



Application

41744 - FY17 Region/CVB Marketing Plan - Final Application

44282 - FY17 Whitefish CVB Marketing Plan
 DOC Office of Tourism

Status: Awarded

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Applicant Information

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Comments:

Organization Information

Name:* Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc.

Organization Type: Non-Profit Organization

Organization Website: www.explorewhitefish.com

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Comments:

Community & Brand Support

1. Describe your destination.

Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why would they come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges. How does your destination align with Montana's brand pillars?

The purpose of the Explore Whitefish Marketing Plan is to sustainably grow the economy of Whitefish by emphasizing its desirability as a travel and recreation destination to non-resident visitors who appreciate and respect the character of the place. Our mission is to build a high level of visibility by developing and building support for Whitefish as a premier year-round mountain town. This includes increasing the occupancy for lodging facilities in Whitefish. Established by the City of Whitefish, Explore Whitefish is the officially designated organization charged with tourism promotion and marketing of Whitefish. The organization also provides critical support for visitor information services, travel infrastructure development, market research, and public relations.

Whitefish, Montana is an authentic mountain town located in the northern Rockies, home to some of the world's most beautiful mountains and spectacular, unspoiled nature. Just 25 miles from Glacier National Park, Whitefish offers close access to the hanging valleys and emerald peaks of this World Heritage Site. The summer season has historically been the busy season for Whitefish, with Glacier National Park as a key draw. Whitefish Lake, at the edge of town, has also been a popular warm season draw. Research also indicates that visitors are attracted to Whitefish because of the distinctive and inviting qualities of the downtown and Central Avenue district. Increasingly, visitation includes those who come to Whitefish without any particular activity as a prime motivation, other than to spend time enjoying the various shops, restaurants and gallery options of the town's eminently walkable downtown core.

The world-class ski slopes and facilities of Whitefish Mountain Resort serve as a key driver for winter visitation to Whitefish. The relationship between the mountain resort and the town of Whitefish is symbiotic, especially as skiing-centric vacations have evolved increasingly into winter vacations where some in the traveling party are not skiing or snowboarding participants—rather, they enjoy the many other winter amenities and activities in and around Whitefish and nearby Glacier National Park. As a result, improving and enhancing the connectivity of the mountain and the town experience helps improve the economic outcomes of both and improves the overall visitor experience as well. Whitefish Mountain Resort summer activities have expanded considerably over the last several years, improving the summertime vitality of the mountain resort experience as well as enhancing the overall attraction of Whitefish as the preferred place to base a northwest Montana and Glacier National Park region vacation.

Whitefish aligns perfectly with the Montana Brand pillars. In all our ads and collateral we serve up beautiful high resolution photos of the scenic beauty, our pristine lake and the incredible nature that surrounds us. Photos of our iconic downtown are an important part of our collateral. Visitors are very attracted to our downtown and it is a primary economic driver for the town. In addition, we try to counter the preconceived notions that Montana is remote and does not have adequate facilities by showcasing the beautiful lodging and incredible dining that can be found here.

While the incredible scenic and wild landscapes that surround Whitefish are a key and compelling inspiration to travel to Whitefish, these landscapes are placed in the context of hospitality. The broad majority of travelers are intimidated by wildness without the tempering possibility of civilization. Beyond the adventure of wilderness by day, they want a good place to eat and comfortable place to sleep. This context is central to the Whitefish experience and also communicated in our marketing efforts.

STRENGTHS

- Whitefish aligns perfectly with the three Montana Brand pillars
 - More spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48
 - Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders
 - Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night
- Proximity to Glacier National Park — Travel forecasts have predicted an increase in U.S. travelers expressing an interest in visiting sites managed by the National Park Service, especially during the 2016 National Park Service Centennial. In addition, the significant name recognition that Glacier National Park holds among North American and international travelers provides an advantage to “putting Whitefish on the map” for potential visitors. In 2015, visitors to Glacier National Park spent an estimated \$199 million in local gateway communities.
- Central Avenue Whitefish and the alluring character of the town's built structures — Research indicates that visitors are attracted to the character and scale of Whitefish, especially the town's Central Avenue district. These are attributes that form the foundation of the town's appeal to visitors who stay in, or around the community, eat at the town's various restaurants, and shop at local stores. Additional amenities such as pedestrian friendly sidewalks, miles of trails and ability to see the night's sky all add to the Whitefish character.
- Access to recreational activities — A wide variety of recreational opportunities in and around Whitefish is a major draw for visitors. These include Whitefish Mountain Resort, the Whitefish Trail, Whitefish Lake, and the Whitefish River, as well as the trails, rivers and scenic roadways in and around Glacier National Park.

