

Step-by-step instructions for use of the Challenge.Gov Challenge Manager portal and system features.

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I. GETTING STARTED

A. Create Your Challenge Manager Account

NOTE: Challenge.Gov uses Login.gov to provide account and system access to users. [Visit Login.gov for more information.](#)

1. From the [Challenge.Gov](#) homepage, click the “**My account**” button in the upper right corner.
2. Click the “**Accept and Sign-in**” button to acknowledge the terms of use.
3. Click the “**Create an account**” button.
4. Enter your government email address (.mil or .gov required).
5. Check the box to accept the [Login.gov Rules of Use](#).
6. Click the [**Submit**] button.
7. Check your email for a message from Login.gov with the subject line “Confirm your email”.
NOTE: Please allow a few minutes for this email to arrive, and be sure to check any special email filters you may have (e.g. social, forums, spam, etc.).
8. Click the “**Confirm email address**” button in the email message. This will take you back to the Login.Gov website.
9. Enter your desired Login.gov / Challenge.Gov password.
10. Click the [**Continue**] button.
11. Follow the onscreen prompts to set up a second layer of security. Visit [Login.gov help](#) to learn more about each authentication option.
12. Enter the one-time security code from your selected authentication method.
13. Click the “**Submit**” button
14. Click the “**Agree and continue**” button to send your new account request to the Challenge.Gov Support Team. This will take you back to Challenge.Gov. A “Your account is pending approval” message will appear on the screen.
NOTE: Please allow up to 2 business days for your request to be processed by the Challenge.Gov Support Team.

B. Log in to the Challenge Manager Portal

1. From the [Challenge.Gov](#) homepage, click [**My account**] in the upper right corner
2. Click [**Accept and Sign-in**] to acknowledge the terms of use
3. Enter the **Email address** and **Password** associated with your account
4. Click [**Sign in**]
5. Authenticate your account using the security method you selected when you created your account.

C. Log out of Your Challenge.Gov Account

1. Click [**Your email address**] in the upper right corner
2. Select [**Logout**] from the account menu

II. CHALLENGE MANAGEMENT

A. Create a New Challenge

This feature allows you to create a challenge tile that will appear on the [Challenge.Gov](#) homepage, as well as a detailed challenge profile. When setting up your challenge you will have options for: challenge publication date & time; single or multiple phase challenges; collection of submissions via Challenge.Gov or an external challenge site; default or custom challenge URL.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the **“Create a new challenge”** button.
2. Follow the on-screen prompts to enter your challenge details starting with *General Info*. See the **Challenge Template** for additional information regarding each of the data fields.
NOTE: For long text fields there is a WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) editor that allows you to adjust the font size and format, create bulleted and numbered lists, indent text, and add hyperlinks.
3. After completing each section, click the **“Next”** button in the bottom right of the page. A progress bar appears at the top of the page letting you know which sections have been completed, and which steps remain.
NOTE: You can click the **“Save Draft”** link at any point to save and continue working at a later time.
4. Once all sections have been completed, review your challenge details.
 - a. If edits are needed, click the **“Edit”** link to the right of the section you wish to edit. This will return you to that section of the Challenge Creation Wizard. Once your needed edits have been made, return to step 3 above.
5. Click the **“Preview”** button in the bottom right to view the challenge as it will appear on Challenge.Gov.
NOTE: The preview page will also contain a link you can share with other team members for internal agency review.
6. Once the necessary agency approvals have been received, click the **“Submit”** button in the bottom right to submit the challenge for review by the Challenge.Gov Support Team.
NOTE: The Challenge.Gov Support team will review your challenge for general content clarity, visibility of graphics, and significant spelling and grammatical errors.

Please allow up to 2 business days for your request to be processed by the Challenge.Gov Support Team. Upon completion of the review, the team will either **“Approve”** for posting or **“Recommend Edits”**

- If **Approved**, your challenge will automatically go live on the **Publish Date** you entered when creating your challenge.
- If **Edits Requested**, you will receive an email notification detailing the recommendations. Refer to the **Edit Your Challenge** section of this manual for instructions for updating your challenge content and resubmitting for review.

