

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Agenda Request

Date of Meeting: September 2, 2014

Date Submitted: August 19, 2014

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board

From: Robert M. Presnell, County Administrator
Allara Mills Gutcher, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: Approval For The Tourist Development Council To Enter Into A Contract For Marketing Consulting Services With Chisano Marketing Group

Statement of Issue:

This item seeks Board approval for the Tourist Development Council (TDC) to enter into a contract with Chisano Marketing Group for marketing services and authorization for the Chairman to execute the contract when developed.

Background:

The previous marketing agreement, which was held with Legacy Marketing, expired on March 19, 2014. A Request for Qualifications (RFQ 2014-07A) was let on June 23, 2014 pursuant to BOCC procurement policies. Bids were received until 10:00 a.m. on Friday, July 11, 2014 in the Management Services Department. Two bids were received, and were subsequently opened in the County Administrator's conference room. These included proposals from Chisano Marketing Group and Parkway Strategies.

The bids were reviewed, discussed and ranked individually by the evaluation committee which included Matt Thro, Allara Mills Gutcher, Sonya Burns, and Jill Jeglie. This committee subsequently met on July 31, 2014. The cumulative results of the reviewing committee were that Chisano received 88.75 points and Parkway Strategies received 32.75 points. The points assigned were assessed from the evaluation criteria that was extracted from the Request for Qualifications.

It was the recommendation of the committee to have both Parkway Strategies and Chisano make a presentation and be interviewed by the TDC. This presentation/interview was scheduled and occurred on August 18, 2014. At that meeting, the TDC unanimously requested that the BOCC allow them to enter into a contract with Chisano Marketing Group.

Analysis:

In order to promote tourism within Gadsden County, the TDC will retain a marketing firm to market and promote Gadsden County as a tourist destination. It is the desire of the TDC that Chisano Marketing Group utilize resources, market tourism, develop advertising campaigns, and coordinate with the TDC and staff to increase tourism within Gadsden County.

Fiscal Impact:

The Tourist Development Council has budgeted funds in the proposed 2014/15 budget to hire a marketing firm, and has also budgeted to fund selected marketing campaign materials such as print advertising, the mobile application, etc.

Options:

1. Approve the TDC's request to enter into a contract with Chisano Marketing Group and authorize the Chairman to sign the contract once developed.
2. Do not approve the TDC request to enter into contract with Chisano Marketing Group.
3. Board Direction

County Administrator's Recommendation:

Option # 1

Attachment(s):

1. Chisano Marketing Group Proposal

C H I S A N O



RFQ No. 14-07
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RPQ No 14-07



Request for Qualifications for a Marketing Firm
For Tourism Services
The Gadsden County Tourism Development Council
RPQ No. 14-07
Opening Date: Friday June 20, 2014

Chisano Marketing Group, Inc.



Joseph Bouch
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jbouch@chisano.com
www.chisano.com

6/20/14



June 20, 2014

Tourism Development Council
C/O Management Services Department
5B East Jefferson Street
Quincy, Florida 32351

Re: RPQ No. 14-07 – Marketing Services for Tourism

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our response to the Gadsden County Tourism Development Council. We know you have many proposals to consider, and for that reason we have attempted to be short, informative and to the point.

We understand that the county is looking for a marketing communications partner who has experience in the areas of branding, strategic planning, electronic marketing, SEO, social, web, PR and the like. As a 30 year old full-service marketing communications firm our experience is extensive in each of these important areas. Hopefully the information that we outline on the following pages will bear that out and clearly highlight our ability to deliver clear, consistent, effective and timely work in a collaborative and effective manner.

As well, we declare that this RPQ has been written in full by representatives of Chisano Marketing Group, with no collusion of any other person or entity outside the firm.

We look forward to your review of our input. Should you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to contact us day or night, 24/7. To that end, Joseph Bouch will be the sole individual authorized to answer questions during the RPQ process on behalf of Chisano Marketing Group, and can be reached via the information below, or by calling his cell phone: 407-756-3636.

