Your Company Name

Request for Information

Date

Revision History

Date	Version	Author	Change

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Note: Text displayed in blue italics is included to provide guidance to the author and should be deleted before publishing the document. In any table, select and delete any blue line text; then click Home→Styles and select "Table Text" to restore the cells to the default value.

1   Introduction and Purpose

Describe the purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) and provide sufficient information to ensure that vendors fully understand what is being provided to them and what is expected of them.

- *An RFI is used to request information from a vendor for use in selecting vendors for further consideration.*
- *The RFI should concentrate on the criteria (e.g., vendor viability, core product functionality, strategic alignment, etc.) to make a vendor final choice.*
- *The RFI is generally used with a small to medium-sized group (e.g. 3-6) of vendors after an initial review of a larger group of vendors but before issuance of a Request for Proposal to the small group of vendor finalists (3-4 vendors).*

The following is an example of an Introduction.

The purpose of this Request for Information (RFI) is to solicit information from qualified vendors on the products and services they recommend.

<Give a brief description of the business problem you are seeking to address or the functionality you are seeking to understand>.

Specific objectives of the RFI process include the following:

2   RFI Information

2.1   Confidentiality Information

Statements concerning the confidentiality of the information provided should be included in the RFI. The following is a Statement of Confidentiality example. This wording should be confirmed with your project's Legal Department representatives prior to issuance of the RFI. Please note that this Statement of Confidentiality does not eliminate the need for execution of a standard Confidentiality Agreement with the vendors.

This RFI contains confidential and proprietary information of <Company Names>. Vendors agree that they will not duplicate, distribute, or otherwise disseminate or make available this document or the information contained herein without the express written consent of <Company Name>. The vendor may make this document available to employees who have a need to know its contents to participate in the preparation of the response.

Vendors shall not include or reference this RFI in any forum without prior written consent of <Company Name>. The vendor may not use the name or trademarks of <Company Name> in any communication, memorandum, advertisement, or press release without the prior written consent of <Company Name> management. Violation of this confidentiality request could lead to legal action.

2.2   RFI Process Stipulations

General statements concerning the terms of negotiation should be included in the RFI. The following is an example of Terms of the RFI Process. Confirm wording with your with Legal Department representatives prior to issuance of the RFI.

This RFI is not an offer to enter into an agreement with any vendor. It is a request to receive information from vendors. <Company Name> reserves the right to reject all responses, in whole or in part, and/or to enter into negotiations with any party. <Company Name> reserves the right to select and negotiate with those vendors who, in its sole discretion, it deems qualified to provide the subject services, and to terminate the RFI process or any future negotiations at any time without incurring any liability. <Company Name> also reserves the right to reject any and all quotations or prices submitted and to change the calendar of events, as we deem necessary.

<Company Name> is not liable for any costs incurred by the vendor prior to execution of a binding contract. Vendors will assume all costs incurred to prepare a response to the RFI and to make any required or requested vendor presentations.

All materials received with the vendor response are the property of <Company Name> and will not be returned. If vendors submit confidential or proprietary information, any limits on use or distribution of that material should be clearly stated.

<Company Name> makes no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy or completeness of the information contained in the RFI and shall have no liability with respect thereto. Vendors are responsible for making their own evaluation of the information and data contained in the RFI and in preparing and submitting their response.

2.3 RFI Schedule

Only provide dates that are firm. The following is an example of a RFI Schedule, which should include specific dates when responses are due.

Activity	Date
<Company Name> issues the RFI electronically.	*<Month day, year>*
Deadline for vendor submission of questions.	*<time> <month day, year>*
<Company Name> distributes answers via electronic mail.	*<time> <month day, year>*
Vendors submit an electronic copy of their response via electronic mail to <primary contact> and <secondary contact>.	*<time> <month day, year>*
<Primary contact> and <secondary contact> each receive <N> printed copies of the vendors' responses.	*<time> <month day, year>*
Vendors present their products.	*<month day, year>*

2.4 Vendor Presentation

(Optional Section) –The following is an example of Vendor Presentations information.

