

April 14, 2010

New Teacher Center

Web Site Redevelopment Initiative

Request for Proposals

Organization Overview

The New Teacher Center is a nationally recognized leader providing teacher induction/beginning teacher support. After a long period of incubation as a unit within the University of California, Santa Cruz, NTC recently separated from UCSC (in 2009) and launched itself as a 501(c)(3) organization. NTC's industry association is the education space.

NTC employs 200 employees. NTC is headquartered in Santa Cruz, CA, with field offices located in Chicago, New York, Wisconsin, and North Carolina.

NTC has operated for 11 years and has an annual current budget of approximately \$18M.

Project Summary/Overview

NTC seeks a comprehensive redesign, redevelopment, and re-launch of its primary web site, located at www.newteachercenter.org.

NTC's existing web site, including its visual design, navigation scheme, codebase, content, etc., is obsolete and does not achieve our organization goals for connecting with and impacting our national clients, funders, and stakeholders.

Therefore, NTC seeks to design and launch an updated web site that will more effectively convey our identity as a national educational nonprofit, including our integrated organizational structure, and enhance and reinforce our brand. This site would also clearly convey NTC's strategic approach and provide examples and insights into our impact in the field.

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Our updated web site will attract visits from members of our target audiences. These users will enjoy an improved user experience due to numerous improvements: an enhanced presentation of content via an engaging user interface, an intuitive navigation design, and streamlined access to information and resources on teacher induction.

The new site will make it easier for users to access and purchase NTC products and services.

NTC has drafted some initial designs for a possible, new site structure; however, NTC explicitly seeks the input and expertise of an experienced web design/development firm to guide the redesign of our site.

RFP Response from Vendors/Potential Contractors

Interested web design/development firms should respond with a formal proposal. Details on submission requirements are included at the end of this document.

Project Details

Project Success

A successful project will result in a highly improved and highly usable new NTC web site that will be met with a favorable response by our staff, clients, and stakeholders. The site will be completed within the timeframe specified, and will conform to all NTC project requirements (design, content, technical, etc.).

Description of Phases of Development

The New Teacher Center has organized its major web site development into 4 phases. Details regarding the scope of work for each phase are provided in the **Technical Summary** section of this RFP. **PLEASE NOTE:** this RFP is only for Phases 1 & 2; a separate RFP will be flown for Phases 3 & 4.

Schedule Requirements

NTC wishes to complete this project in a timely manner, and anticipates a 14-20 week window from project kickoff will be required. The project will include a design/wireframing phase, followed by a development phase. A project timeline, including phases and key milestones, will be finalized with the selected contractor, and will serve as the official project timeline once finalized.

Project Budget

NTC seeks to have this work performed in the most cost-effective manner possible, and anticipates the work can be accomplished within a lower-end, 5-figure budget.

Project Background

NTC Online Properties

NTC's has three web properties:

1. Our main web site at www.newteachercenter.org
2. A professional networking site, NTC's Community of Practice site at <http://community.newteachercenter.org>, developed in Drupal
3. An online learning management system/mentoring space, the NTC Learning Environment at <http://le.newteachercenter.org>, powered by the Sakai open source learning management system platform.

This RFP is concerned with the redevelopment of our main web site, although it must also address articulation with our recently launched Community of Practice site.

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Work performed to date towards designing/redesigning a new web site.

NTC's marketing and web teams have drafted some initial designs for a possible, new site structure. A web developer on staff at NTC has made a series of improvements within the constraints of the current site structure and code-base, improvements that might inform the new site structure, but that may not necessarily be re-usable.

Relationship between new web site and existing branding & marketing strategies

NTC's redeveloped web site will use and reinforce NTC's recently updated branding and marketing strategies. Digital assets used throughout the site will reflect NTC's brand and guide users to appropriate site content. NTC's core messaging, as described in its MarCom plans and Message Map, will inform the presentation of content on the site. A logo and color palette exist.

NTC has developed an organization style guide and library of current digital assets, and will make these available to the selected contractor for use in the project and new site. This does not preclude NTC from requesting the contractor to assist with the design and development of updated and additional digital assets.

NTC is in the process of creating an organization brochure and sales kit. Design elements developed for those pieces will be used in the website. NTC expects the vendor to coordinate, communicate, and collaborate with NTC Marcom staff regarding the use of enterprise assets, especially a current corporate brochure design, to ensure cohesive alignment of design elements

Project Team

The selected web development firm/consultants will work closely with a team of NTC staff members on this web redevelopment initiative.

