



Grant Details

68892 - FY19 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

72784 - FY19 KCVB Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY19 KCVB Marketing Plan
Grant Number: 19-51-021
Grant Status: Underway
Comments:
Applicant Organization: Kalispell Area Chamber of Commerce
Grantee Contact: Diane Medler
Award Year: 2018
Program Area: DOC Office of Tourism
Amounts:
Contract Dates: Contract Sent
Project Dates: 06/20/2018
Grant Administrator: Barb Sanem
Contract Number: 19-51-021
Award Year: 2018

Contract Dates

Contract Sent	Contract Received	Contract Executed	Contract Legal
---------------	-------------------	-------------------	----------------

Project Dates 07/01/2018
 06/30/2019

Project Start
 Project End

Comments

Amendment Comments

Community & Brand Support

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?

Welcome to Kalispell, where the spirit of Northwest Montana lives. Where the mighty mountains of the Crown of the Continent soar. Where the cold, clear Flathead River snakes from wild lands in Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness to the largest freshwater lake in the west.

Where you can plan ahead for a trip of wonder—or let each new moment lead your adventures. Follow the open road to see what's at the very end. Lay out the map and chart a course to its furthest corner. Or explore the galleries, museums, and shops in historic downtown Kalispell—and maybe let the bakery tempt you into an unexpected sweet treat.

Here in the heart of the Flathead Valley, life is awe-inspiring and simple at the same time. If we wish to lose ourselves, there's millions of acres of protected, pristine forest to wander. If we wish to find ourselves, we need only to channel the confident frontier spirit that drove the development of a regional economic, cultural, and governmental powerhouse. These Western roots form the strong foundation for a growing and diversifying community. Which is to say, we are proud of our history but we don't plan on slowing down anytime soon. Just imagine how much energy all this fresh mountain air gives us.

In the past few years, we have doubled down on our commitment to our walkable, vibrant downtown. It's growing by the minute. And the amount of new breweries, distilleries, coffee shops, and restaurants that have opened their doors on Main Street means your night out just planned itself.

Kalispell, Montana, is a place for skiers and hikers and fisherman. It's a place for creatives and ranchers and scientists. It's a place for foodies and history buffs and lovers of the arts. It's a place for you.

Kalispell and the Montana Brand

More spectacular unspoiled nature: Kalispell is surrounded by 10 mountain ranges, a national park, two national forests, one wilderness area, and the largest freshwater lake in the west.

Vibrant and charming small town: A vibrant downtown that merges historical charm with contemporary culture.

Breathtaking experiences by day, relaxing hospitality at night: Making waves on Flathead Lake, rafting

the Middle Fork, cycling the Going-To-The-Sun road, exploring 'The Bob', or viewing fall's dramatic transformation in the Flathead National Forest. However you choose to spend the daylight hours, your evenings will be full of hearty food and homey accommodations in Kalispell.

Discover Kalispell highlights *What Makes Montana Unique* to our high-value audience through vivid, quality imagery and videos highlighting our natural beauty, wide open spaces, and unique experiences.

About Kalispell

Strengths

- Growth economy: Kalispell is home to one of the fastest growing economies in the state, a testament to the area's quality of life and business climate creating an ideal place to build a career or company.
- Well-preserved cultural offerings: Discover the history of the Flathead Valley through three well-preserved museums and iconic Main Street buildings.
- Energized downtown: Kalispell is undergoing several revitalization projects including completion of a rail park, removal of railroad tracks in downtown and development of a linear park, and several enhancements to improve the walk-ability and vitality of Main Street.
- Annual destination events: Montana Dragon Boat Festival, Montana Spartan Race, Montana Pond Hockey Classic, Montana Indoor Soccer Championship, Skijoring at Rebecca Farm, The Event at Rebecca Farm, Three Blind Refs and other events that attract participants from the U.S. and Canada.
- Winter destination: Kalispell and NW Montana offer easy access to a wide range of activities for the winter destination traveler including Glacier National Park and Whitefish Mountain Resort.
- State Parks: Kalispell is surrounded by eleven state parks providing trails, activities, interpretative visitor center, and water-based activities on Flathead Lake and Whitefish Lake.
- Authentic: Kalispell's residents are welcoming tour guides who care about a visitor's experience. It is a local's mountain town with a deep-seated culture of outdoor adventure, agriculture, and other traditional industries. Deep roots that form a strong foundation around which to grow and evolve.

Opportunities

- Glacier National Park and Glacier Park International Airport saw increased visitation in 2017, particularly during the shoulder and winter months such as October, December, January, and April. Discover Kalispell will continue to focus on the off-season particularly as additional amenities and services become available in or near the Park and as seasonal direct flights increase.
- 2018 is the 50th Anniversary of the Wild & Scenic River Act which protects large segments of the three forks of the Flathead River. Leverage media coverage of this event put out by national sources such as NPS, NFS, BLM, US Fish and Wildlife Service or other mainstream media.
- Agriculture is a deeply rooted tradition with generations of families living and working in local farms and ranches. From Flathead Lake cherries to huckleberries from the surrounding mountains, locally grown and raised vegetables, or yak and bison, this valley is home to an assortment of tasty foods that are blended into the community flavor. Discover Kalispell will continue to play a role in promoting and building our agri-tourism product through promotion of locally-sourced products, tours, and activities that are available to visitors and groups.
- The City of Kalispell has adopted a Downtown Plan, providing guidelines to develop a vision to address long-term sustainability of Kalispell's downtown.
- Alberta's economy saw resurgence in 2017 with an estimated growth of 4.5% due in part to improving oil prices and a rebound in consumer spending. 2018 is expected to see a moderate growth of 2.8%.
- The City of Kalispell has adopted a Conditional Use Permit that regulates short term rentals within the city limits. Regulations include proof that the property is registered with the MT Department of Revenue to collect bed tax. This increased oversight should help to shore up revenue losses as the shared economy continues to grow in popularity with travelers.