CHALLENGES

- Limited Transportation Infrastructure — Public transportation options and visitor infrastructure services in and around Whitefish are fewer than those provided at competitor destinations.
- Uncertain Weather — During some years, low snow levels in the winter hamper winter visitation and spending while summer fire seasons affect willingness for visitors to travel in summer and fall.
- Market Perception — Research performed by the Montana Office of Tourism in key destination markets reveals that Montana is perceived to offer lower quality amenities and services to visitors. While Montanans are perceived as being friendly, it should be distinguished that this friendliness does not automatically translate into a guest's perception of a high level of service.
- Lack of Competitive Pricing for Air Access and Limited Seats — When compared to mountain communities with which Whitefish competes for destination visitors, airline seats to Glacier Park International Airport are limited, with fewer flights, limited markets and are priced higher. Within the state, deboardings at Glacier Park International Airport (233,160 in 2015) accounted for 13% of the total deboardings in the state, trailing Missoula (19%), Billings (23%), and Bozeman (28% - See Appendix).
- Highly Seasonal Visitation Patterns — Visitation patterns to Whitefish are highly seasonal with the majority of visitation occurring during the high demand months of July and August. This seasonality impacts the operating effectiveness of Whitefish businesses that must accommodate these aforementioned demand swings.
- The Going-to-the-Sun Road — The Whitefish summer tourism season is directly tied to the opening and closing dates of the Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park.
- Gasoline Prices — The fluctuation of gas prices affects willingness to travel to Whitefish in two ways. Lower gas prices have the ability to spur domestic travel as the cost of driving or flying becomes less expensive. Conversely, the Canadian dollar is a commodity based currency and the exchange rate can fluctuate based upon higher or lower gas prices. As a major producer of oil, lower gas prices often mean a less advantageous exchange rate for Alberta visitors.

Optional: [Include attachments here](#) FY17 Executive Summary.pdf

2. How will your marketing plan address the three phases of the travel decision process of inspiration, orientation and facilitation?

THE TRAVEL DECISION FUNNEL: INSPIRATION, ORIENTATION, FACILITATION

The overall vision for Whitefish is to have integrated communication throughout the travel planning funnel.

Inspiration. At the highest levels of communication, Explore Whitefish leverages the Montana branding guidelines in its selection of imagery and development of creative content, while applying its own Whitefish spin on things. We want to foster an emotional connection with this combination of imagery and creative content so that the viewer will move forward with the primary call to action, which is to visit ExploreWhitefish.com.

Orientation. Orientation to new opportunities is administered through interactive maps within the Explore Whitefish website, as well as companion maps within the Travel Guide and a printed town map available for visitors at kiosks and visitor centers. All maps have a consistent look between them. Depending on the method of communication, the location of Whitefish within the state, or its proximity to other points of interest in the region is detailed.

Facilitation. Facilitation (connecting users with stakeholder businesses) is achieved by empowering individual businesses with the capacity to create and maintain business information, specials, packages, video and events that are displayed at ExploreWhitefish.com. The travel guide and locator maps are made available at local visitor information kiosks, visitor information centers and business locations throughout the town.

Optional: Include attachments here.

3. Who is your market?

a. Define your target markets (demographic, geographic and psycho-graphic)

KEY MARKETS FOR WHITEFISH, MONTANA

Our potential visitors are targeted by geographic location, demographic characteristics, and values that distinguish a potential visitor as a "geotraveler" (as defined by research conducted by ITRR, the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and the National Geographic Society). The following section provides information on the distinguishing characteristics of our geotraveler along with our core and emerging geographic markets.

GEOTRAVELERS

Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of the place being visited including its environment, culture, heritage, landmarks and the well-being of its residents. According to the ITRR study, "Statewide Vacationers to Montana: Are They Geotravelers," the strong geotraveler spent the most money per day while traveling in Montana (\$141.79) followed by the moderate geotraveler (\$134.10) and the non geotraveler vacationer spent (\$133.27). Visitors who agreed with the principles of geotourism spend more money per day while traveling in Montana than non- geotravelers. A 2016 ITRR Study, "The Importance of Traveler Spending on Locally Produced Goods & Services," further examined geotraveler spending. The results of this study showed that visitor groups who purchased "Made in Montana" products, items from local farmers' markets, and who used local guides and outfitters spent \$184.76 more per stay than visitors who did not purchase these products and services.

