

RFP – LC000061 Digital Support and Related Services Q&A (#1)

1. Whether companies from Outside USA can apply for this like from (India or Canada)?

Yes, however, you will still need to comply with Section 4.1(E)(9) of the RFP, regardless of your business entity type.

2. Whether we need to come over there for meetings?

At minimum, absent any restrictions for the pandemic, we will require one onsite meeting in Raleigh per year.

3. Can we perform the tasks (related to RFP) outside USA like from (India or Canada)?

Yes, however, no data or records provided by the NCEL may be hosted outside of the United States.

4. Can we submit the proposals via email?

We have decided to allow email submission of proposals **FOR PHASE I ONLY**. Phase I Proposals may be emailed to BidSubmission@lottery.net.

PHASE II PROPOSALS AND ALL ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS MUST STILL BE PHYSICALLY SUBMITTED AS DIRECTED IN THE RFP.

5. What is the annual budget you have allocated for all the items outlined under the scope of work Digital Support Services (2.4.1 - not including items outlined in 2.4.2 optional services)?

The NCEL's digital support budget will vary depending on the roadmap and project engagement of the digital services agency. The NCEL has prioritized the evolution of its digital assets and budgeted accordingly to support the investment in those assets. Our focus is on overall value and quality, not necessarily the lowest cost. That being said, if we find that all proposals exceed our budget, we will re-evaluate our plans and decide whether to increase our budget or reduce the scope of the required services.

6. Does NCEL have an established, documented digital strategy that can be shared?

Digital Strategy Document is attached.

7. Does NCEL have an established content strategy to integrate with SEO strategy development and management?

No, but working towards one. Looking to the contractor to help build that integration strategy out.

8. Can NCEL share specific objectives/KPIs (channel-specific and across channels) they are tracking in their digital initiatives to measure success toward their stated goals?

The NCEL has a number of KPIs that we are tracking throughout our digital business. We have listed the most important ones below.

eCommerce

- # of FTDs (First Time Depositors)
- Average Deposit Per User
- # of Bettors per Month
- Average Number of Games Played
- Channel % of Total Revenue

CRM

- # of email Opt-ins
- Open Rate
- Click Rate
- Unsubscribe Rate

Loyalty

- Engagement Rate
- # of Active Users
- Engagement Duration

Website Traffic

- # of Page Views
- # of Unique Users
- Average Page Views

9. What is NCEL's current tech stack across its digital properties & marketing initiatives?

- a. CRM/Database Management (Account Transactions and Winning Numbers) – Salesforce
- b. Email Marketing/Push (General) – Pollard / Xtreme Push
- c. Email Marketing (Online Play) – Neo Games
- d. CMS – Internal (HTML, CSS, JS, .NET), AWS, GIT
- e. Loyalty – Pollard / CrowdTwist
- f. eCommerce – Neo Games
- g. eCommerce and Loyalty Reporting / Analytics - PowerBI

- h. Website Analytics – Google Analytics 360
- i. Executive Website Analytics / Reporting – Google Data Studio

10. Are there any technical guardrails we should be aware of?

We work in a complex environment with many “hand-offs” between our site and vendor applications that have thus far made it difficult to compile accurate and complete analytical data from the digital ad process to the end purchase.

11. Are there any specific skills required from the “junior” level partner that will assist in design/development?

- a. Knowledge of best practices in content design and Information Architecture
- b. Experience in UX design and development
- c. Knowledgeable in HTML, CSS, JS and GIT
- d. Experience using collaboration-based design tools (inVision)

12. Can the “junior” level partner be split between different people to accommodate different skillsets?

Yes, but the expectation is that the different people providing that service would remain consistent to the degree possible to maintain some level of continuity. Also, knowledge sharing should be practiced across those multiple individuals.

13. GA4: What, if any, external platforms are ingesting current UA data, and will they need to continue ingesting data from GA4?

None

14. GA4: Are there any specific requirements for saving/storing historical data after the transition to GA4?

No

15. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.3 Budget (p.4):** This section notes that the digital support budget will vary depending on roadmap and project engagement. Can the Lottery clarify if the roadmap is to be agreed upon prior to contract execution?

Yes, refer back to answer in #5

16. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4 Scope of Services (p. 4):** Is it the intention that the Contractor will become ‘Admin’ on the Lottery’s Google Analytics account?

No

17. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 1. (p.5):** How many Google Analytics properties is NCEL currently relying on to support its digital initiatives?

Mainly one on the GA4 platform currently – but we have a few micro-sites utilizing UA data

18. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 1. (p.5):** Does the Lottery have a Solution Design and Tagging plan document already established?

Yes

19. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 2., a. (p.5):** Does the Lottery's advertising agency routinely use UTM codes in their digital ads?

Yes

20. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 2. (p.5):** Does NCEL currently have Firebase mobile app tracking implemented?

Yes

21. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 2. (p.5):** Is NCEL planning to push data to a GA4 property?

No, not in the short term but could be explored as a long-term project.

22. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 2., a. (p.5):** Will there be opportunity for the Contractor to work directly with NCEL's advertising agency?

Depending on the project/work interaction and collaboration with the NCEL's advertising agencies will be possible.

23. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 2., d. (p.5):** Can the Lottery provide a list of KPIs currently being utilized by NCEL?

Yes, refer to question #8

24. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, C., 2., d. (p.5):** Does NCEL have subscriptions to any SEO tools (i.e. SEMrush) that should be acknowledged in the bid response?

We don't currently have any subscriptions, but are not opposed to tools that will help us to optimize our digital marketing efforts.

25. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, E. (p.6):** Could NCEL provide greater clarity on what is expected of the 'junior' level partner? Additionally, are there specific parts of section 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, A through D, that are intended for the annual 1,000 development hours of this 'junior' level partner, or does "design/development" refer to additional services outside of those described in sections A through D?

The junior level partner would provide ongoing UX Design and Development work in addition to the services that are accounted for in Sections A – D. See answer #11 above for desired skillset/responsibilities of the junior level partner.

26. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.1 Digital Support Services, F. (p.6):** Can the Lottery confirm that the intent is that the review be in person and that travel expenses per 4.2 B. Cost Proposal for up to three employees would be covered?

Travel would be required for the annual review, which the NCEL will cover expenses per the travel policy of NCEL for up to 3 individuals.

27. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.2 Optional Professional Services, 1. (p.6):** - What types of research studies NCEL is considering (i.e. player surveys, focus groups, A/B testing)?

- a. Player surveys (digital)
- b. Focus Groups
- c. A/B Testing

28. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.2 Optional Professional Services, 1. (p.6):** Does NCEL have a player survey partner currently implemented on its website?

Yes. Dream Makers is our player panel (Alida), which is invitation/membership based. Currently there are approximately 3,000 members recruited through the website and Loyalty platforms. We currently do not have a survey for gaining user feedback that is implemented on the website.

29. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.2 Optional Professional Services, 1. (p.6):** Does NCEL currently utilize Google Optimize as part of its Google 360 Strategy?

No

30. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.2 Optional Professional Services, 2. (p.6):** How does this fit with the NCEL's third-party vendors providing support for Loyalty and iLottery?

Looking for consultation into overall CRM strategy in addition to the services that are already provided through current third-party vendors/partners.

31. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.2 Optional Professional Services, 3. (p.7):** Does the NCEL web development team have a process for optimizing content?

No

32. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.2 Optional Professional Services, 3. (p.7):** Are there historical content testing results that can be shared in order to better understand the Lottery's current approach?

There have been minimal content tests on the NCEL website historically. Content testing has been mainly via email marketing and has been limited up to this point.

33. **Part II - Scope of Work, 2.4.2 Optional Professional Services, 4. (p.7):** What specific services are delivered from your agency under the current Google 360 platform contract?

- a. Big Query
- b. Data Studio
- c. Standard Analytics

34. **Part IV –Proposal, 4.3 Proposal Submission and Format, 4.3.1 (p. 12):** Would the Lottery consider removing the requirement for physical copies of the response and instead accept electronic responses only?

Please see the answer to Question #4

35. Who are your primary competitors? Is there any seasonality?

Primary competition is mainly other forms of entertainment and gaming. We currently have limited gaming in the state, but anticipate an expansion of gaming in the not too distant future. Currently there are three tribal land-based casinos in the state. These are not viewed as competition by the NCEL, but do represent other forms of gaming in the state.

There is seasonality associated with our business with lower performing months at the end of Summer beginning of fall followed by higher selling time periods in the late Winter / early Spring. During the holiday time period we usually see higher sales, especially through our digital channels.

36. What % of the last year's incoming traffic was labeled as "Direct" within your current channel grouping?

75%

37. Which acquisition channel has the highest conversion rate?

Direct

38. Why are there multiple installations of Google Tag Manager?

We currently host our own GTM Container as well as that of our processing vendor to capture the full buying process online.

39. What efforts, if any, have been taken towards Core Web Vitals optimization?

None to date

40. Does nlottery.com have any active A/B tests?

No

41. Who is nlottery.com's top referral source?

Google

Google Marketing Platform –

42. What is your current use of GMP products? Only one active is mentioned

GA, GTM used to manage and track digital advertising. GDN used in advertising (Display, Search, Video)

43. Are you currently using a DSP? What channels are you running if so? (ex: Display, Video, YouTube, Audio, CTV, Digital out of Home ads)

Yes, to many of these channels, this changes by campaign but can include: Display, Rich Media, Video, YouTube, Streaming Radio, etc.

44. Do your current media platforms share data between each other in any way? Ex: conversions

Our GA tracks various conversions like logins, sign ups, cart actions and sales using GA events. We also use pixels to track conversions in digital advertising.

45. What Social platforms are you using for paid and organic media?

Paid on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube. Organic on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn.

