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June 20, 2025

Addendum 3

Request for Proposals # 25-15-212956

Corporate Website Services

This addendum is issued to extend the closing date for this solicitation. Additionally, this addendum is issued is to provide further clarification by answering questions pertaining to this RFP.

Closing Date

The closing date for this RFP **has** changed. **Proposals will be received until July 1, 2025 at 3:00 PM local time (AKDT).**

Clarification on Addendum 2

ARRC's original answers and follow-up questions are in black text and further clarification is in red text.

In response to question 25 on Addendum 2, Alaska Railroad (ARRC) indicated the following information for "Key Functional Capability" of the "Booking Module" portion:

- Rail-Only (current)
- Single-Day Package "Day Tours" (future)
- Motorcoach + Rail combinations (future)
- *Ability to recall Option*/Confirmed bookings
- Apply coupons
- Use CyberSource for payment

Follow-up questions: Regarding recall Option, does ARRC mean from an Admin perspective of from a booking user perspective? If the latter, are vendors designing and developing a full booking user dashboard? Also, would there be a desired way for guests to reference and modify their reservations (i.e., via booking number and last name)?
For the recall option, this is intended to be a customer facing feature. It is an existing feature from the Travel Trade portal. If the booking is in Option status, they can choose to make it Confirmed status (payment must be applied if not on a credit account). ARRC will be implementing the ability to recall a Confirmed booking and choose to change the status to Canceled if they accept the cancellation fees that will be applied. ARRC desires to extend this

functionality to direct customers, but the methodology and/or dashboard feature will need to be determined which will be part of the scope. At present, the ability to modify reservations is out of scope with the exception of changing the status to Confirmed or Canceled.

In response to question 25 on Addendum 2, Alaska Railroad indicated the following information for "Key Functional Capability" of the "Travel Trade Portal" portion:

- Apply payment gross or net of commission based on agent type (current functionality)

Follow-up question: How is this commission and all payment related data managed? Does the commission need to be released manually by a super admin? Do commission rates vary by agent and is this managed at the registration level? Will we need to be migrating Travel Agent/Partner data from an older system into this new portal? Is the credit data stored within CyberSource or elsewhere?
ARRC's reservation system Rail Studio is the primary system of record for all data relating to Travel Trade Partner (TTP) profiles and bookings. Rail Studio APIs can be used to look up the information required for the TTP portal including commission rates/amounts and other data for use in creating self-service features.

Rail Studio has built in features for managing all aspects relating to commissions and payments. Individual TTP profiles are maintained that include their applicable commission rates which do vary. Commission payments are processed for TTP bookings that were paid at gross rates. TTP credit agents are invoiced for payment after their bookings travel so they are not required to apply payments during the booking process. There is no interaction with CyberSource for these TTPs or their bookings.

In response to question 25 on Addendum 2, Alaska Railroad indicated the following information for "Key Functional Capability" of the "Third Party Tools" portion:

- Cookie Consent (current functionality)

Follow-up question: Which specific tool is ARRC using as vendors may need to reset this completely during set up to account for script blocking and policies re-writing based on the new technologies used. Additionally, the Travel Agent Portal will need its own CMP setup.
ARRC is open to suggestions for cookie consent compliance solutions on this new website. Selection and implementation of this is part of the scope.

In response to question 56 on Addendum 2, ARRC indicated the following information: ARRC will provide pen testing for its website.
Follow-up question: Is ARRC able to provide parameters and specifications so that vendors would be able to test on their end throughout last phases of development?
ARRC will provide further guidance to the vendor on the scope of penetration testing (parameters and specifications) when the site(s) are in a state of readiness for this evaluation.

Questions & Answers

About the Project Budget …

1. Is there a budget maximum (not to exceed) or anticipated budget range?
   The anticipated budget range is between $150,000 to $250,000.

2. Vendors have seen similar RFPs with budgets ranging from $100k to well into six figures. Where in that range is ARRC expecting to fall?

Please see previous question.

About the Request for Proposals…

3. Would ARRC consider extending the due date for this solicitation to 7/3/2025?
   The due date for this solicitation was extended by an additional two weeks, and is now being extended to 7/1/2025.

4. Is ARRC okay with a response that includes 2 Phases? Phase 1 being a fixed bid response including discovery, define, and design. And Phase 2 being a TBD for implementation based on the findings in Phase 1?
   If vendors divide the project into phases, it should still be presented as one project and follow the Cost Proposal schedule.

5. The RFP states proposals must be submitted via a Dropbox link by the due date, and also mentions an "original" hard copy with signatures to be delivered. Can ARRC confirm that offerors are required to submit both an electronic copy (through Dropbox) and a physical hard copy? If so, does the hard copy also need to arrive by the deadline, and are there any specific labeling or packaging instructions for it (besides addressing it to Supply Management at the given address)?
   Offerors are required to submit the electronic copy (through DropBox) and a physical/hard copy. The electronic copy needs to be submitted by the deadline; the physical copy can arrive later. The hard copy should be addressed to:

   Alaska Railroad Corporation
   Supply Management
   Attn: Sazil Say
   327 W. Ship Creek Avenue
   Anchorage, Alaska 99501

   Within the package a sealed proposal should be labeling with the Request for Proposal number and title for easy identification. The Cover Letter and Technical Proposal can be in one sealed envelope and the Cost Proposal should be in a separate sealed envelope. Please indicate on the envelope if it is the Technical Proposal or Cost Proposal.

