



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Selection of Consultants - Expression of Interest for Individual/Freelance Marketing Expert/Consultant for NTC Advertising Project Reference: EOI/NTC/25/50

1. **Background:**

The National Transport Corporation (NTC) is a parastatal bus operator in Mauritius, tasked with providing public transport across the island. In addition to its core transport services, NTC is exploring ways to increase its non-fare revenue by leveraging advertising opportunities on its physical assets (bus fleet, depots, terminals, etc.). Public transport agencies worldwide have successfully generated income by allowing commercial advertisements on buses and at transit facilities. NTC similarly aims to unlock the revenue potential of its assets. With a fleet of approximately 540 buses and 97 routes carrying *±150,000 passengers daily*, and with 6 depots island-wide, NTC offers advertisers a wide reach to the commuting public. To tap into this opportunity, NTC wishes to engage an experienced Marketing Consultant to develop an advertising program, prepare the necessary bidding documents, and guide the implementation. The consultant will ensure that NTC's advertising initiative is well-planned, competitive, and yields maximum revenue while maintaining appropriate content standards.

2. **Objectives of the Assignment:**

The primary objective is to **design a comprehensive advertising strategy** for NTC. The Consultant will act as an expert advisor to NTC's Advertising Project Committee, with key goals including:

- **Identification of Advertising Opportunities:** Examine all NTC assets (buses, interior/exterior, bus stations, depots, etc.) to identify where and how advertising can be placed for optimal impact.
- **Revenue Maximization Strategy:** Develop a strategy and business model that will attract advertisers or advertising agencies, setting out how to maximize NTC's income (through optimal pricing, bundling of ad spaces, appropriate contract structures, etc.).
- **Input for Bid Documentation:** Produce the Terms of Reference, technical specifications for the bid documents to invite proposals from qualified advertising agencies or media firms to implement the advertising program. This includes defining the scope for bidders (e.g. covering various ad formats like wraps, bus-back ads, in-bus digital screens, etc.), as well as contract terms (duration, revenue share or rental fees, maintenance responsibilities, content restrictions, etc.).

- **Support in Evaluation and Award:** Provide expert assistance during the tendering process – from pre-bid meetings/clarifications to bid evaluation – ensuring that NTC selects the most advantageous proposal in a fair and transparent manner. The Consultant will help establish **evaluation criteria** and will serve on the Bid Evaluation Committee to assess bids against those criteria.
- **Implementation Guidance:** After contract award, advise and support NTC in overseeing the initial implementation of advertising by the selected contractor, ensuring that the rollout aligns with the plan and that revenue generation is on track. Transfer knowledge to NTC staff for ongoing management of the advertising program.

3. Scope of Work:

To achieve the above objectives, the Consultant is expected to undertake, **but not limited to**, the following tasks:

1. **Start & Diagnostics:** Conduct meeting with NTC’s team to clarify goals, gather all relevant background information (current use of ad spaces, any past advertising deals, constraints, etc.), and develop a work plan. Review any existing NTC policies or regulations related to advertising.
2. **Site Surveys:** *Visit all NTC depots (6) and major bus terminals*, and inspect a representative sample of buses (of each type in the fleet) to identify available advertising space. Prepare an inventory report detailing potential advertising locations and formats. This should cover: external bus advertising (full or partial wraps, side panels, back of bus), interior advertising (frames, overhead panels, seatbacks, digital infotainment screens if any), depot and station advertising (billboards, wall murals, signage space), and any other innovative channels (e.g. tickets, bus stop shelters if under NTC’s purview). For each category, note approximate dimensions, visibility, and any physical or regulatory limitations.
3. **Market Research & Stakeholder Consultation:** Analyze the current advertising market in Mauritius for out-of-home media. This may include benchmarking rates for bus advertising or similar (if available), and understanding the interest level of potential advertisers or media agencies. Consult stakeholders as needed (e.g. advertising agencies, large advertisers, regulatory bodies for advertising) to gather input on viable approaches. Identify any regulatory approvals required for placing ads on public service vehicles or infrastructure.
4. **Financial Analysis and Revenue Forecasting:** Based on the inventory and market data, estimate the revenue potential for NTC. Develop for revenue from advertising over a given period (e.g. annual projections), taking into account different sales models . Also, estimate any upfront costs NTC might incur – for example, installing advertisement frames on buses or digital display units – and incorporate these into a cost-benefit analysis. This analysis will help NTC set minimum bids or reserve prices if relevant.