Each vendor will have an opportunity to present the functional and technical features of their product(s). The vendor presentations will take place from <start time> to <end time> on <day(s) of week, month(s) day(s), year> at <location>, with attendees representing a broad spectrum of business and/or technical areas within <Company Name>. A representative agenda is:

- *Presentation of Information   <time allotment>*
- *Functional Product Demonstration   <time allotment>*
- *Questions and Answers   <time allotment>*
- *Technical Product Demonstration <time allotment>*
- *Questions and Answers   <time allotment>*
- *Follow-up Questions and Answers   <30 minutes>*
- *Wrap Up   <10 minutes>*

<Company Name's> goal is to fully understand the vendor's organization, product(s), and service(s).

- *Each vendor should come to the meeting with a prepared presentation.*
- *Time spent building demonstration data or setting up scenarios during the allotted presentation time will slow down the meeting and ultimately reflect poorly on the level of preparation.*
- *If the vendor chooses to perform a demonstration of the product, a live system should be used.*

- *The conference room will be available for set up at <time> and includes <conference room facilities. Technical needs must be identified by the vendor in advance of the presentation. <Company Name> may have remote participants via audio-conference; therefore, the vendors should provide electronic copies of any presentation material in advance of the presentation for distribution to the remote sites.*

3 Business Opportunity Overview

3.1 Company Profile

Provide a description of <Company Name>.

3.2 Business Driver

Provide a description why your company is requesting information, i.e., high-level business drivers, e.g.,

- *Automate a specific function.*
- *Time delays in processing.*
- *Increase sales by x%.*

3.3 Business Application Functions and Features

Provide sufficient information concerning the specific business need for the vendors to understand the products, features, or services their response should be based on. This section is optional if the RFI is issued to obtain general company or product information.

Please fill in the following table and use a separate sheet of paper if necessary.

Business Application and Features	
Purpose	
Overview	
Objectives	
Functions	
Features	
Specifications	
Comparison to other competitors	

4   Application-System Environment

Provide a description of <Company Name's> technical environment for the vendors to understand the constraints under which they are presenting information.

System Environment Information	
Application name and version	
Database name and version	
Custom applications built using a variety of tools	
Mainframe and version	
UNIX servers and versions	
Intel-based servers and versions	
Web application server and versions	
Backup and versions	
Monitoring severs and versions	
Remote control and versions	
Anti-virus and versions	
Scheduling and versions	
Security monitoring.	

5 RFI Response Configuration

Provide what deliverables must be included with the vendor responses. This is very important to ensure you are able to easily compare the responses from multiple vendors.

5.1 Response Format

Vendors can include their responses directly into a copy of the original RFI document or can send a separate response document. If a separate document is submitted, a single document should be submitted containing all information. The completeness of the response and our ability to relate the response back to the questions will play a major role in the evaluation of your response.

A generic or boilerplate approach should not be used; rather, the response should demonstrate how the vendor's products and services would address our business opportunities and why and how the vendor is able to successfully partner with <Company Name>.

5.2 Response Content

This RFI is intended to provide vendors with sufficient information to prepare their response. It is the vendor's responsibility to obtain any additional information deemed necessary.

The response should answer all questions and provide information in the context of the business and technical environment presented, e.g.,

- *A logical diagram that depicts the functionality of the solution, e.g., a logical diagram might indicate what component does within the solution.*
- *A physical diagram that depicts all hardware and software components and their interrelations, e.g., a physical diagram depicting Software Component X residing on Hardware Component Y that is physically connected to Hardware Component Z.*
- *List the criteria used in selecting or designing the solution (e.g., industry best practices, experience from previous implementations, constraints in what was known about the environment, etc.), as well as any assumptions that were made.*

6   Vendor Response Information

The RFI should provide the vendors a list of questions or requests for information that will lead to a complete analysis and final selection.