6. Regarding the electronic submission: Should the Technical Proposal and Cost Proposal be uploaded as separate files to the Dropbox (to maintain the "separate sealed envelope" requirement for cost)? If yes, is there a preferred file naming convention for each – for example, "FirmName-RFP#-Tech" and "FirmName-RFP#-Cost"? Please clarify how offerors should name and organize their files for the Dropbox submission.
   Yes, the Technical Proposal (includes the Cover Letter) and Cost Proposal should be uploaded as separate files. For easy identification, please name the files accordingly; Technical Proposal file name: "Firm_Name-RFP-25-15-212956-Corp_Website_Serv" and Cost Proposal file name: "Firm_Name-Cost_Proposal-RFP-25-15-212956-Corp_Website_Serv". Alternatively, please see the response to the below question.

7. The instructions mention a specific file naming convention "Firm Name - RFP# - RFP Name". If an offeror is submitting multiple files (e.g., technical proposal, cost proposal,

and any forms), should they use this convention for the overall submission (perhaps as a folder or zip name) or include the RFP number and name in each file name?
A folder or zip file can be submitted through DropBox with the instructed file name: “Firm_Name-RFP-25-15-212956-Corp_Website_serv”. Within the folder or zip file the files can simply be named Cover Letter, Technical Proposal, Cost Proposal, Bidder’s Questionnaire, etc. (e.g.; other required forms or documentation).

8. The RFP lists minimum qualifications (e.g., the offeror must be licensed in Alaska and have at least five years of relevant experience). Is an Alaska business license required at the time of proposal submission, or is it sufficient to obtain one prior to contract award?
   If an offeror is requesting Alaska Bidder’s preference an Alaska Business License is required at the time of proposal submission. If an offeror is not requesting the preference but is awarded the contract, the Alaska Business License needs to be obtained prior to contract award.

9. Apart from the cover letter and required forms, is there any other content that offerors are allowed to include as appendices or attachments (e.g., detailed resumes, project plan, diagrams) beyond the 30-page narrative? If so, will such attachments be evaluated, or should all critical content be confined to the 30-page limit to ensure it is considered?
   If marketing brochures, diagrams, and other nonessential materials are submitted it should be specific and directly relate to the project Scope of Service. It would be included as part of the not to exceed 30 pages. Additional material will still be evaluated based on the REVISED Evaluation Criteria (Section D) from Addendum 1.

10. Knowing the Contractor’s Responsibility Questionnaire (Section F) must be completed, notarized, and submitted with the proposal, does the electronic (scanned) version acceptable for the proposal submission? Since offerors are also providing a hard copy, should that hard copy include the original notarized form (or can it be a copy as well, with the original retained for records)?
    Both versions of the Contractor’s Responsibility Questionnaire should be notarized. The hard copy should be the originally signed/notarized version.

11. The Service Bid Form references an accompanying “proposal guarantee, if any,” and contract execution timeline. Can ARRC confirm that no bid bond or proposal guarantee is required for this solicitation? Likewise, is no performance bond required of the winning contractor – just the insurance certificates and signed contract?
    No bid bond or proposal guarantee is required for this solicitation. No performance bond is required for the awarded contractor. An Alaska Business License and insurance certifications are required along with the signed contract.

12. The RFP indicates the Cost/Fee Proposal should be a separate PDF/envelope. Will the cost proposals remain sealed/unseen by the evaluation committee until after the technical evaluation is complete? In other words, how will the 25% cost criterion be scored – by formula or committee consensus – and when will that scoring occur in the evaluation process? Clarification on whether lowest cost automatically gets full points, or

if there’s a specific formula (e.g., proportional scoring), would be helpful for us in structuring our cost proposal.
The Cost Proposals will remain unseen by the Evaluation Committee until after they evaluate the Technical Proposals. The scoring for Cost Proposals will be added afterwards effecting the scores by 25%. The lowest cost will receive full points for that criterion. There is a specific formula on page 18 of the RFP that shows how the Maximum Possible Points is calculated.

13. The Contract Period of Performance is stated to run from award through December 31, 2026. Does ARRC have a desired timeline or deadline for the website go-live within that period (for example, a target to launch by a certain date in 2025 or early 2026)? Understanding ARRC’s timeline expectations (e.g., to be live before the 2026 tourist season) will help offerors propose an achievable project schedule.
ARRC would like to get the project done quickly and efficiently but does not have any firm date driven deadlines.

14. The RFP describes a two-phase selection: Phase I written proposals scored up to 100 points, and Phase II oral presentations/website demonstrations up to 100 points. Approximately how many firms does ARRC plan to shortlist for Phase II presentations, and how will the final selection be made? For example, will the Phase I (100 points) and Phase II (100 points) scores be combined into a total out of 200 to determine the winner, or will Phase II scores alone determine the award among finalists?
If required, the number of selected for Phase II are dependent upon the quality of the responses. However, it is expected to be between two and five. ARRC will not combine the points from Phase I and II.

