



Voyages Travel
US Broadband RFP
August 21, 2007

1. Introduction

Voyages Television is launching an on-air (VOD) and online travel service in January, 2008. The web site will function in conjunction with on-air programming and as a stand-alone, video-centric service through which users can find, plan, and purchase luxury travel packages. Additionally, the company plans to license travel video to 3rd party online broadband distributors. Voyages is already a well-known travel brand in Asia and Europe. The VOD channel and Website will be the company's introduction into the US market.

2. Company Background

For detailed information about Voyages Television, its business, history, management team, and business model, see www.voyagestelevision.com.

3. Project Objective

Launch Phase 1 (detailed below) of the Voyages Television broadband service—a video-rich Website—while building a sustainable platform for future growth in the feature set and migration to other platforms.

4. Product Description

a. Brand Attributes

- i. Voyages Travel is a luxury travel package provider.
- ii. Voyages does not do commodity reservations or business travel.
- iii. Voyages is an aspirational brand.

b. Value Proposition

- i. Voyages provides luxury travel experiences.
- ii. Voyages provides the best (and often the only) high quality video for all or their travel experiences.
- iii. Voyages is a trusted brand. Destinations are vetted by experts and by users with expertise.

c. Goal

- i. Voyages becomes THE place to go for **trusted luxury travel information**.

d. Target Audience

- i. Well informed adults with disposable income who are used to searching for, comparing, planning, and booking their travel online.
- ii. Sweet spot is women, 35-45 years old who are the designated (non-professional) family/group/couple travel planner

e. Content

- i. Signature Programs: 80 hours of lifestyle and destination programming.
- ii. Video: 1000 clips at launch, each around 5 minutes, adding 75-100 clips each month. Each clip has associated metadata including: geography, noted hotels, noted airlines, noted destination services, noted activities, associated travel packages, trip category, clip length, promotional attributes, etc.
- iii. Travel Packages: 1700 exclusive packages, adding 75-100 each month.
 1. Each destination, interest, or activity (see below) will have at least one Voyages Travel Exclusive offer and then up to 4 additional offers.
- iv. Editorial (text and image) content, such as Top 10 Lists.

f. Destination Site

- i. Users will be referred to the website from:

1. Voyages Television VOD Channel
 2. Search engines (SEO and SEM)
 3. Partners' websites
 4. Embedded video (distributed by users)
 5. Online affiliate network (in a future release)
 6. Offline marketing (mostly through PR)
- ii. Architecture
- There will be three main pathways for users to browse and use the site:
1. By Destination (including Geographies, Properties, and Events (e.g. Superbowl, Mardi Gras))
 2. By Special Interest (e.g. Spa Getaway, Eco-Travel)
 3. By Activities (e.g. a vacation featuring the beach, golf, and family fun)
- iii. Social Media and Social Networking
1. The site will include social media and social networking features (outlined later in this document).
 2. The goal is not to create yet another social network, but to capitalize on the experience-sharing behavior that occurs among friends around their vacation destinations (e.g. "You have to stay at this hotel when you go to Hawaii. Look at my great pictures.")
 3. This content needs to be seamlessly integrated into the fabric of the site, so that users encounter trusted information from other users as they look for destinations.
 4. A status system will be essential for motivating and rewarding users for sharing their travel experiences.
 5. A means to elevate users with travel expertise to Trusted Guides and ranking those guides based on feedback from other users.
 - a. Also allowing users to directly interact with Guides by asking them public questions related to their travel expertise.
- iv. Promotional Cycles
1. There are 13 promotional cycles each year with specific on-air programming and associated package offers that begin and end with each cycle.
 2. During each cycle, the destinations and offers must be highlighted on the home page and cross-promoted on other high-traffic areas.
 3. These special promotions must also appear in all lists (e.g. most popular) and search results during the cycle.
 4. The CMS used to program the site must account for these programming cycles.
- v. Booking Travel
- Voyages will use a white-label booking service provided by Mark Travel. Site architecture must integrate with this service. Mark provides this type of service as its business, so APIs for integration exist.
- vi. Registration and subscription
- Site must include some light barrier (free registration and possibly a low-cost subscription TBD) to qualify users into a higher tier of service, personalization and participation.
- g. Distribution Network**
- Voyages will be cutting distribution deals to put Voyages content (specifically video) on partner sites either as an embedded video or video files delivered directly to the site for custom integration. The underlying architecture must support a distribution platform.
- h. Launch Strategy**
- Voyages will have deep content only in certain geographies at launch, so while the site must be global, the architecture must support moving users to those areas where content is deep.