Until then, we look forward to further dialogue with your team.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joe Bouch", is written over the word "Regards,".

Joe Bouch, President – jbouch@chisano.com
Chisano Marketing Group
407-788-7070 ext. 211

999 Douglas Ave • Suite 3325 • Altamonte Springs Florida 32714 • chisano.com

- Hickory River Smokehouse – Corporate and Franchises
- Hickory River Smokehouse BBQ Sauces
- Hotel Plaza Association (Downtown Disney Hotel Properties)
- Holiday Inn Oceanfront at Surfside-Myrtle Beach S.C.
- Naples Beach Hotel & Golf Club
- Newspaper Printing Company, Tampa Florida
- OMNI Financial
- Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village, St. Augustine
- Southwest Florida Economic Development Alliance
- Tech Town – Technology Enterprise Zone in Dayton Ohio

Most of our clients, past and present, would tell you that our success as a firm comes from our ability to adapt and to stay ahead of the game, and that we are the ideal choice for an organization that needs the assets of a larger, full-service agency, but wants one that is flexible enough to provide personal service and high level of collaboration. To this end, the disciplines available to you include:

- Account Management
- Brand Planning
- Copywriting
- Database Management
- E-Marketing
- Graphic Design/Art
- Market Research – Analytics - Tracking
- Media Planning
- Public Relations
- Search Engine Optimization
- Social
- Web/Interactive

As to Chisano Marketing Groups ability to meet the requirements of the RPQ, just imagine any and every field possible. There are so many brands, so many choices, so many claims, so much clutter, that the central challenge for an agency like CMG is to rise above the fray on behalf of its clients.

It's not good enough to be "pretty good" at everything. You have to be the best at something: technology, land development, collaboration, incentives, government, quality of life, entrepreneurial spirit...something. For decades, brands were comfortable with strategies and practices that kept them in the middle of the road – that's where the customers were, so that's what felt safe and secure.

Today, with so much change and uncertainty, so much pressure and innovation, the middle of the road is unacceptable. As we've often heard it said; there's nothing in the middle of the road but yellow stripes and dead armadillos...or companies and brands struggling to stand out from the crowd as they play by the same old rules in a crowded marketplace.

Is Gadsden County the most of anything? That's where Chisano and brand planning comes in. We have a history of specialization in all that is relevant to corporate purpose. For client after client, CMG has been deeply committed to the premise that if you can identify why your company/brand/county/product/service exists and what value it embraces, you have a better than even chance of flourishing in the marketplace. The bottom line is that what you say has to match up with what you do and what the customer wants.

Branding can be complicated...Brands used to be all about finding that one unique product attribute and hammering away at it. Today, however, successful brands have meaningful relationships with their customers that go far beyond a single attribute. The closer you are to your customers, the more relevant your product/brand is likely to be; and there's a better chance that they will choose your destination over another. It's about engaging your audiences and stakeholders alike in ongoing conversations; it's about co-creating...listening...observing...discovering. We believe customers have come to play an increasingly equal, participatory and critical role in the development and ongoing success of a brand.

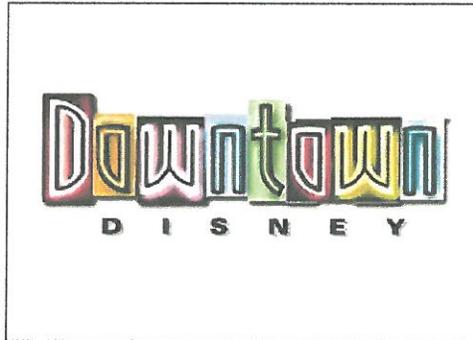
Combined with the deep historical knowledge that stakeholders typically own, collaborative brand building can be a more effective way of discovering unmet or poorly met needs, and ultimately can reveal clear opportunities.

Case Studies

As to our credentials, we have worked on extensive branding and marketing initiatives for a number of clients over the past years that we think are quite relevant to your project.