NTC's staff will project manage this initiative. NTC project team members include:

Project Lead and Primary Contact:

Bruce Andrew Duncan bduncan@newteachercenter.org 831-600-2241

Marketing and Communication Leads

Ann Iverson, NTC MarCom Consultant ann@iversonmarcom.com 650-592-5862

Karen Ackland, NTC Communications, kackland@newteachercenter.org 831-600-2270

Senior Leadership Sponsor and Accountable Decision Maker

Janet Gless, Associate Director, Teacher Induction

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Project Priorities

- A web site that aligns with our strategy and organization
- A web deployment that supports our marketing strategy
- Quality execution (graphics, writing, navigation, etc.)
- Promote a highly satisfactory user experience; encourage regular return visits
- Provide an on-ramp and incentive for users to join our related Community of Practice site
- Accomplish within established timeframe and costs
- Be realized appropriately within our selected technology platform
- Support distributed content creation and be easy to maintain in a current state
- Differentiate our organization from our competition
- Update our image to reflect our organization's savvy and effective use of technology
- Provide a pathway for individual donors to contribute to NTC
- Improve online store and online registration processes

Audience

Our primary target audience is educators and school systems interested in or engaged in the work of teacher induction, i.e., providing intensive focused support to beginning teachers (and school administrators) as they begin their career. Our clients are also interested in teacher development and teacher quality, school administrator development and efficacy, the overall efficacy of education systems that support optimized student learning and achievement, and other related topics.

Important secondary audiences include other education stakeholders (e.g., policy makers, researchers), as well as funders and foundations.

We wish to attract visitors from these target audiences. We especially wish to attract key decision-makers, those that would recommend and or decide on purchasing/engaging NTC's products and services. Our goal for these audience members would be for them to easily and clearly understand the link between our work and our products and services on the quality of beginning teacher development, and as a result of this understanding, decide to purchase relevant products and services from us.

We wish to attract funders and foundations. Our goal for this audience it that they, once informed by representations of our accomplishments as displayed on our site, would be more likely to extend fiscal support to NTC.

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We also wish to draw visitors from the policy and research spheres, who upon viewing our organization and work, might wish to engage with us or reference us in their work which might enhance our ability to achieve our mission, reach, and impact.

Site Design

The appearance of the web site will derive from NTC's branding and enterprise style guidelines. NTC is currently working with a contracted designer on a corporate imaging project. NTC may request that the selected web development vendor contribute design input and develop new digital assets within our style guides, however, NTC may alternately request that the vendor simply process and implement digital assets created by another consultant. Prospective vendor RFP response should respond to this by providing a flexible quote where design work would be included or not.

Any and all design decisions for the new site will be subject to review and approval by NTC's marketing lead.

Site Structure, Navigation, and User Interface

NTC has created initial designs for the potential structure (site architecture) of the new site. NTC expects the vendor will suggest appropriate designs for the site structure, user interface, and navigation scheme of the site that will collectively inform the user experience and determine how content is displayed and engaged by the user.

NTC and the selected vendor will collaboratively iterate the final site structure, navigation scheme, and user interface designs. NTC will provide final approval of these elements before they are actively implemented.

Site Content

NTC's web site will be populated with content determined primarily by our key organization plans, namely our Strategic Plan, our Marketing Plan, including our organization Message Map, and our Communication Plan.

The primary (central) message we wish to convey through the site is:
NTC is a national nonprofit dedicated to improving student learning by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers.

Secondary messages we wish to convey through the site include:

Key benefits of NTC programs and services include:

- Enhanced student achievement
- Accelerated teacher effectiveness

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- Improved teacher retention
- Stronger school communities (improved working conditions, career pathways, communities.)

Content Creation

Content development and editorial oversight for NTC's new web site will be provided by NTC's Editor in Chief, with input from NTC staff. Content for the new site will be created by NTC with content processing and uploading supported by the vendor.

Content Requirements

NTC wishes its new site to contain a range of organization information, including but not limited to the types illustrated in the list below.

- Organization information
 - Overview
 - Mission
 - History
 - Board, funders
 - Organization structure
 - Leadership
 - Staffing and Office locations
 - Contact info
 - Customer base/geographical coverage (where we are working)
- Topical Information
 - Teacher Induction
 - Policy and Research
 - Impact
- News and Features information
 - Timely content related to NTC activities
 - News items and press releases
 - Extended feature stories on compelling topics
 - Events and calendar items
- Products and Services, and Resources information
 - Overview and descriptions of NTC Product and Service offerings
 - NTC catalog/ Product & Service (P&S) detail pages
 - NTC web store
 - Featured products and services
 - Resource repository

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Content Types/Formats

NTC wishes to use a variety of media and digital assets to convey its message and engage users. NTC's existing web site is text-heavy, uninviting, and underutilizes effective imagery and graphics.

The redesigned site must provide support for the deployment of contemporary digital assets to users, including digital images, video clips, motion graphics, text, animation, etc.

Sites We Like (Models)

An example/reference site reflecting a design with which we resonate is the New Teacher Project site found at: www.newteacherproject.com. NTC encourages prospective vendors to review this site to inform their approach to redeveloping our web site.

Technical Summary

NTC wishes to develop its web site using best currently available technology solutions and site development practices.

Technology Platform

NTC has selected the Drupal web content management solution as its platform of choice for developing web sites. NTC expects to develop its new web site using Drupal.

Description of proposed solution, including methodology and approach, technical architecture, and development techniques

NTC expects its new site to conform to Drupal standards. The site will be externally hosted in an industry-standard hosting environment using standardized server software and software stacks. The new site must articulate with NTC's recently launched Community of Practice Site, and with opentaps, NTC's enterprise resource planning solution. It must also be developed in conjunction with NTC's emerging enterprise identity and account management solution.