Challenges

- The Flathead Valley received 325 new guest rooms during the summer of 2016. Two new lodging properties are opening in Whitefish and Kalispell for a total of 186 additional rooms added to the inventory in 2018. Opening in 2019 is an 84 room My Place in Kalispell. The new inventory has already proven to demand adjustments for the established properties, particularly outside of the summer busy season.
- Availability of direct air service to Kalispell is a focus for both the tourism and the business communities. Cost and availability of seats is a barrier for Kalispell to effectively increase visitations from some geographic and psychographic markets. The nonprofit Glacier AERO group continues to work with airlines and the community to fund minimum revenue guarantees (MRG) and marketing campaigns.
- Climate change is affecting our weather, stream flows, water temperature and forests. Weather conditions that are deviating from historical patterns are posing a challenge for tourism in northwest Montana. Our area relies heavily on predictable water and air temperatures and appropriate levels of precipitation for winter activities, major events, and to avoid summer wildfires.
- The National Park Service is anticipating a fee increase which will affect Glacier National Park during the peak summer season. The increase would significantly impact tour operators.
- Depending on national policy decisions regarding travel ban and immigration, negative media coverage may continue to have an impact on international travel to the U.S. and Montana.
- The lack of public transportation throughout the Flathead Valley as well as from Kalispell to Glacier Park impacts some visitors including the international traveler. It is hoped that the implementation of Uber and other ride-sharing services will help to offset some of that demand.
- Although the area's tourism industry is making strides in smoothing out the hotel occupancy levels between the height of summer and the quiet of November and April, seasonality continues to be a challenge. The seasonality creates work force issues both due to a shortage of qualified workers in the summer and ability to maintain adequate staffing levels during the fluctuating shoulder and winter months.
- The traditional lodging properties in Kalispell are experiencing the impacts of the increasing popularity of VRBO, Airbnb and other shared economies. There has been a measurable decrease in room night stays by teams attending signature events and an obvious increase of businesses utilizing space within the historic downtown buildings to create rental space that doesn't fit within the room requirement structure for TBID. As the shared economy options grow and shift it is crucial that Montana Department of Revenue and local municipalities ensure proper taxes are collected.

Describe your destination.

The Travel Decision Process

Top reasons to travel: see new cultures and customs, experience the outdoors, conquer new adventures, have time to think and reflect, create memories with friends and family.... Whatever the reason and wherever you decide to travel, the trip planning cycle is not always a linear path and includes several different stages.

During a traveler's quest for a one-of-a-kind trip they will encounter a 'whole world' of options and Montana in general and Kalispell specifically, are not necessarily a top-of-mind destinations. To be part of a traveler's consideration set means understanding the visitor that would be attracted to our destination and the travel resources influencing their choices. Good news is that the "Expectations to Travel" remain strong. A national survey by Destination Analysts shows that 37% of American travelers expect to take more leisure trips in upcoming year and 36.5% expect to increase their travel budget. The January 2018 survey report included data which gauged the Likelihood To Visit for a long list of potential destinations. The survey showed that 14.5% stated they were "likely to travel" to Montana during the next 3 years, which is up from 12.7% in 2016. (Webinar, State of the American

Traveler, Destinations Edition, March 2018, Destination Analysts and Miles Partnership)

Stage 1: Inspiration - Dreaming

During the first stage of the planning cycle, travelers are gathering ideas and inspiration. This is when the traveler either decides the type of trip they are interested in, or researches destinations that fit the trip type they want. Cost of travel and availability of personal finances to travel will impact the destination and type of trip chosen. Airfare and distance to travel to and within Montana may impact the decision to select Montana. But when prioritizing what they do on their trip, "activities and unique experiences drive travel decisions." (Expedia Media Solutions)

Impediments to Travel: 44% of America leisure travelers said personal finances kept them from traveling more in the past year and over 30% reported that gasoline or airfare being too expensive kept them at home during the past year.

Messages: Speak to the desire for a trip that includes being outdoors, relaxation, and discovery/free-spirit adventure while also addressing safety, availability of modern comforts, and dispelling perceptions of Montana being difficult to access. Include messaging in our promotions that shows the affordability of a Montana vacation once they arrive and the unique experiences and memories they'll receive. Highlight family-friendly events and activities. Tell an inspiring story of what makes our destination special. Most travelers are also considering the trip budget in the inspiration stage and the budget continues to have a strong influence throughout the planning cycle.

Tools:

Destination websites – visitmt, glaciermt, discoverkalispell

Targeted keywords for SEM

Destination social media channels

Blogs, articles, and inspiring photos & videos – show what makes destination unique

Sponsored content in targeting and retargeting campaigns

Emarketing to database – keep followers engaged

Travel shows – 1:1 conversations with targeted potential travelers

Earned media/WOM – let others tell your story

Step 2: Orientation – Planning

Second stage of the trip planning cycle revolves around orientating themselves to the selected destination or trip type – planning their memorable moments. This stage includes deciding the dates of travel, learning about available activities, events, historical, cultural and natural attractions, and setting the trip budget.

Messages: Highlight the historical and cultural and local offerings along with the outdoor recreation opportunities and soften the perception that they will be isolated (being without common amenities) and the perceived challenges of harsh weather. Highlight local food and culture. Food is a major hook in trip planning - locally grown food and cultural food choices have evolved to become destinations in their own right.

Tools:

Consumer reviews and ratings on travel websites

Be present on popular travel sites

Strong call to action in all content

Customized content for emarketing database

Local events calendars

Use video to highlight events and activities so they can imagine themselves in the picture

Checklists to incentivize trip planning – i.e. 10 day hikes within 30 minutes of Kalispell

Stage 3: Facilitation – Booking

Third stage includes making specific plans: booking activities and tours, making reservations for transportation and lodging, checking weather predictions. Travelers do their homework when deciding how to spend the moments of their trip. These 'hyper-informed' consumers have amped their consumption of content across various media and devices.

Messages: Travelers are interested and motivated but probably have not finalized trip plans. To not lose them to another destination, make it easy for them to book. Connect travelers with hotels and activity providers, highlight unique events during their travel dates, promote activities outside of Glacier National Park to extend the trip, and make the transaction as smooth and seamless as possible.

