Company Background

The company who seeks to receive your proposal was established over 10 years ago to develop, sell and support medical imaging equipment for use in hospital laboratories around the world. It employs over 500 people in 4 US locations (plus has need to communicate with 500 other people—customers, partners and resellers in another 40 locations—20 in US, 20 elsewhere around the world). It has an Intranet connecting the headquarters in Chicago, IL with the 3 satellite locations, but given this is taxed with large file transfers (CAD files, images) each of these also has T1 access to the Internet through independently negotiated agreements with regional or national ISPs. All the customers, partners and reseller locations have access to a password protected extranet.

The products it has since brought to market are gaining in acceptance due to the company's outstanding ability to execute new features quickly, but the system itself is complex to install, use and maintain.

The Opportunities

The potential market share and revenues from product sales is significantly larger than this company has been able to capture to date.

- It has opportunities to increase revenues through new customer acquisition strategies, including streaming media presentations (one-to-many and one-to-one), by introducing the existing product line to new facilities under construction or facilities that are expanding capabilities.
- New products targeted to other parts of customer facilities (hospitals), such as in surgical suites and advanced cancer treatment centers, are ready to be launched. The sales cycle time could be as long as 18 months, but the company aims to close most deals in 12 months or less.
- It also has opportunity to reduce overhead associated with maintaining existing equipment in the field by offering trouble shooting (Customer Support Services) via streaming media or live video from the customer location to the service center help desk technician.

One of the constraints to the introduction of its latest technology is that, like competitors, it uses radioactive isotopes in the imaging process. As part of its compliance with government regulations, employees as well as the employees of customers must demonstrate ongoing education/training.

In the first phase of this relationship the focus is on the employee and customer training application for government compliance, however, some of the questions will be more closely tied to future applications. US market is first target, but international reach is a key ingredient of the customer's long-term plans.

The Phase 1 Application

Over 1,000 people will have to complete 4 30-minute training events *per month* starting January 1, 2001. One of the modules/events must be live and others can be on demand.

For on-demand modules to be hosted on the streaming network, 10 new 30-minute video courses will be available in video format (Beta tapes (analog), linear, tutorials) with accompanying slides in PPT format on November 1, 2000. Each quarter 10 additional courses will need to be added to the video archives. The producer will need to send the original tapes out (to the CDN service provider or to another service bureau) for encoding/compression [in two formats, three data rates: 40kbps, 100kbps, 300kbps].

The company compliance group will create HTML pages for viewer registration, or use service provider supplied templates/tools. These are not database specialists, but they will need to provide the regulatory agency with records of attendance. When the video files are available, the will need to be presented in such a way that the viewer can proceed through the content in sequence, with the ability to review previously passed modules. Compliance group personnel will also have a list of terms they will want to have associated with different sections of each module (to support viewer and asset managers who want to search the library).

There will multiple choice comprehension quiz at the conclusion of each module and users will need to be able to search the archives for key concepts they may need to review. Over time the training/e-learning technology will need a way to create unique content for viewers who have been through certain modules but not others. Third party e-learning solutions are being evaluated and partnerships with streaming media service providers will be one of the criteria for selection.

If 1,000 viewers were to begin today, the demand for streaming services would be 3,000 30-min on-demand sessions/month or 1,500 hrs/month. Due to distribution of people in time zones and shifts, viewing could be distributed over a 20 hr/day period (20 hrs x 21 business days/month= 420 hrs/month). We feel that it is fair to estimate that there would be as much as 50 simultaneous viewers on any stream at any time in the month.

The 24 remote user locations in the US are listed in the table below. The company does not know the data rate of individual locations but feels confident that some will be viewing over dial up modems.

San Jose, CA	Denver, CO	Madison, WI	St. Petersburg, FL
Los Angeles, CA	Salt Lake City, UT	St. Louis, MO	Atlanta, GA
Seattle, WA	Phoenix, AZ	New Orleans, LA	Cleveland, OH
Portland, OR	Boise, ID	Dallas, TX	New York, NY
Reno, NV	Detroit, MI	Austin, TX	Boston, MA
Albuquerque, NM	Omaha, NE	Knoxville, TN	Pittsburgh, PA

Since some of the viewers/audience will be in third party businesses, we want to ensure that there are no issues with security breaches while the streaming media is delivered.

