Alabama Department of Education
Request For Proposals

FOR: Moodle Hosting and Management

Vendor’s Name and Address:

Phone: FAX:
Contact Name, Address and E-mail:

Phone: FAX:

IMPORTANT: All interested vendors must be registered with the State of Alabama – Department of Finance, Division of Purchasing. Visit http://www.purchasing.state.al.us/ for additional information or call (334) 242-7250.

RETURN SEALED PROPOSAL TO:

Regular Mail

Alabama Department of Education
5351 Gordon Persons Building
P.O. Box 302101
Montgomery, AL 36130-2101

Courier

Alabama Department of Education Technology Initiatives
50 N. Ripley Street
5351 Gordon Persons Building
Montgomery, AL 36104-3833

SIGNATURE AND NOTARIZATION REQUIRED

I HAVE READ THE ENTIRE PROPOSAL AND AGREE TO FURNISH THE SERVICE LISTED ABOVE IF AWARDED. I HEREBY AFFIRM I HAVE NOT BEEN IN ANY AGREEMENT OR COLLUSION AMONG VENDORS IN RESTRAINT OF FREEDOM OF COMPETITION.
Moodle Hosting and Management
Request for Proposal

Vendor’s Participation Acknowledgement Form:

Complete this form and FAX to Joan Greene at 334-353-5886.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Company:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FEIN:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signature:</td>
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<td>Print Name of Signatory:</td>
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We have received the Request for Proposal.

At this time it is the company's intent to:
- [ ] Submit a Proposal
- [ ] Not Submit a Proposal

Also, please send an e-mail to jgreene@alsde.edu indicating the same information requested above.
1. **Scope and Background**

1.1. **Statement of Purpose**

The Alabama Department of Education (SDE) is seeking responses to this RFP for the hosting and management of the Moodle open source learning management system. We are looking for this to be fully hosted at vendor facilities and include comprehensive support and quality service at the lowest competitive cost.

1.2. **Overview of Products and Services**

1.2.1. **Moodle (LMS)**

Moodle is a free, open source course management system that includes learner tools that enable the delivery of online learning. All proposals will offer full features of Moodle and the capability of interfacing with a student records system such as the statewide STI student management system in place. A more detailed description is offered later in this RFP.

1.2.2. **Help Desk Services**

High quality, comprehensive help desk services to support Moodle on a 24 x 7/365 basis for teachers and students. The proposals will support multiple platforms with both live phone and Web-based support.

1.2.3. **Hosting Services**

The SDE seeks a vendor-hosted service. Vendor’s hosted service shall provide all required robust hardware, bandwidth, and interface tools necessary to provide quality services as requested.

1.3. **Estimated Volume**

The SDE expects to use Moodle initially for three groups: students, teachers, and administrators. One group is estimated to be approximately 10,000 with an increasing number of users in any subsequent year of the contract. The other two groups will consist of an estimated 2,000 users (combined). It should be understood that the SDE cannot guarantee the number of users in any given year. The SDE will need sufficient server space to manage all three of these groups with the option to add more if needed.
2. Time Frame and Evaluation Criteria

2.1. Estimated Time Frame
RFP Release – November 29, 2010
Vendor’s Participation Acknowledgement Form Due – December 10, 2010
RFP Package Due Date – December 28, 2010, 5:00 PM CST
RFP Public Opening – January 5, 2011, 10:00 AM CST
Contract Award – February 1, 2011 (Tentative)

2.2. Evaluation Information
SDE must be confident that the awarded vendor and product will perform and meet the
needs of its students, teachers and administrators. The SDE will evaluate and make
any award(s) on the proposal(s) that is/are determined to be the best value to the
students, teachers, and administrators based on the criteria listed in this document.
All proposals must be complete to be considered responsive. If the proposal fails to
conform to the requirements of the RFP, then the SDE reserves the right to consider
the proposal a non-response.
The SDE’s evaluation process will select the vendor based upon the best overall value
presented in the submitted proposals. Factors considered will include, but not be
limited to, conformance to RFP requirements, financial viability of company, references,
and service/support capabilities (customer service support, delivery capabilities,
technology capabilities, and reporting) and willingness to base price on the models
provided.

2.3 Request for Proposals (RFP) Amendments and Cancellation
2.3.1 The SDE reserves the right to amend this Request for Proposals at any time.