Tools:

Mobile friendly website

Reliable sources for questions - VIC, travel guide, response to questions posted on social media

Season-specific and niche activity content on website and social media

Online maps

Checklists - i.e. list of boat rentals and guide on Flathead Lake with complete contact info

Visitor Information Center that's open year-round

Stage 4: The Experience

Once they are here, be present with resources on the ground and current info on the website and social media. Provide welcoming hospitality and don't promise something you can't deliver!

Stage 5: Sharing

Hopefully you've created loyal fans to your destination and they'll be sharing trip photos on social media and telling stories about their adventures at the next party and family gathering.

Back to Stage 1, with the next traveler: Inspiration – Word of Mouth, opinions of friends and relatives, either direct or via social media, is the most important way to find inspiration when deciding where to travel.

Optional: Include attachments here FY'19 KCVB Marketing Plan - Describe Your Destination.pdf

a. Define your target markets (demographic, geographic and psychographic).

Discover Kalispell's Key Markets

Northwest Montana, due to the close proximity to Glacier National Park and world-class recreational opportunities, is a leading destination for travelers interested in Montana. The primary audience for both Kalispell and Northwest Montana in general, is the Glacier National Park and nature-based outdoor traveler. Kalispell competes for those visitor room nights with other locales in the Flathead Valley.

Kalispell seeks to identify the target audience that will connect with our destination to base their outdoor adventure/Glacier National Park vacation and will travel for destination events. A visitor interested in Kalispell is looking for an affordable variety of shopping, dining and activities along with a bit of culture for their outdoor-centered vacation. Kalispell's character and culture speak to the high potential visitor's need for comfort and authentic experiences. These qualities are highlighted in our downtown amenities, local events and opportunities to enjoy a taste of Montana heritage through agriculture-based activities such as rodeo, hunting and fishing as well as our museums and Main Street vibe.

Kalispell is the hub for meetings and conventions in northwest Montana offering more than 1,700 rooms and 65,000 square feet of meeting and exhibit space managed by experienced hospitality professionals and professional planners.

Leisure/Consumer Travel

Kalispell's key markets in the leisure travel segment are active adults, budget conscious families, and winter enthusiasts.

Key Geographical Markets – Washington, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Alberta

Warm Season – San Francisco and Los Angeles, Seattle, Tri-Cities, Spokane/CDA, Calgary

Winter and Shoulder Season – Spokane/CDA, Seattle, Calgary, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Chicago

The emerging market for Kalispell is the Los Angeles basin area. As identified in the Montana Destination Brand Research Study, Los Angeles "appears to be a hotbed of interest for Montana" for both warm and winter season travel. This is supported by Kalispell's data sources which demonstrate a strong and consistent growth of interest in Kalispell from Los Angeles. United Airlines recently announced summer direct service in 2018 and Los Angeles is also serviced seasonally by Delta and Allegiant.

Warm Season

Kalispell will continue to connect with visitors interested in Glacier National Park, positioning our destination as the ideal place to base their trip for easy access to a variety of activities, trails, retail, dining outlets that offer local products, and a variety of affordable options appealing to families. As the majority of our visitors are repeat (70% of groups had all repeat visitors, ITRR), Kalispell will continue to promote the other iconic experiences outside of Glacier Park such as Flathead Lake, Jewel Basin, Lone Pine State Park, trail systems and local and signature events. Close-by drive market travelers visit Kalispell in the warm season for sports tournaments and notable events such as The Event at Rebecca Farm and Arts In The Park, and to enjoy the variety of water sports and scenic driving and biking trails. Discover Kalispell's spring/summer marketing campaigns typically run April – June.

Winter and Shoulder Season

Kalispell's winter and shoulder season visitors primarily travel from Alberta, B.C., Washington, California, Utah, and Idaho. Visitors from Canada come to Kalispell for shopping, Discover Kalispell's signature events, golf, skiing, hockey tournaments and medical tourism. Nonresident visitors from other markets come for events and to enjoy the variety of winter activities that are easily accessible from Kalispell as well as the affordable variety of lodging and dining. Visitors enjoy the traditions such as Moose's Saloon, Western Outdoor, rodeos, downtown events, snowshoeing, dog sledding, and cultural activities at Kalispell's museums. Younger families both from Canada and our U.S. target markets are becoming aware of what Kalispell has to offer and are attracted to the variety of kid-friendly activities and culture. Discover Kalispell has hosted several family-centered travel writers and media outlets from Canada and the Pacific Northwest to continue to strengthen this niche market. Discover Kalispell's annual fall/winter marketing campaigns are designed to promote easy access to a Montana winter adventure on direct flights (Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles), and a short drive from Spokane/CDA and Calgary.

Direct Flight Markets

Glacier Park International Airport is serviced by Delta (SLC, MSP & seasonal to Atlanta and LA), Alaska (SEA & PDX), United (Denver and seasonal to Chicago, SFO and Los Angeles), Allegiant (Las Vegas and seasonal to Oakland and Los Angeles). GPIA had a 9.5% increase in ridership during 2017. The KCVB is on the board of Glacier Aero, the Flathead Valley's non-profit group dedicated to increasing and sustaining direct flights to Kalispell, and supports the revenue guarantee flights through media events, press trips, online marketing and other targeted promotional campaigns. Increasing flights and seat availability are critical to our success in attracting visitors from our key markets.