The Proposal—Overview

Although the company may elect to keep or develop support for some of these processes internally, it seeks your proposal for:

- all original content acquisition (from Beta or DVD to streaming media format),
- content and database storage,
- indexing/searching,
- reliable, consistent distribution and delivery (from hyperlinks embedded in the training pages on our secure—password protected—corporate portal to the viewer's desk top)

Time frame: A proposal should quote a fee for a pilot phase to last 30 days December 1-31, 2000. Upon successful completion of the trial, the company will seek a one-year contract, starting on January 1, 2001. We will need a quote for this one-year service agreement.

Fees: The quote must reflect all fees and terms (payment plans, penalties, etc.) in US currency.

Options and concerns: In addition to the application described above, growth is anticipated so the company seeks assurances that the service provider has a scalable strategy. Also, during the first phase of its relationship with a Streaming Media Service provider, the company will be doing the live training events in person (on site, quarterly), as it has been doing for the past 4 years. However, trainers do anticipate going to live broadcasts (webcasts) and recording the live (on site and virtual) events for future usage in on demand scenarios or for review/documentation purposes. Therefore, the company needs to obtain the service provider's rates for all these different options.

Service Level Agreements: We would like to see SLAs included with your proposal. We would also like to understand the agreements that the service provider has in place with OTHER service providers critical to the delivery of the full solution.

Due Date: No more than 5 business days from the day the RFP is issued to the service provider.

Criteria for Selection

The company will choose the service provider based on technical merits (architecture of network, security, redundancy, capacity) and business considerations (application development, costs, ability to do business).

The assessment of these will be made based on the written proposal and remote (video) interview with the company's representative (PEREY Research & Consulting).

Technical Capabilities

Technical capabilities include network specifications and performance metrics.

Network specifications

Please explain the network architecture you offer (overlay? centralized or distributed?), giving details about the following:

- advantage(s) the network architecture and technology provide versus a centralized or distributed network
- Location of servers, data centers
- Any proprietary software – e.g. intelligent mapping –integral to the network architecture for
    - ensuring lossless streams
    - avoiding single point of failure (replicate streams? If so, how?)
- provisions made for redundancy and scalability in the network (partnerships or peering agreements?)
- Capacity of network (miles? how do you measure the capacity of your network? Does it include the partnerships)
- Data rates the network sustains (100k, 300k, 1 meg)
- Support for multiple simultaneous users
    - Maximum capacity for standard live broadcast
    - Maximum capacity for live interactive broadcast

Performance and Availability

Please describe performance (in terms of delay, for example) and network availability. Does any software need to be loaded at customer sites to ensure proper monitoring?

Can Quality of Service levels be specified? If so what are the suggested min-max levels, given the application requirements?

Please submit a sample Service Level Agreement with the above details, if it is available. Include clauses for timely reporting (see below) and data recovery in the SLA.

Describe how and how often network performance and SLA compliance are measured.
Ensure that there is a problem resolution guarantee time in the SLA, and state the customer's requirements (expected customer involvement) to resolve any issue.

Describe penalties/customer recourse for SLA breaches.
Please detail fail over/disaster recovery procedures as well as problem escalation processes.

Application Services

Please confirm that service provider has all capabilities to support the application requirements provided above. Explain system offered by vendor or vendor's partner(s) to provision application services. Include details about:

- Content templates, customization capabilities (how is branding "Look and Feel" done?)
- Audio/Video/Presentation synchronization, supported formats (e.g. Microsoft Powerpoint, HTML, Flash)
- Agenda creation tools
- Registration

Content Management and Manipulation Services

- Archival capabilities
- search/index

Security

Describe the security measures in place to protect information sent from audience as well as that streamed over the network.

Describe authentication and access control services offered. Are there multiple levels or types of security? If so, describe each in detail.

Reporting

Please list information reported in the proposed solution (network delivery, application and user/attendance data).
Please describe real-time and historical reporting tools.

- the availability of on-line reporting (Real-time? 1 hr? daily?)
- level of detail: is reporting per access basis, per account basis, per user basis, per application, per geographic region?
- How is the reporting integrated with customer business objectives?
- Does the report tell where surfer/viewer came from?
- Can company's network administrator download summary of data and raw data logs (Comma delimited files, standard HTML formats) and put them into the enterprise's own databases?

Describe how the company can customize reports/detail tracking (for example, the QoS level on different network segments, for security, for real-time chat)

Customer References

Please provide contact information for 3 customers who can be contacted to describe relationship and service performance/track-record of service provider.