



**Grant Details**

**68892 - FY19 Region/CVB Marketing Plan**

**72766 - FY19 Southeast Montana Marketing Plan**

**DOC Office of Tourism**

<b>Grant Title:</b>	FY19 Southeast Montana Marketing Plan			
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<b>Grantee Contact:</b>	Brenda Maas			
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Contract Sent	Contract Received	Contract Executed	Contract Legal
<b>Project Dates</b>	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?*

## **A BRIEF HISTORY**

Originally called "Custer Country," Visit Southeast Montana began in 1984 as an organization charged with helping bring tourists to the region. It was named for one of its most famous attractions, the Little Bighorn Battlefield. In 1987 the Montana Legislature enacted a 4 percent Lodging Facility Use Tax to fund tourism promotion organizations. At that time, Custer Country became one of six state-funded tourism regions in the state. This organization continued to market the 13 counties and two Indian Reservations of Southeast Montana until 2010. The Billings Chamber of Commerce received the contract from the Montana Department of Commerce to manage the region and the organization moved from Forsyth to Billings. In 2012, the Custer Country Board of Directors voted to change the name of the region to "Visit Southeast Montana."

From a traveler's perspective, it may seem like there is not much "out here" but the FY19 campaign will demonstrate otherwise.

## **THE ORGANIZATION**

Visit Southeast Montana is a private, nonprofit organization managed by the Billings Chamber of Commerce. We serve as a voice for Southeast Montana's tourism and hospitality industries, seeking to promote the region's many attractions, events and communities while ensuring that tourism is recognized as one of the region's top economic drivers, especially when changes to local and state-wide legislation are considered. Visit Southeast Montana consists of two full-time staff members under contract with the Montana Department of Commerce and is directed by a board consisting of no more than 21 members from across the region.

Visit Southeast Montana partners with the region's three Convention & Visitors Bureaus (Billings, Miles City and Glendive) along with hoteliers, chambers of commerce and other tourism-related entities including state parks, county and federal organizations, plus private businesses ranging from coffee shops and restaurants to guide services, art galleries and private tour operators. The stakeholders and tourism partners of Southeast Montana provide the essence, flavor, identity and unique character of the region.

## **MISSION**

The mission of Visit Southeast Montana is to increase tourism to Southeast Montana by increasing the awareness of our region, showcasing our cultural heritage, developing memorable experiences and educating our residents about the economic benefits of tourism.

## **IDENTITY**

### **Key Characteristics**

This vast region, blessed with a diversity of people, geography and cultures, prides itself on connecting with visitors who enjoy our six very distinctive characteristics:

1. **Outdoor Recreation** - There is no doubt that opportunities for outdoor recreation abound across Southeast Montana – many exist on public lands and waterways. Fisherman will appreciate the world-class fishing opportunities available along the Bighorn and Musselshell Rivers, Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area (BCNRA) and the Paddlefish Harvest along the banks of the Yellowstone River near Glendive, along with an emerging bass fishery on the Yellowstone River. Hunters continue to pay premium prices to travel to the Powder River area to bag trophy deer and antelope. The Bull Mountains near Roundup are a rising star for elk hunters, and Eastern Montana is becoming known throughout the surrounding states for being great bird hunting country, allowing hunters to stretch their hunting season with pheasant, grouse, chukers, ducks and geese. Hiking and camping enthusiasts will relish the freedom and solitude of the Custer National Forest, Chalk Buttes, Terry Badlands and Medicine Rocks State Park, along with the fore-mentioned Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. Makoshika State Park, Montana's largest state park, features some of the nation's most spectacular badlands scenery while the Terry Badlands remain pristine.

This key characteristic is shared across the region and dovetails perfectly with the newly-created Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation. Director Rachel VandeVoort spent two days in the region in March of 2018 and strong collaboration with that office will continue.

2. Western Authenticity - Many states and regions like to think they possess true western culture, but in SEMT's rural communities, as well as the cities such as Billings and Miles City, visitors can get a true picture of everything that was right about the Old West. From Montana's largest state fair in Billings to feel-good, small-town rodeos, Southeast Montana communities have kept western hospitality alive. Standout western events include the Bucking Horse Sale in Miles City, the NILE and Chase Hawkes Rodeos in Billings and Little Bighorn Days in Hardin – from ranch rodeos to larger circuit Professional Bull Riders, the region hosts a rodeo almost every weekend of the warm season, plus plenty in other months. Authenticity is the key word when listing this strength. Simply traveling across the region solidifies that experience when a visitor may have to wait for cowboys to herd their cattle across the road or they experience the western lifestyle while visiting Southeast Montana's small communities and businesses.

3. Historical Significance - Southeast Montana contains a wealth of historical sites which are internationally known and are of great significance to the story of America. The Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, site of Custer's Last Stand and the nation's most famous Native American victory, is located in Bighorn County and is the third most-visited destination in Montana behind Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. Pompeys Pillar National Monument bears William Clark's signature and is one of the only examples of physical evidence remaining from the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Many other state parks, museums and historic sites tell their own stories of pioneer life on the prairie, the Native American struggle to leave behind their nomadic way of life and the impact of the cattle trade on the American West. From large and well-known to more intimate, all are part of the story of the American West and can be experienced in Southeast Montana.

4. Accessibility and Facilities - Southeast Montana is fortunate to contain two of the state's busiest highways, Interstate 94 and Interstate 90. Billings Logan Airport boasts United, Delta, American and Alaska/Horizon Airlines direct service to 10 destinations, including the most-recently added direct service to/from Dallas/Fort Worth along with extended seasonal direct service to/from Chicago from United Airlines. This brings travelers directly into Southeast Montana. Billings has the state's largest and most advanced convention facilities with capacity for up-to 700 attendees, many who will extend their professional trip with personal travel. Shoppers are also drawn to the region's boutiques and major shopping centers. Lodging opportunities in Southeast Montana are incredibly diverse, including everything from 4-star hotels, to charming bed and breakfasts, RV parks, rustic camping, hunting and fishing lodges.

5. Dinosaur Adventure - The plains, prairies and buttes of Southeast Montana are dinosaur country. Famous dinosaurs taken from the Southeast Montana area of the Hell Creek Formation include Tyrannosaurus Rex, Maiasaura and Triceratops. Walk with the dinosaurs in Makoshika State Park and visit three museums and facilities that are active members of the well-established Montana Dinosaur Trail. The museums showcase the many paleontological treasures which have been discovered in Eastern Montana. Museums of particular interest to dinosaur enthusiasts include the Carter County Museum, Glendive Dinosaur & Fossil Museum, Frontier Gateway Museum and the Makoshika State Park Interpretive Center. Individuals and families can also opt for a private fossil dig or work with a new "fossil hunting" program in Makoshika State Park. This broad category includes fossil and rock collectors.

6. Native American Culture - When visitors from the eastern U.S., Europe, and Asia visit the West, they are innately curious about Native American culture. They grew up reading stories and watching the movies about the tribes that once dominated the American West. Southeast Montana is fortunate enough to play host to Crow Fair, one of the last great Native American cultural events, held annually on the Crow Reservation. This event gives visitors the opportunity to witness how Native American culture has evolved and the importance the tribes continue to place on their history and traditions. The Northern Cheyenne reservation contains an incredible variety of historical sites, as well as opportunities to purchase hand-made gifts and educational experiences presented by local tour guides. The history of the region is inseparable from the history of the tribes who live in it to this day.

