

NATIONAL PROCESSED RASPBERRY COUNCIL
Marketing Committee
Teleconference

March 27, 2014; 11:00 a.m. PDT

Committee Members Participating:

Antonio Dominguez Brad Rader
 Eric Larson Jennifer Ryan
 Hector Lujan Mark Van Mersbergen

Others Participating:

Tom Krugman Tarun Harit
 Tom Skilton Leigh Selby
x = participating o = absent

1. Roll Call; Establish Quorum

Brad called The Conference Call to order at 11:05 a.m. Roll call at that time disclosed a quorum was not present but in the interests of time, Tom K would provide summary reports until a quorum could be established.

With a fourth committee member joining the call at 11:10 a.m., a quorum was established.

2. Approval of January 6, 2014 Minutes

On a motion by Jennifer and seconded by Mark, minutes of the January 6, 2014 Committee conference call were unanimously approved.

3. Request for Proposal (RFP) Reports

Tom K was asked to first report on the RFP to produce a Raspberry Harvest video. Although four vendors had received the RFP, only two had responded with proposals. As the costs were widely disparate, he was unwilling to make a recommendation. Brad concurred, noting that the committee should have at least three alternatives in order to make an informed decision. Mark questioned as to whether there was merit in combining the Harvest Video and Crisis Communications RFP's to effect economies of scale that might result from one agency having both projects. Antonio suggested that the Harvest video was about more than just the harvest, as it should incorporate and reflect a positive image for the industry and its practices.

After further discussion, there was agreement that Tom K should identify additional agencies and re-issue the RFP with the object of filming this summer if at all possible. While there was a desire to have the video to use as part of the social media and trade education programs, it was agreed that it was better to delay the decision to make a better decision. If no additional vendors were to submit a proposal then the project should be tabled until a Public Relations firm is selected this Fall.

Turning to the Crisis Communication Management Plan RFP, Tom K recognized that the five agencies that responded all approached the process in a similar manner but with widely proposed different cost structures. All would assess the industry, identify risks and vulnerabilities, create a communications plan and messages to address these risks and vulnerabilities, and conduct a mock crisis as part of media training. Tom recognized his experience with three of the Agencies (Foodminds, Porter Novelli, and Nuffer, Smith, Tucker), and working through an actual food safety issue with one.

Brad felt it was necessary to look at the bigger picture and not be affected by the sticker shock of the proposals. He was impressed by the food and commodity organization experience represented by the agencies. Mark agreed with the need to have the best program possible and to contract the agency with the best resources able to assist the raspberry industry in the event of a crisis, and that the Plan was an insurance policy. He also noted his preference of contracting with as few different contractors/agencies as possible, for efficiency and coordination. Jennifer concurred with Brad's comments about price and the need for a solid plan. Antonio asked for a clarification of whether the proposals would constitute a one-time budget item or an annual fee. Tom clarified that, unless otherwise specified, the proposed fees would represent a one-time expenditure. There was general agreement from the committee that the Crisis Communication plan should be looked at as part of a larger communications package and the need to have the right partner in the event of a crisis.

With much to consider, no action was taken and the committee asked Tom to contact the agencies which would also be responding to the PR RFP to see if bundling Crisis Communications into that proposal could generate any economies.

As part of this discussion, Tom K was asked to report on the status of the PR Agency RFP. Proposals are due April 11, with most of the Agencies already asking for additional information. Following an evaluation of the first phase responses, Tom K will conduct site visits with Agencies in June followed by conference calls with the marketing committee in September with the top five or six agencies. The top two or three will be invited to attend the Council's November meeting to present their marketing plan.

4. Other Business

Antonio asked about metrics for the Council's website. Leigh stated that she was including metrics in a report to be included in the industry newsletter and would forward that information on to committee members in advance. She noted that on average, viewers were spending over four minutes on the site, meaning that they were reading through it and not using it as a link to other sites, and that the nutrition blogs were generating the most interest.

5. Adjourn

Tom K. noted that he would call an April conference call to discuss next year's programs prior to the scheduled May Council meeting.

There then being no further business before the Committee, on a motion by Mark and seconded by Antonio, the call adjourned at 11:45 a.m.