- The VCB wanted Chisano to develop a strategic campaign/promotion to generate business for the region during the slow autumn/holiday season.
- The goal was to attract leisure travelers from Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando, Atlanta and other drive markets.
- With the allocated budget, Chisano created a promotion that offered consumers a downloadable Getaway Card good for discounts on accommodations, dining, golf and attractions.
- The multi-media campaign included TV, outdoor, print, e-blasts and a unique URL – *MyGetawayCard.com*, a landing page that funneled visitors directly to the VCB's "Specials" page.
- All participating VCB members were asked to create their own Getaway Card offer/incentive.
- At the end of the 4th Quarter promotion, our analytics showed that 26.5% of the visitors to *MyGetawayCard.com* clicked through to the Promotions page, while, 4,600 unique visitors went straight to the Booking button, indicating that they were interested in the offer and wanted to inquire about a purchase.
- If we conservatively estimate that only 20% of the people who went to the Booking home page (26,039 unique visitors) purchased a vacation, and apply that to the average vacation spend of \$1,068 – a number provided by the client – we calculate that the MyGetawayCard promotion generated \$5,561,930 for St. Johns County during the 4th quarter effort.
- That's a very conservative estimate, but it shows an ROI of 11:1.
- The following quarter, Chisano developed a new campaign titled "Romance Lives Here."
- The primary geographic target areas were the Florida drive market – Orlando, Ocala (The Villages), Tampa, Miami - as well as the Tri-state area of Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.
- Results of the campaign were equally impressive.



- Downtown Disney Resort Area Hotels, a consortium of seven hotels with 3,700+ rooms located in the Walt Disney World Resort, wanted to incorporate social media into its marketing strategy.
- Chisano created the group's Facebook and Twitter pages, then – in conjunction with the group's regular offers and updates – sent a series of e-blasts to the client's database with links to the social media sites.
- Daily posts offered vacation tips, fun facts and video clips to engage the audience.
- Within a matter of months, we attracted more than 1,000 fans.
- Once the fan base had been established, the agency recommended a Social Media Promotion to generate bookings for the 7 Downtown Disney Resort Area Hotels.
- Chisano worked with the 7 hotels to come up with individual offers.
- This allowed us to promote savings of “up to 50%.”
- We created urgency by establishing a small window of opportunity – 72 hours – and promoted the offer using multiple mediums:
 - Tweets beginning one week before the sale and increasing in urgency
 - Facebook posts beginning one week before the sale and increasing in urgency
 - Two e-blasts to the client's database
 - Facebook landing page with detailed information about the 72-hour sale and links to the hotels' individual booking engines
 - Special call-to-action/link on the Downtown Disney website
 - Ongoing tweets/posts throughout the 72-hour sale
- How did it work?
 - While the client understood that social media is generally a brand-building environment, and that ROI cannot be the sole barometer of success, the promotion generated 264 room-nights and more than \$22,000 in revenue.
 - As is often the case with successful social media promotions, the buzz continued after the promotion ended, creating demand for a follow-up.
 - The second 72-hour sale generated 488 room-nights and more than \$32,500 in revenue. For just \$4,000, we earned a 13.6 to 1 ROI for the Downtown Disney Resort Area Hotels within a two-month period, while adding 500 new Facebook fans.
- Since this initial test and launch, we have run quarterly social media events; some as successful as the first, and some a bit less, but all impactful delivering on ROI.