## **Key Challenges Facing the Region**

1. Perception that Montana is far away and difficult to travel to - According to the 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, Montana is perceived as challenging to access with associated time and cost that prohibits visitation. Conversely, Colorado (the top regional competitor) was cited as the best destination in regard to scenic beauty, potential for vacation road trip, family-friendly environment, national parks, winter recreational activities and places "I most want to visit." However, Montana as a whole and Southeast Montana specifically are well-positioned to capitalize on Colorado's weaknesses: crowded attractions; lack of or losing authenticity; high costs and over-development. Lastly, the increase of direct flights to Billings (most notably the recent American Airlines Billings – Dallas/Fort Worth) will facilitate more tourists traveling directly to Southeast Montana. For some urban travelers, they may spend more time traveling to the airport from their home than they will actually flying to Southeast Montana.

2. "Regions" are confusing - Tourists typically do not travel via regions, but rather travel to destinations. That is where the identity starts. A marketing campaign that weaves destinations with geographic location will enhance the brand. Additionally, regional partnerships will help strengthen the brand within both the state and four-state region. While the Montana brand should, and does, include Southeast Montana, it is easy for the individuality of the region to be lost within the great whole. The challenge is to be distinctive while still be intertwined within the Montana brand.

3. Distances Between Services - Today's traveler has higher expectations in terms of cellular service and connectivity to a global network. The distances between towns and services are a challenge to Southeast Montana – yet it is that very element that also enhances its appeal, as long as travelers know what to expect. For example, placing the “get away from it all” concept into a mini-marketing campaign that includes tear-off and downloadable maps and itineraries can help orientate the traveler. Additionally, educating the staff at the three regional Visitor Information Centers about the rest of the region will facilitate sharing of regional information.

4. Underdeveloped Tourism Product - Research from both Destination Analytics and the Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research has identified outdoor recreation as a top activity for Southeast Montana's target audience. Despite the wealth of unspoiled nature available, little infrastructure exists for many areas. Strengthening partnerships within the region will help identify tourism products that need assistance for wayfinding, signage and potential promotion. Additionally, working with these partners to secure tourism grants from the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development may help overcome the funding obstacles. The newly-created Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation is a key partnership. Additionally, while Tribal Tourism is undeveloped and not necessarily well-organized nor consistent, the newly-created Tourism Region is taking great steps forward. Visit Southeast Montana has and will continue to collaborate in those efforts.

### **Alignment with Montana's Brand Pillars**

The Montana Brand consists of three pillars, with which Visit Southeast Montana aligns:

1. More **spectacular, unspoiled nature** than anywhere else in the lower 48;
2. **Vibrant and charming small towns** that serve as gateways to our natural wonders; and
3. **Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.**

Southeast Montana is where the mountains meet the prairies and the rivers flow. As such, the region defines "spectacular, unspoiled nature" with Glendive being a primary example of a "gateway to natural wonders" (as found in Makoshika State Park). Unspoiled nature abounds in Southeast Montana, from the Big Sky Back Country Byway and Calypso Trail near Terry, to the haunting rock formations at Medicine Rocks State Park near Ekalaka, to the immense and majestic beauty of the Bighorn Canyon. The region is dotted with charming small towns such as Broadus, where a cowboy can still turn horses-and-wagon on the extra-wide main street to Terry, the home of Eveyln Cameron - each town exudes its own personality, built by generations of families, industry and storied events.

Long-standing events such as the Bucking Horse Sale (since 1950) or Crow Fair (100 anniversary in 2018) showcase "breathtaking experiences by day" while the "relaxing hospitality by night" can be found throughout the region's unique dining experiences and array of lodging options from rustic camping to luxurious facilities like Northern Hotel in Billings. The beauty of Southeast Montana lies in its natural wonders and the plethora of options for travelers and tourists alike.

### **Describe your destination.**

### **The Travel Decision Process**

The typical traveler makes travel decisions in a three-phase process. These phases are Inspiration, Orientation, and Facilitation.

The **INSPIRATION PHASE** is the one in which the traveler is made aware of the general product and develops a desire to visit the destination. This phase is masterfully executed by the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, which uses Montana's key tourism draws to bring nearly 12 million visitors to the state each year.

The **ORIENTATION PHASE** is where the traveller begins researching the details of his or her trip. This phase focuses on the route the traveler will take to arrive at their chosen destination and the mode of transportation they will use to get there.

The **FACILITATION PHASE** is where the traveler tries to find things to see and do at the destination and on the way to the destination. This may include planning alternate routes and overnight stays to break the drive up into manageable daily distances.

Visit Southeast Montana will focus on the Orientation and Facilitation phases. In this way we can target the 'low hanging fruit' already traveling through our region on the way to Yellowstone National Park and other Montana destinations. Additionally, we can emphasize how Southeast Montana fits with the Montana brand for outdoor recreation, for example,

without the disadvantages like over-crowding and expensive fees found with other DMOs. Finally, we will also promote the Inspiration and Facilitation phases to regional travelers, including residents of central and western Montana. We have determined this will be the most effective way to target our limited budget.

**Optional: Include attachments here**

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

By looking at everything we do through the lens of the Travel Decision Process, Visit Southeast Montana is better able to strategically focus its marketing efforts to maximize the positive economic impact through tourism to our region with our limited budget. As such, our geographic, demographic and psycho-graphic target markets will be the same as those of the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development.

**Geographic and Demographic**

According to the 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, the High-Profile Visitor (HPV) is not only attracted to Montana, he/she sees the destination as more attractive and competitive when compared to its regional competition. The HPVs are:

- City dwellers (not rural and not suburban)
- Married with children
- Well-educated
- Affluent (>\$80K)
- Younger (average age 36.4)
- Frequent travelers
- Male-oriented (54.3% male vs 45.7% female)
- Strongly attracted to and familiar with Montana's tourism offerings
- Likely repeat visitors
- Outdoor-oriented travelers (psychographic index)

The HPV's desired activity on a Montana trip relates directly to their psychographic profile of being outdoor-oriented travelers with these favored activities, as indicated in this graph.

The Destination Analysts study (pages 44 - 45) also notes the HPV's desired activities include:

#1: day hikes;

#3: dining out in restaurants;

#5: Visit Lewis & Clark-related historical sites;

#6: Drive scenic byways;

#7: Explore small towns and villages;

#8: Visit geological/dinosaur-related historical sites;

#9: Visit Native American history or cultural sites; and

#10: canoeing, kayaking or boating.

With the exception of #s 2 and 4 (GNP and YNP), all of these experiences are found in and emphasized by Southeast Montana, specifically Pompey's Pillar National Monument, Little Bighorn National Monument, Bighorn Canyone National Recreation Area and the Montana Dinosaur Trail.

It is obvious that Visit Southeast Montana has ideal offerings for the HPV.

Additionally, Destination Analytics identified two niche markets: Family travelers and history buffs. Both niches strongly align with Southeast Montana's strengths with history buffs fitting a cross-section of historical significance, western authenticity and Native American culture.

### **Visit Southeast Montana's Board Input**

This target market information, plus a short survey, was recently shared with Visit Southeast Montana's Board of Directors for their "feet on the ground input." The Board shared their thoughts on target market in the attached image.