Leisure Travelers were asked what are the Biggest Impediment to travel: 19.8% said Airfare was too expensive (#3 out of a list of 14) (Destination Analysts)

Supporting Data

ITRR: 2017 Nonresident Travel Survey Report for Kalispell: (those that spent at least one night in Kalispell)

Top non-resident activities:

68% scenic driving

48% wildlife watching

47% nature photography

47% day hiking

40% recreational shopping

26% visiting historical sites

Demographic: Average age 58, median age 60

Household income 1) \$50,000 to less than \$75,000, followed by 2) \$75k to less than \$100k

64% had a travel group size of 2

Top 5 residency of origin for nonresident visitors to Kalispell: ITRR – WA, OR, CA, BC, FL

DiscoverKalispell.com analytics:

Top five residency of origin of website users: AB, MN, WA, OR, CA

Key markets as measured by percentage increase of new users:

Washington – 83% increase: Seattle, Spokane, Vancouver, Tacoma, Yakima, Spokane Valley

California – 23% increase: 67% increase in visits from Los Angeles basin and 71% increase from San Francisco area

Alberta – 3% increase: Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge

(FY18 over FY17)

NSight – Top Source Markets for Kalispell:

Destinations with the highest percentage for search to book and book to stay:

Los Angeles basin area consistently has the highest percentage, followed by

Minneapolis, Florida, Dallas, New York, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Chicago, and Atlanta

Glacier Park International Airport passenger originating destination data, 2017:

Los Angeles and San Francisco consistently rank in top 10 for highest number of 'visitor' passengers even though direct flights are not available year-round.

Top originating destination of travelers flying into GPIA:

Q1 – SEA, LAS, LAX, DEN, MSP, SFO, ATL, PDX

Q2 – SEA, LAX, LAS, DEN, OAK, MSP, ATL, SFO

Q3 – LAX, SEA, DEN, MSP, OAK, DFW, SFO, PDX

Group, Meetings & Conventions

One of the primary goals of Discover Kalispell is to increase travel by attracting groups, meetings and conventions. Group and tour business accounts for 10% of total room nights for the 21 Kalispell hotels during FY17. The Country Inn & Suites by Radisson scheduled to open in June 2018 with 100 rooms and 4,000 square feet of meeting space. Country Inn & Suites is located at the Glacier Park International Airport and will feature a pool with a slide and future development includes a restaurant and convenience store. A My Place 84 room property has begun construction and is slated to open in 2019. This will bring the Kalispell's total room availability to 1,975.

Groups of 10-500 can be comfortably and adequately accommodated in Kalispell. The most common group size is 50-120. The largest event space in our hotel properties can hold up to 880 for a reception and 700 for banquet seating. The two largest convention hotels can accommodate up to 280 group rooms per night and have over 29,000 square feet combined. Along with our convention hotel space there are numerous unique meeting venues in the Historic Downtown Kalispell that also serve as part of Kalispell's cultural museums.

Market segment percentage of total rooms at Kalispell lodging properties:

	QTR 1 AVG July-Sept 2016	QTR 2 AVG Oct-Dec 2016	QTR 3 AVG Jan-March 2017	QTR 4 AVG April-June 2017
Corporate	12%	15%	21%	14%
Events	2%	3%	4%	4%
Government	4%	6%	5%	6%
Group	10%	9%	6%	6%
Tours	3%	1%	1%	1%
Transient/Leisure	69%	66%	64%	69%

M&C – Key Segment

Association continues to be the most reliable and dependable market due to their organizational structures in their bylaws such as annual meeting agendas, rotation process for state, regional and national and the predictable number of members.

Out of twelve RFP's sent to TBID hotels in FY17 50% are from the association market.

Professionals find it important to belong to associations for reasons such as networking with like-minded professionals, to be a voice and advocate for their industry, and be exposed to industry trends to name a few. Kalispell's businesses are thriving. Top industries in the Flathead County are Healthcare, Manufacturing and Tourism. For example, healthcare is expected to grow here in the next 10 years and economists are predicting another 21 percent increase in health care employment between 2014 and 2024.

With this trend on the rise, it will be the goal of Discover Kalispell to tap into the association and organizational connections of local professionals through our *Bring it Home campaign*, a referral program where locals receive a \$10 gift card for every meeting or conference referral they give. The Kalispell Chamber membership of over 700 businesses and associations is a good source to tap into. The Kalispell Chamber continues to be a strong resource for the KCVB and a tourism advocate with their local members.

M&C – Key Geographical Market

The Puget Sound area will remain a focus for Discover Kalispell to discover new planners and continue to build relationships. Seattle is part of the Sound and the closest major U.S.

city to Kalispell. Other cities in Puget Sound include Tacoma, Olympia and Everett, Washington.

In addition to only being an eight hour drive from Seattle, Glacier Park International Airport offers three direct flights out of Kalispell daily and Amtrak train service daily from Whitefish. Although the Puget Sound region offers spectacular coastal scenery, Montana can provide authentic experiences that only true "Montanans" can pull off. With an abundance of lakes, mountains, and Glacier National Park, our iconic outdoor settings can create that inspirational venue for meetings and team building. Productive meetings don't always require an epic trek and often are within driving distance of major cities.

Discover Kalispell attended the Pacific Northwest Connect tradeshow in 2017 and met with 17 planners specifically from that region. It was great exposure for Kalispell and the information was very well received. Rates, flight availability and activities were high on their priority list and we have all of that to offer here.

Discover Kalispell will continue to partner with MOTBD and Glacier Country to attend IMEX (Incentive, Meetings and Event Expo's) in Las Vegas. Since Montana as a whole doesn't have a large presence at the meeting and convention shows, partnering with the state, regions and CVB's make it viable to highlight Montana as a meeting destination.

Emerging Markets-Tour Groups, International Market

Kalispell has the right elements and events to attract regional and international groups, clubs, and hobby groups for activities related to their specific interest. Discover Kalispell will seek out tour groups and clubs that focus on activities such as history, culture and the activities that encompass our signature events. Our high caliber artists, performers and one-of-a-kind events will be sure to attract the right audiences.

Kalispell is hosted International Roundup in April, 2018 which brought in over 40 tour operators to experience Kalispell. It has been over 20 years since this event has been held in northwest Montana. It is an opportunity for our local hoteliers and activity vendors to showcase their business or service and for Discover Kalispell to continue building relationships with the tour operators. International visitors turn to their travel agencies and tour operators for itineraries, travel insurance and suggestions. The Rocky Mountain region is perceived as safe and international visitors want to see the national parks and experience the historic and western ambiance.

100 Tour Operators offered product in Kalispell with 21,148 estimated overnight rooms from international travelers in 2016. (Rocky Mountain International's proprietary T.R.I.P Report)

b. What are your emerging markets?