ASHEVILLE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

PARTNER INFORMATION



[About the Asheville CVB](#) [Partner Opportunities](#) [Marketing Resources](#) [Tourism Product Development Fund \(TPDF\)](#) [Tourism Research](#)

- The entire branding platform that was developed to put ASHEVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA on the map not only involved an intense focus on the reasons to visit the destination (a very eclectic, non-traditional vacation experience) but more importantly on how the brand could perfectly integrate into the lifestyles of those who would potentially visit.
- We knew that vacationers were showing preference for brands that engaged them on an emotional level, and therefore we set out to create a communications platform that we strongly felt people would CHOOSE TO EXPERIENCE.
- The premise was if you provide your target audience with the kinds of messaging they find stimulating, entertaining, useful, and yes, a bit different than the norm; you will have a greater chance of encouraging them to interact with the Brand on their own terms...on a granular level.
- We also knew that more and more travelers were looking for something different, something UNSCRIPTED in their vacation experience and therefore, the agency set out to develop a communications platform that would truly allow vacationers see Asheville for what it was...to allow them to touch and feel the destination in a way they likely never considered before.
- In its purest sense we wanted to create a campaign that revolved around some eclectic STORYTELLING...little off beat messages that were driven to immerse travelers into the Asheville Brand.
- As such our advertising, web and promotional work revolved around little quirky twists on things consumers were used to:
 - A sign on a door that says “Open Your Minds” rather than “Open”
 - A Stop sign in town that says “Stop and Smell the Coffee”
 - An electronic road crossing sign that says “Don’t Walk” and then turns to “Skip”, rather than “Walk”
 - A street sign that says “Yield to Temptation” rather than “Yield”
 - A road sign out in the country that says “Scenic Make Out Spot”, rather than “Scenic Spot” and our favorite
 - A road sign that says “Llama crossing”
- These particular concepts were used promotionally, in print, in collateral, on the web, and as a television spot set to some very upbeat eclectic original music written and performed by a local Asheville artist.
- We also went off the beaten path with television spots that showed some “baby boomers” at a waterfall spot taking off their clothes and swinging on ropes to the cool waters below, or bikers who actually came flying down the stairwells of the historic Biltmore.

- The overall positioning - come and spend some time in a place where life is UNSCRIPTED, where each day is any way you like it. A Branding effort created to convey the welcoming, natural and vibrant nature of the Asheville area...a place where you can experience enriching, memorable moments. Asheville—unusual, unexpected, unscripted—it's unlike any place on earth.
- Results – Year 1 following launch of the NEW BRAND:
 - Overnight, leisure visitation in Buncombe County accounted for an economic impact of approximately \$1.06 billion, up 19% versus the previous year.
 - Asheville area welcomed approximately 2 million overnight, leisure travelers during the year of the launch – up 27%
 - The Visitor Center of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce welcomed 152,404 visitors to Asheville – up 29%
 - Hotel/motel sales in Buncombe County reached approximately \$124.8 million – up 14%

Some other relevant client work includes:



- Totally re-branded the restaurant in 2013.
- Logo • In-Store • Built 2 new websites (restaurant and franchise) • Advertising • Social
- Marketing Initiatives in Illinois, Ohio and Indiana
- Just Grand Opened the first Florida location in Fort Walton Beach on June 18th.
- Since rebranding the restaurant, share of BBQ market has increased, on average, +11%.
- As well, we have begun a BBQ sauce initiative for Hickory River:
 - Looking to get Hickory River Smokehouse BBQ sauce in stores across the country – the East Coast first.
 - Just completed taste test research in Orlando – 305 taste testings' against the top 4 selling competitors.
 - Had our first meeting with Publix Supermarkets on June 17th.



- New brand established in 2011 after an extensive research initiative.
- Logo • Positioning • Website • Advertising • Social • PR • Direct • E-Marketing
- Since launch, occupancy has gone from 13% to 57%



- New brand established in 2013 – Has not been launched yet.
- Developed Brand Promise • Logo • Positioning • Advertising Concepts • Merchandise Concepts; The Brand is ready to Launch



- New brand established in 2011 – Deep Research/Exploratory (overall summary available).
- Developed Brand Promise • Brand Character • Imagery • Mission • Logo • Positioning.
- Prior to launch, EDC shut down • Joined a regional approach; our next venture.



- New brand established in 2014 - emerged from the Naples-Collier shutdown, and an initial partnership between Collier and Lee Counties.
- Used learning from the Naples-Collier/Fort Myers Regional Initiatives that CMG oversaw.
- Developed Name • Logo • Positioning • Website; close to launch.



