lucas Thompson, o=ou,  
 email=lthompson@gmail.com, c=US  
 Date: 2021.07.09 03:09:17 -0400

Authorized Signature

July 9, 2021

Date

NOTE: This addendum acknowledgement should be submitted with the bid to expedite document processing.

**To: Purchasing Division, Treasurer's Office**  
**From: Cerberus Strategies**  
**Date: July 9, 2021**



We are pleased to respond to CRFP-1300-STO210000002-2. We believe we can provide the Treasurer's Office - and the people of West Virginia - world-class marketing services. This proposal is based on our preliminary research into the programs covered by the proposal. We hope to augment these initial ideas with insights gleaned from extensive meetings with the Treasurer's Office staff.

The Treasurer's Office faces some unique challenges in promoting two new programs in Hope and Jumpstart, revising marketing strategy for four existing programs, and integrating new marketing efforts for all six into existing processes. After a brief overview of our firm's approach to marketing generally, this letter delves into how we propose to tackle all three challenges.

### ***Who We Are***

Cerberus Strategies is a comprehensive marketing and strategic consulting firm. We specialize in data-driven advertising campaigns for government and nonprofit entities. In addition to developing original, cross-platform advertising for our clients, we bring unique skills to bear to help our clients track and assess the efficacy and efficiency of advertising campaigns. We work directly with our clients to make sure precious marketing dollars go further, and we track dollars across platforms to ensure our efforts are working.

### ***Strategy***

Marketers talk endlessly about philosophy and approach. It's mostly hot air. Successful communication requires creativity and discipline. We bring both to the table. We have years of developing, testing, and deploying creative messages under our belt. We combine these with best-in-class technical skills to make sure our clients get the most for their money. This applies across advertising platforms, from broadcast television to peer-to-peer text messaging.

Many clients have concrete goals in mind. We help get there cheaper and faster. For those looking for help defining success, we embed at the outset of a project to understand organizational dynamics, workflow, reputational constraints, personnel capacity, and other assets that the client already has but may not be using to full advantage.



Finally, we are thoroughly committed to transparency. Once we have identified a goal, and selected a media mix to meet it, we establish a reliable reporting cadence that puts the numbers in front of the client during weekly conferences. Clients deserve to know what their dollars are buying. We don't hide behind advertiser argot. Matching numbers to concrete outcomes is the only way to measure success. For governments spending taxpayer dollars, and nonprofits stretching donor support as far as possible, we think doing otherwise is irresponsible.

### *Media*

At Cerberus, message drives the media mix, not the other way around. We execute each message a client pursues across all relevant platforms simultaneously. Typically, that means adapting the same message we're running on television for delivery via radio, digital, social media, phone, mail, and text. In some cases, we also deploy door-to-door canvassers and engage in other in-person contact.

To make broadcast and individually-addressable media work together, we adapt the message for each platform. That means adjusting the specific creative to fit the medium of communication while maintaining a consistent aesthetic and message integrity. Our top-notch design and videography work dovetail with intimate knowledge of communicating across multiple mediums.

While this approach requires considerable planning, it pays off in the execution.

### *Research*

Throughout planning and design, research leads the way. At the outset, we establish a strategic baseline through multimethod survey research and a comprehensive inventory and audit of existing ad programs. This baseline gives clients confidence that they know where they are at the outset, and can track their progress with us over time.

We also test our creativity using the most rigorous research methods available in marketing today. From spot-testing video creative to randomized controlled trials in the field, we push optimization across platforms before and during each ad flight.

Once we begin advertising, we track both ad metrics and policy outcomes. We also supplement our advertising with industry-leading analytics products that measure earned media performance and organic reach. If we do our jobs well, people will be talking about what they're seeing and hearing online, on the airwaves, and in their mailboxes.

### ***The Treasurer's Office***

We have observed that the Treasurer's Office does minimal targeting of its advertising, and we see little evidence of detailed tracking and testing processes. We propose shifting to a targeted approach, and implementing testing and tracking practices to improve public transparency and budgetary accountability.

## 1. Targeted Approach

- a. The Treasurer's Office is casting a fairly broad net. Beyond Facebook's off-the-shelf audiences, program ads are not precisely targeted.
- b. Cerberus proposes implementing a high-touch, targeted approach concentrating contact on fewer, better-identified targets.