B. Edit a Draft Challenge & Submit for Review

This feature allows you to edit a challenge in **Draft** or **GSA Review** status, and submit the challenge for Review by the Challenge.Gov Support Team.

NOTE: Editing a challenge in **GSA Review** will revert it to **Draft** status. Once your desired edits are made, you will need to re-submit your challenge for review.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**View**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit. This will take you to the *Challenge Info* page for your selected Challenge.
3. Click the “**Edit**” button in the *Other Actions* box in the upper right. This will open the Challenge Creation Wizard.
4. Review and update challenge details within each section as needed.
5. Click the “**Next**” button in the bottom right of the page to proceed to the next section. A progress bar appears at the top of the page letting you know which sections have been completed, and which steps remain.
6. Once all sections have been completed, review your challenge details.
 - a. If edits are needed, click the “**Edit**” link to the right of the section you wish to edit. This will return you to that section of the Challenge Creation Wizard. Once your needed edits have been made, return to step 5 above.
7. Click the “**Preview**” button in the bottom right to view the challenge as it will appear on Challenge.Gov.

NOTES:

- The preview will open in a new tab.
 - The preview page will also contain a link you can share with other team members for internal agency review.
8. Once the necessary agency approvals have been received, click the “**Submit**” button in the bottom right to submit the challenge for review by the Challenge.Gov Support Team.

NOTE: The Challenge.Gov Support team will review your challenge for general content clarity, visibility of graphics, and significant spelling and grammatical errors.

NOTE: Please allow up to 2 business hours/days for your request to be processed by the Challenge.Gov Support Team. Upon completion of the review, the team will either “**Approve**” for posting or “**Recommend Edits**”

- If **Approved**, your challenge will automatically go live on the **Publish Date** you entered when creating your challenge.
- If **Edits Requested**, you will receive an email notification detailing the recommendations. Refer to the **Edit Your Challenge** section of this manual for instructions for updating your challenge content and resubmitting for review.

C. Delete a Draft Challenge

This feature allows you to delete a challenge that is in **Draft** status.

NOTE: Only challenges in “draft” status can be deleted. Once submitted for review, this feature will become inactive.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**More options**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit.
3. Select “**Delete**” from the options list.
4. Click the “**OK**” button in the alert message box to confirm your desire to delete this challenge draft.

D. Make Updates to an Open Challenge

This feature allows you to make edits to a challenge in **Published, open** status.

NOTE: Once updates have been made, you can use the **Announcement** and **Bulletin** features to notify potential solvers.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the **“Challenge Management”** button.
2. Click the **“View”** Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit. This will take you to the *Challenge Info* page for your selected Challenge.
3. Click the **“Edit”** link to the right of the section you wish to edit. This will return you to that section of the Challenge Creation Wizard.
4. Click the **“Save and return to review”** button at the bottom of the page when you have completed making the needed edits.

NOTE: Changes will go live immediately upon clicking **“Save and return to review.”**

E. Print Challenge Listing

This feature allows you to print a copy or create a PDF file with a preview of your *Challenge Tile* and full *Challenge Listing*.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the **“Challenge Management”** button.
2. Click the **“More options”** Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit.
3. Select **“Print”** from the options list.
4. From the print preview, select the print **Destination** then click the **“Print”** button.

NOTE: Select **“Save as PDF”** to create a PDF file.

F. Download Challenge Profile (CSV, JSON)

This feature allows you to export your challenge listing content as either a [comma-separated values \(CSV\)](#) or [JavaScript Object Notation \(JSON\)](#) file.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the **“Challenge Management”** button.
2. Click the **“More options”** Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit.
3. Select your desired file format (**“Download CSV”** or **“Download JSON”**) from the options list.

NOTE: Your challenge file will download automatically to your computer’s default download folder.