- New brand established in 2012.
- Much like the Naples-Collier project, after establishing the brand, it was never launched; they joined a regional alliance.
- From extensive strategy sessions we developed • Name • Logo • Vision • Mission • Positioning • Website

Demonstration of Strategic Thinking and Creative Approach

- *What differentiates Gadsden County from other Florida destinations?*

Florida, with more than 95 million visitors every single year, is one of the largest and most lucrative tourist sectors in the world. With its' sandy beaches, beautiful weather, and incredible tourist attractions, it is no wonder that so many people dream their entire lives about visiting Florida. However, many people neglect to realize that Florida still offers many great tourism experiences outside of the major "attraction" destinations.

Gadsden County represents a prime example of another first-class experience Florida provides other than the normal Disney World and Beach getaways. Your county is the only location in Florida that offers your rare combination of outdoor activities and relaxation, all while allowing a peek into the historical towns of Old Florida.

Gadsden's charm and distinctive qualities all stem from its' ability to provide any person with the one of a kind look into life before the glamour of modern America. With beautiful old Victorian style homes, historical landmarks, hunting, incredible sightseeing, and prime fishing grounds, your county can provide a perspective not often seen by Florida tourists.

While most "historical landmarks" have gone "Hollywood", Gadsden's historical sights still come with the great stories (Tobacco Farms, Coke Millionaires) and the old school pastimes (hunting, fishing, sightseeing) of our ancestors. Differentiating from other Florida destinations built on the beach and modern technology, you provide an experience to get away from society's rat race.

Gadsden is able to give visitors outdoor fun and a relaxing experience, while invoking the passion of our history.

- *What do you see as Gadsden County's strengths and assets that could be leveraged?*

Gadsden's main strengths and assets are totally tied to the experience that the county can provide unlike anywhere else in Florida.

You still offer the warm weather that makes Florida a standout destination, but with a differentiable experience that still appeals to a large demographic of travelers. The main strengths that differentiate and therefore electrify Gadsden's brand are its' outdoor activities, historical aura, and prime location for big events.

With recent spending in adventure travel of \$345 billion, taking trips with a connection to nature is an increasingly appealing vacation to tourists. Gadsden's strength is in its' ability to provide a memorable outdoor experience for every member of a family. Gadsden's Joe Budd Wildlife Management Area would be a great sell to anyone seeking a beautiful hike, relaxing bike ride, or during certain times of the year, perfect hunting ground. Lake Talquin,

on the other hand, would be the perfect visit for anyone seeking the type of trip involving canoeing, sailing, and sightseeing in an environment known for Bald Eagles, Osprey, Deer, and Wild Turkeys. Outdoor vacations typically cater to either one person's desires, or they simply don't offer enough fun for an entire trip. With your landscape, you can provide a great vacation for the hunter, sightseer, or simple outdoorsmen, no matter the age.

Aside from those looking for an all-around great outdoor experience, many people will also love to vacation in a place that has a strong tie to the old days in America. With continuing advancement of technology and the constant connectedness of social media, many people want to take a step back to when times were simpler. Society has evolved so drastically over the past 100 years that many people have no grasp on what life was like before TV and computers. Gadsden's unique old-style towns, historical landmarks, and former tobacco farms give people that oh-so sought after blast to the past. That authentic historical aura is an asset that so many people seek when looking for a getaway from their daily lives. In your county they can be taken away from their current worries and deadlines to relax and learn about the days of old.

The last huge asset your county possesses which we believe could funnel in large amounts of tourist dollars is its' location relative to Tallahassee and Panama City. With Festivals and Field concerts becoming increasingly popular among the college demographic, there is no denying the potential financial impact they can have on a local economy. From the Gasparilla Pirate Festival, to EDM concerts and the Luke Bryan Farm Tour, festivals celebrating history and concert events in fields can benefit the local economy by tens of millions. With a location directly next to FSU and FAMU, and a 1-2 hour drive from spring break capital Panama City, Gadsden would be the perfect place for any festival or concert event targeted at college students. Not only is your location optimal, but the farmland, legendary stories, and historical aura surrounding Gadsden make it a prime location for multiple huge college events every year.