i. International Expansion

Voyages expects to launch additional country-specific versions of these web services in the future leveraging this platform in whole or part. It is likely that Voyages will have different partners in different markets (e.g. travel booking), so technology should be designed to provide abstraction interfaces for partner ASP integration where practically possible.

5. Market Landscape

This list represents both competitors and potential partners.

- a. **Big Travel companies** (Expedia, Orbitz, Travelocity, Hotels.com, etc.)
- b. **Niche players in high end of market**
 - i. Andrew Harper’s Hideaway Report (www.hideawayreport.com)
- c. **New breed “Web 2.0” Applications**
 - i. www.triptv.com
 - ii. www.travelistic.com
 - iii. www.zoomandgo.com
- d. **Travel video competitors**
 - i. Travel Channel
 - ii. Weather Channel (future programming plans include travel video)
 - iii. National Geo
 - iv. Fine Living
- e. **Sites currently offering luxury travel content and transactions**
 - i. ForbesTraveler.com
 - ii. LuxuryLink.com
 - iii. LuxuryTravel.com
- f. **Travel Social Networks**
 - i. http://www.gusto.com/
 - ii. http://tripup.com/
 - iii. http://citytherapy.com/pages/index.php
 - iv. http://realtravel.com/
 - v. http://wikitravel.org/en/Main_Page
 - vi. http://www.mytripbook.com/
 - vii. http://www.bootsnall.com/
 - viii. http://triptie.com/
 - ix. http://www.virtualtourist.com/
 - x. http://www.wayn.com/
 - xi. http://www.world66.com/
- g. **Luxury Blogs including travel**
 - i. Gadling
 - ii. Luxist

6. Description of Work

This is a high level list of the functional requirements for the Voyages web site. It is a complete account of everything expected for the initial launch of the site, as well as a roadmap for post-launch development. The scope of the project includes all launch features and a platform on which we can add features and publish to other platforms in the future.

a. Breakdown of Work

Definition	Work with Voyages team to flesh out the functional requirements for the launch feature site.
Scheduling	Schedule launch and iterative releases to fill out product path described below.
UI & Information Architecture	Create front end user experience utilizing existing brand attributes and style guide.

	SEO and web referral landing page testing and tracking will be required and should be part of your development process.
Technical Development	All development work not carried out by third party providers.
Integration	Integration with third party providers, specifically, integration with Mark Travel (www.marktravel.com) who will be providing the booking engine and integration with a video infrastructure provider. Site will also need to integrate with selected advertising platforms – Google AdSense plus display and video ad platforms.
Video Infrastructure	Voyages plans to utilize a third party video infrastructure provider which will need to be integrated into the site. Recommendations for vendors are welcome. Requirements are listed below.
Site Infrastructure	Operating System, Server, Monitoring, Database, Hosting, CDN, CMS, Analytic Tools. It is expected that you will provide a complete set-up to launch service, which may include a complement of web services and providers which deliver on specified scaling and QOS objectives. These should be accounted for in bid.
Support & Maintenance	Ongoing technical support and operational maintenance for up to 2 years following the launch of the site.

b. Detailed Documents

i. **User Stories (attachment)**

The attached user stories are meant to illustrate the ways we envision users entering, interacting with, and exiting the site. They are not meant to be exhaustive and the details contained in each are likely to be altered during the development process.