Board members prioritized the target market as follows:

1. Family travelers, as identified in 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, Inc.;
2. Regional travelers – defined as visitors from the greater regions surrounding SEMT including northern Wyoming, South Dakota and North Dakota along with all residents of Montana;
3. Road-trippers, as identified in 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, Inc., from the Midwest, especially those on way to YNP or GNP.
4. Repeat visitors;
5. Other regional travelers from surrounding 10-state area;
6. History buffs;
7. And, a select segment of international travelers, specifically from the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia, as identified and assisted by Montana Travel Trade Office.

According to ITRR's 2017 Nonresident Visitation, Expenditures & Economic Impacts study, Overseas Visitors averaged \$1,015 per trip with an average stay of 5.82 days, compared to \$635 total per trip for an average of 5 days for Domestic Visitors. Therefore, aligning with the Montana Travel Trade Office's focus on UK, Germany and Australia makes sense.

*b. What are your emerging markets?*

When looking at emerging markets and considering the plethora of outdoor adventure opportunities, such as Short Pines near Glendive and the Terry Badlands, we will focus on mountain bikers and OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) riders. These adventurers fit well with what the region has to offer, especially Bureau of Land Management's public lands. Additionally, we have identified the Canadian market, specifically the city of Regina and Saskatoon, in Saskatchewan, as an additional emerging market.

**Optional: Include attachments here.**            SEMT Marketing Plan Funnel.pdf

*c. What research supports your target marketing?*

The report, *Montana: Destination Brand Research Study*, which was funded by MOTBD and completed by Destination Analytics, Inc. (attached) provides valuable information about the state's brand along with opportunities that align with Visit Southeast Montana's offerings.

This information closely aligns with Visit Southeast Montana's 2010-11 research project, which provided insight of Visit SEMT's target markets as well as many other aspects of Visit SEMT, in regard to how to best achieve the mission. A brief summary of the findings is attached under "Miscellaneous Attachments."

SEMT also incorporates ITRR data, when applicable, to further enhance understanding of the target market.

## **STRATEGIC GOALS**

## 1. Grow In-region Partnerships

A region as physically large as Southeast Montana is truly diverse, and as the foundation of Visit Southeast Montana, regional partners and stakeholders must be committed and strong. It is also within this diversity that the region's strength lies. To grow and further enhance those relationships, we will focus on:

### **FY19 ACTION**

- a) Continuing with the herculean effort to reach each Tourism Partner – new and existing – to realize the full potential of strong relationships.
- b) Spend quality time within the region, presenting Visit Southeast Montana's successes and emphasizing the advantages of working with the region on joint, no-cost ventures such as the website. These quality interactions will also develop stronger inter-region communication to feed website, social media and earned media content (OnlyinMontana.com, for example).
- c) Evaluate Tourism Partner Workshop surveys from FY18 to develop additional, ready-to-implement topics and workshops for Partners.
- d) Continue efforts to connect with and assist Tribal Tourism, especially as it pertains to promotion of events and listings on Southeast Montana's website.
- e) Promote the Tourism Partners segment of the new website, emphasizing the tools for Partners, such as ordering bulk guides, News You Can Use (eblasts) and no-cost business listings.
- f) Continue sharing the Master Calendar of Events, encouraging Partners to submit their events to promote them online
- g) Identify "go to person," known as Film Ambassador, in each community to work with Montana Film Office to assist with locations; assist Film Ambassador as necessary.

### **FY19 MEASUREABLES**

- a) Ensure that at least 50% of Tourism Partners update their business listings on the website.
- b) Track number of presentations (plus attendance at each) to in-region partners such as chambers, civic groups and the like. Give 8 presentations in FY19.
- c) Increase visitation to Tourism Partner segment of new website by 25%
- d) Add 6 SEMT Film Ambassadors to list at Montana Film Office.
- e) Build partner database of 1,590 (April, 2018) by 5% (add 80 new Tourism Partners).
- f) Conduct marketing workshop for Tourism Partners (in 1-3 locations across SEMT).

## 1. Develop Marketing Partnerships

Rather than be an island looking for visitors, we will reach outside the region to facilitate and strengthen relationships with neighboring states, regions and DMOs along with MOTBD bureaus and programs. Initial steps could be a regional familiarization tour ("fam"), working cooperatively at larger leisure travel shows and/or initiating new cooperative marketing campaigns such as downloadable and/or printed inter-regional maps and itineraries. Working under the Montana brand we have, and will continue to, promote Southeast Montana as a destination to international markets, specifically UK, Germany and Australia, via the Montana Travel Trade Office. Additionally, we will:

### **FY19 ACTION**

- a) Invite other Montana regions (specifically Missouri River Country, Southwest and Central) to collaborate on initiatives targeted specifically to the History Buff market (i.e. battlefields or Lewis & Clark sites).

- b) Continuing the Montana Dino Trail relationship (includes three locations in SEMT, plus three other MT regions).
- c) Work with connections specifically with tourism contacts in Sheridan, Cody and Gillette, Wyoming; Rapid City/Black Hills and/or State of South Dakota; and, Theodore Roosevelt NP, Medora and/or State of North Dakota (with potential for quarterly calls).
- d) Connect with Tribal Tourism and collaborate when fits target market.
- e) Strengthen burgeoning relationship with Montana Film Office.
- f) Connect website with at least 5 Partner Organizations, for example, Montana Wilderness Association (guided hikes).
- g) Increase collaborative projects with Montana State Parks, including advertising efforts.

#### **FY19 MEASUREABLES**

- a) Produce thematic-specific itineraries and/or blog post (i.e. history) in collaboration with other regions.
- b) Collaborate on (3) film opportunities within the region.
- c) Collaborate with Dino Trail organization to produce 1-2 media releases, possibly in conjunction with release of new *Jurassic World* movie (late June, 2018).

#### 1. Support Tourism Product Development

Growing in terms of service and sophistication is necessary for success in today's tourism market. Travelers expect the conveniences of home with an authentic yet urban edge to their experience. As thus, we will support the development of new tourism products, as allowed within regulations, plus share our knowledge, expertise and influence to move a project forward. By focusing on Goal #1, we will be able to identify and refer tourism projects to MOTBD for further assistance. Additionally, we will monitor legislative policies that could affect tourism.

#### **FY19 ACTION**

- a) Share public policy statement across the region, specifically in presentations (see above).
- b) Seek projects that need assistance, specifically local (i.e. Trail to The Little Bighorn), state parks (i.e. Plenty Coups, Pictograph, Rosebud Battlefield and Makoshika), national parks and monuments and hunting/fishing (i.e. FWP).
- c) Continue dialog with Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation plus spearhead Outdoor Recreation Roundtables (similar to one conducted with Rachel VandeVoort in March of 2018) for information sharing.
- d) Ensure that all legislators and county commissions are included on News You Can Use and invite them to attend regional presentations.

#### **FY19 MEASURABLES**

- a) Share new public policy statement, which reflects Visit Southeast Montana's mission, with all regional representatives, plus share completed tourism projects (i.e. Custer Circle).