Emerging Markets - Leisure

The emerging geographic market for the Kalispell is the Los Angeles basin area. As identified in the Montana Destination Brand Research Study, Los Angeles "appears to be a hotbed of interest for Montana" for both warm and winter season travel. This is supported by Kalispell's data sources which demonstrate a strong and consistent growth of interest in Kalispell from Los Angeles. United Airlines recently announced summer direct service in 2018 and Los Angeles is also serviced seasonally by Delta and Allegiant.

Emerging Markets-Tour Groups, International Market

Kalispell has the right elements and events to attract regional and international groups, clubs, and hobby groups for activities related to their specific interest. Discover Kalispell will seek out tour groups and clubs that focus on activities such as history, culture and the activities that encompass our signature events. Our high caliber artists, performers and one-of-a-kind events will be sure to attract the right audiences.

Kalispell is hosted International Roundup in April, 2018 which brought in over 40 tour operators to experience Kalispell. It has been over 20 years since this event has been held in northwest Montana. It is an opportunity for our local hoteliers and activity vendors to showcase their business or service and for Discover Kalispell to continue building relationships with the tour operators. International visitors turn to their travel agencies and tour operators for itineraries, travel insurance and suggestions. The Rocky Mountain region is perceived as safe and international visitors want to see the national parks and experience the historic and western ambiance.

100 Tour Operators offered product in Kalispell with 21,148 estimated overnight rooms from international travelers in 2016. (Rocky Mountain International's proprietary T.R.I.P Report)

Optional: Include attachments here. FY'19 KCVB Marketing Plan - Travel Decision Process.pdf

c. What research supports your target marketing?

Destination Marketing – Trends for 2018

Every destination needs to consider the long-term implications of tourism in order to ensure that the right balance is achieved between economic, environmental and social value. (*Destination Think Forum, 2016*). It is the responsibility of a DMO to be involved in planning discussions and have a role in managing and improving the destination. Visitor capacity is already an issue in Glacier National Park during July and August. Tourism stakeholders such as CVB's, Chambers, Glacier National Park, Flathead Forest Service, and activity vendors are developing strategies to promote activities and attractions outside the park to help mitigate the negative impacts of overcrowding and potential trail and road closures. Discover Kalispell is also involved in the Flathead Country Trails Plan update, the City of Kalispell Downtown Plan and Core Development Project.

The success of a DMO has traditionally been measured by what is out of their control - hotel occupancy and lodging tax revenue. A DMO's role is to influence travel to a destination. With countless external factors impacting occupancy, that measurement is not an accurate correlation of a DMO's success. Industry leaders are recognizing that the key to sustaining and grow funding is effective measurement. As Tourism New Zealand CEO Kevin Bowler stated, "I don't think policy makers struggle to understand the economic value of tourism. They struggle with understanding the additional value that a destination marketing organization brings to the industry." (Skift, *Secret to Bigger Destination Marketing Budgets*, May 2015). A goal for Discover Kalispell is to invest in research to better understand the ROI of our marketing initiatives, and then utilize those data insights to make effective marketing decisions. Data from platforms such as Arrivalist measure the way media influences decisions to travel to a particular destination. This type of data more accurately demonstrates a return on investment than relying on hotel occupancy and revenue as performance measurements.

Looking at the bigger picture - Is the role of a destination marketing organization changing? Trends are showing that DMO's are shifting their focus from promotion to product, seeing promotion as a role of the visitor in this digital age. Utilizing the variety of online tools available, travelers can easily share their experiences and build awareness and interest in a destination.

How can a DMO shift its focus on the visitor experience in order to deliver the right destination experience that creates brand advocacy from visitors and residents alike? (Destination Think, Leading Your Destination Into the Future, 2016)

Travelers interested in festivals and special events account for 34.5% of leisure travelers. Event travelers have a mean age of 40, 53.8% are college graduates, this group has a higher annual travel budget, takes 5.1 leisure trips annually and actively use social media to plan their travels. (*Destination Analysts Traveler Segment study, Summer 2017*). Discover Kalispell includes destination events as a major strategy to increase visitations during shoulder and winter months. Our 2017 signature events were impacted by changes in climate, including the wildfire smoke and fluctuating winter conditions, which caused two annual events to be cancelled. Discover Kalispell will build on the six year success of the events by

reevaluating current offerings and looking at new opportunities that are less influenced by climate fluctuations.

Destination marketing trends and tools are constantly changing. How to best connect with your audience today will be different a month from now. It is a challenge for DMO's to manage the always-changing social media algorithms as well as the numerous other content marketing tactics. Facebook rolled out significant changes in 2018, which forced DMO's to reexamine the social media strategy. Why is social media an effective marketing tool? It allows a destination to talk to visitors and potential visitors and builds word of mouth (WOM) recommendations. Social media's ROI is brand awareness – a tool to grow interest in the destination. To measure the effectiveness of a social media strategy is to increase social engagement as a percent of total followers.

"Companies should focus more on how to BE social, and less on how to DO social media". (Jay Baer, ConvinceandConvert.com)

Just when we were all focused on mobile, trends now show that many traveler groups prefer their desktop computer. 30% strongly prefer laptop to research activities and attractions, with the strongest affinity for desktop by Boomers and the growth in mobile addiction is slowing across all demographics. (*Destination Analysts, State of American Traveler, Mobile Edition, Fall 2017*)

DMO's marketing strategies need to be ready to meet the key market visitor where they are today and be ready to go where they are tomorrow. (7 Destination Marketing Trends for 2018, Devin Meister, Wilson Advertising)

The Montana Visitor – Winter Enthusiasts

The winter enthusiast traveler is primarily a ski vacation audience, but when provided a list of 37 winter destination attributes and asked to select which were important to evaluating a destination, 58.9% selected outdoor activities other than skiing or snowboarding. When asked to select the three most important attributes for a winter recreation destination, superior snow quality, outdoor activities other than skiing and snowboarding, and general/overall costs in the destination received the most votes. This is good news for Montana and Kalispell. Outside of superior snow quality which can fluctuate year-over-year, our area offers abundant options for winter experiences and the cost of our destination is lower than the better known winter recreation places such as Colorado and Utah. And when winter enthusiasts take into consideration Montana's beautiful landscape, national parks, and wildlife, those travelers have a growing aspiration to choose Montana. (*MOTBD Winter Enthusiast Research, January 2018*)

Discover Kalispell directs approximately 70% of annual marketing campaign dollars to the winter season. MOTBD is revisiting their winter campaign strategy and is anticipated to increase their winter marketing budget. Discover Kalispell will plan to coordinate and partner with MOTBD and Glacier Country to promote a consistent message that most effectively speaks to the winter enthusiasts' propensity for quality snow, affordability and other activities, which we know we can deliver on.