Geotravelers are high-value, low impact visitors who appreciate the unique characteristics and natural values of the places they visit. They place a high value on authentic travel experiences that respect and support the local character of place and its environment, and are less likely to become discouraged in their travel experiences by travel distances, difficulties and variable weather.

Income — HHI of \$65,000 - \$150,000+ Education: Bachelors' degree+ Age: 33-55+

Source: Montana Office of Tourism, FY16 Marketing Plan

Values— Creative, curious, connected, engaged, adventurous, independent, mindful.

Source: Geotraveler Exploratory, Alexis Sanford, 2008.

Attitudes — Immerse yourself in the culture, go off the beaten trail, get out of your comfort zone, allow for spontaneity, take a risk, pay attention, go now.

Source: Geotraveler Exploratory, Alexis Sanford, 2008.

- A segment of the U.S. total travel market estimated to include over 55 million people.
- They seek authenticity in travel experiences.
- They seek out opportunities to experience businesses and activities that are locally unique.
- Travel is an important part of their "lifestyle" and they often combine learning with travel.
- They spent a disproportionate amount of their income on travel compared to other travelers.
- They are more likely to be aware of their own impact, both environmental and community, on the places they are visiting.

NON-RESIDENT WHITEFISH VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

Source: 2015 ITRR Non-Resident Visitor Study

- 89% visited Glacier National Park
- 56% traveled as a pair (2 persons)
- Average group size was 2.35
- 72% have HHI (Household Income) above \$75,000
- 62% Male, 38% Female
- 23% were first time visitors
- Average age of 55 years old

NON-RESIDENT WHITEFISH VISITOR AGE GROUPS REPRESENTED

Source: 2015 ITRR Non-Resident Visitor Study. The total response percentage exceeds 100% because the question allowed for multiple choices thus the total number of answer choices selected were greater than the number of respondents

- 23% Under 18 years old
- 8% 18-24 years old
- 14% 25-34 years old
- 23% 45-54 years old
- 46% 55-64 years old
- 27% 65-74 years old
- 3% 75 and older

TOP FIVE NON-RESIDENT VISITORS TO WHITEFISH ACTIVITIES WHILE IN MONTANA

Source: 2015 ITRR Non-Resident Visitor Study

- 62% Scenic driving
- 56% Day hiking
- 49% Nature photography
- 44% Recreational shopping
- 42% Wildlife watching

WHERE NON-RESIDENT VISITORS TO WHITEFISH PRIMARILY COME FROM

Source: 2015 ITRR Non-Resident Visitor Study

- 17% Alberta, Canada
- 10% Washington State
- 5% California, Minnesota, Idaho, Florida
- 4% Wisconsin, Colorado
- 3% Oregon, Nevada, Texas, Massachusetts
- 33% Everywhere else in the U.S. and the world (without any regular pattern)

CORE GEOGRAPHIC MARKETS FOR FOCUS

Explore Whitefish will focus its attention during this fiscal period on potential visitors who match the geotraveler profile in the following geographic markets. It is possible that opportunities will arise in additional markets in partnership with other tourism organizations, such as the Montana Office of Tourism. In these instances, Explore Whitefish may extend its efforts beyond these core focus markets.

- Seattle, Washington (Puget Sound Area)
- Portland, Oregon
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Regional Drive-To (including Alberta)

b. What are your emerging markets?

EMERGING MARKETS

- Chicagoland (Chicago core and northern suburbs to Madison, Wisconsin) - The has been a target market for the Montana Office of Tourism for many years. During FY16, Explore Whitefish engaged in its second consecutive comprehensive cooperative marketing campaign with Whitefish Mountain Resort in the Chicago market. There is currently a weekly winter seasonal direct flight from Chicago O'Hare (ORD) to Glacier Park International Airport (GPIA).
- San Francisco/Oakland – Whitefish Mountain Resort began marketing efforts to this area three years ago. There is currently a bi-weekly summer seasonal direct flight as well as short airline connections to Glacier Park International Airport (GPIA).

c. What research supports your target marketing?

Research conducted by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana as well as the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and the National Geographic Society are referenced in question 3a and can be found under Miscellaneous Attachments.

Optional: Include attachment here.