#### 1. Produce Quality Marketing Initiatives



Visit Southeast Montana's marketing methods will continue to follow the Inspiration- Orientation-Facilitation strategy outlined in this Marketing Plan. A key component, however, will be the integration across platforms along with branding and consistent messaging. For example, while social media may highlight upcoming events, it will incorporate the ever-growing photo library while weaving pre-designated messages (i.e. Southeast Montana is not as far away as you think) into the overall landscape. This seamless melding of messaging will be subtle but consistent from advertising, to social media, to branding and collateral, to media relations and appeal to the ever-growing global market.

## **FY19 ACTIONS**

### **MARKETING STRATEGIES**

#### **a) MARKETING SUPPORT:**

Visit Southeast Montana will continue to operate out of the shared offices in Billings; the close proximity to Visit Billings staff facilitates collaboration and promotion of Southeast Montana when larger groups and tours stop in Billings or with media groups that move through the region. Additionally, we will continue to work with MOTBD's international market specialists to enhance the United Kingdom, German and Australian markets. Within the region, we will continue to serve our tourism partners both formally and informally by being a point of contact, sharing information from MOTBD along with social media opportunities, a quarterly newsletter and low-cost marketing strategies.

**b) CONSUMER TRADE SHOWS:** In terms of leisure travel shows, this year we will again attend the Northwest Outdoor Show (Minneapolis) with potential to explore a show in Denver, Chicago and/or other regional shows, including those in Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota. We will explore opportunities to attend larger shows cooperatively with other regions or CVBs and invite Board members or Tourism Partners (including the Office of Outdoor Recreation and MOTBD), where appropriate, to share their regional expertise with show attendees. We will also explore the option of a history-travel show as it fits the above-identified market.

**c) PUBLICITY, SOCIAL MEDIA & MEDIA RELATIONS:** With the newly-completed and expanding website, we will increase focus on earned media in FY19, regionally, nationally and internationally, by selectively nurturing relationships, including publications/editors, freelancers and social influencers. The service from Cision (earned media tracking & media/freelancer database service) is a key component to this strategy. The addition of a media room and blog (fresh content) to the website will also facilitate interest and will be promoted socially. With Roundup International in Spearfish, SD, in spring of 2019, we will already have tour operators and international media in-market; plans for a cooperative fam tour with MOTBD Travel Trade is in the initial planning stages, as are other media fams. These tours are also an ideal opportunity to collaborate with the CVBs within the region, and with other regions, customizing to each groups' specific interests.

**d) CONSUMER ADVERTISING:** The bulk of the budget lies within this realm and will focus on the audiences identified above via very targeted digital advertising. We will also use a combination of digital, print and potentially geo-fencing to target the niche audiences described above. In partnership with Windfall, SEMT's agency of record, we will vet qualified leads from both the call center and from Yellowstone Country and Glacier Country's opt-in lead lists to target those with plans to visit Montana, those who have visited one of the national parks and/or those who will drive through Southeast Montana to get to a national park (i.e. Midwestern states), thus enhancing the "Accessibility" strength identified above.

**e) PHOTO LIBRARY:** Stunning photography is a key element to the inspirational piece of the marketing funnel. We will dedicate funds to continue to build the photo library (considerable progress has been made in FY18), seeking to purchase photos for multiple uses (i.e. advertising, travel guide, travel show booth, social media, etc.) rather than purchase for one-time uses. Additionally, we will incorporate photo rights into social influencers agreements, thus stretching those dollars. Hosting photo contests is another consideration.

#### **f) PRINT PROJECTS:**

The Visit Southeast Montana Travel Guide is the foundation of all marketing efforts—it tells the story of Southeast Montana. The guide has evolved from being a bi-annual guide with no advertising to an annual, private-fund project with a sophisticated magazine- style format. During FY18, Visit SEMT personnel, Board and Agency of Record evaluated the

guide along with numbers, with three cover options presented to the Visit Southeast Montana Board in April of 2018. The guide will be printed and distributed, with an emphasis on newly-acquired images. We will continue to distribute the guide as widely as possible, with special attention going to vetted quality leads acquired from Glacier and Yellowstone Countries' media buys; this piece functions as the heart of SEMT's print collateral.

Additionally, we will develop and print thematic itineraries for the targeted markets (i.e. historic tour for those interested in Indian Wars). The itineraries are useful for all types of visitors: regional; those traveling to/from the national parks; fly-and-drive; and international. The itineraries will compliment newly-developed (FY18) thematic Southeast Montana maps, which are tied to the website and social media.

g) **TELEMARKETING/FULFILLMENT:**

The travel guides and other collateral must get into the hands of the traveler. To facilitate that, we have dedicated additional funds fulfillment and distribution (contracts to be considered as they approach renewal dates). Additional collateral (such as thematic maps and itineraries) will be available from distribution center, regional VICs and via download from the website. Tourism Partners can also order the travel guide in bulk.

h) **WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT**

While VisitMT.com, the MOTBD's website may serve as the first point of contact for Montana visitors, the Southeast Montana website can provide more details along with regional-specific inspiration, orientation and facilitation. In FY18, Visit Southeast Montana's agency of record, Windfall, created a new website, which "scrapes" content from VisitMT.com but still allows for more creative and timely control at the region's level. However, websites are not static; the site will grow with new and fresh content and images, evolving as new tourism products develop. Additionally, funds will be used to continually enhance SEO and other optimization techniques. A newly-improved media room, travel blog and master calendar of events will be added to the website, further enriching the user's experience.

**FY19 MEASURABLES**

- a) Increase media tours and social influencer visits, 6 fams/25 individuals total.
- b) Increase social media numbers, i.e. followers, engagement, shares by 25%.
- c) Increase number of consumers in database from 6,380 (as of April, 2018) to 8,000+.
- d) Increase earned media, I.E. 10 national articles/segments and 20 regional articles/segments.
- e) Update website and increased traffic numbers by 100%.
- f) Establish CTR on digital media of .3%
- g) Establish 15% open rate on Consumer eblasts.

In conjunction with the detailed marketing strategies outlined previous, Visit Southeast Montana will distribute funds according to the following budget demonstrated below.

One major change, as approved by the Visit Southeast Montana Board of Directors in April of 2018, moves the visitor's guide from state marketing dollars to a privately-funded opportunity. This liberates approximately \$75,000, which was re-allocated back into marketing and advertising. Compared to FY18, the re-imagined budget allows for:

- Nearly \$30,000 more for online and print advertising
- New allocation for Out of Home advertising (\$5,000)
- Almost double in Joint Ventures (\$7,500)
- Nearly double in Opportunity (\$8,900)
- Returns International Powwow (\$4,000)
- More than double regional/new tradeshow – history focus (\$5,000)
- Continue to enhance photo/video budget (\$10,000)
- Add SEO, optimization to new website (\$9,500)

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

We would like to continue working with the MOTBD on co-ops in national print and online publications. We have found the online co-ops with the state to be particularly effective in driving traffic to our website.

Social media influencers are an emerging marketing strategy, and we would like to partner with MOTBD to explore options that are very specific to the Southeast Montana experience.

Co-ops in the form of journalist and tour operator fam trips through the Visit Southeast Montana region have also been beneficial and we would like to see those continue along with attending the Rocky Mountain International Roundup show.

We are open to all opportunities, including non-traditional and experiemental marketing methods, particularly those those align with Road Trippers and Repeat Visitors.