Meeting, Convention and Group Travel

Research conducted by Destination Analysts surveyed 569 meeting professionals with corporate, association, and third-party planners, as well as those who plan city-wides and those solely focused on self-contained meetings. Here are some of their findings:

Top five most important components in measuring success of a meeting or event, and the type of planner who rated them the highest:

- Attendee satisfaction 38.3% - SMERF Planners (43.0%)
- Number of attendee registrations 36.0% - Association Planners (50.3%)
- Client satisfaction 30.2% - Third-Party Planners (54.3%)
- Achieving meeting goals 28.8% - Corporate Planners (40.0%)
- Staying within the budget 14.4% - Corporate Planners (19.2%)

Top 5 most important attributes for a meeting location and the type of planner that rated that value the highest:

- Geographic location 91.0% - Third-Party Planners (93.4%)
- Hotels – quality 89.3% – Third-Party Planners (93.4%)
- Meeting facilities 89.1% - Association Planners (92.3%)
- Hotels – rates 89.1% - Third-Party Planners (92.1%)
- Overall cost of holding a meeting in the destination 88.2% - Association Planners (92.3%)

While a CVB's role in the meetings process is largely described as a "one-stop shop" for destination expertise, there is a notable lack of specific knowledge of many functions and services a CVB provides.

Meeting planners were asked to describe a CVB's role in the meeting planning process:

The top 5 descriptions were:

1. Destination expertise 39.8%
2. Site visits – hotel selection help 18.1%
3. Distribute RFPs 12.8%
4. Local connections – liaison with stakeholders 12.8%
5. Provides support – saves time and money 12.3%

Despite being a slightly lower measure of success compared to attendee satisfaction, issues related to cost are largely the key challenges meeting planners face in executing a successful meeting. CVB's that can assist or otherwise provide relief in this area are likely to be highly valued. Kalispell is the perfect meeting destination to support meeting planner preferences for several reasons: 1) our iconic location near Glacier National Park, 2) quality lodging options, 3) ability to help planners combat the overall meeting cost compared to larger cities, and 4) being a one-stop-shop.

Discover Kalispell utilizes monthly, quarterly and annual campaigns to promote the professional services provided through the KCVB. In addition to the downloadable Kalispell Meeting Guide, a quarterly newsletter is sent to the meeting planner database, articles are posted regularly to Discover Kalispell LinkedIn profile, and we educate the local business community and tourism stakeholders on the economic impact attained through meetings and group business. This is achieved through presentations, monthly newsletters, and incentives to refer a meeting or conference through the Bring It Home Campaign.

According to STR's recent study of meeting planners (DestinationMAP), almost two-thirds of all meeting planners attended at least one conference in the past 12 months (2017). Listed as the preferred trade shows and conferences are: IMEX, MPI (Meeting Professionals International), ASAE (America Society of Association Executives), PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association) and Connect. Discover Kalispell's continued attendance at IMEX and Connect give us the ability to meet new planners and build on existing relationships. Additionally, hosting a FAM for meeting planners who have never been to Kalispell is a cost effective way to validate Kalispell as desired meeting destination.

Marketing Plan Goals and Objectives

Goals

1. Generate increased press and public awareness of Kalispell in targeted U.S. and International markets.

2. Build relationships with visitors as demonstrated through increased usage and engagement with our key platforms.
3. Grow winter and shoulder season visitations.
4. Acquire applicable research to understand the ROI of KCVB initiatives and incorporate data insights to make effective marketing decisions.
5. Promote Kalispell for tour group travel, domestic and international.
6. Connect with active meeting planners in drive market and regional areas.
7. Promote Kalispell as a meeting destination to local businesses and organizations.
8. Educate meeting planners on services the CVB provides.
9. Play an active role as a voice for tourism in the state and the community through positive publicity and outreach and involvement in the downtown and core area redevelopment projects.

Objectives

1. Increase occupancy at TBID hotels between October and June by 2% (as measured by TBID Collections).
2. Increase total unique visitors to website by 15% over FY18.
3. Increase consumer database by 7% over FY18 (equates to additional 1,000 opt-in subscribers).
4. Gauge interest in Discover Kalispell social media channels by measuring the level of engagement. Obtain an average post engagement equal or greater to 10% of total followers.
5. Generate 10 media stories in target markets through public relations efforts.
6. Maintain crisis communication plan to effectively communicate with Discover Kalispell's audience and to assist local businesses and stakeholders.
7. Host two press trips with travel media from key markets.
8. Successfully produce KCVB signature events: on budget and with increased economic impact to community.
9. Provide sponsorship through the CVB Event Grant program for new or expanding events or sports tournaments that have long term growth potential during off-season.
10. Increase database of qualified and interested meeting planners by 30% over FY18.
11. Retain engagement of meeting planner database through quarterly newsletters.
12. Attend two regional tradeshows to promote Kalispell as a meeting destination.
13. Host one meeting planner FAM of qualified planners who have never been to Glacier Country.
14. Connect and engage with meeting planners through two targeted advertising campaigns.
15. Increase referrals to the KCVB Bring It Home program by 20% over FY18.

a. *In what types of co-ops with MTOT would you like to participate?*

Discover Kalispell would be interested in match opportunities directed towards the winter enthusiasts traveler, in media that were not solely focused on downhill skiing/ski resorts. Also match opportunities for print that also includes editorial in publications that support our target markets.