4. Overall Goals

MARKETING PLAN GOALS

- Support the brand identity and presence of Whitefish, Montana in the marketplace as a destination for active experience-seeking travelers.
- Encourage destination visitation from the core and emerging markets.
- Aggressively showcase varied winter vacation experiences in and around Whitefish and Glacier National Park.
- Position special events messaging to enhance visitation during the "Secret Season" of May-June, and the "Summer Plus" season of September-October.
- Position Whitefish as the basecamp for Glacier National Park visitors with the natural, cultural, and culinary assets of Whitefish.
- Improve "Secret Season" visitation by promoting bicycling, wildlife viewing, birding, fly fishing, golf, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, performing arts, culinary experiences, and community events.
- Improve "Summer Plus" visitation by promoting fall foliage, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, performing arts, culinary experiences, and community events.
- Stimulate the publication of feature stories in national and regional publications, digital media, and broadcast media.
- Encourage corporate retreats and improve meeting and convention market with emphasis in shoulder seasons.
- Expand the pursuit of new airline markets to improve access, ease, and affordability of travel.
- Collaborate with regional and state tourism partners, including Glacier National Park, to develop and build out support for shoulder season visitation.

Optional: Include attachments here.

5. Joint Venture Opportunities

a. In what types of Joint Ventures with MTOT would you like to participate?

Explore Whitefish has actively participated in the past and anticipates participating in the future in a variety of cooperative marketing programs with the Montana Office of Tourism (MTOT). Explore Whitefish participation in MTOT marketing programs in the past have primarily centered around spring, fall or winter campaigns. Winter MTOT cooperative campaigns that focused on the destination ski market have been of particular interest to Explore Whitefish. Spring and Autumn cooperative campaigns that are focused on the active outdoors traveler within our core geographic markets have also been of particular interest.

b. In what other types of Joint Ventures would you like to participate? (Regions/CVBs, etc.)

Explore Whitefish actively cooperates with Whitefish Mountain Resort (WMR) on multi-channel marketing campaigns in key markets including Seattle, Portland, and Chicago. Explore Whitefish also partners with WMR and other partners to create a comprehensive Whitefish presence at winter activity focused consumer trade shows in Seattle and Portland. During FY16, Explore Whitefish and WMR participated in cooperative marketing efforts with Amtrak in order to promote visitation to Whitefish during the ski season and shoulder seasons via Amtrak's Whitefish 20% Promotion.

Explore Whitefish also partners with Glacier Country Regional Tourism including cooperative consumer advertising, media events, special events, press trips, FAM trips, and groups marketing.

c. What types of Joint Ventures have you done in the past? Were they successful - why or why not?

Explore Whitefish has engaged in many cooperative marketing initiatives with the Montana Office of Tourism in the past. These initiatives have been measured separately by Explore Whitefish through independent ad tracking. We have made adjustments to future participation based on previous tracking. We have found the most success in MTOT cooperative efforts that are aligned with our primary seasonal and geographic targets, and include the opportunity to provide fulfillment on responses.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Include pie chart here.

FY17 Public Budget Pie Charts.pdf

Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	Provide a brief rationale.	Plan to measure success?	Marketing Method Evaluation	Estimated budget for each method.	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Atchmnts
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	<p>We advertise in publications within our target markets with alignment to geotraveler and other demographic profiles that have been outlined for Whitefish. Print opportunities, especially in cooperation with the Montana Office of Tourism in national active travel specific media channels, are also pursued. Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. This method comprises 30% of our consumer advertising budget.</p> <p>Summer Plus</p> <p>DEMOGRAPHICS</p> <p>The target audiences for this time period are those who do not currently have children in school, have adult children, or do not have children. This primarily means a target audience of 35 and older with HH income over \$75,000.</p> <p>PSYCHOGRAPHICS</p> <p>Travelers seeking active experiences such as scenic driving, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, paddling, and hiking. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary autumn activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.</p>	See supporting research/statistics under each season.	<p>Summer Plus</p> <p>Occupancy history in Whitefish shows that during the period of late June through August the town is at its busiest. From late August into early September, occupancy levels are still strong, but begin to wane. The objective is to extend the peak summer season and grow occupancy and business levels in the autumn for the time period of September to the end of October. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities, fall events, and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during this time period that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with fall experiences in Glacier National Park such as scenic driving, fall foliage, wildlife watching, and hiking. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20%</p>	Success is measured seasonally with Resort Tax Collections and Lodging Tax Collections. In addition, click-through-rates (CTR) as well as website sessions are measured against industry standards and historical performance. Specific details can be found on the attached PDF.		\$16,650.00	Yes	FY17 Marketing Method_PrintAdvertising.pdf

GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE

Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS

Seattle and the Puget Sound area have been historically strong markets for Whitefish. Portland is now a core market as we have increased investment in the past few years. The existence of the Amtrak train route has made this connection logical, as well as the initiation of a seasonal direct flight. Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of their economic impact. Research by ITRR indicates that nonresidents who travel to the state via air spend more money per day and stay longer than the average nonresident traveler group.