## 2. Testing and Tracking

- a. Working with the Treasurer's Office, Cerberus will identify key performance indicators, implement tracking processes, and review data from past marketing efforts to establish performance baselines.
- b. Cerberus will also help the Treasurer's Office integrate data from other agencies and will implement an earned media monitoring program.

The six programs covered by the RFP would benefit from targeted marketing campaigns, but the balance between advertising and procedural implementation varies widely.

### ***SMART529/Jumpstart/Hope: Three Ways to Save***

These three education savings programs serve distinctive populations, and will need to be marketed to distinct audiences. However, the Treasurer's Office can improve general awareness and operational efficiency by treating them as three branches off of a single trunk. Conformity across programs will improve the customer experience for prospective savers and increase conversion rates.

Connecting the launches of Jumpstart and Hope to SMART529 will paint a comprehensive picture of educational savings for West Virginians. We recommend marketing educational savings in West Virginia under a "Three Ways to Save" banner. Cerberus will develop a Three Ways to Save page, for hosting on the Treasurer's site, a corresponding flier for print and digital distribution, and audio/visual content explaining the savings plans available.

The launch of Three Ways to Save will involve a back-to-school push announcing the new site, a school tour by Treasurer Moore where he will give interviews to local press about the unified plan, and strategic radio buys during high school and college athletic events to raise background awareness of the new, combined effort. Simultaneous to the initial rollout, Cerberus will implement an institutional outreach campaign and a targeted advertising effort.

All three savings plans need to reach the families of prospective beneficiaries long before those beneficiaries are in a position to save money themselves. Thus, integrating the three programs under a single banner, unifying payment streams, and integrating the savings discussion into the curriculum will lower barriers to entry. The implementation of a single payment processing system in the Treasurer's Office for state, county, and municipal payments could also serve as a foundation for implementing automatic direct deposit into savings accounts.

Following the example of neighboring states, Cerberus will help the Office bring Three Ways to Save to West Virginians at critical inflection points, namely at birth and key grade transitions. Parents will encounter the flier first when a hardcopy arrives along with the birth certificate of their child. Because many West Virginians live near the state border and give birth in neighboring states, Cerberus will help the Office align with neighboring states to flag out-of-state births.

Parents will also encounter the flier upon kindergarten entry, beginning middle school, and matriculating to high school. Beyond grade level transitions, supplemental information will coincide with periods of increased contact with parents and caregivers, namely around the West Virginia General Summative Assessment given in grades three and eight. To encourage cooperation, Cerberus will explore setting up a district-level competition for schools to compete for a grant, drawn from the Office's discretionary budget, for the school in each district or county with the highest new sign-up rates.

In addition, Cerberus will work with the Office to produce two videos. Budget permitting, we will shoot an in-depth, fifteen-minute long video with Treasurer Moore going into detail about the different applications of Jumpstart, Hope, and SMART529. We will aim to host this video on the Three Ways to Save page, and to extract radio spots out of its audio roll. In addition, we will craft a short, animated "Three Ways to Save" video that follows the course of a child's education from birth, to certification, to graduation and entry into the workforce.

Looking beyond these institutionally-anchored outreach efforts, Cerberus will help the Office focus on two additional, important populations: grandparents and students who are the first in their families to seek post-secondary education. Budget permitting, we'll build a custom micro-targeted audience of likely grandparents, who we will target with programmatic digital banner ads and video, emphasizing mobile and social content, where this target population increasingly gets its information. We will augment this effort with ongoing radio buys during high school sports, as well as back-to-school homepage takeovers of Ogden and HD Media local newspaper websites.

Beyond these efforts at enhancing the efficiency of the Office's advertising, Cerberus will help develop a specific messaging track for West Virginia students whose parents did not attend post-secondary education. Many West Virginia high schoolers know as much about the skilled trades and workforce preparedness as they know about a four-year undergraduate-track program. These first generation students will benefit from a direct, targeted messaging effort explaining both bachelors-degree and skilled trade career options. With Hope, Jumpstart, and SMART529, West Virginia is uniquely positioned to help these first generation post-secondary students get a solid start in specialized education, and therewith a solid footing on the socioeconomic ladder.

