

IFT

Institute of
Food Technologists

THE Society for Food Science & Technology

Request for Proposals

Website Redesign Process Consulting

October 5, 2007

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Introduction

The Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) has initiated a Request for Proposal (RFP) process to identify a vendor qualified to plan, execute and deliver the redesign of IFT's website (www.ift.org). IFT requires a vendor who has demonstrated experience in managing website projects and expertise with best practices regarding successful website design, development, and deployment. In addition, this vendor will either provide development resources or lead the selection process to obtain project development resources.

Based on the first phase of the RFP process, IFT selected your organization as a potential candidate to work on this project. If your organization is interested in submitting a proposal based on the RFP guidelines outlined on the following pages, IFT requests submission by October 18, 2007. A pre-proposal conference call is scheduled on October 10, 2007 at 10 AM (800 791-2345, access code: 23827#). Other calls may be arranged through Sam Halferty at 312-604-0209 or swhalferty@ift.org. The intention of these calls is to allow the opportunity to ask questions regarding the RFP, assuming this RFP has been reviewed.

About IFT

Founded in 1939, IFT is a nonprofit scientific society with 22,000 members working in food science, food technology, and related professions in industry, academia and government.

IFT publishes various resources for the food industry, including *Food Technology* and the *Journal of Food Science*. IFT also conducts the world's largest annual convention on food grown, processed, manufactured, distributed and eaten worldwide, the IFT Food Expo[®].

As the authoritative voice of food science and technology, IFT contributes to public policy and opinion at national, state and local levels. IFT's Science, Communications, and Government Relations department advocates the scientific perspective on food science and technology issues.

The IFT Foundation supports programs such as undergraduate scholarships, graduate fellowships, science-based communications to media and policy makers, career guidance programs, food science awards and the Congressional Science Fellowship.

IFT's Core Message and Strategic Goals

IFT's Core Purpose

The Institute of Food Technologists exists to advance the science of food. Our vision is to ensure a safe and abundant food supply contributing to healthier people everywhere.

IFT's Mission

As the leading multi-disciplinary organization IFT is uniquely positioned to foster an inclusive community for all food science professionals and help advance integrated solutions reflecting sound science.

Goal 1: Steward for the Professional and its Community

Providing an inclusive and welcoming community for all food science professionals, and the knowledge and tools they need to enhance their professional capacity and competency.

Goal 2: Trusted Spokes-Organization

Engaging in advocacy and communications efforts that enhance recognition for the profession and result in increased application of food science in regulatory decisions and consumer choices.

Goal 3: Research Champion and Innovation Catalyst

Increasing food science and technology research funding and emerging technologies' research efforts to ensure a safe and nutritious food supply.

Goal 4: Global Citizen and Partner

Proactively contributing to, and being a partner for, the global advancement and application of food science.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this project is to deliver a unique interactive website experience that meets the information and content expectations of key IFT target audiences; generates cross-selling and cross-communication opportunities on the value of IFT programs, services and benefits; and builds an online community through networking and shared experiences to identify positively with the IFT global brand.

Other Objectives:

- Align the website with other IFT communications
- Create intuitive site navigation with a roadmap of offerings

- Create a visually interesting site. Consider graphics and video streaming to make the site more engaging and interactive
- Improved search functionality
- Offer community based tools for members
- Showcase the IFT brand
- Target content for specific audience segments
- Show a clear picture of IFT membership benefits to non-members
- Increase membership and revenue

Project Description

IFT's Web site is the primary communication vehicle to members and the public. This project will address several aspects of the IFT website including design and usability, style, content, and supporting technology. The high-level goal of the project is to create a website that serves food related scientific and technological content with a corporate look and feel. The web site should engage IFT targeted audiences and be easy to use.

Targeted Audiences

Primary Audience:

- IFT members
- IFT volunteer and staff teams
- Non-members who utilize goods or services of the IFT
- Prospective new members

Secondary audience:

- The media
- Regulatory officials

Tertiary audience:

- Consumers
- Allied organizations

Design and Usability

The site should serve as a roadmap to resources, services, and programs offered by IFT. Navigation should be intuitive to targeted audiences and less influenced by IFT procedural and departmental structures. Finally, the site should be friendly to use with information that is readily accessible to members and non-members.

Style

The site should present unified visual identity, brand and message. There is a separate, concurrent branding project to address key elements of IFT's visual identity and messaging. Recommendations from this initiative should be included in the site. The site should also address a strategy of embracing international members.

Content

Content will be evaluated within this project. Relevant content will be tailored to targeted audience and audience segments. The site will provide access to both IFT and industry information and resources. This site should also clearly communicate IFT's vision and mission with the web users. While IFT is responsible for content, the vendor will help determine the best web content format.

Technology

The redesign must use one supporting technical platform. Currently, IFT has an integrated website comprised of two parts: www.ift.org and members.ift.org. They are hosted on separate servers supported by different technical architectures. The platform for www.ift.org is LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, and PHP); for members.ift.org is Microsoft, ASP.NET 1.1, SQL Server, and Microsoft CMS 2002.

Timeframe

The redesigned website implementation deadline is August 2008.

Current Usage / Website Statistics

www.ift.org and members.ift.org had approximately 2 million visitors, 7 million page views, and 27 million hits between October 1, 2006 and September 30, 2007.

