

Pre-Submittal Conference Q&A

Thursday, September 6, 2018

10:00am – 10:45am CT

Questions:

1. “AVA compiles clubs within each state into 10 regions.” What are those regions?

There are 10 regions: Atlantic, Mid America, North Central, Northeast, Northwest, Pacific, Rocky Mountain, South Central, Southeast, Southwest. Please visit

http://www2.ava.org/Region_Map.php to view a map of the 10 regions by state.

2. Ultimately, what does success look like to you?

We would like to be the premier physical activity club for those who are 50 years and over and the preferred partner of other physical fitness and health organizations.

3. There seems to be a secondary audience of 25-40 year olds. Are you trying to build and invest in this audience as well?

Yes, this secondary audience needs to be tapped into, but 50 and over is our primary market.

4. Have you executed similar campaigns in the past? Do you have examples of that creative to share? What did you like about them? What would you want to improve?

No, we have not executed similar campaigns.

5. What kind of PR tactics have you tried before? Are there any you haven't tried but really want to?

In the past, a Publicity Toolkit has been provided to all the clubs. The Publicity Toolkit is available on our [AVA website](#). It has not been effective because it is not consistent in the way it is implemented; some clubs use it, some don't. The AVA is requesting much more than a toolkit. The RFP explains what we are asking for.

6. What is the number one way your current members engage with you?

There are several ways our members engage with us. First, they are all volunteers that host and support our events. Our members volunteer to serve on committees. They also engage through Facebook, emails, phone calls, club and board meetings, and Biennial Conventions. Interaction is multichannel, we experience difficulty reaching all people all the time. Some of our members use smart phones, some use flip phones. We are technologically diverse, meaning our members communicate through different devices.

7. Where do you see AVA in 5 years? 10 years? 20 Years?

In 20 years we hope to be a thriving organization that everyone knows. In terms of the RFP, we're looking for a firm that will develop building blocks to get a National Publicity Campaign going for many years. The priority is the next 5 years.

8. Who would you say you're competing with to target the same audience?

Depends how you look who we are, it can be no one or it can be everyone. For example, AARP started a campaign for walking. There are other organization that do hiking, or advocacy work for a cause. Our cause is preventative health and wellness. It's not clear who are our biggest competitors. Nobody does what we do as well as we do. It really depends from what lens you look at us. This is something we look for the firm to help us clarify.

9. Is there a way to survey your members to understand what they do and how much they tap into your offering?

Yes, we have a survey from about 4 years ago. This can be available to firms. If an additional survey is needed, we are open to carrying it out.

10. What are your most recent challenges? Most recent wins?

One of our biggest challenges is attracting a younger group. Our current group is aging out, making it harder for them to participate in walks or other activities. This is something that impacts our membership growth. Branding is another challenge. We don't have a consistent brand, we look different in every region when it comes to marketing. Another challenge is attracting a more diverse audience. It would be helpful to come up with an outreach plan to help clubs attract culturally diverse groups. Technology is another big challenge. We want to advance in technology, but at the same time we don't want to leave those who are not tech-savvy behind.

A current win for the organization is that we have started operating under a new DBA. We are now operating as AVA: America's Walking Club. The reason behind the change was so more people can relate to us. If any of the firms see some potential in marketing the term "volksporting" as oppose to America's Walking Club, then we are open to that as well. Our 401K: Invest in Your Health Program can be considered another success. Several of our members signed up and there has been a lot of buzz on the program. For more information on the 401K Program visit <http://www.ava.org/401K.php>.

11. Has the AVA ever had a PR or Marketing agency before?

The AVA has never worked with a PR or Marketing agency before.

12. Has the AVA had publicity wins? Has the AVA been featured in publications?

Every so often clubs get featured in publications within their region. We've had some publications in major newspapers. However, these publications don't really go anywhere because we don't have the expertise on how to get this out to everyone. We partner with AARP locally, but we haven't been successful engaging with them at a corporate level. New Balance and San Antonio Shoemakers used to sponsor us before. Other partnerships exist in different regions at a local level.

13. Is print, television, and advertising included in the \$150K budget for all 50 states?

When proposals come back we would like to see something like a menu of services firms can provide and how much for those services.

14. Do you have a spokesperson for the organization? Or are you looking for the agency to represent the organization in events such as media tours?

We informally have someone. She's not tied to a contract, we book her services as needed. Recommendations from a firm would be helpful. This option is open to explore.

15. Are you looking for ideas and concepts different from the ones listed under the scope of services in the RFP or are you just looking for those services that are listed?

We would like to see different concepts after the firm has been chosen. We love creativity!

16. Do you have a separate budget for the website? Have you already chosen the website designer? Who is developing the website? Is this something that should be added as a budget item?

No, it shouldn't be added as a budget item. We have someone internally and an IT Committee that will support that work. We are looking for someone to guide the content on our website.

17. How did you come up with the \$100k - \$150k? Is that expected to extend for the two years or per year?

It is expected to extend over the two years. \$150k is the cap that was approved by our board of directors. We need the firm to let us know what our priority should be for the next two years. We are asking firms to present back what is doable within our budget.

There are some things the publicity committee can help with, such as carrying a new survey for our membership.

18. Does the organization have key members to run social media or are you looking for the firm to run all your social media?

We need help getting it started, but eventually we would do the work.

19. How are you currently managing social media?

One of our employees currently manages our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts.

20. Do you want a hard copy of the RFP?

Yes, we would like a hardcopy and electronic copy of the RFP by the deadline. The mailing address and email address is on the RFP.

Follow-up questions can be emailed to publicity@ava.org.