

# Domestic Digital Marketing Initiative for Maine SMEs

## 1. Introduction

The Maine International Trade Center (MITC) is seeking proposals from qualified digital marketing firms or consultants to support Maine small and/or medium-sized manufacturers (SMEs) in expanding their domestic market reach. This initiative aims to increase regional or national sales through strengthened digital marketing capabilities and increased brand visibility.

## 2. Background

Maine businesses can face unique challenges in scaling their operations and reaching broader U.S. markets. Many lack the resources or expertise to fully leverage digital marketing tools. This program will provide a combination of digital marketing workshops and individual coaching for Maine SMEs. Funding for this project expires on June 30, 2026 and cannot be extended; an efficient project timeline is crucial. **The budget range is \$20,000-24,000.**

## 3. Objectives

- Recruit eligible Maine SME manufacturers to attend workshops/individual coaching
  - Eligibility defined by funding source: Businesses must be organized/incorporated in the US, operate in Maine, meet the small business size standard, have been in business at least one year, and not be under an order of debarment or otherwise ineligible to receive Federal or State funds.
- Programming will:
  - Improve digital marketing infrastructure and skills
  - Increase domestic sales and brand awareness
  - Support job creation and long-term business development

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## 4. Scope of Work

The selected vendor will offer workshops and/or individual coaching to participating SMEs on several of the following topics:

### Potential Focus Areas

Vendors should address at least one the following focus areas:

Focus Area	Description
<b>Online Advertising Strategy</b>	Offer guidance on paid ad campaigns (Google, Meta, LinkedIn); optimizing targeting and ROI.
<b>Platform Selection &amp; Optimization</b>	Recommend and provide guidance on e-commerce platforms (e.g., Shopify, Squarespace); train SMEs on usage and analytics.
<b>AI-Driven Marketing Tools</b>	Facilitate adoption of AI tools for automation, content creation, and segmentation.
<b>Marketing Budget Planning</b>	Help SMEs build realistic budgets; advise on resource allocation and cost-saving strategies.
<b>Affiliate &amp; Partnership Development</b>	Offer insight into affiliate program structures, including influencer onboarding, management, and compensation.

*NOTE: This list of focus areas was generated based on Maine business feedback.*

## 5. Deliverables

Must include:

- Progress reporting: Written bi-weekly progress reports & final impact report
  - To include (1) engagement metrics (name/number of eligible businesses attending workshops & name/number of eligible businesses engaging in individual coaching), (2) identified focus areas and workshop topics, and (3) individual coaching summaries.

Could include:

- Other quantitative or qualitative reporting data that the vendor suggests.

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## 6. Proposal Requirements

See template below. **NOTE:** Proposal not to exceed **five pages**.

## 7. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Potential to benefit multiple Maine SME manufacturers
- Speed to market
- Experience with US digital marketing and SME manufacturers
- Cost-effectiveness and clarity of budget
- Capacity to deliver measurable results

## 8. Timeline

RFP Release Date: Week of December 4, 2025

Proposal Deadline: December 19, 2025

Vendor Selection: Week of January 5, 2026

Project Start & Vendor Onboarding with MITC: Upon award (January 2026)

Project End: Approximately June 12, 2026

Final Reporting Due: June 30, 2026

## 9. Submission Instructions

Submit proposals in PDF format to [rfp@mitc.com](mailto:rfp@mitc.com) with **Subject Line:** “RFP Submission – Domestic Digital Marketing for Maine SMEs”

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## Proposal Template *NOTE: Not to exceed five pages.*

### DOMESTIC DIGITAL MARKETING INITIATIVE FOR MAINE SMEs

#### 1. Company Profile & Relevant Experience

- **Organizational Overview** | Provide a concise description of your firm.
- **Past Work Examples** | Share 1–2 examples of past work which demonstrates success in helping SME manufacturers expand national sales through digital marketing initiatives. Highlight measurable outcomes and project duration.
- **Relevant Expertise** | Demonstrate experience in at least three of the following focus areas:
  - Online advertising strategy; Platform selection and optimization; AI-driven marketing tool strategy; Marketing budget planning; Affiliate and partnership development.

#### 2. Proposed Methodology, Format & Timeline

- **Project Timeline** | January–June 2026, with clear milestones for assessment, strategy development, implementation, and reporting.
- **Methodology** | Outline your approach to recruiting and registering eligible Maine SMEs, hosting workshops and offering individual coaching. Explain how your methodology will strengthen digital capabilities, improve brand visibility, and drive sustainable growth.
  - MITC can be a resource in recruiting eligible Maine SME manufacturers. MITC has existing relationships with organizations such as Maine Made, the Maine Association of Manufacturers, and other industry associations. The registration process should be conducted by the vendor.
  - Individual coaching offerings can be defined in your proposal and can have reasonable limitations given the budget. Only eligible Maine SME manufacturers will be eligible for individual coaching and workshop attendance.
- **Anticipated Outcomes** | Provide projections for measurable results such as:
  - Increased domestic sales; job creation or workforce expansion; new partnerships or distribution channels.

#### 3. Team Bios & Roles

- **Key Personnel - Roles & Responsibilities** | Clearly define who will lead strategy, manage deliverables, and oversee reporting.
- **Capacity & Commitment** | Demonstrate ability to implement the project within the proposed timeframe, including resource availability.

#### 4. Budget Breakdown & Pricing Model

- **Detailed Budget** | Present a transparent breakdown of costs by major activity (e.g., assessments, strategy development, training, and reporting).
- **Pricing Model** | Specify whether pricing is fixed-fee, milestone-based, or hourly.