- *What is your recommended brand-positioning platform against which all marketing communications efforts can be measured to ensure it is on target and reinforcing the brand?*

Certainly a dangerous question in an RFP – to ask an agency, with no dialogue with the client, to say from the outside looking in, here is what you should be. Developing a dynamic brand position should never work that way. But answering the question, we must.

The basic brand platform behind Gadsden must be one that is able to identify with the positives of Florida tourism, while establishing a differentiable brand from every other vacation destination. Florida tourism, as a whole, is a resource that cannot be overlooked when establishing this brand. In the minds of consumers, Florida is one of the most premier destinations to visit for a world-class vacation. By identifying yourselves with Florida tourism as a whole, travelers will already have a positive mindset and possibly personally identify with your brand, before ever knowing what Gadsden has to offer.

The other half of your platform is what will be difficult to establish, because it will require some consumer education for full understanding of the Gadsden brand. So, assuming consumers will already have a positive feeling toward Gadsden, due to its association with Florida in general, you must differentiate your brand from the other in-state destinations.

Obviously, we have already highlighted the strengths and differentiable qualities your county offers, but the consumer will not know these qualities...not yet, anyway. You must break down the core essence of your county and identify the target market that will be attracted to that essence.

Once the core demographic consumer is identified, research must be done to establish the best medium for consumer education.

And after the target groups have been educated, they will come to know that...

***Gadsden County, Florida is an American Original
A step into America's past, and present
Where visitors can experience a world steeped in
History, nature, and the great outdoors
As well as events, concerts, festivals and more
In the beautiful warm Florida sunshine.***

- *How would you creatively express the brand?*

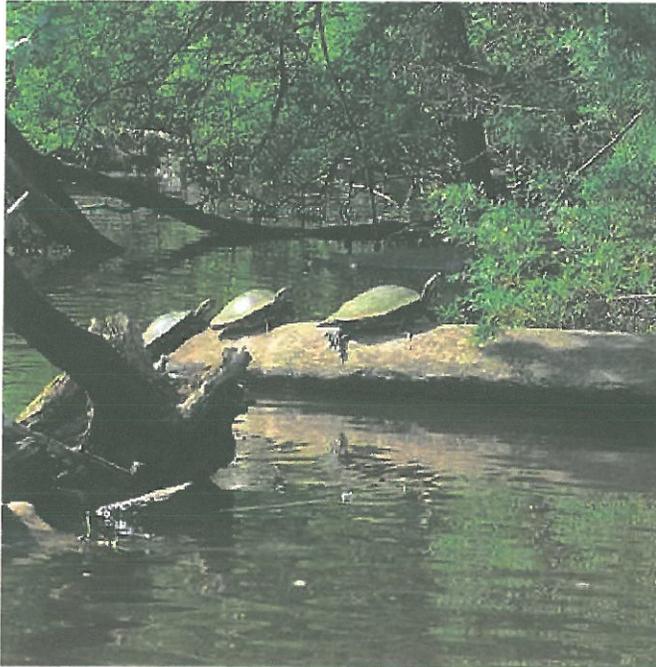
Once the brand and a marketing plan are established, the creative work will be put in place to support the core message behind Gadsden County Tourism.

From a 10,000 foot view, we would like to build the creative around **DO SOMETHING ORIGINAL...**and put those words into a stamp...sort of a "cattle" brand.



