

U.S. House of Representatives

Request for Information

WEB-03082016

Cloud Web Hosting Options

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)

- 1.1 The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) provides service and support to the United States House of Representatives. This request for information (RFI) is for the Web Systems group within House Information Resources (HIR). The Web Systems group develops and supports web sites and applications for the offices within the House that are both publically and internally available that include Member, Leadership, and Committee (MLC) office sites.
- 1.2 Currently, there are approximately 350 sites being hosted on premise in a Drupal 7 CMS platform (slated for Drupal 8 in early 2017). This platform consists of 5 multi-sites that are tiered based off of complexity. HIR is currently maintaining an internal Cloud architecture that supports the Drupal platform. There are also approximately 100 additional MLC sites that are developed and maintained by approved House vendors. Vendors have the option to utilize the House Drupal platform if they choose. Otherwise, they are provided a separate virtualized environment on the House infrastructure with the ability to develop, manage, and host the site with the technology of their choice. All of these sites are referenced from the main U.S. House of Representatives website located at www.house.gov.
- 1.3 The House's public/internet facing web presence has historically been based on "on premise" technology infrastructure. The House wishes to migrate its entire public facing web presence from "on premise" to the Cloud in the least disruptive and low cost fashion while ensuring high availability, quality of service, and security of these websites.
- 1.4 The resulting objective of this RFI is to enable HIR to narrow its options for the HIR Web Systems team to migrate their entire public web architecture (House.gov site and MLC) to the Cloud – either separate from the vendor supported websites or jointly. In the process, HIR Web Systems is interested in the opportunity to plan for and ultimately transition its web development and operational support activities from an on premise infrastructure environment to a public Cloud-based environment.
- 1.5 The purpose of this RFI is to help Web Systems determine which direction in terms of infrastructure as a service (IaaS), platform as a server (PaaS), or managed service provider (MSP) the Web Systems team should focus upon. In addition, information that will be received from industry may be used to assist the CAO in developing its policies, service agreements, solicitation documents, or resulting contract terms and conditions.

2. GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

- 2.1 The CAO is seeking your expert guidance in recommending a path forward to migrating its public web sites to the Cloud. Vendors are encouraged to provide any additional information that they feel would benefit the CAO in understanding the market, technology, and their specific recommendations for tools necessary to meet our goals. Respondents are requested to provide their comments, suggestions, concerns, and where applicable, alternative recommendations regarding how the questions posed in this RFI could be satisfied. Respondents should explain any assumptions they make in their responses.
- 2.2 Vendors should submit all responses in searchable PDF format with a maximum email file size of 15 MB. Responses shall be organized so that they follow the format outlined in Section 3 of the RFI and may not exceed 12 total pages with a minimum font size of 12. Vendors shall also provide the following information in a cover letter: name of vendor, mailing address, phone number, name of designated point of contact and e-mail address.

3. FORMAT OF RESPONSE

- 3.1 **Introduction.** In no more than 1 page, provide a general description, history, and capabilities of your firm with respect to the Cloud.
- 3.2 **Questions.** In no more than 10 pages, provide answers to the following list of questions:
- 3.2.1 What are the most important web migration strategies or approaches the House should consider and ultimately implement to complete this migration within an IaaS, PaaS, and MSP environment? Please explain your position for each strategy or approach by Cloud environment.
- 3.2.2 What factors and lessons learned should the CAO consider when determining which Cloud service models (e.g. IaaS, PaaS, or MSP) would best meet our requirements? What questions should we be asking and getting answered before initiating our migration?
- 3.2.3 Saving money and personnel resources are often touted as primary reasons for moving to the Cloud. These savings are not always clearly defined or are rumored to be offset by hidden costs or liabilities. How would you substantiate or counter this statement regarding “hidden costs or liabilities” and in which cloud approach are cost and resource savings most likely to be achieved? Please explain.
- 3.2.4 If you were asked to help the House minimize its costs and simplify operations, what Cloud-based approach would you take and why?

- 3.2.5 Is gradual adoption and or expansion of web services in the Cloud a logical approach for HIR? For example, is starting with IaaS and then moving to PaaS and/or MSP a viable approach? Please explain?
- 3.2.6 From a website security perspective, what are the most critical Cloud security considerations, techniques and/or services HIR should consider and ultimately implement? Why?
- 3.2.7 From a business continuity perspective, implementing cloud-based websites running in an Active-Active fashion across multiple physical locations is preferred. What technical, cost, or operational considerations should HIR be aware of if running Active-Active? Any other thoughts on business continuity in the Cloud?
- 3.2.8 What implementation and operational challenges is HIR likely to encounter when moving to the Cloud?
- 3.2.9 Are there any support or compatibility considerations with existing or remaining infrastructure that an organization should consider? How will our licensing models likely change?
- 3.2.10 With the high demand for web site availability at the House, what level of service should the House expect for the high profile need? Please explain.

3.3 Summary. In no more than 1 page, provide a summary of your recommendation (in paragraph format) for the specific Cloud strategy that you believe would best suit the CAO's needs to understand and contextualize how this strategy can enable the organization to achieve its business objectives. Include an explanation as to why you believe this meets the CAO's needs and any other relevant information you feel is necessary to communicate.

4. RESTRICTION ON DISCLOSURE AND USE OF DATA

- 4.1 Responses that include data, including proprietary data, that the vendor does not want disclosed to the public for any purpose, or used by the CAO except for evaluation purposes for this RFI, should include a title page marked with the following legend:

“This response to RFI WEB-03082016 includes data that shall not be disclosed outside the House and shall not be duplicated, used, or disclosed--in whole or in part--for any purpose other than to evaluate this response. This restriction does not limit the House's right to use information contained in this response if it is obtained from another source without restriction. The data subject to this restriction are contained in sheets numbered [insert number(s)].”

- 4.2 Respondents should then mark each sheet of data to be restricted with the following legend:

“Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this response.”

- 4.3 The House is not subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

5. DISCLAIMER

This RFI is issued solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a solicitation. Information contained herein is subject to change. Responses to this notice are not offers and cannot be accepted by the CAO to form a binding contract. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with responding to this RFI. Responses to this RFI will not be returned. Respondents will not be notified of the result of the review. Failure to submit a response to this RFI in no way precludes a vendor from participating in any competitive solicitation the CAO may issue in the future.

6. SUBMISSION OF QUESTIONS

Please submit any questions related to this RFI to Kyle Griggs, Contracts Specialist, kyle.griggs@mail.house.gov, no later than 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time on March 16, 2016. The House may opt not to answer questions that are deemed outside the scope of this activity or may not respond to all submitted questions. Answers to questions of general applicability will be published as an Amendment to the RFI.

7. SUBMISSION OF RESPONSES

Please e-mail responses to this RFI to kyle.griggs@mail.house.gov so that they are received no later than 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time on March 29, 2016.

Your interest in the House is appreciated.