2.3.2 The SDE also reserves the right to cancel and/or reissue this Request for
Proposals at its sole discretion.

2.3.3 Any amendments or cancellations by the SDE regarding this Request for
Proposals will be made via Web site postings at http://accessdl.state.al.us or
www.alsde.edu.
3. **Vendor Submission Instructions and Format**

3.1. **Instructions and Conditions Governing Proposal Submission**

3.1.1. **RFP Coordinator**

Joan Greene  
Alabama Department of Education  
Technology Initiatives  
P.O. Box 302101  
5351 Gordon Persons Building  
Montgomery, AL 36130  
Phone: 334-242-9594  
Fax: 334-353-5886  
jgreene@alsde.edu

3.1.2. **Submission Conditions**

Proposals are to be submitted in the format as designated in this RFP. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

3.1.3. **Questions & Inquiries**

All interested vendors should indicate their interest in responding to this RFP by registering. To register, interested vendors should complete the Vendor Participation Acknowledgment Form in Section 1 and FAX the completed form to the RFP Coordinator (see 3.1.1). Those interested vendors who properly complete and deliver this form to the SDE will receive a link and login to a specific Web site via return e-mail or FAX (if such valid information is provided). All questions and inquiries regarding this document should be submitted as they occur through the provided Web site. By the use of such Web site the questions and any responses specific to the terms and conditions, process, procedures, language, specifications, and other parts of the RFP shall be made public and will be shared with other registered vendors. Questions may be received on the Web site until three days before the scheduled RFP opening, with final response to those date sensitive questions two days prior to the RFP deadline. After this date questions may not be answered. All questions and inquiries regarding this document should be submitted in writing to the Web site or via e-mail to the RFP Coordinator listed above.

It is the responsibility of vendors to inquire about and have clarified information, data, and the requirements of this Request for Proposal that are not understood. If there are questions concerning the use of the Web site or the content of this document, direct all inquiries to jgreene@alsde.edu. The SDE will not consider any verbal response or communications between interested vendors and any SDE staff member or other related parties as binding. All communication concerning this RFP must be in written format by mail or e-mail and through the RFP Coordinator listed above.

**Note:** Relevant questions and responses will be provided to all vendors on the SDE Web site. The SDE will not be bound by oral responses.
3.1.4. Copies of Proposal

The vendor’s response to this Request for Proposal and all attachments are to be in the form of five (5) entire original documents with original signature(s) and two (2) CD’s of the entire proposal in a digital format. The format of the response should adhere to the instructions and format provided in this RFP. A legally authorized representative of the vendor must sign the proposal (see cover page).

3.1.5. Delivery of Proposal

Proposals shall be addressed as stated on the cover page of this RFP in a sealed package(s). Delivery of proposal is to be made on or before RFP Due Date (see cover sheet) at the close of business.

Business hours for receipt of proposals are: 8a.m. – 5p.m. Central Standard Time. Offers shall be hand delivered, express mailed, or otherwise sent to arrive prior to closing time on the RFP Due Date. Fax, e-mail, verbal, or similar type response will not be accepted. See cover page for additional information concerning delivery.

3.1.6. Costs of Submission

Any and all costs incurred by the vendor in the preparation and delivery of the submission or in anticipation of receiving a contract from the SDE are those of the vendor and will not be reimbursed by the SDE.

3.1.7. Innovations or Creativity

Innovative ideas, new concepts, and partnership arrangements other than those presented in this document may be considered. For example, these might include unique educational features, special services, discounts, or terms and conditions specific to each Vendor.

3.1.8. Value-Added Arrangements

Please indicate any other value-added arrangements, unique educational features, sponsorship arrangements, and special services, discounts or terms and conditions that could be combined with this RFP. All optional arrangements should be described separately in a stand-alone, clearly marked section of the response.

3.1.9. Formal Presentations

As part of the evaluation process a formal presentation from selected vendor(s) may be requested. Selected vendor(s) should use this presentation to provide further insight regarding their proposal and to clarify any issues.

The SDE is interested in implementation and functionality of the most current released version.

Demonstration needs:

1 – Vendor’s diagram showing programmatic flow of stated features
2 – Demonstration CD - showing step-by-step how to perform the functions
3 – Online environment setup for evaluators to validate performance, ease of use, and true integration of the stated feature set.
3.1.10. Access for Evaluation

If requested, vendor will provide online access to a ‘live’ installation of the products outlined in their response. Access for evaluation must be provided free of charge. The request will be reasonable and sufficient to undertake an appropriate evaluation. If a vendor has a limit on how many may access the system simultaneously, such limitations should be provided in the response.