- **Average Nonresident Travelers:**

The statewide average 2015 nonresident traveler group to Montana (2.19 people) spent an average of \$149.29 per day. With an average length of stay of 4.59 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$685.

- **Fly-in Nonresident Travelers:**

The statewide average 2015 fly-in nonresident traveler group arriving in Montana (1.94 people) spends an average of \$232.56 per day. With an average length of stay of 6.64 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,544.

Winter

DEMOGRAPHICS

For the 2014/2015 season, the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) estimated that there were 9.5 million domestic active skiers or snowboarders (NSAA 2015 U.S. Snowsports Participants Report). Since we are targeting a small percentage of the domestic population, and particularly those active participants with household incomes of \$75,000 or greater, we can most efficiently reach this target through niche channels.

of its overall consumer advertising budgets to Summer Plus marketing efforts.

Winter

Whitefish offers a world-class ski and snowboarding experience, including unique winter events, yet destination visitation to the town is still significantly lower than the summer season. As a result, Explore Whitefish has allocated 60% of its overall consumer advertising budget to winter ski marketing efforts. These efforts also seek to focus on the winter experiences in Glacier National Park, including sightseeing, snowshoeing, and nordic skiing. The perception that Glacier National Park is closed in the winter continues to be a challenge and our increased efforts to showcase these winter experiences will hopefully help to dispel this myth.

Secret Season

The objective is to begin the visitor season earlier and grow occupancy and business levels in the spring and early summer for the time period of May and June. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during these time periods that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with spring experiences in Glacier National Park

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

We apply largely the same geotravel profile to the ski market. While not all skiers and snowboarders fall within the geotraveler psychographic, we find that those with experiential preferences for authentic travel are more likely to appreciate and enjoy Whitefish and then return again in subsequent years. It is important that we acquire new, repeat customers, not simply attract one-time visitors who are not a good fit for the Whitefish experience and as a result will not likely return. The addition of marketing the aforementioned Glacier National Park winter experiences provide additional breathtaking experiences for a day off for skiers and snowboarders as well as those who do not alpine ski or snowboard.

GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE

National communication cooperative opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism. We also focus much of our efforts within the Seattle, Portland, and Chicago metro areas. Regional drive-to markets are also a target and the addition of San Francisco/Oakland as an emerging market yields additional opportunities.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS

During the winter of 2015/2016, Explore Whitefish partnered with Whitefish Mountain Resort (WMR) on a multi-channel marketing campaign (digital and out of home) in the Chicago market to promote the second year of the winter seasonal direct flight from Chicago O'Hare to Glacier Park International Airport. WMR reported a 125% increase in lodging revenue from Illinois compared to the previous season. Although Illinois only comprised 1% of total skier visits, Illinois was the 12th ranked market for WMR lodging reservations. As we continue to build this market, we believe that these types of statistics show the effectiveness of our winter marketing efforts and the partners are likely to engage in the same multichannel cooperative approach during the 2016/2017 ski season.

Secret Season

DEMOGRAPHICS

such as biking or hiking the Going-To-The-Sun Road and wildlife watching. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to spring and early summer marketing efforts.

The target audiences for this time period are those who do not have kids in school. This primarily means dual- income, no-kids and those 45 and older with HH income over \$75,000.

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Travelers seeking active experiences such as bicycling, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, non-motorized water sports, and horseback riding. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary spring activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.

GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE

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			\$232.56 per day. With an average length of stay of 6.64 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,544.						
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	No	Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. The consumer advertising budget for each strategy is allocated to the seasonal media buying plan.		Compelling photo and video content are vital to the success of our online, print, and out-of-home campaigns. We utilize local photographers as much as possible because of their knowledge of our tourism products.	Although one hundred percent of the success of our online, print, and out-of-home campaigns cannot be attributed to the purchase of appropriate and vibrant photo and video content, this does play a significant role in our success. Therefore, we use the same measurements as we do for our online and print campaigns.	\$5,000.00	Yes	
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	<p>We advertise on websites in our stated target markets as well as nationally through cooperative opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism. Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. This method comprises 45% of our consumer advertising budget.</p> <p>Summer Plus</p> <p>DEMOGRAPHICS</p> <p>The target audiences for this time period are those who do not currently have children in school, have adult children, or do not have children. This primarily means a target audience of 35 and older with HH income over \$75,000.</p> <p>PSYCHOGRAPHICS</p> <p>Travelers seeking active experiences such as scenic driving, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, paddling, and hiking. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary autumn activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.</p>	See supporting research/statistics under each season	<p>Summer Plus</p> <p>Occupancy history in Whitefish shows that during the period of late June through August the town is at its busiest. From late August into early September, occupancy levels are still strong, but begin to wane. The objective is to extend the peak summer season and grow occupancy and business levels in the autumn for the time period of September to the end of October. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities, fall events, and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during this time period that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with fall experiences in Glacier National Park such as scenic driving,</p>	Success is measured seasonally with Resort Tax Collections and Lodging Tax Collections. In addition, click-through-rates (CTR) as well as website sessions are measured against industry standards and historical performance. Specific details can be found on the attached PDF.	\$24,975.00	Yes	FY17 Marketing Method_OnlineAdvertising.pdf

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SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS

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fall foliage, wildlife watching, and hiking. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to Summer Plus marketing efforts.

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We apply largely the same geotravel profile to the ski market. While not all skiers and snowboarders fall within the geotraveler psychographic, we find that those with experiential preferences for authentic travel are more likely to appreciate and enjoy Whitefish and then return again in subsequent years. It is important that we acquire new, repeat customers, not simply attract one-time visitors who are not a good fit for the Whitefish experience and as a result will not likely return. The addition of marketing the aforementioned Glacier National Park winter experiences provide additional breathtaking experiences for a day off for skiers and snowboarders as well as those who do not alpine ski or snowboard.

GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE

National communication cooperative opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism. We also focus much of our efforts within the Seattle, Portland, and Chicago metro areas. Regional drive-to markets are also a target and the addition of San Francisco/Oakland as an emerging market yields additional opportunities.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS

During the winter of 2015/2016, Explore Whitefish partnered with Whitefish Mountain Resort (WMR) on a multi-channel marketing campaign (digital and out of home) in the Chicago market to promote the second year of the winter seasonal direct flight from Chicago O'Hare to Glacier Park International Airport. WMR reported a 125% increase in lodging revenue from Illinois compared to the previous season. Although Illinois only comprised 1% of total skier visits, Illinois was the 12th ranked market for WMR lodging reservations. As we continue to build this market, we believe that these types of statistics show the effectiveness of our winter marketing efforts and the partners are likely to engage in the same multichannel cooperative approach during the 2016/2017 ski season.

Secret Season

DEMOGRAPHICS

National Park, the narrative will lead with spring experiences in Glacier National Park such as biking or hiking the Going-To-The-Sun Road and wildlife watching. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to spring and early summer marketing efforts.

The target audiences for this time period are those who do not have kids in school. This primarily means dual- income, no-kids and those 45 and older with HH income over \$75,000.

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Travelers seeking active experiences such as bicycling, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, non-motorized water sports, and horseback riding. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary spring activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.

GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE

Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.

SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS

Seattle and the Puget Sound area have been historically strong markets for Whitefish. Portland is now a core market as we have increased investment in the past few years. The existence of the Amtrak train route has made this connection logical, as well as the initiation of a seasonal direct flight. Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of their economic impact. Research by ITRR indicates that nonresidents who travel to the state via air spend more money per day and stay longer than the average nonresident traveler group.

• **Average Nonresident Travelers:**

The statewide average 2015 nonresident traveler group to Montana (2.19 people) spent an average of \$149.29 per day. With an average length of stay of 4.59 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$685.

• **Fly-in Nonresident Travelers:**

The statewide average 2015 fly-in nonresident traveler group arriving in Montana (1.94 people) spends an average of