15. If the RFP states that at ARRC’s discretion, discussions/presentations may be held in-person in Anchorage or via remote technology. If an out-of-state offeror is selected for Phase II, will they have the option to present remotely, or should they be prepared to travel to Anchorage on relatively short notice?
If an out-of-state offeror would like to travel to Anchorage for the presentations, it would be relatively short notice, but travel to the state is not required. ARRC prefers video conference applications such as WebEx, Zoom, or Teams.

16. Please clarify what is meant by “Ability to Create Option booking” in the Travel Trade Portal?
An Option booking has services that hold inventory space but has not been paid yet (or committed to by changing to Confirmed in the case of a credit agent). Typically, these will have an expiration date whereupon inventory is released if it has not been paid for and changed to Confirmed.

About ARRC’s Current Website, Vision, and Requirements…

17. What company/agency built the ARRC Drupal site in 2016?
A company built the initial version of the site and the rest was refined and implemented by internal staff. ARRC has not had any interaction with that company since the initial version was delivered.

18. How many Drupal taxonomies and content types make up ARRC's current content model for the site?
A variety of content types and objects are used but they are not expected to be reused or replicated for the new site. These would be based off of what is observable in our current website or through the discovery process with the vendor.

19. Does the site utilize a Digital Asset Management system (DAM)? If so, which DAM?
ARRC currently use Crowdriff for digital asset management system. Example is on this page: https://www.alaskarailroad.com/corporate/news-media/railroad-imagery

20. How many Drupal modules does the site use? How many are contributed modules? How many are custom? If there are custom modules, did ARRC's internal team develop them?
A variety of modules are in use and some are contributed and some are custom. Custom modules were developed by both internal staff and contractors. These modules are not expected to be reused or replicated exactly.

21. Can ARRC share current website analytics, specifically peak season daily visitors and maximum concurrent users, for infrastructure and scalability planning? How many unique users visit the site each month? How many sessions per month? How many pageviews per month?
During the peak booking season from October to May, ARRC expects to have anywhere from 3K active users up to 12K active users on the website daily, with the average between the 5 to 7K users. ARRC desires the ability to be more readily scalable to handle increased capacity that is expected to come with an optimized website.

22. Can ARRC please provide some examples of the volume spikes at different times? What are the typical baseline numbers, and what are the spikes, and how often and when throughout the year do they occur?
Please see answer to question 21.

23. What website performance issues has ARRC found that are having the greatest impact?
ARRC desires to have a better user experience and performance on mobile devices.

24. What User Experience (UX) issues has ARRC found that is having the greatest negative impact? How has ARRC identified and tracked these issues (e.g., through use of web analytics software, user complaints, etc.)?
See response to question 23. ARRC does not have any formal tracking of website issues or complaints.

25. Did the UX design consultant (that ARRC previously worked with) conduct user research such as decision trees and card sorting? Or was desk research/best practices used?
There was no formalized user research, including decision trees or card sorting, as part of the UX design process with the consultant. It was a collaborative effort involving the consultant and the passenger services and technology departments. The research included browsing sites with similar features ARRC desired and discussing amongst peers, etc.

26. Will any additional UX research and design work be sought from the selected vendor, or will the design work already completed for the passenger side be the only research and design leveraged for this project? If additional research and design are sought, could ARRC please briefly explain/provide context?
ARRC will consider a nominal amount of research to be conducted to validate the extent the current design concepts are viable. Modifications to the design will be considered if they are believed to result in a better website that meets the timeframe in a cost-effective manner.

27. The RFP mentions that the new site will have two major design areas: “passenger” and “non-passenger” content and functionality. Could ARRC elaborate on what falls under the “non-passenger” side? For example, does this include freight service information, corporate pages (about us, news, investor relations), real estate or industrial development content, etc.? Are there any specific functionalities or online tools required for the non-passenger sections (beyond informational content and forms), such as freight customer portals or interactive elements?
The majority and categorical extent of non-passenger content exists on the current website. There may be new content areas to consider, but ARRC does not expect it to be substantial. Anything new that is interactive or along the lines of a portal would be out of scope at this time.

28. The RFP indicates that the booking engine redevelopment will require multiple phases – initially Rail-Only and Single Day Packages (Day Tours), with later phases for Multi-Day Packages. Should our proposal address and price all phases of the booking engine (including the future Multi-Day Packages functionality), or focus only on the initial phase? In other words, is the intent to include Multi-Day Packages development within this contract’s scope (by 2026), or just to lay groundwork for it in the future?
ARRC would like to primarily focus on the first phase of Rail and Single Day Packages. The schedule for Multi-Day Packages will be determined after the initial phase and may extend beyond 2026. The requirements are more complex and therefore ARRC expects more discovery would be necessary to properly prepare a scope.

29. If Multi-Day Packages are to be considered now or in the future, can ARRC provide any details on what these packages entail? For instance, will Multi-Day Packages involve integrating additional services like lodging, tours, or transportation that are not part of Rail Studio currently? Understanding the eventual goal for multi-day itineraries (and whether external systems or partnerships are involved) will help us design an architecture that can accommodate those in the future.
ARRC has descriptions and details of many of its typical multi-day package offerings on its current website. They consist of a range of non-rail services that may include accommodations, tours, flights, and alternative transportation. Supplier inventory management and integration are key considerations in how ARRC sells these products.

