

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

ADVERTISING AGENCY OF RECORD | STRATEGIC MARKETING SERVICES & SUPPORT

ISSUE DATE:	Tuesday, September 15, 2026
ISSUED BY:	Richland-Lexington Airport District 3250 Airport Blvd, Suite 10 West Columbia, SC 29170 www.FlyCAE.com
POINT OF CONTACT:	Kim Crafton, Vice President of Marketing & Air Service Development (K.Crafton@flycae.com)
QUESTION DEADLINE:	Wednesday, September 30, 2026, No later than 5 p.m. EDT Kim Crafton, Vice President of Marketing & Air Service Development (K.Crafton@flycae.com)
RESPONSES ISSUED BY:	Wednesday, October 7, 2026
PROPOSAL DEADLINE:	Monday, October 19, 2026, No later than 5 p.m. EDT. Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format via email to Kim Crafton (K.Crafton@flycae.com)
NOTICE OF AWARD:	Thursday, November 12, 2026
CONTRACT START DATE:	Friday, January 1, 2027

1. INTRODUCTION

The Richland-Lexington Airport District (Columbia Metropolitan Airport/CAE hereafter) is soliciting proposals from qualified marketing, advertising, and/or communications firms to provide comprehensive media planning, media buying, media trafficking, advertising placement, campaign reporting, and strategic marketing support services.

The selected firm will serve as CAE's advertising agency of record for paid media initiatives designed to support passenger growth, brand awareness, community engagement, air service development support and special initiatives associated with the airport's strategic marketing goals.

CAE seeks a firm with demonstrated experience in destination marketing, transportation, aviation, tourism, public sector communications, and integrated media campaign execution.

2. BACKGROUND

[CAE](#) serves the Midlands region of South Carolina by providing commercial air service, cargo operations and general aviation services through its on-campus Fixed Based Operators (FBO). CAE is focused on enhancing their passenger's experience, strengthening its regional awareness, increasing airline and passenger growth initiatives, and further establishing its presence and importance in and for the community.

CAE may also be undergoing brand evolution and future positioning initiatives that will require coordinated strategic communications and advertising support.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The selected firm should provide strategic and tactical marketing services including, but not limited to, the following:

A. Media Planning and Strategy

- Develop annual and campaign-specific (at times airline specific) media strategies
- Recommend target audiences and market segmentation
- Provide budget allocation recommendations



- Identify optimal media channels and placements
- Develop integrated paid media campaigns

B. Media Buying

- Negotiate and place media buys across:
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Streaming/OTT
 - Digital display
 - Paid social
 - Search engine marketing
 - Outdoor advertising
 - Print publications
 - Trade and industry publications
- Secure added value opportunities where possible
- Coordinate co-op opportunities with airlines, tourism partners, or community stakeholders

C. Media Trafficking and Campaign Execution

- Manage ad trafficking and placement schedules
- Coordinate creative asset delivery
- Ensure campaign accuracy and timely deployment
- Monitor campaign performance and optimize as needed

D. Reporting and Analytics

- Provide monthly campaign reporting
- Track KPIs and campaign effectiveness
- Analyze reach, impressions, engagement, conversions, and ROI



- Deliver strategic recommendations for optimization

E. Optional Services

The airport may also request optional support services including:

- Creative development
 - Video production
 - Graphic design
 - Photography
 - Public/Media relations support
 - Crisis communications support
 - Community outreach campaigns
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4. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

Proposers should demonstrate:

- Minimum five (5) years of relevant experience
 - Experience managing media campaigns with annual budgets comparable in scale to the airport's needs
 - Experience with airports, tourism, transportation, government, or public entities preferred
 - Strong digital advertising capabilities
 - Experience with campaign analytics and reporting platforms
 - Ability to provide dedicated account management support
 - Data-driven in approach to continue or adjust campaign plans and channels
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5. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Proposals should include the following sections:

A. Firm Overview



- Company history
- Office location(s)
- Organizational structure
- Primary contact information

B. Relevant Experience

Provide examples of at least three (3) similar engagements, preferably involving:

- Airports
- Tourism destinations
- Public sector entities
- Transportation organizations

C. Proposed Approach

Describe:

- Strategic planning process
- Media buying methodology
- Reporting capabilities
- Optimization practices
- Account management structure

D. Team Structure

Identify:

- Lead account manager
- Key personnel
- Roles and responsibilities
- Relevant experience

E. Fee Structure

Provide:



- Agency fee structure
- Commission structure (if applicable)
- Billing methodology
- Any markups or additional fees
- Optional service pricing

F. References

Provide at least three (3) client references.

6. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Proposals may be evaluated based on:

- Relevant experience and qualifications
- Understanding of the airport's needs
- Quality of proposed approach
- Experience with aviation/public sector clients
- Reporting and analytics capabilities
- Cost competitiveness
- Reference input if applicable

Columbia Metropolitan Airport reserves the right to conduct interviews with short-listed firms.

7. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format by **5 p.m. EDT on Monday, October 19, 2026**, to:

Kim Crafton
K.Crafton@flycae.com



Subject Line:

“RFP – Media Buying and Marketing Services”

Late submissions will not be considered.

8. TERMS AND CONDITIONS

CAE reserves the right to:

- Reject any or all proposals
- Request additional information
- Negotiate with selected proposer(s)
- Cancel or reissue this RFP

All materials submitted become property of CAE.

***Intellectual Property:** CAE will not use any marketing ideas or creative elements submitted as supporting documents by any agency other than those submitted by the winning proposal and firm.

9. INSURANCE AND COMPLIANCE

The selected firm shall maintain appropriate insurance coverage including:

- General liability
- Professional liability
- Workers’ compensation

The selected firm must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local regulations.

10. NON-DISCRIMINATION

CAE encourages participation by all interested entities, groups, solo practitioners, firms and organizations that meet the requirements.



11. QUESTIONS

All questions regarding this RFP must be submitted via email by **Wednesday, September 30, 2026**, to:

Kim Crafton

K.Crafton@flycae.com

