



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Contacts: Robert Udowitz – 703.621.8060
Steve Drake – 301.680.2064

RFP Associates Launched to Help Organizations Conduct Searches for Public Relations Agencies

New Firm Will Manage the Request For Proposal and Selection Process to Streamline Arduous Task For all Types of Organizations and Build Strong Client-Agency Relationships

WASHINGTON, DC – October 18, 2010 – With client organizations and public relations agencies in agreement that the process of searching for, selecting and hiring an agency is in need of repair, a new consulting firm today announced it will serve as an honest broker between the two sides to help establish effective and lasting client-agency relationships.

RFP Associates, led by public relations industry veterans Robert Udowitz and Steven Drake, was formally launched here during the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) International Conference. Tomorrow, Udowitz and Helen Sullivan, APR, Fellow PRSA, also affiliated with RFP Associates, will outline the firm's philosophy and approach during "Best Business PRactices: Strategy, Writing and Managing the RFP Process," a Conference workshop taking place from 8-9:15 AM in the Georgetown West Room at the Washington Hilton Hotel.

"Discussions with numerous organizations suggested that clients often find the PR agency search and selection process confusing, tedious and time consuming," said Udowitz. "By the same token, PR agencies have told us that the request for proposals they receive often prompt more questions than they answer, and require a lot of 'jumping through hoops' for no discernable reason."

RFP Associates Principal Steven Drake added that a comprehensive PR agency selection process, which can take between 100-200 hours, is essential considering the stakes involved. "Given PR budgets, it's not unlike hiring several PR executives at once. A company never wants to make a bad employee hire. So it needs to be doubly careful about retaining the right PR agency – an entity that is often entrusted to represent and communicate the organization's brand and reputation."

RFP Associates will offer these and related services to corporations, law firms, and other businesses, associations and government entities:

- Consulting to help evaluate and define the precise needs of the client.
- Development of an RFP which comprehensively and accurately reflects client's requirements.
- Comprehensive search for agencies qualified/experienced to perform the work called for by the client.

- more -

RFP Associates/2

- Pre-screening and –qualifying of agencies to result in a manageable “universe” of candidate firms.
- Management of the outreach, RFP distribution and pre-proposal process.
- Coordination and work with client to review and evaluate:
 - Written proposals and capabilities statements.
 - In-person presentations
- Support in the negotiation and contract structuring process.

RFP Associates Principals Robert Udowitz and Steven Drake are public relations practitioners each with more than 20 years of experience working in the corporate and public relations agency sectors. As principals of their own public relations consulting firms, Udowitz and Drake have worked with clients in the education, financial, publishing and technology fields on PR agency searches and negotiations.

On an ongoing basis RFP Associates will collect information about public relations agencies of all sizes and specialties to benefit its present and future clients. A dedicated webpage for agencies to submit their qualifications is located through the RFP Associates website at rfpassociates.net/agencies.

As part of its commitment to the public relations industry RFP Associates subscribes to and expects all of the agencies it works with to adhere to the professional ethics code of the Public Relations Society of America.

For more information, please visit the RFP Associates website at www.rfpassociates.net or call 703.621.8060 or 301.680.0585.

#