6.1   General Vendor Information

The RFI must include vendor contact information. A primary and secondary contact should be named. The following is an example of Contact Information.

Vendor General Information	
Vendor Name	
Address	
Contact Name(s)	*Primary and secondary names and titles*
Telephone Number	*e.g., for contacts, sales, service, help desk*
Fax Number	
Email Address(es)	
Vendor Role (e.g., product developer, reseller)	
Staff Information	*Number of Staff (e.g., support, IT, help desk)* *Location (e.g., city, state, country)* *Support Hours (e.g., 24 x 7, specific days, hours, level of support)* *Support Location (city, state, country)*
Existing Product Installation Information	*Number of Existing Installations and Users* *Site List (include the following information):* *Names of Major Clients* *Locations and When Installed* *Contact Name(s) and Telephone Number(s)*
Experience	
Vendor Stability	*Enter five-year audited financial figures, which may include the following:* *Profit & Loss, Balance Sheet, and Shareholder's Equity:*

6.2 Vendor Vision and Capability

6.2.1 Company Background

Provide an overview of the company.

Topic	Vendor Response
Company's history, size, and global presence.	
Major locations you sell integration solutions, and how you sell and deliver products in those locations.	
Financial and competitive analysis	
Integration product history and key development milestones.	
Integration product strategy and direction.	
Integration technology vision.	
Number of integration solution installations including: • *Size / scale / geography experience.* • *Growth in customer base.* • *Market share growth.*	

6.2.2 Development Strategy

Provide an overview of your development strategy.

Topic	Vendor Response
Number of developers and dollars (as a percentage of sales) allocated towards research and development.	
Frequency of product releases.	
Frequency of patch releases. • *Are patch releases cumulative?*	
Product release and development plans including both in-progress and future plans and anticipated release dates.	
Is the product release schedule dependent upon the platform?	

6.2.3 Industry Standards

Provide an overview of your industry standards.

Topic	Vendor Response
Policy on industry standard compliance.	
Policy on incorporating web services standards into your products.	
Compliance with the relevant industry standards.	
Compliance with the full	

Topic	Vendor Response
specification of each relevant standard.	
Independent certification to comply with industry standards and interoperability.	

7   Product or Application Technical Information

7.1   Product or Application Technical Functions and Features

Fill in the following table to help explain product or application technical information.

Product or Application Features	
Production Platform	
Processing (e.g., Client/Server, Centralized)	
Back-end Hardware	
Back-end Operating System	
Back-end Software	
Front-end User Interface	
Front-End Hardware	
Front-End Environment (e.g., Windows, UNIX)	
Middleware/ODBC-Compliant	
Data Management (e.g., SQL-based)	
Preferred RDBMS	
Connectivity (e.g., LAN/WAN, SNA, etc.)	
Availability of Future Options	
Workgroup Computing (Yes/No)	
Workflow (Yes/No)	
Data Warehousing (Yes/No)	
Customization / Maintenance	
Design	
Documentation (Yes/No)	
Parameter Driven (Yes/No)	
Update Installations	
User Interface (GUI/Text)	
Security / Control Features (Yes/No)	
Recovery & Control (Yes/No)	
Performance (e.g., Transaction per second)	

Product or Application Features	
Number of users supported	
Development	
Application Development / Maintenance	
Front-End, Back-End, Middleware	
Integrated Development Environment (Yes/No)	
Operating System	
Database Management System (DBMS)	
Utilities / Debugging Tools	
Enabling Tools (e.g., Oracle Developer)	
Message Control (e.g., LINC)	
Platform	
Version Control/Change Management (Yes/No)	
Five-Year Cost (specify on a separate paper)	
Training (s) Provided	

7.2   Hardware Requirements

Fill in the following table to help explain the hardware requirements.

