

Application

Instructions

Print to PDF will convert the application plus any PDF attachments into a single PDF file. **Release for Review** will change the status of the application to Under Review and move it on to the evaluation process. **Negotiation** will allow you to unlock one or more sections of the application and route the application back to the applicant for further editing. **Annotations** allow internal staff to add notes that are visible to internal staff only and possibly also reviewers if they have a special security privilege. The applicant cannot see these notes. **Versions** will display all component versions that were created as a result of the negotiation process. **Feedback** allows staff to enter feedback about the application to the applicant. The feedback text will appear at the bottom of the application and will be visible to anyone who has access to the application. **Withdraw** changes the status of the application to Withdrawn and removes the app from the evaluation process.

Application Details

[Map](#) | [Print to PDF](#) | [Negotiation](#) | [Annotations\(0\)](#) | [Versions](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Withdraw](#)

15254 - FY15 Region/CVB Marketing Plan - Final

16149 - FY15 Yellowstone Country Marketing Plan DOC Office of Tourism

Status:	Under Review	Original Submitted Date:	05/02/2014 11:21 AM
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Organization Information

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Organization Type:	Non-Profit Organization		
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Community & Brand Support

1. Describe your destination.

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

PURPOSE

Yellowstone Country's primary purpose is to market & promote the area as a year-round destination. Travelers seek out this region because of the natural beauty and the outstanding outdoor recreation opportunities.

STRENGTHS- The core strengths of Yellowstone Country include the main attractions such as Yellowstone National Park & the Beartooth All-American Road, but equally important in making the experience unique for visitors is the ability to immerse themselves in one/more of the outdoor recreational opportunities that are available to them when they choose this region as their destination.

- § Yellowstone National Park/National Park Corridor
- § Three Major Alpine Ski Resorts
- § World-renowned Snowmobile Areas
- § Beartooth All-American Road
- § Nordic Skiing
- § Culture & History
- § Annual Events, unique local festivals, farmer's markets, and fairs
- § Recreational Opportunities
- § Destination Lodging and Meeting Facilities
- § Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport
- § Open lands-public access to BLM lands, Forest service national parks, etc.
- § Four Montana state parks-recreation and culture/history

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES—Always a challenge when they occur, but also an opportunity to raise awareness, engage consumers and open dialog/discussion for each unique happenstance. 2013's Sequestration & government shutdowns had an enormously harmful impact on tourism throughout the region. Given the inherent seasonality of the region, one of the major challenges is to offer a year-round product. There is a concerted effort in many of our communities to plan events or festivals in shoulder seasons that bring overnight visitors. The visitors may not be from out-of-state, but they are from out of the region. For example, the Big Timber community plans an annual event each April that draws people from all over the state.

- Inclement Weather Conditions/Natural Disasters-fire, floods, etc.
- Transportation Issues-public transportation, seasonality of service
- Economic Climate –recession, budget cuts
- Infrastructure--always a question when more people come, is the infrastructure sufficient to handle growth
- Lack of Viable Marketing Partnerships-lack of or limited funds & timing hinder partner projects
- Shoulder Seasons-weather, amenities/service availability, staffing all have impact

MONTANA BRAND PILLARS

Yellowstone Country aligns very well with the Montana Brand Pillars in that there is an abundance of spectacular, unspoiled nature throughout the region, and given the multitude of recreational options, the region certainly meets the definition of offering breathtaking experiences. As with the majority of Montana, our communities are known for having friendly, hospitable people who work hard to help make a visitor's experience one to remember.

SPECTACULAR, UNSPOILED NATURE: The region is anchored by two major iconic destinations: Yellowstone National Park & the Beartooth All-American Road (BAAR). Three of the five entrances to YNP are located in Yellowstone Country, including the only year-round entrance at Gardiner and the most-accessed entrance at West Yellowstone.

BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY, RELAXING HOSPITALITY AT NIGHT:

The founding premise of our strategic vision is that many visitors to the Yellowstone Country region want to experience exceptional outdoor recreational activities: ATVing, nature walks, hiking, climbing, mountain biking, horseback riding, RVing, camping, golfing, fly-fishing, bird & wildlife watching, ice climbing, Nordic and alpine skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, whitewater rafting and other water sports! Before, between & after playing outside, guests can take a walk on the "quieter side" of Yellowstone Country by visiting a multitude of art galleries, nature centers, museums & historical sites which will help them learn more about the areas where they are spending time. Local attractions, festivals & events offer fun opportunities for visitors to immerse themselves in community culture, whether it's attending a rodeo, taking in a music or cultural festival, participating in and/or watching an exciting winter ski or snowmobile event or just spending time taking in the surroundings, there's something for everyone!