Access should minimally include the following roles:

- Learner
- Designer
- Teacher
- Administrator

Evaluators will require access to vendor’s toll-free technical support during the evaluation stage.

3.2. Proposal Response Format

The instructions set forth in this section prescribe the format to be followed by each vendor in the preparation and presentation of the RFP. These instructions are not intended to limit the contents of a proposal response, but rather to insure that all pertinent information essential for evaluation is included. Vendor’s submissions must include a detailed table of contents of SDE’s requested information formulated in the same order as it is requested in this RFP. Each tab of the vendor’s response should be labeled with the section header of the RFP.

Ex:

Tab 1: Response to Section 4.1 - Executive Summary
Tab 2: Response to Section 4.2 – Company Background

Accompanying materials and additional information deemed necessary to complement a vendor’s response must be clearly labeled and included as an addendum or exhibit. Responses to this RFP should be specific providing a straightforward, complete, and concise description of the vendor’s and proposed software’s ability to meet the requirements of the RFP and the functional specifications identified. Responses indicating only that the requirement is “met by” or “provided for” without a full explanation will be considered unacceptable.

Each requirement of the RFP shall be individually addressed. Response forms provided and formats described must be used. If requested information is the same for more than one area, indicate such, but do not duplicate previously provided information.

**Note:** Proposals that do not adhere to the order and format requests identified could be disqualified. Please note that the “Original” RFP shall prevail.

3.2.1. Uniformity

To provide uniformity and to facilitate comparison of Proposals, all information submitted must clearly refer to the page number, section, or other identifying reference in this RFP. All information submitted must be noted in the same sequence as it appears in this RFP.
4. **Required Vendor Submission**

4.1. **Executive Summary – (Response Tab 1)**

   This shall consist of a concise non-technical summary providing a management overview of the proposal; a description of products offered in the Agreement; and a detailed summary of the pricing policies, pricing level(s), discounts, net pricing and price lists, including a comparison of the offer to other agreements the vendor may have and make available to the SDE.

4.2. **Company Background – (Response Tab 2)**

   In this section the vendor shall provide background information about the company. Included should be information about past experiences with providing similar needs. Provide percentage of budget that is devoted to Research and Development.

4.3. **Financials – (Response Tab 3)**

   If public, provide copies of the three most recent annual reports. If private, provide copies of the most recent three-year audited financial statements or some documented evidence of financial stability to assure required performance.

4.4. **References – (Response Tab 4)**

   Provide a list of five (5) references pertaining to projects/services provided by the vendor that are of comparable size and similar to the services requested in this RFP. Be sure to include contact name, phone numbers, date implemented, and any other pertinent information.

4.5. **Program Response – (See sections 5 - 7)**

4.5.1. **Technical Considerations (Tab 5)**

4.5.2. **Hosting Moodle (Tab 6)**

4.5.3. **Pricing Response – (Tab 7)**

4.6. **Additional Information (Tab 8)**

   In this section, the vendor should include any additional information deemed necessary to support its proposal.

4.7. **Required Signature Block**

   Vendors must complete all information requested on the cover page including the signature line(s).

   **NOTE:** Failure to complete and sign all signature blocks on the cover page may disqualify vendor’s RFP Response.
5. **Technical Considerations (Tab 5)**

5.1. **Bandwidth Considerations**
Describe any issues that may arise concerning bandwidth:

**Response Area:**

5.2. **Training**
Identify the training that will be included as part of the offer.

What types of training or instruction are required for the users, instructors, system administrators, and other role types?

**Response Area:**

What is the delivery method for this training?

**Response Area:**

What is the availability of this training?

**Response Area:**

What is the cost, if any, of this training?

**Response Area:**

5.3. **Standards**
Provide as much detail as possible about the level of conformance of the product to learning interoperability and content standards and specifications (SCORM 1.2 and 1.3, IMS Enterprise, IMS Content Packaging, IMS QTI, IMS Meta-data, IMS Simple Sequencing, IMS LIP, etc.; list provided at [http://www.imsglobal.org/specifications.cfm](http://www.imsglobal.org/specifications.cfm)). Please include any conformance test results that specify the type and level of conformance at which the product is certified. It is important to report this separately for each different product area that is conforming to the standards. Providing test logs would be a positive.