Competitors

Half of IFT members also have membership in one of these associations:

- American Chemical Society, (<https://portal.acs.org>)
- AACC International, (<http://www.aaccnet.org>)
- Research Chefs Association, (<http://www.culinology.com>)
- International Association for Food Protection, (<http://www.foodprotection.org/main/default.asp>)
- American Society for Microbiology, (<http://www.asm.org>)

Members also use regulatory agencies to access information:

- FDA, (<http://www.fda.gov/>)
- USDA, (<http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome>)

Anticipated project work

Determine Objectives	Use Cases
Requirements gathering	Information Architecture Model
Audit of Existing Site	Usability Testing
RFP for development	Development
Vendor Selection for	Content Migration
Development	Deployment
Technical Requirements	Training

Considerations

The web site must integrate with TMA Resources' Personify and Personify e-business, the Association Management System used by IFT. E-commerce and transactions occur on the Personify e-business site, hosted and managed by IFT. Personify is scheduled to launch in January 2008.

IFT's 2008 Annual Meeting and Food Expo (AMFE) will require resources from almost all of the IFT staff. Most staff will have limited unavailability for the 30 days prior to this event. The event will take place from June 28 to July 1, 2008.

Vendors who may be affected:

- Blackwell Publishing, (publisher of The Journal of Food Science)
- Compusystems , (customer registration for the AMFE)
- TMA Resources, (publisher of Personify)
- Votenet Solutions, (web based voting for IFT elections)

IFT is developing a language strategy for electronic communications. The web site may need to support multiple languages in the future.

IFT owns a license for Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007 content management system and prefers using it unless there is a compelling reason to use a different CMS. Any other CMS software must be included in the project budget.

IFT does not have sufficient IT staff to develop the project. Additional resources will be required for development.

IFT members should be included in requirements gathering and testing project tasks.

Restructuring of IFT's Divisions may occur soon after this project is complete. In addition, the IFT Student Association and some IFT Sections host independent web sites. This project should allow for easy reconfiguring of web pages to integrate with these sites as required in the future.

IFT Organizational Support

Jerry Bowman is project owner and Sam Halferty is project manager for the web redesign. Other Key functional and technical roles identified for the project and staffed by IFT are:

Requirements Lead	Technical Architecture Lead
Communications Lead	Technical Infrastructure Lead
Content Lead	Development Lead
Design Lead	Testing Lead

In addition, this project has the support of IFT's Board of Directors and top management. A governance team has been formed to make project decisions regarding budget, requirements, scope, and timeline. Jerry Bowman is the project liaison to the governance team.

Vendor Expectations

Basis for Award of Contract

Proposal evaluation is on the following criteria:

- Project Understanding 40%
- Project Cost 30%
- Vendor Team Experience 10%
- Personnel Strength & Personality 10%
- Differential Advantage 10%

Sample Project Plan

Please provide a sample project plan with clear assumptions, based on your understanding of the information from this document.

Budget and Timeline

Please provide an itemized budget with breakdowns for all proposed project phases. IFT allocated approximately \$320,000 for this project.

Create the budget based on the ideal methodology and process to meet our process and project needs. Budget negotiations will be based on your initial proposal of how IFT can most effectively produce the outcomes outlined above.

Once budget negotiations are final, any changes to the fees will require written authorization from Jerry Bowman.

Selection Timeline

Vendor selection will follow a two stage process. Proposals must be presented to IFT by October 18, 2007. Then IFT will invite a few vendors to make proposal presentations on November 6, 2007.

Date	Activity / Deliverable
October 5	RFP available to vendors
October 9 – 13	RFP Discussions
October 10 at 10 AM	RFP Questions conference call at 10 AM: <i>(800) 791-2345 access code: 23827 #</i>
October 18	RFP Due to IFT. Late submissions will not be accepted.
October 19 –23	IFT Reviews RFP's.
October 24	Notification to vendors for Presentations
November 6	Vendor Presentations
November 7 -8	Vendor Selection Process
November 9	Vendor Notification of Selection

Key Dates

- October 10, 2007 RFP Questions Conference Call (10 AM)
- October 18, 2007 RFP Due to IFT
- November 6, 2007 On-site Presentation of Proposals
- June 28 - July 1, 2008 IFT AMFE
- August 2008 Website Implemented

Assumptions and Agreements

- After reviewing proposals, a few vendors will be asked to present their plans to the IFT staff
- All costs associated with the preparation and presentation of the proposal will be borne by the participating vendors

- Proposals and their accompanying documentation will not be returned
- Proposals will be considered final as submitted and may not be altered unless requested by the IFT staff

Proposal Instructions

Below are just a few guidelines for your RFP response. Please feel free to include any information that you feel is critical to the comprehensiveness of your response, even if it is not expressly asked for within the RFP.

As part of your proposal, please address the following:

- Sample Project Plan
- Project Budget
- Your approach to website design
- Details regarding your website project management process
- A summary of website development experience
- A listing of existing client references
- Identify who will be involved in your project including their relevant experience and credentials

General Criteria

Proposals should include a response to all aspects of the evaluation criteria.

Please be sure to include the name and contact information of persons to be contacted for clarification of the proposal if needed. Proposals should include a summary of your approach to the work, any exceptions to be taken, and any alternative or additional information that you deem important to the representation of your team.

Submission of a response to this RFP does not bind IFT to engage the vendor to provide the requested service. IFT reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, accept any proposal terms it deems to be in the best interest of the organization, waive any informalities in proposals submitted, and waive any minor irregularities or discrepancies in proposal procedures.

Response Logistics

Responses to this RFP must be returned no later than October 18, 2007. All proposals should be sent to the address below:

Institute of Food Technologists
Attn: Sam Halferty
525 West Van Buren Street
Suite 1000
Chicago, IL 60607

Statement of Confidentiality

As a selected vendor, your organization will guarantee that all discussions, materials, and findings will be held in confidence.

This RFP and the nature of work solicited is the confidential and proprietary information of IFT and the information contained herein may only be used as necessary to prepare a proposal for submission to IFT.

Additional Information or Clarification

Contact: Sam Halferty at 312-604-0209 or swhalferty@ift.org