



Save Ontario Shipwrecks

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

WEB SITE DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

October 7, 2011



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## SUMMARY

Save Ontario Shipwrecks (SOS) is accepting proposals to design and develop the organization's website. This will be a concept to completion production. The purpose of this RFP is to provide a fair evaluation for all candidates and to provide the candidates with the evaluation criteria against which they will be judged.

The existing SOS website was designed and is maintained using in-house resources and owns rights to all images and resources.

For reference and research purposes the URL of the current site is;

<http://SaveOntarioShipwrecks.on.ca>

## PROPOSAL GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

This is an open and competitive process.

Proposals received after 11:59PM EST, **November 4, 2011** will not be considered.

The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.

Multiple alternate solutions will be accepted.

The price you quote should be inclusive. If your price excludes certain fees or charges, you must provide a detailed list of excluded fees with a complete explanation of the nature of those fees.

If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of sub-contractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Sub-contractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. In your proposal please provide the name, address, and EIN of the sub-contractor. SOS will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of sub-contractors; however we retain the right to refuse the sub-contractors you have selected.

Provisions of this RFP and the contents of successful responses are considered available for inclusion in final contractual obligations.

## **CONTRACT TERMS**

SOS will negotiate contract terms upon selection. All contracts are subject to review by SOS legal counsel and a project will be awarded upon signing of an agreement or contract which outlines terms, scope, budget and other necessary items.

- a. Organization must own, have full access to and have the right to customize site code.
- b. Terms for proposal:
  - i. Relevant dates (see Timeline Section below)
  - ii. Proposals should be delivered to **Chris Phinney**. Copies should be received by **November 4, 2011, 11:59PM EST**
  - iii. Please provide 2 copies of any proposals submitted
  - iv. All proposals must include a statement of authorization to bid signed by principal of the responding company
  - v. All proposals must use the proposal format outlined in this RFP
  - vi. Parties submitting separate proposals may not discuss pricing information or they will be ineligible to bid on the project
  - vii. Bidder status: bidder must disclose any relevant conflicts of interest and/or pending lawsuits

## **PURPOSE, DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

### *Purpose*

SOS currently has a web presence that is somewhat outdated in appearance, structure and in the presentation of content. An opportunity exists to re-engineer the site to better reflect the mission of SOS and incorporate the latest web technology. Upon completion of the development of the site, SOS will assume full responsibility for web site content maintenance and administration. All content, coding and graphics will become the sole property of SOS.

### *Description*

Create a flexible, informative web site that is easy to maintain. We must develop a friendly site that can deliver large amounts of constantly changing information to our key audiences. In addition to designing a user-friendly site with an intuitive interface we will also require a database driven membership management system. Our members should be able to easily purchase new and renew their current memberships as well as download electronic copies of our newsletter and receipts for tax purposes.

Local chapters of SOS should also be able to create their own content on sub pages. Our preference would be to use a WYSIWYG web based interface to easily create and manage content.

Integration or replacement of our online store (<http://saveontarioshipwrecks.on.ca/QMstore/>) for the sale of merchandise to members and non members.

To be effective, our web site must be:

- Easy and intuitive
- Visually pleasing
- Informative
- Safe and secure
- Quick to load and operate

### *Objectives*

Our primary Internet objective is to continue to build brand identity, awareness, and interest in the organization and the services it provides.

### *Our Vision*

- Maximize web-based technologies
- Build member loyalty and enhance customer relationships
- Improve program delivery and service
- Provide focused web-based solutions
- Leverage human capital
- Increase market share

### *Specific Strategies*

- Increase awareness of the SOS mission and promote involvement through programs
- Retain current members and program participants and gain new ones
- Strengthen relationships with community partners, donors, members, program participants and volunteers
- Attract qualified and diverse volunteers

- Improve business efficiencies
- Present comprehensive information and resources in an easy to use format
- Increase site promotion activities
- Integrate brand messaging
- Deliver a consistent image
- Deliver a scalable, maintainable foundation

#### TIMELINE

- SOS will release its RFP **October 7, 2011**
- Please submit all questions on RFP via email to **[cphinney@LiquidArchaeology.com](mailto:cphinney@LiquidArchaeology.com)**.
- FAQ's will be released as needed to all bidders.
- Proposals are due by **November 4, 2011** 11:59PM EST. Please send to the address above if by email or to the mailing address listed under "Evaluation Criteria".
- Finalist interviews will be conducted the week of **November 14, 2011**.
- Proposal award date will be **November 28, 2011**.
- Initial meetings **December 5, 2011**.
- Quarantine begins (no new concepts/functionality added) **TBA**.
- Beta site **TBA**.
- Proposed site launch **April 2, 2012 or earlier**.