**Optional: Include attachment here.**

Montana Brand Exploration Research - Final Report of Findings V2 - Novme... (004).pdf

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

As noted in Visit Southeast Montana's Overall Goals above, we will actively seek relationships with both inter-region CVBs and DMOs and with neighboring states, regions and DMOs. The continued success of the Dino Trail is an excellent example of a Joint Venture between regions, CVBs and DMOs in Montana. Additionally, creating itineraries for those traveling between YNP - Black Hills/Mount Rushmore - Theodore Roosevelt National Park in addition to newly-initiated efforts with the Office of Outdoor Recreation and the Montana Film Office. We also seek to collaborate with Tribal Tourism entities to continue to promote Native American events and venues for visitors.

Overall, Visit Southeast Montana will consider any and all Joint Ventures.

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

As noted above, the Dino Trail, which includes three locations in Southeast Montana and has regional support, is an excellent example of a successful Joint Venture; it continues to move forward in a robust fasion.

Additionally, Visit Southeast Montana has worked with Miles City and Visit Glendive to promote the May events like the Paddlefish Harvest and the Bucking Horse Sale and other regional events via advertising (print and online) in Distinctly Montana. Visit Billings and Visit SEMT collaborated on a "Your Trailhead to Adventure" buy in *Northwest Travel*; with Southwest Montana in *True West*; and, with MOTBD in the *Family Fun* buy for FY18. All of these efforts were amazing opportunities and data is still being collected.

In FY17, a JV social influencer with MOTBD was not the most ideal -- specifically because the influencer visited out of season (Feb) despite our best effort to dissuade her. As a result, we now ask more specific details about deliverables from influencers.

We have engaged in out of home, national print, national and regional online, Fam Tours and trade shows with MOTBD and FWP. Of these the online, fam tours and tradeshow components were the most successful, though we wouldn't consider any of the co-ops we've engaged in with the state to be failures; some are simply stronger than others but all have benefit.

Overall, we plan to continue with joint ventures whenever possible and feasible.

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### Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does 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	Are you using private funds to support this method? If so, please explain	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Attchmnts
Consumer	Opportunity Marketing	Yes	Opportunity Marketing is just that -- an opportunity that arises that was not anticipated at the time of marketing plan development.	This will be determined when/if the opportunity arises.	To be determined when/if the opportunity arises.		\$7,000.00			No	
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	Yes	Out of Home Advertising has returned to the Visit Southeast Montana marketing plan. We hope to collaborate on outdoor space, if possible. Additionally, we will also look for opportunities to	Data from Phocuswright shows that 38% of tour and activity bookings are happening on the same day or up to two days before the activity. many of these bookings take place in-destination, while	We can measure ROI using traffic counts (vehicles) and comparing those to landing page analytics, if applicable. The	The research noted above ties Out of Home advertising to the Road Tripper market identified on pages 7-8 of the FY19 Marketing Plan (attached).	\$5,000.00			No	

			influence on-the-ground travelers within or about-to-enter the region.	consumers are already traveling.	measurement should correlate closely to the OOH topic (i.e. MT Dino Trail promotion - increased numbers at local dino facilities, tours booked and/or Makoshika Park visitation increase).						
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	<p>This method includes ad production and media purchasing for print advertising. As an important element of Visit Southeast Montana's media mix, regional media will primarily promote events and weekend/short-vacation travel. Some ads may be produced as a co-op with MOTBD, others in conjunction with regional partners. For example, collaborative efforts within-region can maximized budget while intra-region collaboration will provide a bigger picture of Southeast Montana within the tourist's National Park itinerary (i.e. the road-tripper audience as identified by the 2016 Montana Brand study and further detailed in</p>	<p>Print advertising remains relevant, especially for niche markets.</p> <p>People are still reading print publications. According to a 2016 Nielsen report, 169 million Americans still read newspapers regularly and three-fourths of that group reads the print edition specifically. Additionally, unlike a digital ad, a print ad stays around as long as the publication is around. This is especially relevant when looking at publications like magazines and travel planners.</p> <p>Additionally, a 2015 study by Temple University Fox Center for Neural Decision Making used neuroscience to gauge how people responded to physical and digital ads. In short, respondents spent more time</p>	<p>Success will be measured based on the number of calls and emails received at the Visit Southeast Montana call center as a result of that individual print ad, in addition to increased attendance at events. The call center workers are trained to gather this information from those who call in looking for information about SEMT.</p> <p>Additionally, we will track website traffic and lodging tax dollars.</p>	<p>Print advertising allows us to reach a different audience than online advertising while also complimenting online ads with an integrated approach. We will spend a slightly larger percentage of our budget on online advertising; however, we will favor print ads that include an editorial component, thus creating more opportunity to inspire and motivate the niche audience while including facilitating details. A good example of this strategy includes a print ad in <i>True West</i> magazine. The FY18 multi-media buy, in</p>	\$60,000.00			No	

			<p>the attached Visit Southeast Montana Marketing Plan). Other niche markets like history buffs or sportsmen/women also fit well with the print medium. Additional print ads may focus on niche and/or emerging markets, specifically mountain bikers and OHV riders (as identified on page 8 of the attached FY19 Marketing Plan).</p>	<p>reviewing the print ads; print ads yielded higher levels of recall; and print ads caused more activity in brainareas associated with value and desire, key markers of purchase interest.</p> <p>Furthermore, 2015 research conducted by Millward Brown Digital found that print achieved the highest levels of brand favorability and purchase intent of any measured media.</p> <p>Information collected from ITRR and Destination Analytics also support this method.</p>		<p>collaboration with Southwest Montana, was based on a print ad and reached 915,000 consumers with a passionate interest in Western American History and Heritage Travel - a perfect fit for two regions that include two major battlefields (Little Bighorn &amp; Big Hole).</p>					
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	<p>Online advertising will be used to promote Visit SEMT to all targeted markets as identified on page 8 of the FY19 Marketing Plan (attached) during all three phases of the travel decision process. The strategy includes native ads, some banner ads and re-targeting, plus digital paid content. Online advertising will be both regional and national and will direct traffic directly to the Visit Southeast Montana website and, in some cases, to the SEMT Facebook page.</p>	<p>Advertising has always been about location, location, location. And digital advertising has the flexibility to be at the right location at the right time. A recent study by Deloitte found that Americans collectively check their smartphones nearly 8 BILLION times per day -- that provides ample opportunity for Visit Southeast Montana to be in front of the identified target throughout the entire travel-decision process, from inspiration on forward.</p> <p>According to <i>Digital Advertising</i>, 70% of website visitors who are re-targeted with ads are likely to visit your site. And,</p>	<p>Success will be measured based on Visit SEMT's web analytics. The Visit SEMT Board has set goals for the SEMT website to reach in terms of unique visits to the website. Google Analytics will be used. Each online advertisement can be tracked and its success or failure will be determined in this fashion.</p>	<p>Online advertising is by far the best way to reach a targeted audience. The analytics we receive from our website give us valuable information as to the engagement the target market has with each ad and whether it leads them to spend significant time on our website learning about SEMT.</p>	\$183,000.00			No	