Phased Implementation

NTC anticipates that 4 distinct phases of development will be required to redesign and launch our new web site, implement enterprise applications, and complete full enterprise integration of our site with these enterprise apps. This RFP seeks a response only to Phases 1 and 2 (described below). Phases 3 and 4 will be advertised via a separate RFP.

Description of Phases and Requirements for each Phase

The following section contains suggested scopes of development/work for each of four sequential phases. **PLEASE NOTE:** this RFP is only for Phases 1 & 2; a separate RFP will be flown for Phases 3 & 4.

Phase 1 – Initial Transition Efforts

- Quick refresh/update to existing web site
- Evaluate transitional web store prospects
- Create Impact page w/Case Studies

Phase 2 – Migration to Drupal, core web site redevelopment and linkage to CoP site

- Rearchitect web site structure
- Redesign navigation scheme and UI
- Consolidate installed Drupal instances and existing databases

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- Recode within Drupal framework; provide functionality for lay users to perform content edits via a plain-language user interface
- Port content to new WCMS; provide support for onscreen display of text and various digital media/assets
- Create appropriate templates for various page types
- Post updated content for news, features and success stories, press releases and article pages
- Incorporate vetted NTC branding and identity elements
- Design “sub-sections” for remote office locations
 - JNTP, WNTP, CNTC, SCSVNTP, NC
- Design and implement organization calendar
- Design and implement maps displaying the distribution of NTC’s activities in the field
- Design and implement a Policy map, with links per state to state-level policy content
- Determine forward-facing direction for NORTI (Network of Researchers on Teacher Induction) sub-site (migrate to NTC Community of Practice site or retire)
- Implement transitional web store (possibly via “Uberstore” Drupal-compatible module or other appropriate solution until full integration and use of opentaps-powered web store); provide initial solution for credit card processing
- Rationalize products and services offerings
- Revised deployment of Resources (between main web site and CoP) and provide file download functionality
- Initial online registration solution (e.g., to replace existing Symposium registration solution)
- Include a “join NTC” section containing employment opportunities
- Potentially include staff contact info and bios
- Include a Contact Us page – key info, sales, media contacts

Phase 3 – Continuing refinements and consolidations

- Reskinning of LE to conform to NTC branding and align with other NTC web sites
- Integration with NTC enterprise Identity and Access Management (IAM) solution
- Articulation with Alfresco enterprise content management (ECM) solution
- Symposium conference site

Phase 4 – Full enterprise integration and functionality

- Full integration with NTC enterprise resource management (ERP) suite (opentaps)
- Web store powered by opentaps

Legacy Systems/Databases in Place

NTC's current web site incorporates a "faux" web store, essentially a CGI-script that generates a printable order form that users complete and mail in. This store needs to be retired and replaced by a contemporary solution.

NTC also currently uses a dedicated MySQL database behind its existing web site. NTC's Community of Practice site currently runs on its own Drupal instance with its own MySQL database.

Ongoing Management, Administration, and Technical Maintenance

Ongoing management of the new site will be performed by members of NTC's Online Development and MarCom teams. Administration and maintenance of the new web site will be distributed between this team, NTC ITS staff and an appropriate array of external consultants, potentially including the developers of the new site. Such administration and maintenance activity would be covered under a separate contract.

Security

There are no "exotic" security issues or requirements for this project; however, NTC expects the site will be developed in a manner that conforms to appropriate security standards and practices.

Site Hosting

Our web site is currently hosted at the Rackspace Cloud, running on virtual servers and the Ubuntu OS. NTC expects to continue this hosting arrangement for the new site.

Project Expectations & Delivery

NTC expects this project be completed in a 16-20 week timeframe. An initial design/wireframing phase would be followed by a production phase.

RFP Response

The New Teacher Center requests that prospective vendors (web development firms/consultants) reply submit a response to this RFP expressing their interest. **RFP responses are due to the New Teacher Center by 5 PM, PDT, Friday April 30, 2010.**

NTC wishes prospective vendors to understand that this redevelopment initiative will be a joint effort between the selected vendor and NTC staff. Generally speaking, NTC staff will provide design elements, create content, participate in iterating the sites design, be available for usability testing, and provide overall project management.

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Prospective vendors responding to this RFP should clearly address their ability to conduct web site design processes, create site prototypes, create and process digital assets, develop within the Drupal framework, work using related web technologies such as JavaScript, and whatever else is required to meet the aforementioned requirements expressed in this document.

Additionally, the RFP response must include the following:

- Company Qualifications (overview regarding company's project experience designing and creating web sites)
- Portfolio of completed projects
- Client references with name, title, and phone number
- An initial cost estimate

Responses should be submitted to one of the following address options:

Print-version RFP

New Teacher Center
Web RFP Response
725 Front Street, Suite 400
Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Attn: Bruce Andrew Duncan

Electronic RFP

Email to bduncan@newteachercenter.org
Subject line should read "Response to NTC Web RFP"

Questions?

Questions regarding this RFP may be directed to Bruce Andrew Duncan via email at bduncan@newteachercenter.org or via phone at 831-600-2241.

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