## **BUDGET**

Please provide several cost proposals to accomplish the scope outlined below. The budget must encompass all design, production, and software acquisitions necessary for development and maintenance of the web site.

Hosting will be addressed separately and costs for hosting are not included in the budget for this project.

List pricing for:

- Phase I: Discovery, Requirements Planning & Site Definition
- Phase II: Site Development, Testing and Deployment
- Hosting: We have not yet made a decision to host on or off-site. Discussions during the discovery phase and your input and advice will help us make a decision in this regard.

## **BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION**

The Purpose of SOS

To further public knowledge and appreciation of Ontario's marine heritage by such means as may be expedient and, in particular, but without limiting the foregoing:

- a. By assisting museums and public archives in acquiring information and displaying artefacts pertaining to Ontario maritime history;
- b. By undertaking public education projects in furtherance of the objectives of the Corporation;
- c. By surveying, documenting and encouraging the preservation of shipwrecks in Ontario's lakes and rivers as a resource of historical and recreational value to the public in the Province and Canada.

The Role of SOS

Save Ontario Shipwrecks is a not-for-profit organization, dedicated to Marine Heritage Conservation. In order to carry out this purpose, four long term goals have been set out:

- a. To stop the destruction of marine heritage sites;
- b. To identify, evaluate and monitor marine heritage sites;
- c. To conduct projects which contribute to the knowledge and understanding of Ontario's maritime history; and

- d. To provide the diving community and the general public with the opportunity to learn and understand more about Ontario's maritime history, and the value of our marine heritage resource.

### *History of SOS*

During the late 1970's, two far sighted individuals, Rick Jackson and Gain Wong, began to realize that the most effective means of putting an end to wreck stripping in Ontario would be to educate and involve divers in conservation projects. They also recognized the need for an organization dedicated to preserving Ontario's marine heritage. In February of 1981, Save Ontario Shipwrecks (SOS) was incorporated with Rick Jackson, Andrew Garay and Gain Wong as the first directors.

In the beginning, SOS was centred in Toronto. The first Chapters were Toronto, Niagara, Peterborough and Ottawa. In 1985, SOS Quinte was formed primarily to continue work on the Annie Falconer. This project, the wreck of a late eighteen hundreds schooner near Picton (Pt. Traverse) was the first to involve amateur divers and professionals and stands today as an example of the quality effort that can be achieved by the dive community. Also in 1984 we saw the formation of SOS Ottawa Valley, Sault Ste Marie, Superior, London and Sudbury, and Oshawa came on board in 1985, followed by Ohio in 1986. SOS Ohio consisted of a group of divers working on an Ontario wreck in Fathom Five Park, and assisted the State of Ohio in organizing their own marine heritage groups. 1986 saw the formation of Chapters in Windsor, Ingleside (which was closely affiliated with the Lost Villages Historical Society) and Thunder Bay.

In 1986, SOS was awarded a Core Funding grant by the Ministry of Culture. This in turn forced SOS to develop a more structured fiscal operating system, and reorganized to manage our affairs in a more professional manner. In 1986, we finally evolved to the position where we had a definite Board of Directors, with Officers and an Executive Committee to manage the day to day affairs of the corporation.

In 2003 SOS embarked on a provincial wide campaign to provide mooring buoys to SOS chapters and affiliated organizations like the NDA, POW and ErieQuest. To date, SOS has purchased over 80 buoys for initial deployment and maintenance purposes for this program. In 2005 SOS created the Dive To Preserve program with an additional website at <http://www.DiveToPreserve.org>. This program outlines many of the things that people can do to get actively involved in Marine Heritage preservation. Such as Low Impact diving, site stewardship, ad-hoc reporting of site conditions or changes.

## AUDIENCE

Stakeholders and audience groups:

Primary:

Current members, donors, and employees.

Secondary:

Prospective members, donors, and volunteers.

## SCOPE AND GUIDELINES

Design:

It is our intention to have a site which encourages fresh and new content as easily as possible. Our vision therefore includes the following features;

- A core website with static pages for information that rarely changes and is controlled by our webmaster via CMS.
- Sub-site for each chapter that is partially driven by the membership database (ie. Chapter contacts) and the balance editable via CMS by designates of that chapter.
- The “front page” of the main site should contain a roll up of chapter and provincial articles (blog style).