			<p>Additionally, a portion of the budget may be dedicated to the direct flight markets, which will bring travelers directly into Southeast Montana. This is an ideal opportunity to collaborate with Visit Billings CVB.</p> <p>The digital advertising strategy includes TripAdvisor and Sojern, plus other Joint Venture opportunities that leverage funds.</p>	<p>according to 2016 report from <i>MarkMonitor</i>, 68% of global consumers book their travel online.</p> <p>We use this research to very specifically target our advertising on websites where users are in the process of planning a vacation, or may be planning a vacation. In late FY19, we also plan to add video to Southeast Montana's integrated digital approach.</p>							
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Yes	<p>Consumer shows, such as the Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis, primarily target directly to the leisure traveler, allowing us to provide specific guidance and printed information in a one-on-one arena, often to people who are already planning trips to Yellowstone or Glacier and are in the Orientation and Inspiration phases of the travel decision process. This also aligns with the Road Tripper market. The same could be true for shows in Denver and other direct-flight markets and/or regional shows.</p>	<p>The year-long research project undertaken by SEMT, as well as up to date information collected from ITRR, support this project. Please see the Marketing Plan Narrative for information regarding SEMT Research. Additionally, we are taking information about outdoor adventures directly to the high potential visitor (HPV) as identified by the Destination Analysts, Inc. study.</p> <p>As mentioned in our narrative, one of the aspects of our target market is that they are already considering a trip, or a return trip, to Montana. We travel to these shows to provide orientation and facilitation to those</p>	<p>Success will be measured based on the number of sign-up sheets collected at consumer shows(which are added to the Consumer Database) and by contacts made and bookings confirmed by international tour operators.</p> <p>As per conversations during the MOTBD monthly calls, shows are notoriously difficult to measure; however, we strongly believe that being present contributes to</p>	<p>These shows allow us to build relationships and speak face-to-face both with the potential traveling public and tour operators who bring a number of international travelers to our state each year. At these venues we can ask the operator specific questions about their clients' needs or ask the traveler what interests them (outdoor adventure, history, Native American culture, dino trails, dining/night life, etc.) and tailor our responses to specifically and accurately</p>	\$16,500.00			No	

			<p>Travel tradeshows are appointment-based shows and target international tour operators. The Roundup International Conference is only for tour operators/receptives who focus on the four-state region and offers an excellent opportunity to develop relationships with these quality operators. The Interntational Powwow, attending in conjunction with MOTBD, is a bigger conference, yet exposes the region to an even broader audience, includiing potential international media. For both international conferences, building relationships over time and keeping Southeast Montana's opportunities in front of these operators is an on-going process. Over the past year, we have noticed more interest in routing from YNP to TRNP in North Dakota -- with a perfect transition through the SEMT region.</p>	<p>already somewhat familiar with the region. According to ITRR's 2017 Nonresident Visitation, Expenditures &amp; Economic Impacts study, Oversees Visitors averaged \$1,015 per trip with an average stay of 5.82 days, compared to \$635 total per trip for an average of 5 days for Domestic Visitors. Therefore, aligning with the Montana Travel Trade Office's focus on UK, Germany and Australia makes sense and has the potential for a strong ROI.</p>	<p>awareness and brand lift for both travel trade shows and leisure travel shows.</p>	<p>promote what Southeast Montana offers that coincides with their wants and needs. The tour operators are always asking, "What is new?" and by being present, we can answer and increase interest during dialogue.</p>						
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Yes	<p>Stunning photography is a key element to the</p>	<p>Fresh, inspirational imagery is crucial to strong marketing</p>	<p>While most photographs are simply part</p>	<p>In FY18, we combed partner contacts, looking</p>	\$10,000.00			No		



			<p>inspirational piece of the marketing funnel. In FY18 we will dedicated significant funds to boost the Visit Southeast Montana photo library, seeking to own photos for multiple uses (i.e. advertising, travel guide, travel show booth, social media, etc.) rather than purchase for one-time uses. That process continues now (May of 2018) and into FY19.</p> <p>Additionally, we will incorporate photo rights into social influencers agreements when and where possible, thus stretching those dollars. In a new venture that will start in FY18 and continue into FY19, we are also shooting video and creating a small variety of video products to be launched across various platforms, including the website, through media campaigns and via leisure and tradeshows.</p>	<p>initiatives and provide the Inspiration piece of the funnel. Research conducted by Visit SEMT staff at tradeshow events, in visitor information centers and other places has shown that there is a need for fresh, quality awe-inspiring photots to promote the region.</p> <p>Studies show that while people only remember 10% of things they hear and 20% of what they have read, around 80% of people remember things they see or do. And, Simply Measured found that there was not only a 46% increase in content engagement for brands but an additionall 65% increase in photo and video engagement.</p> <p>For example, one of our new tradeshow booth "skins" shows an image of a man and dog, pheasant hunting. We recieved far, far more questions about upland bird hunting at that show (Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis) than in the previous year. While this is "unofficial" research, the value and message of imagry cannot be disregarded.</p>	<p>of brand lift and new creative, some images, particularly those shared via social media, can be measure by analytics. However, without stellar images, Visit Southeast Montana's message would be only words and thus, would struggle to inspire.</p>	<p>for shared images and video. We will continue that process and also share SEMT's images (that are not in an active campaign). Additionally, we will also work with MOTBD to secure images of Southeast Montana if and when the opportunities arise. As another option, we will consider hosting a photo contest to both build excitement about regional images plus acquire the use of those images, provided this can be accomplished within the rules and regulations. We could also look to photography students for a collaborative project -- in short, we will maximize the budget to build a very robust photo library.</p>						
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	Yes	In FY18, we opted to move the Visit Southeast Montana	Research has shown that the most commonly used source	Success will be measured based on	A vibrant, fresh website is simple crucial in	\$19,000.00				No	

			<p>website away from the MOTBD website umbrella to allow for more control and creativity. While still maintaining the Montana brand, the new SEMT website aligns with the Visit Southeast Montana brand and creative. Additionally, FY19 will see website expansion and enhancements such as a news room, potential blog, more detailed listing with locations for newly-developed itineraries and video.</p> <p>A website is dynamic and this strategy includes continuous optimization, plus SEO and SEM to assist with organic searches and placement.</p>	<p>for travel planning is online research using DMO websites and other online sources.</p> <p>According to TrekkSoft.com's <i>Travel Trend Report 2018</i>, 82% of tour and activity bookings processed by TrekkSoft take place on a company's website or mobile app, with 64% being researched and booked by women (with 64% being age 34 or younger). Additionally, AARP's <i>2017 Travel Trends Report</i>, notes that 41% of Boomers will book at the airline/hotel/car website.</p>	<p>increases in key web analytics.</p>	<p>today's environment. To be without is suspect.</p>					
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Yes	<p>Consumer-facing E-newsletters will be sent out from time to time to inform those in our consumer database of interesting tourist attractions in SEMT, as well as upcoming events. This strategy will be used in conjunction with social media, news releases and hallmark event promotion.</p>	<p>Research shows that online research is the number one way visitors plan future vacations. Our E-Blasts use this media to inspire and guide potential visitors to relevant areas of our website where they can receive information in planning their trip.</p> <p>It has been proven that email marketing is the king of the marketing kingdom with a 4,400% ROI and \$4 4 for every \$1 spent, as</p>	<p>Success will be measured based on analytics we receive on our database, such as members added and dropped along with "opens." We will also monitor attendance and promoted events to watch for trends related to e-newsletter mailings, as</p>	<p>Email is a convenient medium to help inform our database of upcoming events which are time sensitive. Additionally, we will incorporate newly-acquired photos into this method and tie it to social media campaigns.</p>	\$2,000.00			No	