Optional: Include attachment here. [FY'19 KCVB Marketing Plan - Supporting Research.pdf](#)

b. *In what other types of co-ops would you like to participate? (Regions/CVBs, etc.)*

Discover Kalispell works cooperatively with the PR and Group Travel departments of MOTBD and Glacier Country to assist with hosting press trips, social influencers, and media events. We collaborate with Explore Whitefish and Glacier Country on PR crisis issues to ensure a consistent message to travelers. For the group travel, meetings and conventions segment, Discover Kalispell participates in FAM trips, RMI site tours, and meeting planner shows such as IMEX with Montana region and CVB representatives.

In the local market Discover Kalispell regularly meets with partners at Glacier National Park, Flathead Forest Service, Associated Chambers of Flathead Valley, Kalispell Downtown Association and Business Improvement District, Montana West Economic Development, Flathead County Parks and Recreation and Fairgrounds, Kalispell Parks and Recreation, and Montana State Parks. Discover Kalispell assists with funding for the West Glacier VIC. Due to the increased visitation and overcrowding during July and August, GNP and Glacier Conservancy staff have assisted by promoting activities and attractions outside of the park during the annual park staff training, making information and resources outside the park available to park visitors, and staffing the VIC at the West Glacier Belton Depot. Discover Kalispell is a member of the Flathead County PATHS Committee, whose vision is to create safe and convenient networks of multi-use trails connecting Flathead County communities, schools, parks, and public lands for the benefit of area families, the economy and the environment.

c. *What types of co-ops have you done in the past? Were they successful - why or why not?*

During FY18, Discover Kalispell participated in MOTBD Family Fun print advertising match campaign. We will evaluate the available joint venture opportunities in FY19 and participate if it fits within our marketing strategy and budget.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Optional: Include attachments here. [FY'19 Marketing Plan - Bed Tax Approval.pdf](#)

Optional: Include attachment here:

Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget

		Does											Are you using private			
--	--	------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	-----------------------	--	--	--

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	Plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale.	Estimated budget for each method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	funds to support this method? If so, please explain	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Attchmnts	Meets Regs	Eval Comments
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Yes	Secure new photos & videos that support the PR, social media & advertising.	Images touch a traveler during each phase of the decision process through social media, online adv., and mobile marketing.	Imagery is a branding tool. Effectiveness would be gauged through social media insights.	Images play an important role in promoting a destination and engaging with potential visitors.	\$3,000.00			Yes			
Consumer	Social Media	Yes	Update and manage social media sites that foster consumer engagement and enhance cross platform consistency. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube.	Social media has changed how people research trips, make decisions and share experiences. (Hospitalitynet.org)	Increased level of engagement; obtain an average post engagement equal or greater to 10% of total followers.	Majority of travelers (all demographics) use social media to connect with sphere and share travel experiences and get consumer reviews.	\$8,000.00			Yes			
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	Media buy for digital advertising including banner ads and geo-location marketing and retargeting.	Digital advertising has measurable ROI and drives shares and referrals and can be highly targeted. (INMA ROI Study, Marketingland.com)	Digital advertising is measured by number of impressions, engagement, page likes, contest submissions, CTR.	Digital advertising enables a destination to reach targeted consumers and connect them with website and other platforms.	\$16,000.00			Yes			
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	Creative services and media buy in print publications that meet target market specifications.	Seeing a brochure or ad on a screen doesn't deliver the same tactile fulfillment as holding that very same brochure in your hand. We see millions of things on screens each day and the digital overload dilutes the importance in even the most memorable design. (Forbes, July 2017)	Print advertising, as part of the overall marketing mix, supports the overall brand awareness.	Lifestyle print publications, particularly with accompanying editorial, speak to specific geographic and psychographic markets and are effective in building brand awareness.	\$8,000.00			Yes			
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Yes	Kalispell will attend at least two consumer travel shows in target markets during FY19	Travel shows allow us to directly connect with a target market to grow off-peak visitations.	Number of brochures distributed and opt-in subscribers collected.	It is an economical way to connect directly with consumers interested in our destination. One-on-one conversations allow us to create a strong inspiration to move the interested traveler into the orientation phase of trip planning.	\$2,000.00			Yes			
				Through fulfillment requests, in brochure racks in target markets, and distribution at	Distributed in	The Kalispell tear-off map is a popular item and includes an area map and detailed Kalispell map							

Consumer	Printed Material	Yes	Design and production of maps and niche brochures.	travel shows, we are able to engage with potential visitors and lead them to our website and social channels to learn more. Niche brochures play a role such as suggested itineraries to incentivize travel.	VIC and at travel shows and used in conjunction with our website for brand awareness.	that identifies locations of hotels. Other niche brochures are Breweries, Wineries, Distilleries brochure, hiking brochure, and birding brochure.	\$3,000.00			Yes			
Events	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	Yes	Story pitches and press releases announcing event in target markets to solicit teams and promote teams coming to our events through hometown media.	Participants register for our signature events from across the U.S. and Canada. We have successfully used the event as the story pitch, either through promotion of a team within their hometown newspaper or just the uniqueness of the event for our state, to enable Kalispell to permeate markets that we could not have normally afforded.	Part of event brand awareness, measured by registrations and spectator volume.	Connect with markets that have existing teams/ participants to increase event awareness.	\$1,000.00						
Events	Social Media	Yes	Social media advertising is used to promote event and solicit registrations and spectators.	Participants register for our signature events from across the U.S. and Canada. We have successfully used the event as the draw, either through promotion a team within their hometown newspaper or the uniqueness of the event in Montana, to enable Kalispell to permeate markets that we could not normally afford.	Part of event brand awareness, measured by registrations and spectator volume.	Economical and targeted approach to promote event registrations.	\$2,000.00						
Events	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Yes	Digital advertising including video promos and emarketing to promote event and solicit registrations and spectators.	Participants register for our signature events from across the U.S. and Canada. We have successfully used the event as the draw, either through promotion a team within their hometown media or the uniqueness of the event in Montana, to enable Kalispell to permeate markets that we could not normally afford.	Part of event brand awareness, measured by registrations and spectator volume.	Connect with markets that have existing teams/ participants to increase event awareness.	\$1,000.00						
Group Marketing	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	Promote Kalispell to qualified meeting planners, associations and corporate planners to solicit RFP's and build our database.	Meeting planners can find information on conference facilities and hotels within each destination, offer one RFP to multiple destinations, and receive unlimited local advice from their destination experts. (Empowermint)	Number of qualified leads and increase our database.	Use an industry recognized platform such as Empowerment to connect with qualified planners interested in our destination.	\$10,000.00			Yes			
			KCVB utilizes part-time services of the KCVB sales manager to administer bed tax funded group marketing projects which include but not	Group and meeting & convention marketing	Growth in the database of								