ii. **Vision Comps (attachment)**

The attached vision comps are meant to be discussion documents and do not represent actual design or layout. These should give you a visual reference point for how we are thinking about the site and be a point-of-departure for your own UI efforts.

iii. **Site Diagram (attachment)**

The attached flowchart shows all the sections of the website but not every individual page.

c. Feature Set

Component	Feature	Description
Current Feature Set		
User Account	Registration/Log-in	Standard simple registration with email confirmation and a password retrieval system. Log-in should be in-line

		wherever it occurs on site.
User Account	My Account	Area where user can administer all of their account information, set communication preferences, choose destinations, interests, and activities that they are interested in.
Discovery Tools	Vacation Finder	As shown on the Vision Comps as the Quick Resort & Spa Finder, a quick and multi-parameter way for users to find available vacations based on a combination of destinations, interests, activities, and price range.
Discovery Tools	Search	Global site search of both text content and video metadata must return results broken down by Destination, Interest, and Activity, as well as Google Ad Sense Sponsored Results.
Discovery Tools	Related Video List	Each video detail page will have a dynamically generated list of additional videos to watch, very similar to YouTube.
Video Tools	Video Player Integration	Integration of a 3 rd Party video platform which will include embedding the player in the page.
Travel Tools	Google Maps	Integration of Google Maps into Destinations to give users the geographical information they need to make their travel decisions.
Sharing Tools	My Voyages	Area where users can view their own and make public their trips and uploaded media for those trips.
Sharing Tools	Upload Tool	Ability to upload video (which will need to be transcoded by Video Platform) and photos to My Voyages. Tags and Category selection will determine where media is integrated into rest of site.
Sharing Tools	Photo Service Integration	Allow users to add photos from 3 rd party video sites. Video could be included in the user's My Voyages area and/or attached to any destination. System must allow for staff preview and approval before posting. Start with Flickr and add other services incrementally.
Sharing Tools	Video Service Integration	Allow users to add video from 3 rd party video sites. Video could be included in the user's My Voyages area and/or attached to any destination. System must allow for staff preview and approval before posting. Start with YouTube and add other services incrementally.
Personal Tools	Trip Log	Allow users to create a log of their trip, even while on their trip, including text,

		photos, video, and comments from other users. Can be either public or private.
Personal Tools	Trip Planner	Allow users to save itineraries (before making final purchase) as they are planning their vacations for subsequent retrieval and sharing with others (who might be part of their travel party).
Personal Tools	Favorites (Save to Favorites)	Allow users to maintain a list of favorite destinations (and videos) and have the save functionality attached to all videos on the site.
Content	Top 10 Lists and other Editorial Content	CMS must allow for creation and management of text articles with accompanying photos and videos that will be tied to destinations, interests, and activities. These lists will act as entry points to destination information for the items in the lists and may be tied to specific promotional periods.
Content	Syndicated Content	CMS must allow for the inclusion of content from other parties delivered both manually and automatically. Specifics of this will depend on the partners and will be developed as those deals are pursued and closed.
Content	Photo Albums	CMS must allow the creation of photo albums relating to any destination and the interface must have a means for flipping through photos (slideshow and manual) and enlarging them.
Content	Most “xyz” Lists	As shown on various pages in the Vision Comps, lists of most popular, most booked, and most recent across a variety of content segments. These will be automatically generated based on established criteria.
Booking Tools	Add Additional Activities	After a user books travel, they will be able to add additional activities (e.g. tours) supplied by 3 rd party web service.
Booking Tools	Integration with Mark Travel	Each destination must include link to book the package(s) associated with that destination. The actual booking will take place using Mark Travel’s white-labeled engine.
Communication Tools	Newsletters	Voyages will communicate with its users via rich HTML newsletters. We wish to send personalized newsletters with an automated system that assembles content blocks based on express interests.
Sharing Tools	User Comments	Allow users to add comments in the context of sharing their own travel