				noted on CampaignMonitor.com.	well as lodging tax revenue. The email campaign also provides brand lift in the consumer world.						
Consumer	Printed Material	Yes	<p>This line item provides for funds to produce targeted print pieces promoting more specific aspects of Visit Southeast Montana (as noted on page 13 of the attached FY19 Marketing Plan). These print pieces may include, but are not limited to, rodeo calendars of events for cowboy-related events, hunting and fishing information and targeted itineraries that compliment the newly-developed FY18 thematic maps.</p> <p>Additionally, these items could include cooperative efforts with within and intra-region. The budget includes production, print and shipping costs.</p>	Our own research conducted at travel trade shows and other events has shown that targeted pieces grab attention. For example, we gave away ~ 1,500 maps over 2 days at the Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis -- potential visitors were very interested in the region-specific scenic map. By producing smaller pieces with more specific information that meets the needs or wants of the reader, they will be more inspired to take action.	Success will be measured based on reports from staff attending events where the pieces are handed out. Any landing site URLs will also be tracked using web analytics to determine whether the printed product is driving traffic to the SEMT website.	Supplementary printed materials will compliment and work in conjunction with the new Visit Southeast Montana website.	\$5,000.00			No	
Marketing Support	Research	No	This line is simply a placeholder for potential research project(s), particularly one in conjunction with a CVB or another region.	Research always makes a marketing segment more valuable.	To be determine if/when a research project is embarked upon.		\$100.00			No	

Marketing Support	Outreach	Yes	We will use this segment to offer support to Visit Southeast Montana's Tourism Partners. For example, in FY18 we offered (2) workshops specializing in Digital Marketing Strategies and expect to consider a similar format for FY19.	By offering our expertise and marketing support to Visit SEMT's Tourism Partners, we strengthen the entire region and industry. This collaboration logically flows directly into the Visitor Facilitation piece of the funnel.	We will track attendance and post-workshop surveys to determine success.	Please see the narrative on page 10 of the attached FY19 Marketing Plan for details.	\$1,000.00			No	
Marketing Support	Marketing Plan Development	Yes	This strategy is a line item holder, in the event that funds are available and the SEMT Board sees the need to re-evaluate the region's overall strategies.		To be determined.	To be determined.	\$100.00			No	
Marketing Support	Administration	No	In our FY19 Marketing Plan Budget, Visit Southeast Montana is budgeting the full 20% allowable for Administrative Expenses. Our strategy in doing so is to take a conservative stance in terms of how much of the Administrative Budget will ultimately be used. By budgeting for the full 20%, we don't run the risk of going over budget for allowable Administrative expenses.		Success for this method is difficult to measure. As long as the administrative side of SEMT continues to run smoothly, and the funds are used in a responsible manner, we will continue the method to be a success.	Administrative expenses, including mileage reimbursements for travel to stakeholders and events across this vast region, are necessary for the fulfillment of Visit Southeast Montana's mission.	\$109,000.00			No	
Marketing	Marketing/Publicity	Yes	Visit Southeast	All of our research has	Success will	These positions	\$75,000.00			No	PR-Social

Support	Personnel		Montana will employ a full-time Marketing Manager and a part-time Social Media/PR Manager in FY19. The Marketing Manager is responsible for implementation of marketing and public relations projects as assigned. A full job description is attached. The Social Media/PR Manager assists the Marketing Manager and will develop, manage and monitor publicity and communications projects and programs. A complete job description is attached.	shown that it is necessary to market a region to travelers in order to encourage them to visit and to see sights and attractions which might not otherwise be known to them. Marketing staff is necessary in order to facilitate the many projects and tasks needed in order to accomplish this.	be measured dependent on annual marketing goals set by the SEMT Board of Directors. Marketing Personnel are also evaluated annually by John Brewer, CEO of Visit Southeast Montana.	are a very efficient and cost effective means to handle our marketing. The value of the local knowledge of the region, relationships with stakeholders and familiarity with events cannot be overstated.					Media Manager.pdf
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	No	Staff from Montana's tourism regions are strongly encouraged to attend the Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Tourism Advisory Council meetings. This line item sets aside funding to allow us to do so.		Success will be measured by whether we are able to attend said meetings or not.	Funding is needed for car rentals, mileage, hotel reservations, food per diem, and other misc. expenses during travel to TAC and Governor's Conference meetings.	\$2,500.00			No	
Marketing Support	Professional Development	No	This line item provides funds for Visit Southeast Montana staff to attend Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), Public		Success will be measured via a report from the Visit Southeast Montana staff member who attends the conference as	Industry-specific conferences provide staff with the opportunity to network with fellow DMO employees and to learn about	\$5,000.00			No	

			<p>Relations Society of America (PRSA) Conference on Travel &amp; Tourism, or similar industry-specific training.</p>		<p>to what they learned and how they will apply the knowledge to promoting the region.</p>	<p>new trends, opportunities and technology in the destination marketing industry. It's important that staff remain up to date on what is happening amongst other DMOs from states throughout the nation.</p>					
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	Yes	<p>This method covers expenses to field inquiries (calls, email) from potential visitors and provide them with requested printed material via mail. Expenses include agency fees, shipping, postage and storage. This method also covers the cost to distribute the Visit Southeast Montana travel guides to locations across Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota, primarily to locations frequented by travelers.</p>	<p>Research conducted by Visit SEMT, MOTBD and ITRR has shown that Travel Guides and phone inquiries are ways in which visitors gather information and plan trips. Fulfillment, both in mailing brochures to those who request them, and in answering toll-free phone calls regarding a visit to Southeast Montana, helps provide these services to potential visitors. Also, 2016 ITRR research indicates that 25% of people use brochure information racks.</p>	<p>Success will be measured based on the number of calls fielded and material sent. At the end of the fiscal year these numbers will be compared to expenses to determine whether it is the most efficient way to meet customer needs.</p>	<p>Some ads and printed material, plus the website, feature a toll-free number encouraging travelers with questions to call and/or request a travel guide. It's important we continue to provide this service to potential visitors. We add the collected email addresses to the Consumer e-blast database, continuing to grow that communication line.</p> <p>Additionally, we distribute travel guides to locations throughout Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota to keep that inspirational and guiding piece at</p>	\$33,300.00			No	

						the forefront of travelers' minds.					
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	Yes	This method may fund grants to Visit Visit Information Centers to help them maintain operations and/or pay for improvements (within the state rules and regulations including signage) so they can better meet the needs of Visit SEMT visitors. As the eastern gateway of the state, it is vital that the VICs receive visitors, at least during warm season.	Research conducted by the Montana Office of Tourism has shown that VICs are important and that it is vital to provide a good experience to the visitor. Without support from Visit SEMT, these VICs would have drastically reduced staffing/open hours.	A visitor's experience once they arrive in the region is vital in encouraging them to make a return trip. VIC's are the first place visitors go with problems or questions, and it is important to insure that they have the resources to maintain regular hours and to properly staff their visitor centers.	Success will be measured based on feedback from the VICs, which is gathered from first-hand experiences and signup information sheets from visitor interaction, that will be submitted in report format.	\$15,000.00			No	
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	No	Visit Southeast Montana considers the Joint Ventures line item a vital budget segment because it is basically a "2 for the price of 1" opportunity, plus Joint Ventures allow us the look both within and beyond the region to find similarities (ie: Little Bighorn and Big Hole Battlefields) and market thematically. These funds are specifically designated for use in joint marketing projects with lodging tax entities, including CVBs,	It simply makes sense to participate in Joint Ventures - leveraged funds go farther, so this \$7,500 budget line becomes \$15,000 or more.	Plans to measure success for projects utilizing Joint Venture funds will be made depending on the details of the project.	We have found Joint Ventures with the MOTBD to be extremely effective in fulfilling our mission and marketing Visit Southeast Montana to the largest number of targeted potential visitors. We feel that by also participating in Joint Ventures with CVBs and Regions, we can further expand the success we've seen working with MOTBD. Collaboration	\$7,500.00			No	