30. The RFP references sample websites (Railbookers, TourRadar, AlaskaTravel) as having similar functionality to what ARRC seeks. Are there specific features from those example sites that ARRC is particularly interested in? For example, Railbookers and TourRadar

emphasize package booking and itinerary building – is ARRC looking for similar dynamic packaging capability, or are the references more for general look-and-feel and user experience inspiration?
For Multi-Day Packages, ARRC desires to start with predefined itineraries and then work on adding features for customizations where feasible. Ease of use is a primary focus as well as ease of product and booking administration.

31. The RFP suggests using a "modern technical architecture/stack such as Angular, React, or an alternative solution, as approved". Does ARRC have any preference or internal expertise with specific frameworks or languages (for front-end or back-end) that we should take into account? For example, if ARRC's IT is more familiar with Microsoft/.NET environments vs. open-source, or if there's a preference for a particular CMS product, that would be helpful to know. Or should offerors simply propose the stack they believe best meets the requirements (scalability, security, etc.)?
    Vendors are not expected to propose a specific technology stack in this proposal but are expected to describe their expertise and background that would assist ARRC in selecting this as part of the project. ARRC does not have specific preferences, but is seeking modernized technology suitable for enterprise environments that will achieve better performance as well as ease of development and maintenance.

32. The scope's miscellaneous items include an "Availability Calendar". Can ARRC elaborate on this feature? Is it intended to show customers a calendar view of available travel dates or seat availability for certain routes/tours? How should it function in relation to the booking engine – for example, is it a calendar that highlights days when seats are available or special events?
    ARRC's website currently has an availability calendar as a tool for passengers to identify what days they can book certain trains and routes. ARRC desires to have the same functionality although are open to improvements on usability or alternative solutions.

33. The requirements mention "minimum response time meets industry standards" and support for modern browsers/devices. Does ARRC have any specific performance targets or metrics ARRC can share (e.g., page load times, Time to Interactive, etc.)?
    ARRC does not have specific requirements to list for minimum response time, but expect that targets and metrics would be developed as part of this project.

34. For future integrations like Salesforce, Click-to-Chat, and AI Chatbots: Will these be client-provided and pre-configured? Can ARRC specify which tools and use cases are anticipated (e.g., chatbot provider, lead scoring, form sync, etc.)?
    For future integrations that require third-party integrations, their licensing and anything else required to use will be provided by ARRC. Configuring for specific use and integration will be a part of the scope for the project team. Some of these are not in scope at this time, but may be considered in the future such as Click-to-chat and SalesForce. AI chatbot integration is likely to be included but the chatbot exists and would need to be accessible on the new website via an iFrame or similar methodology.

About Wireframes…

35. ARRC has "initial concepts of the UX/UI design for passenger content and basic booking functionality," which will be provided as artifacts. Is the Wireframes doc released with the solicitation these concepts? If not will these design artifacts (e.g., wireframes, mockups, or design guidelines) be shared with offerors (perhaps via the provided Dropbox link)? Also, should the vendor plan to adhere closely to these existing design concepts for the passenger portion, or are they expected to further evolve and refine them? Finally, for the "non-passenger" sections where initial design may not be provided, is the vendor given creative freedom to design those from scratch (while maintaining overall site consistency)?
    The wireframes provided with the RFP are the artifacts to be used as a starting point to complete the overall design. The non-passenger pages and templates will need to be developed, but ARRC expects them to have a similar look and feel to the final passenger design.

36. Will fully developed wireframes and visual designs be provided by ARRC, or is the vendor responsible for delivering final designs and CMS UI specifications?
    The wireframes that were included were a result of a user centered design process. The wireframes should be used as a starting place for design in the project. ARRC is open to alternative concepts but interested in expediency (prefer not starting from scratch).

    Developing completed wireframes and visual designs (including CMS UI specifications) based on the concepts provided is considered to be part of the scope of this project.

About Content Management Systems (CMS)…

37. The scope mentions implementing "appropriate user account management and access control functions". Beyond the CMS administrators and possibly travel trade users, does ARRC anticipate that regular passengers (customers) will create user accounts on the website? For instance, will there be a benefit for a passenger to log in (like viewing past bookings or saving information) or will the booking process be primarily a guest checkout model with confirmations via email? Offerors want to clarify which user roles (admin, travel agent, customer) need account functionality on the site.
    At present, direct passenger user logins for booking features is out of scope. Many passengers only travel on Alaska Railroad once so ARRC would need to consider if this feature would be feasible in the future. The guest checkout model will be in scope as well as some tools to allow booking recall with payout or cancellation option. User roles will be determined as part of this project, but they will address the different department content areas and responsibilities.

38. The scope calls for designing and developing "middleware" web services to streamline API and CMS interactions. Does ARRC envision this middleware as a set of custom API endpoints or microservices that the new website will use as an intermediary between the front-end/CMS and Rail Studio (and possibly other systems)? Essentially, should offerors plan on building an integration layer that could, for example, combine data from Rail Studio and CMS content before presenting to the front-end? Also, is there any

existing middleware or integration service in place that the current site uses, or will this be entirely new development?
While ARRC does have some middleware that might be reusable, ARRC expects the bulk of it to require development. It is expected this will include integrating the Rail Studio APIs, CMS, and potentially other systems.