VIBRANT, CHARMING SMALL TOWNS THAT SERVE AS GATEWAYS

Showcasing the region's diverse, welcoming communities are an integral part of Yellowstone Country's marketing strategy. Each place has a unique "flavor" and something special to offer visitors.

[Optional: Include attachments here](#)

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

INSPIRATION: The Consumer Advertising media campaigns messaging and imagery are specifically designed to address the Inspiration phase to a very targeted audience. The marketing strategy is activity-based, so each message is geared toward the market demographic audience. For example, if we are running advertorial in Cross-Country Ski magazine, our imagery and message will be focused on inspiring the cross-country skiing enthusiast to come to Yellowstone Country to ski. Additionally, the website, www.visityellowstonecountry.com, is multi-dimensional in that the main pages are to address inspiration (awe-inspiring imagery, main activities & attractions in the region, etc.), while the landing pages & sub-pages address the orientation & facilitation phases of trip planning.

Social Media plays a huge role in the Inspiration phase as we are able to engage consumers consistently throughout a season or in relation to something specific. For example; once it was announced that there would be a direct flight for Houston, we've been able to push out information on social media and have seen Houston rise to # 5 on our list of cities where we have the most FB fans; until then Houston was not even in the top 30.

ORIENTATION & FACILITATION: The Yellowstone Country website and annual travel planner are the primary resources for helping travelers with the orientation & facilitation phases, although the travel planner does play a role in the inspiration phase. Both of these resources have extensive mapping & relevant general travel information, but they are also designed to in a way that helps "push/pull" the user through these phases by making it as easy as possible to find any information they need very quickly & efficiently.

[Optional: Include attachments here.](#)

3. Who is your market?

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

Primary Consumer Market: The Yellowstone Country primary target market can best be defined as "activity travelers"--these visitors fit into three categories: (1)immersion/entertainment tourist **(2) the outdoor tourist** and (3) the relaxation tourist. Within those categories, the majority of visitors to this region fit into the "outdoor tourist" category.

Secondary Consumer Market: Montana residents from out of the region and/or those residents choosing to spend an overnight in another community within the region

Primary Geographic Markets for Yellowstone Country: The key geographic markets for all visitors to Yellowstone Country are: CA, WA, WY, ID, UT, MN, WI, OR, ND, TX, CO, British Columbia & Manitoba Provinces, CAN

Primary Demographic Markets for Yellowstone Country: Active individuals & small groups (2-4 people), age range 25-54, Household Income range \$50,000-\$150,000.

Key Psychographic Markets for Yellowstone Country: Social Class-middle to upper class (in terms of disposable income), Lifestyle-active, outdoor recreation oriented, Opinions-interested, but primarily influenced by desire to experience things for themselves, Activities & Interests-outdoor activities, history & culture, Attitudes & Beliefs: environmentally conscious, has an adventurous spirit, likes nature

b. What are your emerging markets?

Geographic Markets: TX, CO, AZ, NY

In terms of the geographic markets, there seems to be a direct correlation between the new direct flights coming into Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport. Example: The percentage of people coming in from New York did not show up on statistical data until after the NY-Newark flight (which was marketed by a cooperative group of regional partners) was implemented. It now shows up in the visitor data collected by both our region VIC's and in the non-resident visitors statistics compiled by ITRR. There are new flights starting in 2014 (Houston, NY-LaGuardia) and the airport is anticipating a 30% increase in seat capacity for the June-July timeframes.

Demographic Markets: Active, outdoor recreationists, age-55-74 years old, family groups, Income range-\$150,000 or greater

Part of the marketing mix is making assumptions from available data. People today are staying active and traveling at a later age than previous generations. There is also a trend of traveling in larger and/or extended family groups. Our VIC's report a significant number of visitors in their communities are traveling in motor coaches, staying longer in lodging properties, and purchasing some higher end items when they shop--one could make the assumption they may have a higher wage range or more disposable income.