			Regions and the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development.			simply makes sense. Joint Ventures also foster the partnering relationship that remains vital across the state.					
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	Yes	As previously stated, collaboration makes sense. In the past Visit Southeast Montana has offered Cooperative Marketing Grants to non-profit tourism related businesses throughout the region Successful applicants must demonstrate that the project (for which funds are being requested) will benefit Visit Southeast Montana by increasing tourism to the region. All TAC regulations must be met in order for funding to be given and the committee favors new projects and events over others.	Each organization which receives Cooperative Marketing Funds must provide research showing how the funds provided helped increase tourism to Visit Southeast Montana. Over the past several years, the research we've received has clearly shown that by providing funding for projects, we are indeed leveraging our tourism dollars in the most effective way possible	Plans to measure success for projects utilizing Cooperative Marketing funds will be made depending on the details of the project. Typical measurements included increased attendance at events, increased paid admission to a facility or creation or improvement of a tourism entity.	Most of the applicants for Cooperative Marketing funds are from small communities attempting to increase tourism to their town. Often times they would be unable to move forward with their project without the matching grant funds we supply. By offering Cooperative Marketing funds, we are helping to improve Southeast Montana's tourism infrastructure and promotion of small events and communities in a way we could not if we were to undertake the projects alone. In addition, Cooperative Marketing reinforces strong partnerships within the region and that helps tourism overall.	\$10,000.00			No	
Publicity	Press Promotions/Media	Yes	Public relations,	Marketshare notes that	We will	This strategy	\$8,000.00			No	



	Outreach		<p>earned media and media tracking are all strategies that allow Visit Southeast Montana to stretch the marketing dollar. Hosting media events for new tourism products or collaborating to bring media to a major or new event will leverage even more dollars into trackable product. This strategy compliments the Fam strategy.</p>	<p>word-of-mouth has been shown to improve marketing effectiveness by up to 54%. And, again, Nielsen study shows that 92% of consumers believe suggestions from friends and family more than other advertising.</p>	<p>measure success by the quantity and quality of articles, blogs, content, images and video produced directly from our PR and media efforts.</p>	<p>includes cooptively contracting a media tracking and database service with Visit Billings. This massive database allows us to mine for writers, bloggers, influencers and the like to cover very specific topics. We'll once again use the history buff example, noting that different writers may have a similar interest but a variety of outlets.</p>					
Publicity	Social Media	Yes	<p>Funds in this segment support efforts in the social media realm including social media influencers, event promotions or "boosts" and other ways to enhance organic social media content throughout the region. This strategy also includes paid social media to specific target markets.</p>	<p>Research also shows that social media, including social media influencers, supports brand lift, places opportunities in front of followers and inspires "followers" to act. Nearly 70% of people would rather learn about products through good content. And 68% of consumers spend time reading blog content and other content from a brand that they find interesting.</p> <p>Additionally, according to the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research, 77% of millennials make a purchase both online and in-store</p>	<p>Social media analytics will provide a solid measure of success as will increased attendance at promoted events or offerings. Plus, quality social media content continually provides a strong brand boost.</p>	<p>Social media continues to gain in popularity and markets. While the majority of content will be created and/or gathered in-house, we will sometimes contract with social influencers to supplement and gain access to different audiences. Plus, social media is an ever-changing, ever-growing platform that allows for creativity and experimentation.</p>	\$12,000.00				

				after viewing something on Facebook. <i>Fluent</i> noted that the top three social media for Millennials and non-Millennials (age 35+) are Facebook, YouTube and Instagram.							
Publicity	Fam Trips	Yes	<p>This method sets aside funds for familiarization tours through Southeast Montana for tour operators, journalists, bloggers, free-lance writers, video producers and photographers. It also includes promotional giveaways for welcome packets given to specific individuals or groups visiting the region plus includes a placeholder for film recruitment. These fam tours are often performed as a co-op with MOTBD or with other tourism entities including CVBs.</p> <p>The value of WOM - Word of Mouth - marketing cannot be fully understood (although some methods do try to monetize each "produced piece"). It is traditional and long-trusted. We will employ significantly more effort into WOM in the future.</p>	<p>Statistics have shown that international visitation to the United States and Montana in particular is increasing. Fam tours allow tour operator to personally experience the region, our "product" in a more intimate and influential situation.</p> <p>Research also shows that earned media, an article or video produced by a journalist, retains stronger media value than paid advertising. A Nielsen study shows that 92% of consumers believe suggestions from friends and family over advertising. WOM - Word of Mouth - is a crucial component of a comprehensive campaign.</p>	<p>Success will be measured based on tour operator bookings and articles, videos, social posts and the like written by hosted journalists, photographers and others.</p>	<p>Fam tours are an important method of educating potential tour operators to bring groups into SEMT. Operators rarely are willing to add an area to their product line unless they have experienced it personally. Competition with other states often means that regions such as ours must compete to bring operators to Visit Southeast Montana.</p> <p>Fam tours remain an important PR tool in that journalists can be provided with unique experiences. These experiences often result in articles being written by journalists in various publications</p>	\$9,000.00			No	

						which can be worth tens of thousands of dollars, if not more, in media impressions and credibility. Photographers and video producers are included in this group -- this inspirational component will be amplified.					
							\$595,000.00				

**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	Print Advertising	\$60,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$203,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$10,000.00	\$0.00

Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$16,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$19,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
		\$325,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$22,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$109,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	\$75,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$7,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Professional Development	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	\$33,300.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Marketing Plan Development	\$100.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Research	\$100.00	\$0.00
		\$281,500.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Social Media	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Fam Trips	\$9,000.00	\$0.00
		\$29,000.00	\$0.00
		\$636,000.00	\$0.00

## **Miscellaneous Attachments**

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<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>File Size</b>
2016 Montana Brand Research	Montana Brand Exploration Research - Final Report of Findings V2 - Novme... (004).pdf	3.0 MB
FY19 Marketing Plan - Visit Southeast Montana	SEMT FY19 Marketing Plan FINAL TO TAC.pdf	2.5 MB
SEMT Marketing Plan Funnel	SEMT Marketing Plan Funnel - FY19.pdf	12 KB
SEMT Projected Budget FY19	SEMT Projected Budget FY19_pie_chart.pdf	11 KB

## ***Reg/CVB Required Documents***

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<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>File Size</b>
Certificate of Compliance FY19 Application for Lodging Tax Revenue Pledge of Understanding and Compliance	FY19 Visit SEMT MPlan Compliance Docs.pdf	779 KB