39. What level of access or control is expected within the CMS regarding reservation system data? (e.g., override availability, view/edit bookings, modify package details)?
See response to the next question.

40. Does ARRC have exact documentation on all Admin roles and their respective permissions within the website CMS including in relation to reservation system management and data?
ARRC does not have exact documentation on the admin roles in relation to the reservation system. This is expected to be defined as part of the scope. The ability to override availability and edit existing bookings (except to Confirm or Cancel them) is not part of the scope.

    ARRC internal staff have a good understanding of the data and processes required for selling Rail only services. However, it expects that in order to sell more expanded products, such as Day Tours (Rail and same day Tour) or Packages, the project team will need to design a solution to manage and display product details for content and booking enablement that may come from a variety of sources such as that which will be maintained in the selected CMS and Rail Studio (accessed via the APIs or directly in the database).

About Rail Studio API…

41. Could ARRC provide the full API documentation for the Rail Studio XML-based system?
Incorporated into this Addendum is additional information about Rail Studio APIs. Please review documents starting on page 18 of this addendum.

42. Could ARRC please provide API documentation for the Rail Studio reservation system?
See response to the previous question.

43. What specific booking workflows or user scenarios should be supported during integration (e.g., multi-day packages, third-party tours, real-time availability)?
The main booking workflows are booking for Rail and Day Tours (rail combined with a tour in the same day). These should support real-time availability with the existing Rail Studio APIs. Within this, there are other related user scenarios that will need to be addressed. Multi-day packages are a future feature. Please also see clarification questions from Addendum 2 in the beginning part of this addendum.

44. The booking module requirements include features like holding an "Option" booking (quote) that can later be confirmed with payment, and allowing cancellations with standard penalties. Are the business rules for these actions governed by the Rail Studio system or expected to be enforced in the website layer? For example, will Rail Studio's API handle the logic for whether a booking can be held, or paid, or canceled (and

calculate penalties), and the website just needs to call the appropriate API endpoints? Or will the website need to implement any custom logic to enforce booking criteria (such as expiration times for option bookings, or preventing cancellations outside policy)?
In working with the Rail Studio APIs, it is ARRC's experience that much is handled via the APIs, however there are circumstances where custom logic is needed to enforce functional requirements. An example is that Travel Trade booking commissions are not applicable to certain trains and/or discounted fares and so these are suppressed (not available) during the booking process.

45. Regarding coupon codes and discounts: Does Rail Studio support promotional or coupon codes natively through its API that the website can apply to bookings, or will the website need to implement a separate mechanism for discount codes? If such a system exists, how are coupon codes created and managed (through Rail Studio by ARRC staff, or would the CMS need to store them)? We want to clarify how to integrate discount functionality without duplicating effort or bypassing the reservation system's rules.
Rail Studio does support the setup of discounts for use with the APIs in the booking process. However, there are limitations to how the discounts work online. Most discounts are not applicable to certain classes of service (i.e., GoldStar) and so those options should be suppressed. In this scenario, additional configuration is required to be maintained outside of Rail Studio to control this behavior, ARRC may want to explore supplementing other Rail Studio API discounts with additional logic.

46. The ARRC reservation system "Rail Studio" is internally hosted and provides an XML-based API for bookings. Will ARRC provide the Rail Studio API documentation and sandbox access to the selected vendor? Also, are there any limitations or known quirks of the Rail Studio API that we should be aware of (for example, certain functions not available via API, or performance considerations)? Since this API is core to the booking engine, understanding its capabilities (search, availability, booking, modification, cancellation, etc.) is crucial. Additionally, does Rail Studio require any VPN or secure network connection for the external website to communicate with it, or will ARRC expose the necessary API endpoints to the internet for this project?
ARRC will provide some information about the Rail Studio APIs. No sandbox (non-Live environment) access will be permitted prior to contract award. For a hosted solution, it is expected that the solution will require some configuration to be applied to enable access to the endpoints.

47. Will ARRC facilitate communication with Open Destinations (the vendor of Rail Studio) if needed during the project? For instance, if we run into questions or need support/information regarding the reservation system's API or capabilities, is there a process to get assistance either through ARRC's IT team or directly with the Rail Studio vendor?
ARRC can facilitate access to Open Destinations support, when necessary, through ARRC's IT team. ARRC has a support agreement with Open Destinations and can open tickets for basic questions and issue resolution. Further, ARRC can engage Open Destination for consulting on specific areas if necessary.

48. The travel trade requirements mention that certain agents can pay net of commission whereas others pay gross amount. Are the rules for this (who pays net vs gross) configured in Rail Studio (by agent type or login), or is it something the website must handle by applying a discount or deduction at payment time? We want to confirm if the reservation system will calculate the commission and adjust the payment due when an agent booking is made, or if the website checkout needs to implement logic to only charge the net amount for certain agent categories.
    Rail Studio handles commissions for Travel Trade customers. This includes the Rail Studio API functions. The front end of the booking flow does needs to account for things such as displaying the appropriate commission amounts and amounts due based on what is returned by the APIS. There are a few limitations for the APIs such as mentioned in question 44.

