

**Request for Proposal**

**For**

**Office Products and Furniture**



## **Organizational Background**

The Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM) is a 501(c) (6) not-for-profit, trade association organized for the exclusive interest and concern of small business in Michigan. SBAM was created to provide leadership in the promotion of free enterprise and other common interests of small businesses in Michigan. SBAM's primary mission is to help Michigan small businesses by advocating for small business, bringing business owners together to share knowledge, creating collaboration and partnerships, and delivering group buying power.

## **Membership**

SBAM membership includes over 28,000 businesses. To be a member of SBAM a company must have fewer than 500 employees and be a registered business in Michigan. The typical member tends – upwards of 90% of members having 25 or fewer employees. Our membership comes from across the state and across the spectrum of SIC codes.

## **Do Not Confuse SBAM and SBA**

The Small Business Association of Michigan (SBAM) is a not-for-profit trade association funded by dues dollars and income from several other sources. The Small Business Administration (SBA) is an agency of the federal government. We are not one in the same.

## **SBAM Products and Services – partial list**

- Advocacy/Government Relations relating to issues that impact small business
- Employee Benefits including group health, life and disability, dental and vision insurance, Section 125, health savings account and health reimbursement arrangement administration, COBRA administration, and accident/critical illness insurance
- Consolidated billing and enrollment services for all sponsored group benefit plans
- HCM/payroll
- IT Management and CyberSecurity
- Workers' compensation
- HR and Legal Hotline

For more information on the Small Business Association of Michigan, as well as our products and services, please visit our website at [www.sbam.org](http://www.sbam.org).

## **II. DELIVERABLES**

We are searching for an office supply and office furniture company that will offer our members the best combination of product, price and customer service.

**A. Vendor Profile**

- Provide the name of the proposing organization and its address, telephone and fax number.
- Is your company a subsidiary or affiliate of another company? Please provide full disclosure of any direct or indirect ownership or control. Describe any pending agreements to merge or sell your company.
- What percentage of your business is dedicated to office supply and office furniture sourcing for small businesses?
- Provide your current overall company product/service offering, strategy and positioning in the Michigan marketplace and within your industry as they relate office supply and office furniture.
- Does your business cover the entire state?
- Describe your method and timing of order fulfillment.
- Indicate the number of years your organization has been in business and provide a detailed description of your organization.
- Outline the local management team, tenure and experience.

**Please reply to the following questions, if not answered previously:**

- What is your corporate philosophy toward group purchasing programs?
- Are you currently administering any similar group purchasing programs?
- What is the length of time those programs have been in effect?
- How many employers participate in the programs and the sales volume. Please break this down by:
  - Details by Plan Size
    - Under 25 employees
    - 26 – 50 employees
    - 50 + employees
- What contractual relationships with other associations does your company maintain? Could any be considered as a conflict with SBAM? What solution would you propose to any conflict?

- What would you describe as your core competency (ies)?
- What sets your company apart from your competition?
- Please describe the implementation and account management teams (including the detail of each of their roles) who will be assigned to SBAM. Who will be the point-of-contact for SBAM and what is his/her experience in this role?
- Where is the plan's primary client contact located? How many client accounts does he/she maintain?
- What is the maximum number of client accounts per client representative?
- Do you have local staff available in Michigan? How often can you make a representative available at SBAM's location for planning and review sessions?
- Provide three references for any association with a similar offering. Please also include two references for any association that has discontinued your services within the past two years.
- Please provide the results of any customer service surveying that you have done within the past 2 – 3 years.
- Are there any current or pending litigation or administrative actions against your firm? If yes, please describe them.
- Please provide copies of financial statements for the last three fiscal years (audited statements preferred).

**B. Communications, Pricing, Residuals and Sales reporting**

- Please provide your thoughts on the introduction of this program to SBAM members – what would be included in the roll out?
- Please provide your thoughts on the continued marketing and advertising strategy to keep this program in the forefront of our member thoughts as they buy office products.
- Please provide your thoughts on ongoing marketing in support (financial) of this program. What commitment are you willing to make to market this program to SBAM members?

- Please provide us a list of the top 50 products purchased by small businesses in 2020 and the unit price offered.
- Please provide your thoughts on residual income payable to SBAM from sales to SBAM members.
- Please provide thoughts on current customers that may also be SBAM members. Will they be eligible for this program?
- How will SBAM member sales be tracked and reported?

### **III. QUESTIONS, DEADLINES, ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

We have in place a task force of volunteers and staff who will guide the selection process through the coming months. Our desire is to have selected a vendor and outlined the scope of work involved in the summer of 2021 and a plan ready soon thereafter. So that all proposals may be thoroughly analyzed and selected vendors interviewed, proposals must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on July 23<sup>rd</sup>. Based upon the information provided, SBAM will conduct interviews of selected companies and we reserve the right to reject any proposals that in SBAM's sole discretion do not meet our requirements.

If a potential vendor requests additional information, the information will be provided to all possible vendors. Selection of the finalists and ultimate vendor will be made based on the organization that can significantly serve our member business with a best value program. The selection will not be based solely on financial considerations.

Proposals received after this date and time will not be accepted. Proposals must be submitted via email. SBAM will bear none of the costs incurred by any proposer or potential proposer in their preparation and delivery of the proposal or any future visits to the SBAM offices, if in-person presentations are required.

If you wish to participate in this process, please submit your proposal electronically to:

Scott Lyon, Senior Vice President  
Small Business Association of Michigan  
120 North Washington Square, Suite 1000, Lansing, Michigan 48901  
(517) 492-1232 (office direct)  
(517) 242-1307 (mobile)  
[scott.lyon@SBAM.org](mailto:scott.lyon@SBAM.org)

Questions regarding the RFI should be directed to Scott at the above address.

### **IV. Conclusion and timeline**

**The selection process we have outlined is as follows:**

- Step 1:** Issue RFP
- Step 2:** Identify potential vendors
- Step 3:** Narrow potential vendor list
- Step 4:** Select vendor team
- Step 6:** Negotiate terms, design plans, marketing and distribution
- Step 7:** Launch Plan

We recognize the extended effort and time required in responding effectively to our request for information. With a potential customer pool of over 28,000 members, and over 100,000 prospects, we trust the time and energy your organization commits will prove beneficial. We appreciate your participation. Providing the best value for our membership is our primary concern and what makes the official RFI process important.

In order to obtain the most comprehensive proposal, SBAM staff and members of the SBAM Member Services Committee are able, if required, to sign non-disclosure agreements to protect the confidentiality of your offering.