G. Add a Challenge Announcement

This feature allows you to add an important update or announcement (up to 150 characters) at the top of your challenge profile. Announcements will display at the top of your challenge page for two (2) weeks from the date you publish it (unless removed by you prior to that time - see the Edit an Announcement Section. For active challenges, an **Important Update** banner will also appear on your Challenge tile on the [Challenge.Gov](#) homepage.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the **“Challenge Management”** button.

2. Click the “**View**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit. This will take you to the *Challenge Info* page for your selected Challenge.
3. Click the “**Add/Edit Announcement**” button in the *Other Actions* box in the upper right.
4. Enter the text you’d like displayed in **Banner update text** box
5. Click the “**Publish**” button in the lower right.
6. Click the “**OK**” button in the alert message box to confirm your desire to post this update.

NOTE: The system does not automatically notify your challenge followers when an announcement is posted to your challenge listing. Should you wish to ensure followers of your challenge are aware of the announcement, you can send them a bulletin email. Refer to section **V.A - Send Bulletin to Followers of Your Challenge** for more information.

H. Edit a Challenge Announcement

This feature will allow you to edit a challenge announcement that is currently active.

NOTE: Making an update will extend the display period for your announcement for an additional two (2) weeks.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**View**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit. This will take you to the *Challenge Info* page for your selected Challenge.
3. Click the “**Add/Edit Announcement**” button in the *Other Actions* box in the upper right.
4. Update the text in **Banner update text** box
5. Click the “**Publish**” button in the lower right.
6. Click the “**OK**” button in the alert message box to confirm your desire to post this update.

I. Remove a Challenge Announcement Manually

Announcements will automatically be removed from your challenge after two (2) weeks. This feature will allow you to manually remove an announcement prior to that time.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**View**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit. This will take you to the *Challenge Info* page for your selected Challenge.
3. Click the “**Add/Edit Announcement**” button in the *Other Actions* box in the upper right.
4. Click the “**Remove Update**” button at the bottom of the *Announcement* box.
5. Click the “**OK**” button in the alert message box to confirm your desire to remove this announcement.

J. Add Winner Information

This feature will allow you to add a *Winners* page to your challenge profile. On this page you can display a **Winners Description**, **Winners Overview Image** and/or **Individual Winners** (including name, rank and/or photo) for your challenge.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**View**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit. This will take you to the *Challenge Info* page for your selected Challenge.
3. Click the “**Add Winners**” button in the *Other Actions* box in the upper right.

4. Click the “**Manage Winners**” button for the Phase you wish to update.
5. Follow the on-screen prompts to enter your winner information.
NOTE: For long text fields there is a WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) editor that allows you to adjust the font size and format, create bulleted and numbered lists, indent text, and add hyperlinks.
6. Once all winner information has been added, click the “**Review + Publish**” button at the bottom of the page to push your update live.

K. Add Additional Challenge Managers

The Challenge.Gov platform supports having multiple challenge managers for a single prize competition - be they from the same or a different government agency.

To add additional challenge managers:

1. Have the person who needs to be added create a Challenge.Gov Challenge Manager account
2. The challenge manager who initially created the listing sends an email request to team@challenge.gov with following:
 - a. Subject Line: “Request to add additional challenge manager”
 - b. Challenge Name
 - c. Name of Challenge Manager to be added
 - d. Email address of Challenge Manager to be added (must be the address used to create the user account).

L. Grant Access to a Contractor Without a .gov or .mil Email

Federal Challenge Managers can request that contractors without a government email account (.mil or .gov) be granted special access to allow them to help with challenge creation and management. However, only a user with a full Challenge Manager account (someone with a government-.gov or .mil-email) can submit challenges for official review and approval by the Challenge.Gov Support Team.

NOTE: Contractors who are operating in an official government capacity, and have a .gov or .mil email, will be able to obtain a Challenge Manager account with full permissions.