		experiences about any specific destination.
Sharing Tools	User Ratings	Allow users to assign a 5-point rating system (symbol TBD) to any destination. Use this information to create ordered lists of destinations in site.
Distribution Tools	Embed Codes	Each video will have an associated embed code displayed, similar to YouTube. Tracking requirements for Embedded video TBD.
Distribution Tools	Email to Friend	Allow users to send links to specific video(s) to their friends with personal messages. In later iterations this may include the ability to upload their own address book.
Distribution Tools	RSS	Where appropriate, RSS feeds must be available, most likely attached to Top 10 lists, Most "xyz" lists, and broader destinations. An index page must also be created listing all available RSS feeds.
Distribution Tools	External Application Integration	Allow users to Digg content, and add to Delicious. Other application recommendations are welcome.
Architecture	Site Versioning for Co-Branding	All aspects of the site back-end must support future multiple co-branded versions of the site. This includes publishing and analytics.
Architecture	Internationalization	All aspects of the publishing of the site must support future non-US localization. Your bid should include some detail as to how you would accomplish this and what (if any) affect it will have on the schedule.
Architecture	SEO	Every page must be optimized for high inclusion on Google when users search for destinations, interests, or activities for which there is content on Voyages. A tool must be available to edit the metadata on any page or set of pages to improve SEO.
Advertising	Video Ads	The site must also support video ad serving and tracking. It is our intention to use a third-party hosted ad serving solution, so we require the ability to insert and modify ad tags that will call to the hosted system.
Advertising	In-Page Ads	The site will contain standard IAB ads and the design and UI must account for those units (exact specifications to be determined during design phase).

Advertising	Google Ad-Sense	Integrated where appropriate throughout site.
Tools	Analytics	Analyzing the traffic to the site will be a critical business function. We require a robust reporting system that will enable us to dissect traffic patterns so we know which content is working and how the site is working overall. It is our intention to use a third-party traffic analysis system. We must be able to insert tags to send such a system the required "events" for tracking. We welcome your recommendations for reporting systems.
Tools	Offer Administration	We require a dashboard through which we can monitor (in as close to real time as possible) the take on offers, and edit offers on video found throughout the distribution network. This system must integrate with the Mark Travel booking engine to provide package inventory control. We will require the ability to A/B test offers to audience segments, get results, and make changes in near real time.
Tools	CMS	A web-based CMS must be built to administer all of the functionality detailed above. This CMS will be used by non-technical Voyages staff and must take into account ease-of-use, work-flow, staging, versioning history, and roll-back functionality.

Product Path (Future) Features		
Voyages Television Integration	Micro-sites for VOD Signature Series	Each Signature show will need its own landing page and entry point into travel content corresponding with specific episodes and the shows' themes overall. (See Voyages Television site for information on all the Signature Series)
User Account	Subscription Level	Create a tiered service, behind which any feature or service can be restricted according to business requirements.
Discovery Tools	Recommendations	Collaborative Filter for generating recommendations based on user behavior and usage.
Personal Tools	Design My Own Dream Package	An application that allows users to assemble any vacation they wish. Voyages would then create a custom package that matches a user's wishes.