Using this as the thematic touch point, we would bring to life all that is Gadsden County - from the outdoorsmen attractions mentioned earlier in this document, to the stories surrounding the tobacco farms, the haunted Leaf Theatre, and the riches in Gadsden from

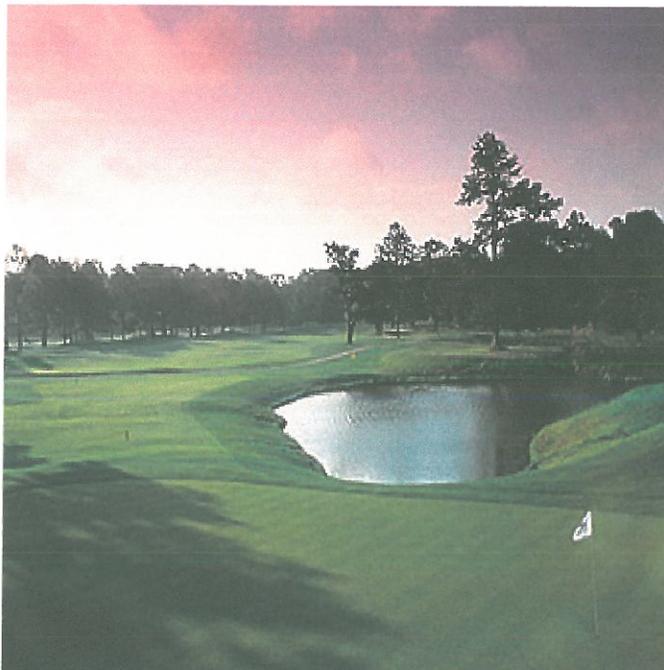
investing in Coca Cola; all these stories can be presented creatively to cement and energize the brand.



YOU WON'T FIND
THIS KIND OF CHARACTER AT
ANY THEME PARK.

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COURSES, YOU'D BETTER
BRING YOUR BEST GAME.
AND EXTRA BALLS.

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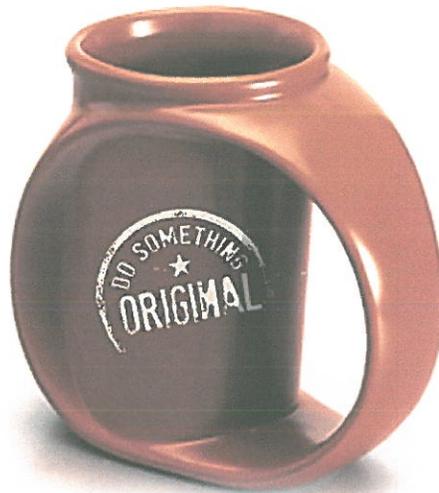
THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING
NEW TO DISCOVER HERE.



THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING
NEW TO DISCOVER HERE.

→ LIKE EACH OTHER. ←

Gadsden
COUNTY, FL



- *Why are you interested in partnering with the Gadsden County Tourist Development Council?*

Because it is what we do...it is what we live for.

Listen, as strangely as this may sound, it is easy to market destinations like Orlando, New York, Vegas, etc., with the big massive budgets. It is much harder to brand and market a destination that is off-the-beaten-path, with small budgets and fewer communication opportunities.

Such a challenge is always unique; and when you succeed, it is much more gratifying that the big account.

CLOSING NOTE

Our success comes from marketing. That means many other agencies can do what we do...if they develop the same skills and the same determination that we have at Chisano Marketing Group.

We use no specialized materials that are in short supply. We don't have massive production and editing studios that would be hard to duplicate. We don't possess any proprietary technology. Our business doesn't depend on the amount of money Congress votes for defense or housing starts or oil imported from unfriendly countries.

It's all up to us...our own initiative, creativity, hard work.

If we pinch one of our clients businesses, we expect to see something jump. In other words, nothing happens in our business automatically. Unless we do something every day to create interest on behalf of our clients, we're out of business by nightfall. In a sense we live day to day by our wits, by our creativity, by our energy, by our determination. We have to re-create ourselves, and our business, every day, every month, and every year!

It gives us one heck of a sense of urgency.

We look forward to the opportunity of putting our heart and soul into the Gadsden County Tourist Development Council account.

Joseph Bouch
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