To request access for a contractor without a.gov or .mil email:

1. Have the person who needs to be added create a Challenge.Gov public solver account
 - a. **NOTE:** The process for creating a public solver account is the same as for a challenge manager account. The exceptions being: (1) requiring use of a government email; (2) needing approval by the Challenge.Gov Support Team.
2. The challenge manager who initially created the listing sends an email request to team@challenge.gov with following:
 - a. Subject Line: “Request to activate contractor account”
 - b. Challenge Name
 - c. Name of person to be added
 - d. Email address of person to be added (must be the address used to create the user account)

III. MANAGE SUBMISSIONS VIA CHALLENGE.GOV

A. Collecting Solver Submissions

This feature will allow you to collect public solver submissions to your challenge via the Challenge.Gov portal.

NOTE: By default Challenge.Gov facilitates collection of submissions via the platform. Should you prefer to collect and manage public solver submissions external to the Challenge.Gov platform see **Section IV. Manage Submissions External to Challenge.Gov.**

The submission form is standard across all challenges. Data fields included on the submission form are as follows - all fields are required unless noted otherwise:

- **Title** - Open text field to provide a name for the submission
- **Brief Description** (up to 500 characters, text editor tool available) - This serves as a brief summary of the submission
- **Description** (no character limit, text editor tool available) - Detailed submission content
- **Upload files** (optional) - Allowed file types: pdf, .txt, .csv, .jpg, .png, .tiff
- **External URL** (optional)
- **Acknowledgement of Rules, Terms & Conditions** - A link is provided to the **Rules** tab of your challenge listing allowing participants to review the details before acknowledging

NOTES:

- If there are specific pieces of information you wish to collect, you can include a submission template as part of your “How to Enter” instructions detailing the information solvers must provide. The completed form can then be uploaded and included as part of their submission.
- You should limit the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) solvers are requested to provide as part of the submission process. Examples of PII that should generally not be collected via the Challenge.Gov submission form include: SSN, financial documents, agreements, participant address. You should also consult your agency’s Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) office for review and approval of any questions solvers are asked to answer.
- You will be able to view submissions while the submission period is open, however, public solvers are able to revise their submissions at any point prior to the submission deadline. Therefore, you will only be able to download submissions and progress them through the challenge phases once the submission period has closed.

B. View Submissions

This feature will allow you to view public solver submissions to your challenge.

NOTE: You will be able to view submissions while the submission period is open, however, public solvers are able to revise their submissions at any point prior to the submission deadline. Therefore, you will only be able to download submissions and progress them through the challenge phases once the submission period has closed.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**More options**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to work with.
3. Select “**View Submissions**” from the options list.
4. **If multi-phase challenge (skip to next step if single-phase challenge)**, click the “**Manage Submissions**” button for the phase you wish to work with.
5. Click the **Title** of the submission you wish to review.

C. Download Submission Details

This feature will allow you to download public solver submission details and attachments for viewing outside of the Challenge.Gov platform.

NOTE: You will be able to view submissions while the submission period is open, however, public solvers are able to revise their submissions at any point prior to the submission deadline. Therefore, you will only be able to download submissions and progress them through the challenge phases once the submission period has closed.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**More options**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to work with.
3. Select “**View Submissions**” from the options list.
4. Click the “**Download**” button at the top left of the page.
5. Click the “**Create New Download**” button at the top of the page.
6. Follow the on-screen prompts to indicate which submissions you wish to download.
7. Click the “**Create Download**” button at the bottom of the page.
8. Once the download **Status** says “Completed”, click the “**Download**” link

NOTES:

- Press the [F5] key on your keyboard to refresh the screen and update the status.
- Your file will download automatically to your computer’s default download folder.

D. Progress Submissions Through Challenge Phases

This feature will allow you to progress submissions through the various phases marking them as appropriate as “Selected for Judging”, “Selected for Next Phase” (for multi-phase challenges), and “Awardee”.