Logo:

Our existing logo is included below and is in our official colour (approximately #800000). We are open to modernizing of the logo. The complexity of any design should have screen printing, embroidery and marketing materials in mind. (ie. Not too complex and no fine lines that would be difficult to reproduce) A high resolution version of this and other graphics will be issued to the successful bidder.



#### Site Specifications:

Technology and programming language is left to the developers' discretion but should be main stream and not proprietary.

#### Testing:

Testing of site on all applicable platforms to ensure web site works as promised. Explain testing plan through development process (i.e. focus groups, etc.).

#### Delivery:

Delivery and uploading of site to client for internal hosting, to an outside third party, or hosting by consultant (to be determined).

In order to expedite delivery, we will allow for the project to be split into deliverable groups prioritized below.

Group 1 –Main Website with CMS at the provincial level, Membership Management System, Online Store

Group 2 – Chapter Sub-Sites and Member login area as specified below

Group 3—Marine Heritage Database, Online Quiz, Mooring Database

Group 4 – Any additional functionality that your firm designs.

We are open to additions or slight rearrangement to these groups if there are features that your firm recommends. In addition, we will consider a total implementation if budget and time constraints allow.

#### Expected Functionality and Design:

- Content Management System
- SOS Branding and colours
- Easy to use and manage
- Visually Appealing and Professional looking - The site must have an attractive mix of text and graphics.
- Common Theme - Each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The SOS logo should be prominently displayed on every page as a common header.
- Consistent Design - As stated above, each section of the site should have a common look and feel. The use of photographs, fonts and layouts should be consistent throughout the site.

- Easy to Navigate - The site should be easy to navigate. Information should be grouped and presented in a logical manner and require no more than three levels of "drill down" for the user to find the desired information.
- WYSISWG editor with preview capability also allows HTML based editing.
- User and group based permissions
- Member login area providing a secure and private section to your site. This secure section can be used to create any number of secure access levels facilitating the distribution of sensitive and privileged information to staff, members, board of directors, various committee members etc., providing each group access to information and documents that are only relevant to them.
- Site must be compatible with IE and Firefox and should be standards compliant.
- Site should be compatible with popular mobile device browsers (with reduced functionality in applications if required).
- Web site must not require plug-ins as a default.
- Chapter Sub-sites
- Surveys / Poll Questions –See existing site for example (<http://saveontarioshipwrecks.on.ca/index.php>)
- Provide search capabilities using key words or phrasing that will identify content from throughout the site.
- Event Calendar –Should be available at the chapter level and a combined calendar be available at the top level of the site.
- Membership registration system (must utilize existing data on current and past members)
  - Online registration and renewals
  - Mass emailing capability
  - Data export capability
  - Customized to our specifications and requirements
  - Automated renewal notifications
  - Reporting functionality
- Keeping consistent with today's trends towards social media, the new site should be integrated with social media services such as Facebook, Twitter, RSS Subscription, etc. (SOS currently has a Facebook page only)

## **AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES / INTEGRATION ISSUES**

SOS would like to reuse as much of our existing content as possible.

The proposed solution should either use the following existing databases or re-implement them:

- Membership Database (very important and functionality must be retained)
- Marine Heritage Database
- Shipwreck Geek Trivia Database
- Membership Form (this is a PDF which contains the fields of data that we initially collect from members and should be included in the new online membership system) [http://saveontarioshipwrecks.on.ca/Membership/membership\\_form.pdf](http://saveontarioshipwrecks.on.ca/Membership/membership_form.pdf)
- Existing Site (we own the rights or have permission for all of the content, images and graphics on our current site) <http://saveontarioshipwrecks.on.ca/>

SOS employs a CubeCart <http://www.cubecart.com/> based ecommerce solution for our Quatermaster's Store. We are currently pleased with this solution but would consider replacing it with another ecommerce solution if there were significant benefits.