46. What is your current bid strategy across Programmatic, Social, Search?

Varies by campaign, can be awareness, clicks, conversions, etc.

47. Are you using any automation tools? Ex: Custom Algorithms, Conversion APIs, etc.?

No

48. What does your audience strategy look like?

Audience Segmentation work, customer research and ongoing Brand/Ad Tracking have all informed audience strategies for Digital Advertising efforts. Audience strategy does change by campaign type, product, beneficiary, responsible gaming, etc.

49. Are you using any First Party data for media activation? Do you know a rough % between 1P and 3P?

Yes, we use both 1st and 3rd Party data. Currently no numbers to share.

Google Analytics

50. Please list the domains / apps included in the scope of this project.

- a. Nclottery.com
- b. NCEL Mobile App
- c. Microsites

51. Does the same team work on measurement deployment for app and web, or are they different teams?

Different teams

52. Who are the main reporting stakeholders for Google Analytics data?

NCEL Leadership team, mainly those on the Digital and Brand Management teams

53. What is the level of availability of resources to deploy data layer changes to support a GA4 migration?

At this time, we don't think this will be needed but open to discussion as necessary.

54. Will there be any offline data feeds uploaded into GA4?

Not at this time

Measurement

55. Are you using any measurement partners to better understand media performance? Brand Lift, MTA, MMM, Reach & Frequency, Nielsen, Kantar, etc.

Yes, Nielsen, MRI. We use others as well, including custom Brand Tracking and Audience Research.

56. What are your Media KPIs? Are they varied by channel? Upper funnel vs Lower funnel?

Varies by channel. Includes impressions, reach, clicks, conversions, etc. Most advertising efforts concentrated on upper funnel KPI's.

57. Are you currently using any offline data? If so, how?

Not at this time

58. How are your Google Data Studio dashboards used? Are they automatically updated? Are they for leadership? What do they track?

- Used for high level executive data access
- Automatically updated
- Track relevant KPIs such as users, page views, etc. as well as source and traffic data, content, search results, and specific app data

59. How do you approach your media planning process? Etc, budgets by channel?

Varies by campaign. Sometimes we budget by channel, sometimes the goal is to optimize for an objective.

60. Are you very reliant on 3P cookies and what is your current approach to a Cookie less future?

We still currently use pixels for digital conversion tracking, this is a topic of consideration though.

Creative

61. What type of creative assets are developed and by who?

In house graphic designers typically make banner rotators and other promotional creative assets. Advertising agency develops microsites and digital advertising assets.

62. Do you use measurement and data to influence creative rotation and targeting?

Not currently, but would like to move more in this direction in the future.

63. How do you approach creative personalization to your audience?

Targeted graphics and messaging to our known demographics, but limited personalization up to this point.

64. Does NCEL currently have Google Tag Manager implemented on their digital properties?

Yes

65. How many Universal Analytics properties will need to be converted to GA4 before July 2023?

3-4 minor microsites and 1 historical data site

66. Is NCEL currently working with an agency for digital advertising services? If so, is this agency the same as their traditional advertising agency?

Yes, the NCEL works with one agency for digital advertising media buying and another agency for creative.

67. Does NCEL currently conduct any player research to regularly assess user satisfaction with the website/app?

Research has been conducted in the past, but the current research is limited to surveys conducted through the NCEL's player panel as described above in question #28.

68. Can NCEL share which third-party agency they plan to partner with to provide personalized online content to players?

Not at this time, but we are currently evaluating various platforms.

69. Optional services section: Can NCEL further explain what services they are looking for the agency to provide related to content for NCEL websites?

- a. Assistance in best practices of content design and organization
- b. Assistance in implementation of new games/categories
- c. Not looking for the agency to provide design services as part of this line item

70. Section 4.1(A) states “For multiple Responding Contractors submitting joint Proposal, Responding Contractors must provide the information as requested under Section 4.1” and we have the following related questions:

- a. Is this language applicable to Subcontractors planning to operate under a single primary Respondent?

No. This language is only applicable to a joint venture with multiple primary Responding Contractors.

- b. May a Subcontractor be highlighted within portions of the overall Proposal rather than submit a duplicate of all sections in 4.1?

Yes.

- c. If Subcontractors must submit a copy of section 4.1, does this mean that two separate copies of Section 4.1 in its entirety should be submitted in a single proposal, or should sections be combined (e.g., total revenues combined for both companies into a single table, strategic process combined, etc.) across both companies?

Subcontractors are not required to provide a copy of Section 4.1. However, if there is a joint venture, the submission should contain separate historical data about each company. The proposal may include combined strategic process, but should identify the role and strengths each party brings to the partnership.

NOTE FOR PHASE II FINALIST PROPOSALS ONLY: Any subcontractor that will be providing 25% or more of the services or receiving 25% or more of the cost of the Responding Contractor’s proposal must provide the requested Background Information (Section 6.3), the Background Check Fee (Section 6.3(A)), and a Disclosure of Litigation and Legal Matters (Section 6.4).