			\$232.56 per day. With an average length of stay of 6.64 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,544.						
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	Yes	<p>We explore opportunities to advertise on and around public transportation, including digital displays and billboards, particularly with cooperative partners such as Whitefish Mountain Resort in our target markets. Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. This method comprises 25% of our consumer advertising budget.</p> <p>Summer Plus</p> <p>DEMOGRAPHICS</p> <p>The target audiences for this time period are those who do not currently have children in school, have adult children, or do not have children. This primarily means a target audience of 35 and older with HH income over \$75,000.</p> <p>PSYCHOGRAPHICS</p> <p>Travelers seeking active experiences such as scenic driving, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, paddling, and hiking. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary autumn activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.</p> <p>GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE</p> <p>Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.</p> <p>SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS</p> <p>Seattle and the Puget Sound area have been historically strong markets for Whitefish. Portland is now a core market as we have increased investment in the past few years. The existence of the Amtrak train route has made this connection logical, as well as the initiation of a seasonal direct flight. Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of thier</p>	See supporting research/statistics under each season	<p>Summer Plus</p> <p>Occupancy history in Whitefish shows that during the period of late June through August the town is at its busiest. From late August into early September, occupancy levels are still strong, but begin to wane. The objective is to extend the peak summer season and grow occupancy and business levels in the autumn for the time period of September to the end of October. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities, fall events, and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during this time period that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with fall experiences in Glacier National Park such as scenic driving, fall foliage, wildlife watching, and hiking. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to Summer Plus marketing efforts.</p> <p>Winter</p> <p>Whitefish offers a world-class ski and snowboarding experience, including unique winter events, yet destination visitation to the town is still significantly</p>	Success is measured seasonally with Resort Tax Collections and Lodging Tax Collections. In addition, click-through-rates (CTR) as well as website sessions are measured against industry standards and historical performance. Specific details can be found on the attached PDF.	\$13,875.00	Yes	FY17 Marketing Method_OutofHome.pdf

economic impact. Research by ITRR indicates that nonresidents who travel to the state via air spend more money per day and stay longer than the average nonresident traveler group.

- **Average Nonresident Travelers:**

The statewide average 2015 nonresident traveler group to Montana (2.19 people) spent an average of \$149.29 per day. With an average length of stay of 4.59 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$685.

- **Fly-in Nonresident Travelers:**

The statewide average 2015 fly-in nonresident traveler group arriving in Montana (1.94 people) spends an average of \$232.56 per day. With an average length of stay of 6.64 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,544.

Winter

DEMOGRAPHICS

For the 2014/2015 season, the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) estimated that there were 9.5 million domestic active skiers or snowboarders (NSAA 2015 U.S Snowsports Participants Report). Since we are targeting a small percentage of the domestic population, and particularly those active participants with household incomes of \$75,000 or greater, we can most efficiently reach this target through niche channels.

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

We apply largely the same geotravel profile to the ski market. While not all skiers and snowboarders fall within the geotraveler psychographic, we find that those with experiential preferences for authentic travel are more likely to appreciate and enjoy Whitefish and then return again in subsequent years. It is important that we acquire new, repeat customers, not simply attract one-time visitors who are not a good fit for the Whitefish experience and as a result will not

lower than the summer season. As a result, Explore Whitefish has allocated 60% of its overall consumer advertising budget to winter ski marketing efforts. These efforts also seek to focus on the winter experiences in Glacier National Park, including sightseeing, snowshoeing, and nordic skiing. The perception that Glacier National Park is closed in the winter continues to be a challenge and our increased efforts to showcase these winter experiences will hopefully help to dispel this myth.

Secret Season

The objective is to begin the visitor season earlier and grow occupancy and business levels in the spring and early summer for the time period of May and June. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during these time periods that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with spring experiences in Glacier National Park such as biking or hiking the Going-To-The-Sun Road and wildlife watching. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to spring and early summer marketing efforts.

likely return. The addition of marketing the aforementioned Glacier National Park winter experiences provide additional breathtaking experiences for a day off for skiers and snowboarders as well as those who do not alpine ski or snowboard.

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Secret Season

DEMOGRAPHICS

The target audiences for this time period are those who do not have kids in school. This primarily means dual- income, no-kids and those 45 and older with HH income over \$75,000.

PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Travelers seeking active experiences such as bicycling, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, non-motorized water sports, and horseback riding. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are

			<p>also considered primary spring activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.</p> <p>GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE</p> <p>Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.</p> <p>SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS</p> <p>Seattle and the Puget Sound area have been historically strong markets for Whitefish. Portland is now a core market as we have increased investment in the past few years. The existence of the Amtrak train route has made this connection logical, as well as the initiation of a seasonal direct flight. Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of their economic impact. Research by ITRR indicates that nonresidents who travel to the state via air spend more money per day and stay longer than the average nonresident traveler group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average Nonresident Travelers: The statewide average 2015 nonresident traveler group to Montana (2.19 people) spent an average of \$149.29 per day. With an average length of stay of 4.59 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$685. • Fly-in Nonresident Travelers: The statewide average 2015 fly-in nonresident traveler group arriving in Montana (1.94 people) spends an average of \$232.56 per day. With an average length of stay of 6.64 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,544. 							
Marketing Support	Administration	No	In order for the WCVB to effectively and strategically operate, the organization has set aside a budget to support the marketing efforts of the organization. First and foremost, we require administrative support for staff and business expenses. Previously, we have used these public funds to pay for					\$13,000.00	Yes	