## RESOURCES

- a. Point of contact/ project manager

**Chris Phinney**

email: [cphinney@LiquidArchaeology.com](mailto:cphinney@LiquidArchaeology.com)

phone: **905-531-5223**

Address:

**109 Cleghorn Dr.**

**Binbrook, ON**

**L0R 1C0**

**Canada**

- b. The executive board of SOS will be responsible for making technical and non-technical decisions and reviewing proposals

## QUALIFICATIONS

- List the five web sites your firm has produced that best reflect your work and relevancy to this project. Briefly list the role your firm played in each project. The URL should be submitted. Only sites that are live will qualify during evaluation.
- Describe your experience in producing sites for non-profit and/or community-focused projects.
- Provide current reference information for three former or current clients.
- Briefly describe your firm's organizational capacity to produce our web site (e.g. staff, equipment, software, physical space, office location, etc.).
- How many full-time staff does your firm employ? Please include a copy of your firm's organizational chart.
- Provide a company profile, length of time in business and core competencies.
- Briefly describe the percentage of your web staff that would end of working on this project relative to your entire staff (using full time equivalents). For example, if you would use five staff on the project and you have ten web designers and developers, the percentage would be 50%.
- What type of team will be assigned to this project? What will each person's role be? Please include a brief background summary for each key staff member assigned to this project.
- Briefly describe your firm's project management process.
- Percent of total revenue derived from site developments and other business ventures.
- Explain your business model.
- Please discuss any hardware/software vendor partnerships.
- Please discuss your testing and support plan.
- Please explain your service level agreement (SLA) structure.
- Time frame for completion. The time frame for completion of the project will be evaluated. In addition, time frames will be part of the contractual agreement; therefore, a realistic time frame for completion is requested.

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The following criteria will form the basis upon which SOS will evaluate proposals. The mandatory criteria must be met and include:

Two (2) copies of your proposal must be received no later than 11:59PM EST, **November 4, 2011**. Your proposal must include a cost proposal as described above. All costs associated with the delivery of the project should be presented in a flat rate, fee for service format.

Deliver proposals to the attention of:

**Chris Phinney**  
**109 Cleghorn Dr.**  
**Binbrook, ON**  
**L0R1C0**  
**Canada**

Proposals that meet the mandatory requirements, as stated above, will be evaluated with the following criteria:

- Suitability of the Proposal - the proposed solution meets the needs and criteria set forth in the RFP.
- Expertise in recommending and communicating appropriate technical and aesthetic solutions as evidenced by the proposal and references.
- Aesthetic Capabilities - Prior work demonstrates artistic and innovative, user friendly interfaces that engage communities and viewers.
- Candidate Experience - Candidate has successfully completed similar projects and has the qualifications necessary to undertake this project.
- Value/Pricing Structure and Price Levels - The price is commensurate with the value offered by the proposer. As a non-profit institution, SOS is able to accept pro bono service and recognize the provider to the full extent allowed by the Revenue Canada, including naming the proposer within the web site and other collateral as a SOS supporter and partner.
- Depth and Breadth of Staff - The candidate firm has appropriate staff to develop the site in the time frame needed.
- Proposal Presentation - The information is presented in a clear, logical manner and is well organized.
- Demonstrated commitment to high service level agreements (SLA).

## FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS

### 1. Title Page:

AGENCY XYZ of Rock Hopper County, Web Site Development Proposal, your company name, address, web site address, telephone number, fax number, e-mail address and primary contact person.

### 2. Cover Letter:

Signed by the person or persons authorized to sign on behalf of the company (1-2 pages).

### 3. Proposal:

Discuss your proposed solution, including the features, benefits and uniqueness of your solution. You should also touch on your ability to deliver the project in the timeframe.

### 4. Technical Aspects

- Web development process: explain the process you will follow to build the Web site, including major milestones and evaluation.
- Usability standards and testing.
- Any technology information and specifications used in your solution (languages, platform, etc.).

### 5. Management

- Organizational structure: communication process; including lines of reporting and any special tools used.
- Schedule of deliverables; include major milestones and testing proposal.

### 6. Budget

- Break down cost by production hours, tools and functionalities. It is the preference of SOS that the development aspect of this project be presented on a 'Not to Exceed' cost basis.
- Maintenance and support: Identify any costs that should be assumed as part of the site and ongoing costs for maintenance and support we need in the future.
- License fees: Identify the costs we will need to pay to develop or host the site.

- Hosting: Identify whether we must or are highly encouraged to host with your company. If hosting is provided as an option or requirement, provide pricing options.
- Training and Style Guide: Identify costs to train our board members to use site tools and provide a style guide.
- Other charge areas: Please identify whether there will be other expenses, consulting fees, future work, etc. to complete this project.

## 7. Attachments

- Qualifications and Experience: relevant case histories with information on accessing online demos or examples.
- Biographies of all who will work on account.
- Three professional references.