Finally, Treasurer Moore is the best salesman for the education savings programs. As the father of two young children, he can speak with credibility about the value of the savings programs to audiences being introduced to them for the first time. When he travels the state in his official

capacity, he should have pamphlets ready to hand, and the Three Ways to Save url and sms shortcode prominently displayed on official materials. Cerberus will track the earned media value of the Treasurer's appearances in local press, as measured in advertising-equivalent dollar estimates.

### **WVABLE**

The existing WVABLE digital infrastructure, managed by STABLE Accounts, is well-designed, well-maintained, and seemingly easy to use. Rather than focus efforts on marginal improvements to web design, Cerberus will work with the Office to implement procedures to help families form and contribute to WVABLE accounts earlier.

Broadening the top of the conversion funnel, to help families open accounts earlier, is complicated by federal privacy laws. HIPPA and FERPA combine to make non-voluntary identification of eligible individuals impossible; and no sensible targeting solution exists using traditional audience-construction methods. As such, the Treasurer's Office needs to educate and engage with practitioners at the point of diagnosis. As a practical matter, that means integrating with special education and IEP providers at the district level in the public schools, and with early childhood clinicians at in-state and across-border hospitals.

Cerberus will work with the Office field staff to engage directly with medical providers in-state and just across state lines. Additionally, Cerberus will develop outreach and instruction materials, designed to help educators explain the benefits of a WVABLE account to parents and caretakers during initial identification processes and independent education plan development.

### ***Unclaimed Property***

Convincing citizens to engage with the unclaimed property program requires finesse. The Office does not want citizens to feel unduly surveilled, nor do we want citizens to expend considerable effort seeking unclaimed property without a realistic hope of filing a successful claim. Successful marketing strategies therefore need to combine high-intensity outreach to likely recipients along with aggressive auction marketing to drive general awareness.

Working with the Office, Cerberus will work to refine the list of likely claimants, beginning with unique first and last name combinations. We will begin a multimedia outreach campaign to these high-probability claimants, focused on telephone, text, and direct mail. Claimants will be alerted via robocalls and text that they should expect a mailer from the Treasurer's Office outlining the process for making a property claim. Customized mailers for likely recipients will be sent with precise instructions about searching for specific claims.

Additionally, Cerberus will work with the Office to create a standard outreach packet each time the Office holds an unclaimed property or restricted firearm auction in a municipality. Increased attendance at, and general awareness of, will help to drive interest in the program. Broader public awareness should lead to greater participation. Cerberus will track earned media

penetration around these events and report advertising-equivalent dollars in local television markets.

### ***West Virginia Retirement Plus***

The state's 457 plan, West Virginia Retirement Plus, has fewer broad-based advertising needs than the other accounts. Instead, the Treasurer's Office should focus on implementing procedures to maximize public employee participation. As an initial step, Cerberus will undertake a comprehensive review of all existing explanatory materials for the program, as well as making an inventory of state employee participation.

An initial review of the plan website finds an over-reliance on pdf documents, some of which are digital forms, others of which have to be printed and submitted by hard copy, and still others of which are simply informational fliers. Simplifying the website - without a redesign - should make it easier to enroll new and existing public employees. After simplification, Cerberus will craft new sign-up materials for newly onboarded public employees, as well as a process for encouraging participation among existing employees.

Public employees, especially short-term or part-time employees, should see participating in the 457 plan as painless, easy, and a straightforward way of increasing one's retirement savings. These employees may not fit the traditional picture of 457 saver: a mid- to high-earner anticipating a lower income (and thus lower income tax rate) in retirement. However, even for young savers, the opportunity to put pre-tax dollars into a professionally-managed account bearing a good rate of return should appeal.

### ***Conclusion***

The Treasurer's Office faces unique challenges in launching two new education savings initiatives, updating the marketing of existing programs, and growing participation. In addition to the strategies outlined above, Cerberus will help the Treasurer's Office implement best practices for tracking outcomes across marketing campaigns.

In order to help the Office refine its efforts over the course of the proposal, Cerberus will catalog all historical data on marketing, create a key performance indicator tracking system, and implement regular program audits. Additionally, new efforts will be pilot tested for efficacy before spending at scale occurs.

By the conclusion of the contract, the Office should be positioned to sustain the institutional relationships and accountability systems outlined, improving the performance of its marketing efforts, and maximizing value for the West Virginia taxpayer.