49. Regarding the Travel Trade registration form (for new agent sign-ups) which currently emails an ARRC user: What information does ARRC require from new travel trade partners in that form? And is the expectation for the new site that it will still simply email this info to ARRC staff, or should offerors also plan for storing this registration data (e.g., in a database or CRM)? The RFP notes future integration with Salesforce for these registrations – is that integration within scope now or just something to design for later?
    At present, the information included on the form would be emailed to ARRC staff, including uploaded documents as attachments. This information is saved in a simple separate database for logging and audit purposes. Integration with SalesForce is currently out of scope, however, ARRC retains the option to include it at a later time.

50. Regarding "Apply payment gross or net of commission based on agent type": Can ARRC describe how commissions are currently calculated and applied? What level of integration with the payment gateway (CyberSource) is required to support these rules?
    As part of the booking process, the Rail Studio APIs will calculate and provide the amount of commission a TTP is eligible to receive for each booked service. The booking flow will include logic that determines the amount of payment due from a TTP for a booking when it advances to the CyberSource payment screen. If paying Gross then 100% is due and typically paid via the travelling passenger's credit card. TTP will be paid their commission via the reservation system after the booking travels. If paying Net then they pay the net amount due (gross total minus commission) typically via the TTP's own credit card. There is no special integration with CyberSource other than determining the amount and defaulting the appropriate customer details (lead passenger for Gross or TTP for Net).

51. How will the agent/travel partner initiate bookings from the website and have commission allocation management/viewership or does ARRC just simply want visibility for these agents/travel partners on their commission and sales analytics?
    TTPs must preregister with ARRC to have a profile set up in order to book and receive commission. As part of this process (or subsequently) they must request a login in order to access ARRC's website online TTP booking portal. When they sign in to the portal and start a booking process for their clients, they are able to see the commission they would earn. They are also able to see their booking history and the associated commission but not necessarily any sales analytics (possible future feature). They

cannot view any details related to their specific rail service allocations (if any exists). They cannot view the status of commission payments that may be due or have been paid (future scope). At present, TTP and direct customers have the ability to view seat availability via the public Availability Calendar page.

52. Will all travel agents be allowed to register through the portal? Is admin approval required before activating new travel agent accounts?
At present, TTP agents request registration via a single input form which is part of the scope for the new website. This does require an administrative review to ensure they meet eligible criteria and have submitted all required documentation. ARRC desires to develop a more streamlined registration process in the future.

53. Related to performance and devices: Are there any particular browsers, devices or assistive technologies that offerors should ensure are officially supported beyond general best practice? (For instance, do a significant portion of ARRC's customers use a specific browser or does ARRC have an obligation to support legacy versions for any user base?)
ARRC does not have any requirements beyond industry standards and general best practice for performance on particular browsers and/or devices. As this changes from time to time, ARRC expects it will be part of the scope to research and identify targets for QA and testing of the new site.

54. The scope also mentions various forms (Lost & Found, Freight Quote Request, etc.) that currently email ARRC users. Are these forms simply to be recreated on the new site with email submission, or would ARRC like to enhance them in any way (for example, have them write to a database, integrate with Salesforce or another system, or provide an acknowledgement to the submitter)? Also, approximately how many such forms are there in total across the site that we should account for building (and will the form fields stay roughly the same as on the current site)?
At present ARRC does not have plans to redesign the other various forms on the website and their processes. However, ARRC retains the option to develop forms at a later time. The forms are listed in the RFP. There are some simple forms such as the option to register for newsletters with Mailchimp on a few pages that are not mentioned specifically, but are not expected to be difficult to implement.

55. The RFP mentions future integrations such as Salesforce (for forms), click-to-chat, and AI chatbots. Could ARRC clarify whether any of these features need to be included in the initial launch? For example, if ARRC already has a Salesforce CRM in use, are there specific forms (contact forms, lead forms) that should send data to Salesforce now? Likewise, for chat functions or chatbots, should offerors include implementing a chat service in this project or simply design the site such that a chat widget could be added later?
ARRC expects to be implementing a chatbot on its existing website soon based on MS Copilot, this is within scope for the initial redesign. This soon to be implemented chatbot will not be integrated with any click-to-chat functionality initially, but that feature is desired as part of this scope. The technical solution for click-to-chat has not been officially determined, but would likely involve enabling features in our existing Cisco

phone system. Configuring this feature is out of scope, but collaborating with ARRC's team to implement it on the website would be in scope.

About Third-Party Tool Licensing…

56. Understanding ARRC works with third-party tools like Google Analytics, Google Tag Manager, Cookie Consent, and Mailchimp. Does ARRC already have Google Analytics (GA4) and Tag Manager accounts set up for the website, or should the vendor set those up anew? Similarly, for Mailchimp, is there an existing email subscription list and account should be integrated with (for newsletter sign-ups), or will that be created as part of this project? Also, for Cookie Consent compliance, does ARRC prefer a specific solution or can offerors use a standard cookie banner manager to handle user consent for tracking?
    ARRC currently has Google Analytics (GA4) and Tag Manager set up for its existing website. Assistance in configuring these to transition to a new website is considered to be in scope. As well, ARRC has several Mailchimp newsletter subscriptions that ARRC expects to be able to continue to use without significant changes. ARRC is open to suggestions for cookie consent compliance solutions on the new website. Selection and implementation of this is part of the scope.