Personal Tools	Make My Own Video	The capability for users to mash-up their uploaded video, other users uploaded video, and Voyages video into new video works that can be attached to destinations as additional content.
Personal Tools	Make My Own Tour	Allow users to assemble a playlist of videos and share that list with others in an organized and annotated tour of their own making. Tours will be featured on the site as additional content with travel deals attached where appropriate.
Distribution	Custom RSS	Allow users to assemble custom RSS feeds based on combinations of key words and categories.
Distribution	Face Book Application	Determine best application to build for Face Book platform, and have as much of Voyages application exposed under Face Book as possible.
Distribution	Widget	Allow users to publish their travel log, dream packages, and other personally relevant information on their blog, MySpace page, etc.
Distribution	Affiliate Program	An automated sign-up and tracking tools for an Amazon-like affiliate program where affiliates are compensated for the sales they generate.
Distribution	Co-Branded Site Implementation	Launching of partner co-branded sites that will differ in content selection, look and feel, but will operate in the same way as main site.
Distribution	Internationalization implementation	Based on business requirements, the creation of region specific sites that have culturally appropriate content and regionally specific offers.
Mobile	SMS Alerts	Text messages sent based on explicit subscription to receive messages when packages are available that match a user's preferences.
Mobile	WAP Application	A version of the site—as full as possible—accessible from any phone's WAP browser.
Mobile	Mobile Upload	Allow users to upload to the site from their phones, presumably when they are in a very interesting location and want to share.
Social Networking	Messaging Platform	A full messaging platform which allows users to communicate with their friend network, within their group, and invite others to be friends or in their groups. This platform would also enable users to ask questions of and get responses

		from Trusted Guides as discussed earlier in this document.
Social Networking	Friend Network	The capability to invite and add friends, edit your friends list, and perform other standard social network functions with friends and groups.
Social Networking	Groups	Allow users to create groups, both public and private, in which they can plan travel and/or share experiences.
Travel Tools	Click to Call	Probably offered as a premium service, this would allow users to call a real Voyages agent over the internet.
Video Tools	Download Video	The capability to download video in appropriate format for iPod or other devices.

d. Video Infrastructure Requirements

Your recommendation of provider, if included, should meet these requirements.

i. Format

We prefer to serve Flash 9 video to support wide-spread embedding.

ii. Quality

Video should be delivered at the highest quality possible, while making the wait to load as minimal as possible. Users will have the option to make video full-screen

iii. Encoding

Video exists in digital format, but will need to be transcoded to the appropriate format and resolution. An archive, low compression version should also be stored for future distribution on other platforms. Encoding time should be accounted for in the development plan.

e. Site Infrastructure Requirements

i. Platform

We have no preference for platform as long as it meets the demands of serving the site fast and reliably, can scale as audience grows, and can support the rapid deployment of additional features and applications.

ii. Hosting

We have no preference for host and will choose an appropriate host based on facilities, reliability, scalability, and cost.

iii. CDN

We have no preference for CDN and welcome recommendations.

7. Instructions for Proposal

a. Due Date

Proposals are due no later than Wednesday, August 29.

b. Delivery Instructions

Proposals should be emailed to Frank Voci (frank@voci.com).

c. Proposal Format

Proposals should be delivered in a single Word, PowerPoint, or PDF document.

d. Questions Regarding RFP

Please contact Frank Voci at 323-356-0766 or frank@voci.com for any clarifications.

8. Terms and Conditions

a. Confidentiality

The information contained in this RFP and any communications with VOYAGES TRAVEL or its agents are to be considered strictly confidential and shall be considered proprietary to VOYAGES TRAVEL. This information is not to be shared

with anyone outside of your organization unless VOYAGES TRAVEL provides explicit written or verbal consent.

b. Proposal Expenses

Any costs incurred in preparing and providing a response to this RFP are solely the responsibility of your organization.

c. Staffing Responsibility

If engaged, your organization will assign project personnel that possess the necessary skills to successfully complete the project under the agreed upon terms. The assignments are completely at your organization's discretion. VOYAGES TRAVEL reserves the right to require the removal and/or replacement of personnel who are not meeting expectations or who are detrimental to a positive working relationship.

d. Guarantees and Indemnity

If engaged, your organization will provide a mutually agreed-upon level of guarantee for the efficacy of your work, which will stipulate that the Voyages website and its back-end tools will work as specified.