Group Marketing	Group Marketing Personnel	Yes	limited to: development and maintenance of EMpowermint subscription, responding and managing group and event RFP's and facilitating event press promotions and media outreach and printed material.	serves to create visitations during targeted months. Connecting with the target audience requires dedicated personnel to effectively communicate and create innovative solutions.	active meeting planners in drive market and acquisition of RFP's and other group events.	Group and meeting & convention marketing is a key goal and strategy for the KCVB.	\$12,000.00			Yes			
Marketing Support	Administration	No	Admin funds include required expenses for operation of the KCVB such as rent, supplies, postage, bookkeeping, equipment, tech support, janitorial, miscellaneous and employer costs related to staff wages/taxes.		Maintain operational costs within established budget.	Operational and staffing costs are essential to operate a business.	\$18,000.00						
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	No	The KCVB Director will attend TAC meetings and the annual Governor's Conference.		Completion of travel within budget	Attendance at TAC meetings is a requirement as part of the use of the bed tax funds. Governor's Conference provides insights and education for destination marketers.	\$700.00			No			
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	Yes	KCVB supports a full time year-round travel counselor and additional seasonal coverage at the VIC. VIC staff maintains superior information resources, responds to inquiries submitted by phone, email, and walk-ins, compiles and inputs VIC data, completes fulfillment requests, solicits and trains volunteers and analyzes visitor satisfaction levels.	In 2017 the VIC had over 10,555 total inquires, a 10% decrease over 2016.	Increased total number of inquiries to VIC and fulfillment packets requested. Expand VIC hours between the third week of June to September (after labor day) to 7 days a week.	The VIC staff is often the face of Kalispell and the Kalispell Chamber/CVB to a first time visitor. It is imperative that adequate staffing be maintained to provide superior services and keep visitors engaged with our destination.	\$33,000.00			No			
			KCVB plans to coop with Glacier Country to produce		Success will	Opportunity funds are in place to allow the KCVB to participate in							

Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	Yes	media events in target markets and other opportunities as they become available during FY'19.	Previous fiscal years have shown that there are opportunities that come available during the year.	be determined based on the individual projects.	co-op or other marketing and/or publicity opportunities that become available during the year.	\$9,000.00			No			
Marketing Support	Outreach	No	Outreach funds will be used to allow the KCVB to support tourism related organizations that are important to advancing state tourism industry such as Voices of Montana Tourism.		Important to support organizations and initiatives that help to advance the state tourism industry.	The outreach funds are seen as assisting in the promotion and security of the tourism brand within the state.	\$1,000.00			Yes			
Marketing Support	Wayfinding	Yes	Funds to be used for maintenance and replacement of existing signs when necessary due to damage or new resources needing to be listed.	Wayfinding is important for people to make their way through unfamiliar areas because it improves efficiency, accessibility, and decreases frustration, time spent giving or looking for directions, and directs visitors to our amenities and services. When you have a great experience in an unfamiliar place, chances are you were able to navigate your visit easily without much frustration. When you enjoy experience you will find yourself wanting to frequent that destination more often. (Importance of Wayfinding, Actually We Create)	Part of the branding for our destination and increased visitations to amenities promoted on the signs.	The existing Wayfinding system needs to be maintained to provide visitors with accurate information presented in a professional manner.	\$5,000.00			No			
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	Yes	Phone, postage and supplies to fulfill visitor information requests through the Kalispell VIC. Fulfillment piece is the Kalispell Visitor and Guide and other niche brochures as requested.	In 2017 the VIC had 6,371 walk-ins, 1,700 fulfillment packets mailed 1,680 phone inquiries, sent 234 follow up postcards and 137 welcome letters.	Increased total number of inquiries to VIC and fulfillment packets requested. Expand VIC hours between late June and September (after labor day) to 7 days a week.	A visitor information center is the first point of contact for many consumers. It is important to have the process and staffing in place to answer questions and send the proper information to keep the potential traveler engaged with our destination.	\$4,300.00			No			
							\$137,000.00						

Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments

Attachment 1

Attachment 2

Attachment 3

Attachment 4

Attachment 5

Attachment 6

Attachment 7

Attachment 8

Attachment 9

Attachment 10

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$3,000.00	\$2,000.00
Consumer	Social Media	\$8,000.00	\$5,000.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$16,000.00	\$27,000.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$2,000.00	\$2,750.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$3,000.00	\$8,000.00
		\$40,000.00	\$52,750.00
Events	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Events	Social Media	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Events	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
		\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Group Marketing	Online/Digital Advertising	\$10,000.00	\$17,000.00
Group Marketing	Group Marketing Personnel	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
		\$22,000.00	\$17,000.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$18,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$700.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$33,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$9,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Wayfinding	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	\$4,300.00	\$0.00
		\$71,000.00	\$0.00
		\$137,000.00	\$69,750.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
FY19 Discover Kalispell Destination Marketing Plan	FY'19 Marketing Plan - Bed Tax Approval.pdf	4.0 MB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
KCVB Required Documents: Applicants Certificate of Compliance (with copy of resolution) Application for Lodging Tax Revenue Pledge of Understanding	KCVB Required documents - All.pdf	1.1 MB