About Cybersecurity…

57. Knowing ARRC will handle penetration testing, when would that testing occur? Are there specific security standards or guidelines (beyond PCI-DSS compliance and OWASP best practices) that ARRC expects vendors to follow while developing the site?
    ARRC will evaluate the project schedule to determine when penetration testing would occur. This is not expected to occur until ARRC and the vendor agree the site is ready. It will occur both before and after the site is deployed to production. ARRC is subject to other security standards, but the corporate website is currently out of scope for them. If this changes, ARRC reserves the right to modify cybersecurity requirements. These other standards typically cover more operational aspects and are not expected to be more stringent than PCI-DSS or OWASP.

58. Would ARRC consider including a formal security acceptance/signoff phase post-launch?
    ARRC expects to conduct security assessments pre-launch to ensure readiness and post-launch to ensure compliance. ARRC does not require a formal security acceptance/signoff phase post-launch as this will be a requirement throughout the process as the site is prepared and supported. ARRC is responsible for this assessment and, when necessary, will work collaboratively with the vendor to ensure all requirements are met.

59. The compliance requirements list "Privacy and Security Law/Standard (GDPR, CCRS/CCPA)". Could ARRC clarify what "CCRS" refers to in this context? In general, what steps does ARRC expect the website to take for GDPR/CCPA compliance – for instance, cookie consent, data access request handling, privacy policy disclosures, the ability to delete user data upon request, etc.?

The reference to CCRS is a typo. It should refer to CPRA California Privacy Rights Act which is related to CCPA California Consumer Privacy Act. At a minimum, ARRC expects the mentioned features and policies in the question to be addressed. Vendor will work with ARRC to determine appropriate actions for compliance.

60. Does ARRC have a preferred cookie consent management tool in mind? If not, is ARRC open to recommendations such as Termly?
ARRC is open to suggestions for cookie consent compliance solutions on the new website. Selection and implementation of this is part of the scope. (This is the same response to the "Cookie Consent Tool" Addendum 2 follow-up question in the beginning portion of this addendum).

About Administration…

61. Will ARRC's internal team do all of the UAT testing? Will the vendor be participating as well? And will the ARRC team be participating in any other QA/Testing? If so, please describe.
ARRC expects the vendor and a multi-department team will perform QA for the initial versions of the site. ARRC users will be identified for final Acceptance Testing for each content and functional area of the site. ARRC is in the process of selecting and will implement testing automation software which is expected to be used for this project for online booking and related features.

62. Knowing ARRC will conduct UAT, are there any test cases or scenarios (especially around booking flows or integrations) that ARRC already knows will require special attention?
QA/UAT for online booking processes involve a lot of interaction with Rail Studio in order to validate data. ARRC has experience with and will be responsible for developing appropriate test scripts. Examples of areas of functionality that may require special attention are:

    - Handling children in a booking, especially infants that may or may not require a seat (lap infants).
    - Determining what service options or discounts are available in which booking scenarios.
    - Calculating prices for non-rail services as they often comprise of multiple items such as taxes, porterage, etc.
    - Packages (bookings that include rail and non-rail services) in general are complicated not just in the content and data but also their cancellation and modification rules.

63. Knowing approximately how many ARRC staff members will be involved with website administration, does ARRC prefer in-person training session(s) in Anchorage, or would remote training via video conference be acceptable? Also, should vendors deliver training materials (use manuals, how-to guides) for future reference?
Remote training session(s) with screen sharing are acceptable. Documentation such as training materials and user manuals will be required. The project team will determine

what this consists of and what parts will be done by the vendor and which will be done by ARRC. ARRC is also comfortable with using "train the trainer" methodology for certain items.

64. Regarding deployment and cutover: Does ARRC have any restrictions or preferences on when the new site goes live (for example, launching in an off-peak time or shoulder season to minimize disruption)? Will ARRC handle updating DNS or any necessary domain configuration, or should the vendor include coordination of that as part of launch support? Additionally, is there an expected downtime window allowed for the switchover, or must it be essentially instantaneous?
    The most desirable time to launch for the passenger business is in early October when ARRC starts to focus is heavily on sales for the next year's season. The least desirable time for the passenger business would be from March/April to mid-September. However, ARRC intends to be flexible and will prioritize quality and readiness over a deadline. ARRC's technical team is expected to coordinate with the vendor for all required tasks to complete the cutover. A relatively immediate switchover is desired once a "Go" decision has been made and the cutover scheduled.

65. The RFP calls for at least 60 days of post-launch support. After this period, does ARRC anticipate continuing with an ongoing support/maintenance agreement (potentially through December 2026) under this contract, or would that be handled separately? Should offerors include options or pricing for extended maintenance beyond the 60-day warranty/support period (for example, monthly support fees or hourly rates for updates), or just assume any further support is out-of-scope unless requested?
    ARRC will evaluate contracting needs and options after the new site is live and the support period has expired. This will be based on ARRCs ability to support the site with existing internal staff. Should additional support be needed, ARRC reserves the right to add to the contract.