Type	Minimum Requirements	Recommended
Processor		
Client		
Type		
Speed		
Co-processor		
Server		
Type		
Speed		
No. of Parallel Processors		
Memory		

Type	Minimum Requirements	Recommended
Client		
Capacity		
Speed		
Server		
Capacity		
Speed		
Other Peripherals		
Client		
Hard Disk Drive (minimum available to the app.)		
Monitor Type		
Mouse Support		
Ethernet Board		
Server		
Floppy Disk Drive		
Hard Disk Drive (minimum available to the app.)		
Tape Drive		
CD/DVD		
Ethernet Board		
Monitor Type		
Mouse Support		
Printer Support		

7.3   Software Requirements

Fill in the following table to help explain the software requirements.

Software Requirements		
	Minimum Requirement	**Recommended**
Software Installed		
Client		
Operating System		
Windows		
Net Protocol		
MS Products (e.g., ODBC / OLE)		
Host Language		
Server		
Operating System		
X Windows / Windows		
Net Protocol		
Host DB Language		

8   Vendor Pricing Information

Fill in the following table to help explain vendor pricing.

Vendor Pricing		
A	**Vendor Services (including fee structure)**	**Vendor Response**
1.	*Licensing policy and fee structure:* • *Licensing the product: What is the basis for your product pricing (enterprise, concurrent users, total users, number of production instances, etc.)?* • *Licensing and fees assessed on a number of users / site basis depending on number of users and growth.* • *If a component can be purchased individually or as part of a package, both costs should be included.*	
2.	*Software installation costs.*	
3.	*Prior release support (policy on supporting older software).*	
4.	*Upgrade support policy and fee structure:* • *Providing upgrades to software customized by vendor, customer, or a third-party.*	
5.	*Upgrade frequency / version control (e.g., meeting commitment dates for upgrades, documented bugs).*	
6.	*Annual maintenance and support. If different support levels are available, the cost and features of each level should be included.*	

Vendor Pricing	
7.	*Customer support (e.g., type of support, access hours, locations, response time, support for customized software).*	
8.	*Professional Services rates. If different skill levels are available, the cost of each skill level should be included, e.g.,* *Consulting and training (i.e., services to assist installation, customization, training and using the package).*	
B	*Future Releases*	
1.	*Objectives for the package including number of expected future releases.*	
2.	*Key functions / features to be added.*	
3.	*New platforms / technologies to be supported.*	
4.	*Principles / standards to guide future development.*	
5.	*Improvements to existing functions / features.*	

8.1.1 Vendor Support Resources

Provide information about product support resources you offer.

Topic	Vendor Response
Customer support and service: • *Support Structures.* • *Support Service Levels.* • *Escalation Path.*	
Support infrastructure (resources and processes) for resolving problems and restoring	

Topic	Vendor Response
service, including phone, online (web, e-mail, searchable knowledge base), and onsite options.	
Support hours of operation, staffing levels, escalation path, defined severity levels, and service levels by severity.	
Provide measured actual performance for each defined severity by the support organization during the most recent six-month period (i.e., time to resolve 98% of severity 1, 2, and 3 problems).	
Describe remote access needed for support purposes, including the following: • *Details of remote support user levels needed (e.g. root access on servers).* • *Details of protocols used and bandwidth needed for remote support.*	

9 Total Lifecycle Costs

Fill in the following table, which will better explain lifecycle costs.

Total Lifecycle Costs		
A	*Initial Cost*	
	Initial License (depending on # of users)	
B	*Implementation Costs*	
	Configuration	
	Customization	
	Interfacing and Data Conversion	
	Technical Infrastructure Modification	
	Facility Preparation	
	Initial Training	
	Consulting Cost to Fully Implement Package	
C	*Upgrade Costs*	
	Vendor's Fee (plus any required consultant cost)	
	Third-party Vendor (if used)	
	Rolling customized features forward to new release	
	Changes to other systems to accommodate upgrades	
	Additional Training	
D	*Maintenance Costs*	
E	*Enhancement Costs*	
F	*Support Costs*	
	Help Desk	
	Bug Reporting / Fixing	
	Consulting	

10 APPENDIX