As an independent contractor, your organization will not be asked to guarantee the business success of the Voyages website.

e. Price Protection

The fee schedule and budget provided in your proposal must be complete and inclusive of all work planned for the scope of the project defined in this RFP. If engaged, you agree to complete the project as described in this RFP on the agreed upon schedule for the agreed upon price. After engagement begins, any changes to the price or schedule must be approved by VOYAGES TRAVEL.

f. Ownership

- i. At the end of the project, VOYAGES TRAVEL will own all software code, graphics, text, and any other elements appearing on or in functional support of the Voyages website.
- ii. Back-ups of all graphics appearing on the Voyages website will be delivered to VOYAGES TRAVEL in their original layered Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator formats on DVD.
- iii. Back-ups of all software code used on the Voyages website and its back-end will be delivered to VOYAGES TRAVEL in an agreed-upon format on DVD.

9. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- a. Your organization's past work, background, references, and quality of your team
- b. The development plan for the project
- c. Your development process
- d. Compatibility with VOYAGES TRAVEL
- e. Pricing

10. RFP Process Timeline

Proposal Due Date	8/29
Meetings/Presentations	Week of 9/3
Final Decision	9/7
Engagement Begins	9/10
Phase 1 Launch	1/7/08

11. Documentation Requirements

a. Technical Documentation

A complete specification for the site including front-end, data models, tools, etc.

b. CMS Instructions

Clear instructions on how to use the content management tools so that Voyages non-technical staff can smoothly go about their day-to-day operation of the web site.

c. Style Guide

Detailed description of design and UI for the site including color scheme, font styles, layouts, photo styling, transitions, navigation elements, and any other conventions used.

12. Ongoing Services

It is our intention to engage the development agency for ongoing technical support and service of the Voyages web site. This service will not include regular operation of the site, which will be handled by Voyages staff. Your proposal should include this cost as a separate line item as indicated in the Deliverables below.

13. Deliverables

All of the following items must be contained in the single document proposal that is delivered.

a. Company Background

A brief overview of your organization's history, management, its specialties, past successes, etc.

b. Project Personnel

- i. Name
- ii. Role
- iii. Years of experience
- iv. Years with your company
- v. Examples of other relevant projects worked on

c. Disclosure of Sub-contractors

If your organization intends to utilize a third party organization to perform any of the tasks associated with any aspect of the work, their names and relevant qualifications must be included as part of the proposal.

d. Potential Conflicts of Interest

Please list any current clients you have in the Travel category. While these may not constitute a conflict, it is important for VOYAGES TRAVEL to be able to make that determination.

e. References

Please provide at least three client references from projects similar in scope and scale. Include contact information and a brief description of the work for each reference.

f. Methodology

- i. Describe your overall work methodology as well as how you would execute this project.
- ii. How do you like to interact with your clients?
- iii. What is your development process?
- iv. What's your testing methodology?

g. Development Plan

- i. Please describe your plan of execution for the project, Include any assumptions and contingencies that you think are necessary.
- ii. Include a release schedule taking into account a January launch of version one with subsequent iterative releases. The January launch must be a robust, highly engaging website.
- iii. Also list any third party products or services you would use or recommend. These may include, CMS, CDN, hosting, application software, platforms, development environments, etc. Please include the costs for such products and services in your bid.

h. Final Deliverables

Please detail what you will deliver at the conclusion of the project. Include a description of all supporting materials you will provide.

i. Development Timeline

Please provide a detailed timeline covering the entire development period. Include milestones, approvals, testing, and launch. For each stage, list deliverables from both your organization and VOYAGES TRAVEL.

j. Detailed Development Budget

Please provide a line item budget detailing costs by component and breaking out personnel costs. Include all direct costs and pass-through costs.

k. Service and support budget

Please provide a line item budget detailing the costs of retaining your organization's service and support for up to two years from launch date.

l. Billing and payment terms

Please indicate the increments in which you will bill and your payment terms.

m. Authorization to bid

Please confirm your authorization to bid on work on behalf of your organization. Include the contact information for an officer of your company should VOYAGES TRAVEL wish to confirm your authorization.