NOTE: You will be able to view submissions while the submission period is open, however, public solvers are able to revise their submissions at any point prior to the submission deadline. Therefore, you will only be able to download submissions and progress them through the challenge phases once the submission period has closed.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**More options**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to work with.
3. Select “**View Submissions**” from the options list.
4. **If multi-phase challenge (skip to next step if single-phase challenge)**, click the “**Manage Submissions**” button for the challenge phase you wish to work with.
5. Click the appropriate tab in the middle of the screen to select the evaluation phase you wish to work with.
6. Click the “**Add**” button to the right of the submission title to progress it to the next evaluation phase.

NOTE: Once the “**Add**” button is clicked, the button will turn grey and change to “**Selected**”. To deselect and return the submission to a prior evaluation phase, click the “**Selected**” button.

D. Manage Invites for Next Phase (Multi-phase Challenges)

For multi-phase challenges, this feature will allow you to invite participants to submit an entry for the next phase. This feature will send an email to the person who submitted the entry via the Challenge.Gov public solver portal.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**More options**” Actions button for the challenge you wish to work with.
3. Select “**View Submissions**” from the options list.
4. Click the “**Manage Submissions**” button for the challenge phase you wish to work with.
5. Click the “**Selected for Next Phase**” tab
6. Click the “**Manage Invited for Next Phase**” button
7. Click the checkbox next to the solver(s) you wish to send an invite to
 - a. **NOTE:** Participants will not be able to see the email addresses or other identifying information of other invited participants.
8. Enter your email content in the “**Invite Message**” field.

NOTE: The WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) editor allows you to adjust the font size and format, create bulleted and numbered lists, indent text, and add hyperlinks.
9. Click the “**Send Invite**” button.

NOTE: This will automatically queue your message to be sent, so be sure to review your content carefully before clicking “**Send Invite**”.

E. Manage Communications with Challenge Participants

This feature will allow you to send and track messages with challenge participants. Once sent, challenge participants can view and reply to your message via the *Message Center* in the Public Solver portal.

NOTE: This feature is only available for prize challenges collecting submissions via the Challenge.Gov platform.

i. Send a New Message

This feature will allow you to send a new message to challenge participants.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Message Center**” button.
2. Click the “**New Message**” button at the top left of the page
3. Select the challenge you wish to work with from the “**Select Your Challenge**” dropdown list.
4. Click the appropriate radio button to indicate if you wish to send the message to “*All members of this challenge*” or an “*Individual solver of this challenge*”

NOTE: Participants will not be able to see communications with other participants. Sending a message to multiple participants will start a separate message thread with each one.
5. Click the “**New Message**” button at the bottom of the page
6. If you selected “*All members of this challenge*”, skip to step 7. If you selected “*Individual solver of this challenge*”, follow the steps below to select which solver(s) you wish to message:

- a. From the *Submissions* page, select the tab for the submission phase you wish to work with.
 - b. Click the checkbox(es) next to the title(s) of the submission for the participant you want to message.
 - c. Click the “**Message Solvers**” button at the top left of the tab.
7. Enter your message content in the text box at the bottom of the page
- NOTES:**
- The WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) editor allows you to adjust the font size and format, create bulleted and numbered lists, indent text, and add hyperlinks.
 - You can click the “**Save Draft**” link at any point to save and continue working at a later time.
8. Click the “**Send Message**” button at the bottom of the page.
- NOTE:** This will automatically queue your message to be sent, so be sure to review your content carefully before clicking “**Send Message**”.

ii. View & Respond to Messages

This feature will allow you to view and respond to messages from challenge participants.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Message Center**” button.
2. Click the “**Message Snippet**” for the message you wish to work with
 - a. **NOTE:** A history of your conversation will appear at the top of the page
3. To reply, enter your message content in the text box at the bottom of the page

NOTE: The WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) editor allows you to adjust the font size and format, create bulleted and numbered lists, indent text, and add hyperlinks.
4. Click the “**Send Message**” button at the bottom of the page

NOTE: This will automatically queue your message to be sent.

iii. Other Message Center Features

The message center has a number of features to help you filter and manage your messages.