5. **Develop Advertising Strategy & Business Model:** Formulate a strategy document outlining how NTC should proceed with monetizing its advertising spaces. Key decisions to address include: whether to appoint a single concessionaire for all NTC advertising vs. multiple vendors (by region or by format), the optimal contract duration for ad agreements, the payment structure (fixed rental vs. revenue share vs. hybrid), and measures to ensure performance (e.g. minimum guaranteed revenue). The strategy should also cover ad content guidelines (ensuring ads are not indecent or politically/religiously sensitive, etc., in line with public standards and any legal requirements). The Consultant should ensure NTC's policy framework for advertising is clearly defined.
6. **Drafting of Specifications for the Tender Document:** Based on the agreed strategy, prepare Terms of Reference for bidders (describing NTC's requirements and expectations), detailed technical specifications for the advertising services (e.g. number of buses to carry ads, allowed formats, maintenance of advertisements, reporting of ad installations, etc.), general and special conditions of contract (covering the revenue arrangement, duration (likely 1-3 years or as decided), renewal options, penalties for violation of content rules, etc.), and templates (for bidders to fill pricing, experience, proposed approach).
7. **Define Evaluation Criteria:** In collaboration with NTC, establish the criteria and scoring system for evaluating the bids. Criteria may include technical soundness of the proposal (e.g. sales approach, network of advertisers, proposed innovations), bidder's experience and capacity (track record in advertising/media, financial strength), and the financial offer (revenue share percentage or rent fee offered to NTC). Each criterion should be weighted to reflect NTC's priorities (with approval from NTC's Procurement Board if required). The Consultant will draft an Evaluation Plan detailing how the committee will score and compare bids in a fair manner.
8. **Industry Engagement (Pre-bid):** If needed, assist NTC in conducting a pre-bid meeting or responding to queries from prospective bidders. The Consultant can help clarify the technical aspects of the TOR to bidders, and prepare any addenda or clarifications to the tender document (ensuring all bidders receive the same information).
9. **Bid Evaluation:** As a member of the Bid Evaluation Committee, the Consultant will evaluate the proposals received, using the pre-established criteria.
10. **Contract Award & Negotiation:** Assist NTC in the finalization of the contract with the winning bidder. This may include refining certain terms, confirming the inventory of ad spaces to be allotted, setting the schedule for deployment, etc. Ensure that the contract documents align with what was stipulated in the tender and the bidder's proposal. If negotiations are needed (for example, to clarify responsibilities or to maximize guaranteed revenue), advise NTC during those discussions.

11. **Monitoring Initial Implementation:** In the early phase of the advertising program (initial months), the Consultant will provide guidance to NTC's team. This includes verifying that the contractor's advertising installations on buses or facilities meet the agreed specifications, schedules, and quality standards. The Consultant should review initial reports from the contractor (e.g. list of buses carrying ads, advertiser deals closed, revenue flow) and advise if any corrective actions are needed to ensure targets are met. The Consultant will help troubleshoot any issues (such as public complaints about content, operational hindrances, etc.) by recommending solutions in line with industry best practices.
 12. **Knowledge Transfer:** Throughout the assignment, and especially towards the end, the Consultant should mentor or train designated NTC staff on managing advertising contracts. This could include setting up simple processes for monitoring contract compliance, invoicing and revenue tracking, and maintaining relationships with advertising partners. The aim is to leave NTC with the capacity to sustain and possibly expand the advertising initiative beyond the Consultant's tenure.
 13. **Reporting:** Prepare periodic progress reports for NTC (e.g. monthly or quarterly updates summarizing activities completed, key findings, and next steps). Also, deliver a final report at the end of the consultancy, summarizing the work done, outcomes achieved (e.g. tender completed, contract signed, revenue expected), and any recommendations for future improvements or expansions of the advertising program.
4. **Deliverables:**
- The Consultant is expected to produce (at minimum) the following deliverables, in English, in both electronic format (Word/Excel/PowerPoint as appropriate) and hard copy:
- **Inception Report** – detailing methodology, work plan, and initial observations (within 2-4 weeks of start).
 - **Advertising Inventory & Opportunity Report** – including results of site surveys, list and description of ad spaces, and preliminary revenue estimates.
 - **Advertising Strategy & Business Plan** – covering the recommended approach, pricing model, contract structure, content policy, and revenue projections for NTC's advertising program.
 - **Terms of Reference for Bid Document** – complete set (TOR for bidders, specs, draft contract, etc.) for NTC's review.
 - **Evaluation Criteria/Plan** – a document outlining how bids will be evaluated (may be part of the tender or internal).
 - **Monthly/Quarterly Progress Reports** – short reports during the implementation phase (only if the assignment extends into overseeing implementation) to update on progress of the advertising rollout and revenue gains.

- **Final Consultancy Report** – at end of the assignment, summarizing all activities, outcomes, lessons learned, and recommendations for NTC going forward.

5. **Duration and Schedule:**

The assignment will span **12 months** from the date of contract commencement. Should project needs require, the contract may be **extended for an additional year** (or portion thereof) under the same terms, to allow the consultant to continue advising on subsequent phases or expanded advertising initiatives. Any extension will be subject to mutual agreement and performance satisfaction.

6. **Institutional Arrangements:**

The Consultant will report to the **General Manager of NTC** or an assigned senior official, and will work under the guidance of the NTC Advertising Project Committee (which may include representatives from NTC's management, finance, operations, etc.). The Consultant is expected to be largely self-driven in executing the work but should coordinate regularly with NTC's team for data, decisions, and validation of outputs. NTC will provide the Consultant with access to relevant information, facilitate contacts with stakeholders, and arrange site visits (including access to depots and buses as needed). Office space and logistical support (e.g. transport for site visits) can be arranged by NTC if required, or the Consultant may work from their own premises with frequent meetings at NTC. Key decisions (such as approval of the advertising strategy or tender specifications) will be made by NTC management, based on options/advice presented by the Consultant.

7. **Consultant's Qualifications and Profile:**

- **Expertise:** The assignment requires a seasoned professional in marketing/advertising. The Consultant must have substantial experience in media planning and advertising sales, ideally in the out-of-home (OOH) advertising sector. Specific experience with transit advertising (buses, public transport) will be a strong advantage, as the nuances of advertising on moving vehicles and in transport hubs differ from static billboards.
- **Educational Qualifications:** A master degree in Marketing, Communication or related field is required. Advanced degrees or professional certifications in advertising/media are a plus.
- **Experience:** A minimum of **5 years (preferably 10+ years)** of progressive experience in roles such as marketing consultant, media planner, advertising account manager, etc. The candidate should demonstrate a track record of crafting or managing successful advertising projects. Experience in **developing revenue models** and conducting financial analysis in the context of marketing initiatives is important. Any prior consultancy for public sector or transport sector clients on similar revenue-generation projects would be highly regarded.