			insurance, supplies, utilities, postage, rent, and a portion of director wages.						
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	No	In order for the WCVB to effectively and strategically operate, the organization has set aside public funds to support a portion of the salary necessary for a full-time marketing coordinator position. This position has previously been a part-time position paid from private funds the past two years.				\$15,000.00	Yes	
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	No	The WCVB is required to attend all meetings of the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) as well as the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation. As these meetings take place all over the state, we require support for travel and expenses to attend.				\$1,500.00	No	
							\$90,000.00		

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$24,975.00	\$32,612.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$16,650.00	\$21,740.00
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	\$13,875.00	\$18,118.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$5,000.00	\$13,100.00
		\$60,500.00	\$85,570.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$13,000.00	\$82,000.00
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	\$15,000.00	\$20,000.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
		\$29,500.00	\$102,000.00
		\$90,000.00	\$187,570.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

File Name	Description	File Size
2014FlatheadCountyNonResidentExpenditures.pdf (124 KB)	2014 Non-Resident Expenditures for Flathead County (ITRR)	124 KB
2015 Nonresident Expenditures by Airport.pdf (498 KB)	2015 Non-Resident Expenditures by Montana Airport (ITRR)	498 KB
2015 Nonresident Visitation Expenditures.pdf (496 KB)	2015 Non-Resident Expenditures Per Quarter (ITRR)	496 KB
2015WhitefishNonresidentData.pdf (47 KB)	2015 Whitefish Non-Resident Visitor Data (ITRR)	47 KB
FY17 Marketing Plan Total Budget Breakdown.pdf (41 KB)	FY17 Marketing Plan Total Budget Breakdown	41 KB
FY17 Public Budget Pie Charts.pdf (123 KB)	FY17 Public Budget Pie Charts	123 KB
Geotourism The New Trend in Travel TIA.pdf (526 KB)	Geotourism: Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and the National Geographic Society	526 KB
Whitefish Marketing Plan FY17_FINAL.pdf (805 KB)	FY17 Whitefish CVB Marketing Plan	805 KB

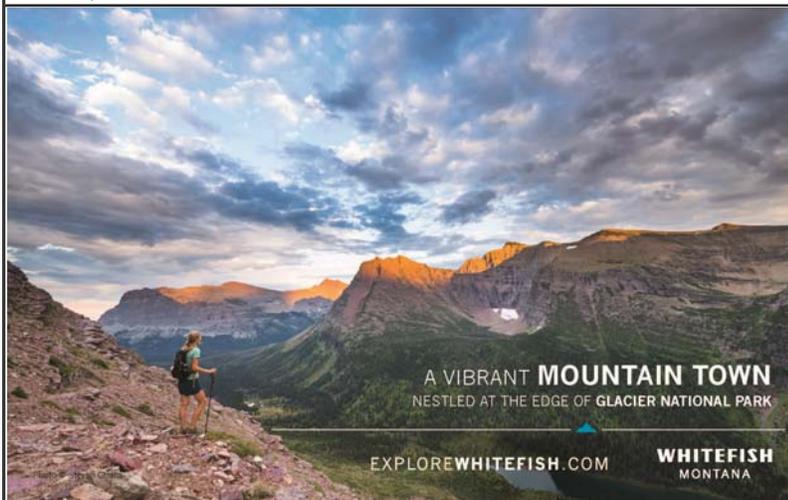
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FY16 Sample Winter Creative



FY16 Sample Secret Season Creative



FY16 Sample Summer Plus Creative

Reg/CVB Required Documents

File Name	Description	File Size
FY17 Application For Lodging Tax Revenue.pdf (191 KB)	FY17 Application For Lodging Tax Revenue	191 KB
FY17 Certificate of Compliance.pdf (234 KB)	FY17 Certificate of Compliance	234 KB
FY17 Pledge of Understanding and Compliance.pdf (172 KB)	FY17 Pledge of Understanding and Compliance	172 KB
WCVB Board Meeting Minutes 03 14 16.pdf (50 KB)	Whitefish CVB Board of Directors Minutes 03 14 16	50 KB
Whitefish City Council Minutes 04 04 16.pdf (654 KB)	Whitefish City Council Minutes 04 04 16	654 KB