**Response Area:**

Describe the support for
- RSS
- Web Services (e.g., UDDI, WS*L, SOAP)
- WebDAV
- MARC
- Emerging platform standards

**Response Area:**
Is the respondent a participant in any specifications and/or standards organizations? If so, describe its participation.

Response Area:

5.4. Other Presentation Devices
Identify all devices which are supported for end-users with varying roles. (i.e., PalmOS, Windows CE, Desktop devices, mobile devices, etc.).

Response Area:

5.5. Documentation/Help
Describe the user and technical documentation that is available for the system. Include information on documentation that provides:

- An overview of the system
- Installation/configuration information
- System and database administration
- Technical information on jobs or modules executed
- Data element documentation
- Description of tables and views and the relationship of database entities
- Context sensitive help

Response Area:

Provide a list of the printed and electronic formats (e.g., PDF, HTML, Word, online in the application) in which each documentation set is available. If available online, indicate where and how to access.

Response Area:

Provide limitations on the distribution of documentation.

Response Area:

Describe how the respondent ensures that the documentation provides clear, accurate, and detailed error messages.

Response Area:

Describe how the SDE can modify the help documentation to meet the needs of students, teachers, and administrators.

Response Area:
What documentation is provided with new releases?

Response Area:

Does the respondent provide full documentation in an accessible format for sight disabled?

Response Area:

5.6. Integration

Describe all current integrations with external systems (Student management program, library, voice thread, etc.). Include discussion regarding the integration of the proposed program offered with STI (the Alabama public K-12 statewide student management program currently in place).

Response Area:

Describe willingness and ability to provide seamless integration with other third party tools and software products.

Response Area:

Describe how the optional i-podcast module integrates into Moodle.

Response Area:

5.7. Import/Export

Product must include functions that provide Import, Export, Archive, and Purge capability, using industry standards to enable users to manage their data and easily transition from one platform to another.

Response Area:
6. Vendor Hosting Moodle  (Tab 6)

6.1. Objective
The objective of this proposal is to facilitate use of cost-effective hosting services for the comprehensive Moodle open source software requested in the proposal. Vendor must provide server space to host Moodle and any other required necessary applications. If the SDE decides to move Moodle to its server at any time, the vendor must allow the SDE to retain all material, courses, grades, and information pertaining to Moodle stored on the vendor’s server.

6.2. Questions and Response
Vendor should demonstrate its experience and qualification to provide hosting services. Include a summary of the number and types of clients currently served.

Response Area:

Is vendor’s server proposal a dedicated or shared solution?

Response Area:

Are software upgrades provided at no additional charge to customers? If not, what is the cost to accept an upgrade?

Response Area:

Are there any application licensing costs or issues that a customer would be held responsible for if leasing?

Response Area:

Does vendor’s technical, programming, and support staff qualify as experts in the applications offered, or is the expertise obtained from an external source?

Response Area:

Is vendor able to provide multiple branded sites for client?

Response Area:

Describe vendor’s process for hosting a new application.

Response Area:

Will vendor integrate the applications provided with other software that the vendor does not manage (i.e., STI student management system and associated applications)?

Response Area:

What is vendor’s system scalability for adding additional functions or applications (i.e., streaming video, etc.)?
Indicate vendor’s schedule for:

- System Upgrades
- Software Upgrades
- Scheduled Maintenance

**Response Area:**

Indicate if there is any client down-time and if so, average down-time in minutes for vendor’s scheduled:

- System Upgrades
- Software Upgrades
- Scheduled Maintenance

**Response Area:**

What advance notice is provided to customers prior to system upgrades, software upgrades, and scheduled maintenance?

**Response Area:**

How many data centers does vendor operate, and what are their locations?

**Response Area:**

What measures are in place to prevent vendor’s employees from viewing or distributing data that they are not authorized to see or distribute?

**Response Area:**

What measures are currently in place to prevent outsiders from hacking into the vendor’s system(s)?

**Response Area:**

What Disaster and Recovery Plan is in place in case data is deleted or destroyed, and what recourse is available to customers whose data is not recoverable?

**Response Area:**

Does vendor supply all services necessary to deliver an application or will the SDE be required to dedicate staff, full-time or part-time, to support the solution?