- **Filter by Challenge:** Dropdown list at the top of the page allowing you to filter the list of messages by challenge.
- **Star:** Clicking the *star* icon next to the message date will add it to a special list, allowing you to easily access it by clicking the “**Starred**” link at the top of the page.
- **Mark as Unread:** All unread messages can be easily accessed by clicking the “**Unread**” link at the top of the page. To mark a viewed message as “unread”, hover over the *Message Snippet* and click the **envelope icon**.
- **Archive:** All archived messages can be easily accessed by clicking the “**Archived**” link at the top of the page. To archive a message, hover over the *Message Snippet* and click the **box icon**.
- **Drafts:** All draft messages can be easily accessed by clicking the “**Drafts**” link at the top of the page.

IV. MANAGE SUBMISSIONS EXTERNAL TO CHALLENGE.GOV

NOTE: By default Challenge.Gov facilitates collection of submissions via the platform.

A. Direct Solvers to an External Website

This feature will allow you to deactivate the **Manage Submissions via Challenge.Gov** functionality, and provide a link directing potential solvers to an external challenge website for additional information and submission instructions.

- From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
- Click the “**View**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit. This will take you to the *Challenge Info* page for your selected Challenge.
- Click the “**Edit**” link to the right of the **Details** section. This will open the Challenge Creation Wizard.
- Scroll down to locate the **Existing External Challenge Link** field.
- Enter the full URL for your challenge site into the **Existing External Challenge Link** field.
- Click the “**Save and Return to Review**” button at the bottom of the page.

B. Direct Solvers to Submit via Email

NOTE: This feature is still in development and will be deployed in late October / early November.

V. CONNECT WITH PUBLIC SOLVERS

A. Send Bulletin to Followers of Your Challenge

This feature will allow you to send an email notification to potential solvers and others who have elected to follow your challenge. You can find the number of followers for each challenge in the “**Subscribers**” column of your challenges list.

NOTE: Challenge.Gov uses GovDelivery to support management of challenge followers and facilitate message delivery.

1. From the *Challenge Manager Dashboard*, click the “**Challenge Management**” button.
2. Click the “**More options**” Actions button for the draft challenge you wish to edit.
3. Select “**Send Bulletin**” from the options list.
4. Enter your desired email subject in the “**Subject**” field
5. Enter your email content in the “**Body**” field.
NOTE: The WYSIWYG (What you see is what you get) editor allows you to adjust the font size and format, create bulleted and numbered lists, indent text, and add hyperlinks.
6. Click the “**Submit**” button.
NOTE: This will automatically queue your message to be sent, so be sure to review your content carefully before clicking “**Submit**”.

B. Reply to a Public Solver Question

This feature will allow you to accept and respond to questions from public solvers.

NOTE: Public solvers will be able to submit questions to you via the *Contact* page of your challenge listing. Once submitted, a notification will be sent to the email designated as the “**Point of Contact Email**” when you set up your challenge.

1. Regularly monitor the email account you designated as the “**Point of Contact Email**” when you set up your challenge.

NOTE: The “**Point of Contact Email**” is located on the *General Information* page of the Challenge Creation Wizard. To change your point of contact after your challenge has been published, refer to Section **II.D - Make Updates to an Open Challenge** of this manual.

2. Use your email platform’s “reply” feature to respond to the inquiry as appropriate.

VI. ANALYTICS

This feature will allow you to view a snapshot of Challenge.Gov platform data. If desired, you can filter the data based on: start date, end date, start year, end year, and/or agency.

The following metrics are currently available:

- Total Active
- Total Archived
- Total in Draft
- All Challenges by Year
- Challenges by Primary Type (creative, software/apps, ideas, etc.)
- Challenge by Hosting (on Challenge.Gov or External)
- Total Cash Prizes
- Challenges by Legal Authority (America COMPETES or other)
- Number of Participating Lead Agencies