66. What website administrative issues has ARRC found that are having the greatest negative impact on its team?

    ARRC has a variety of challenges with our current website administration that are expected to be improved by this project. Some specific areas may be related to:

    - Having an uncommonly used technical stack
    - Managing core platform updates
    - Using deployment tools such as GitHub or DevOps
    - Maintaining multiple environments for development streams

67. Can ARRC confirm which tasks in the Scope of Work will be handled by the ARRC team vs. expected from the awarded vendor? (e.g., third-party tool setup, content entry, form logic, etc.)
    ARRC expects to have staff resources available for both technical and content/subject matter expertise. Once the full scope, including training and content migration, is known, ARRC will determine a strategy to complete the work. ARRC understands that this may be difficult to estimate and is open to proposals on the best way to complete these tasks.

About Terms and Conditions…

68. Regarding insurance requirements: the General Terms and Conditions for Professional Services stipulates specific coverage minimums. If a company does not own vehicles (no company fleet), would a non-owned auto liability policy suffice for the Auto requirement? And in general, if a company's current insurance coverage meets or exceeds these limits (except for areas not applicable), is that acceptable?
    General Terms and Conditions for Professional Services can be negotiated prior to contract execution. If the Contractor's policy contains higher limits, ARRC shall be entitled to coverage to the extent of such higher limits.

69. What are ARRC's expectations regarding the payment structure and invoicing for this contract? Does ARRC prefer a milestone-based payment schedule tied to deliverables (e.g., payments at completion of design, development, testing, launch, etc.), or a time-and-materials approach with monthly invoices? Are payments typically made within a certain timeframe (Net 30 days) upon acceptance of each deliverable/invoice?
    ARRC expects payments to be issued based on fixed pricing. Payments are typically made within 30 days after invoicing.

All other terms and conditions remain unchanged. **Please acknowledge receipt of this and all addenda in your firm's Service Bid Form (Form 395-0129).**

Please direct all responses and/or questions concerning this solicitation directly to:

Sazil Say
Contract Adminstration Specialist
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907.265.8747 *office*
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ALASKA RAILROAD

Rail Studio B2CXMLAPI Web Service Operations Summary

Alaska Railroad uses the Rail Studio reservation system to book and manage rail services for passengers. This system is licensed by Open Destinations Ltd, a software company. The Rail Studio system includes a set of SOAP APIs that can be used to integrate with other applications, such as the online booking engine that Alaska Railroad uses on their external website.

This document provides a high-level summary of the types of operations available via the Rail Studio APIs. Some of this was produced with the assistance of AI evaluating the WSDL. The operations are grouped into functional categories relevant to the use case, with detailed descriptions for each category. Specific operation names are omitted for confidentiality so as not to require NDAs due to the proprietary nature of the software.

These APIs include methods that support the integration of functions within and data to and from the Rail Studio reservation system.

Below are descriptions of the web services currently used by Alaska Railroad:

Booking:

- Cancel
- Cancellation Charges: Get
- Create
- Note: Create
- Receipt: Create
- List: Get
- Information: Get
- Financial Details: Get
- Passenger Information: Create, Get
- Send Confirmation
- Update Status

Brochure Request: Create

Login: Authenticate User

Passenger: Create

Rail Service Search

Travel Agent:

- Contact: Create, Get
- Details: Get
- Contact Information: Get

Service & Package Management

These operations support the discovery, configuration, and pricing of travel-related services and packages. They are typically used in the early stages of the booking journey and are essential for building dynamic packaging tools or service catalogs.

Capabilities include:
- Retrieving available services and their metadata (e.g., descriptions, availability, and status).
- Fetching pricing details for configurable service options.
- Listing and describing package types and tours.
- Managing package components and headers for custom or bundled offerings.

This category is foundational for any system that allows users to browse, compare, or customize travel products.

Passenger & Agent Management

This category handles the creation, authentication, and relationship management of passengers (formerly referred to as clients) and agents. It supports both internal CRM functions and external-facing user management.

Capabilities include:
- Creating and updating passenger profiles and their relationships (e.g., family members, group travelers).
- Authenticating passengers, agents, and contacts for secure access.
- Managing agent and contact records, including onboarding and credential validation.
- Retrieving default values or preferences associated with a passenger.

These operations are critical for personalization, compliance, and secure access to booking and account data.

Booking & Amendments

These operations manage the full lifecycle of a booking—from creation to cancellation and everything in between. They are the backbone of transactional workflows.

Capabilities include:
- Creating new bookings for services, packages, or transfers.
- Modifying existing bookings, including changes to dates, services, or passenger details.
- Canceling bookings or specific components (e.g., a hotel or transfer).
- Applying discounts or offer plans to bookings.
- Logging booking activity and sending booking-related messages.

This category is essential for any system that allows users or agents to transact and manage reservations.

Financial Transactions

These operations handle the financial side of bookings, including payments and accounting entries.

Capabilities include:
- Creating and processing credit notes, receipts, and financial transactions.
- Handling credit card transactions securely.
- Calculating booking prices.
- Retrieving financial summaries or breakdowns for a booking.

These are vital for integration with payment gateways, accounting systems, and financial reporting tools.