**Response Area:**

Describe vendor’s data connectivity and capacity. Include discussion of redundant network paths. Specify the bandwidths currently available, and planned upgrades for future growth potential:

**Response Area:**
Provide a copy of vendor’s procedures to control Internet fraud, abuse, and address complaint investigations:

**Response Area:**

Provide a copy of vendor’s Acceptable Use or similar policy:

**Response Area:**

Describe the process and procedure for providing security to facilities.

**Response Area:**

Describe the process and procedure for providing security on server and related equipment.

**Response Area:**

Describe the process and procedure for providing security on software.

**Response Area:**

Describe the process and procedure for providing security on network.

**Response Area:**

Describe the process and procedure for securing copyrighted materials in the Moodle environment.

**Response Area:**

Vendors are required to indicate what is included in any system or equipment setup and in installation services, including related costs. Vendors must minimally include:

- List of services provided in the setup fee
- Average time period between setup/installation service request and the beginning of the process by technicians
- Average time required to complete setup, installation, testing, and to bring all components and services to full operational status
- Service levels, including installation deadlines and credits for missed deadlines

**Response Area:**

Does your SLA address the following:

- Purpose of SLA
- Description of service
- Duration of service
- Start/End dates for service
- Installation timetable
- Payment terms
- Termination conditions
• Legal issues such as warranties, indemnity, limitation of liability, etc.

Response Area:

Does your SLA provide the following:

• Specified level of customer support
• Provisions for system and data security
• Guaranteed level of system performance (i.e., sub-second response time)
• Continuous system availability (i.e., 24 x 7 x 365)

Response Area:

Does your SLA provide for creating and branding new sites as needed?

Response Area:

If the SDE decides to move Moodle to its server at any time, the vendor must allow the SDE to retain all material, courses, grades, and information pertaining to Moodle stored on the vendor’s server. Is the vendor willing to do this?

Response Area:

Vendors are required to include a sample copy of their SLA as part of the RFP response under the tab for Section 6.2.

6.3. Security and Privacy:

Describe vendor’s process to ensure confidentiality and privacy of student records and personal data.

Response Area:
7. **Pricing Proposal (Tab 7)**

Based on the specifications for a turnkey vendor-hosted package of the comprehensive LMS/LOR package as described within this request for proposal, provide vendor pricing in the tables below. Enter the minimal number of business days lead time needed to begin services or minimal number of days needed for installation and setup.

Scenario – 100* Courses – 10,000* Concurrent Users with approximately 75* teachers and administrators (reflects total of all groups)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vendor-Hosted Pricing Submission and Response</th>
<th>Minimum Number of Days Needed for Setup:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Installation, Maintenance,</strong> Setup Fees <strong>(One Time/annual)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Help Desk/Support (annual)</strong></td>
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*SDE cannot guarantee exact quantities of courses and users (teachers, students, administrators, etc.). Provide “per user” banded pricing as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Per User Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7000 - 8000</td>
<td>$________ per user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8001 – 9000</td>
<td>$________ per user</td>
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<td>9001 – 10000</td>
<td>$________ per user</td>
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<td>10001 – 12000</td>
<td>$________ per user</td>
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<td>16001 – 18000</td>
<td>$________ per user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18001 – 20000</td>
<td>$________ per user</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20000 + users</td>
<td>$________ per user</td>
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**In detail and with an itemized list describe the charges included within the “Other Charges (annual)” item above (such as third party tools necessary to meet specifications of this proposal).**

Describe any other available optional or add-ons not specified within the document as required and the pricing of such add-ons. These are not required and will not be considered during evaluation of responses.

**Comments:**
8. **Additional Information**

In this section, the vendor should include any additional information deemed necessary to support its proposal.
9. RFP Evaluation

The evaluation of the proposal responses will be done by a committee designated by the SDE and the ACCESS committee. The entire evaluation and award process will adhere to the bid laws as stated within the Code of Alabama, 1975. The award will be made to the lowest responsible bidder, taking into consideration the qualities of the commodities proposed to be supplied, their conformity with specifications and the purposes for which required, and the dates of delivery provided.

9.1. Evaluation Criteria

The proposals received will be evaluated using the following factors with indicated weight in scoring:

- Adherence to RFP requirements (Required)
- Pricing Offered (20)
- Service, Support, Product Warranty and Maintenance meets all specifications in Sections 5 and 6 (45)
- Order Placement/Delivery/Installation meets all specifications in Section 6 (10)
- Qualifications, References, Experience, and Past Performance (25)