NOTE: YC is just beginning to research the viability of the emerging target demographic market described here (baby boomer generation) as a viable opportunity, especially for shoulder seasons. The research/statistics below are for the **current** target markets.

c. What research supports your target marketing?

For current demographic target markets, ITRR 2013 Non-resident study data: 34.8% of all non-resident visitors spent at least one night in Yellowstone Country. The data shows that 55% of those visitors to the region came from the primary target markets listed above; obviously a good number, but room for increase. For those markets, there is either direct flight access, or they are on the major drive corridor. For example, we have seasonal or year-round direct flights to Los Angeles & San Francisco (CA) Salt Lake City(UT), Portland (OR), Minneapolis/ST. Paul (MN) & Denver (CO). In our emerging target markets segment, we will have a new flight to NY and one to Houston (TX), and we have direct flight into Phoenix (AZ). People travelling by vehicle have access via the major highway arteries on Interstates 15, 90, and 25.

Re the demographics, ITRR data shows 62% of non-resident visitors to the region are between the ages of 25-54, 66% of them are in the wage range of \$50,000-\$150,000, 69% of them travel in small groups of couples, immediate family or family & friends and they travel in an average group size of 2.55 people (with 69% of those being a group of 2-4 people).

As previously stated, YC uses an activity-based marketing strategy, reaching out to consumers who engage in one/more types of outdoor recreation that is available in the area. The ITRR research shows the following percentages for non-residents visiting the YC region:

- 70% scenic driving
- 48% day hiking
- 48% wildlife watching
- 48% nature photography
- 27% car/RV camping
- 15% fishing/fly fishing
- 8% rafting/floating
- 7% birding
- 6% road/tour biking

- 6% horseback riding
- 5% skiing/snowboarding

Along with those activities, rock hounding, backpacking, canoeing/kayaking, mountain biking, hunting, cross-country skiing, motor boating, OHV/ATVing, snowmobiling, geocaching and snowshoeing all show up on the data radar.

Yellowstone Country provides staff funding for 10 VIC's located throughout the region. As a requirement of the funding, we ask them to compile statistical information including where visitors are from, how many in the party, primary/secondary reasons for travel to the area & types of activities they participate in, and events they plan to attend. The VIC administrator then submits a report of this information to YC, and includes observations of any specific changes/trends that are noted by the travel counselors. Often, the information mirrors the non-resident data from ITRR, validating that research. For the 2013 reports, 6 of the 10 VICs in the region reported some interesting trend information: more family groups, and because there are more people in the group that want to experience certain things, they are doing more. For example, if the family group includes children, teens, parents & grandparents, a typical visit to the community of Red Lodge could include an activity that appeals to each of the generations--fishing or horseback riding, then a float/raft trip, drive over the Beartooth Hwy, picnic & hike to one of the lakes or waterfalls, then spend time in the old-time candy store, at the museum, shopping the great boutiques, or just strolling a great historical community.

Additionally, we know that visitors to YNP come out of the park and spend time in our gateway communities experiencing the multitude of activities that can be found in the gateway communities & beyond. The new National Park Visitor Spending Effects report shows that the 3.4 million visitors to Yellowstone National Park in 2012 spent \$400,346,500.00 in the communities near the park. That spending supported 5,619 jobs in the local areas. (NPS 999/Cullinane Thomas, C., C. Huber, and L. Koontz. 2014. 2012 National Park visitor spending effects: Economic contributions to local communities, states, and the nation. Natural Resource Report NPS/NRSS/EQD/NRR—2014/765. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado. 3/14)

According to the research study conducted for Big Sky by Longwoods International (August 2013), on overnight trips to Montana, 36 % of visitors to the state come during the warm season (Jul-Sept), followed by spring 22% (April-June), 21% for both winter & fall (Jan-Mar)(Oct-Dec). These statistics show there is significant room for growth in three of the four seasons.

As the busiest airport in the state, Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport is projecting a record-breaking summer, with non-stop service to 14 destinations coast-to-coast. The airport is expected to handle over one million passengers in 2014; early passenger increases have averaged over 5% for over 35 years. (Source: BZN Airport). Those 14 destination cities are in the primary and/or emerging target markets identified in the previous section of this plan.

Optional: Include attachment here.

4. Overall Goals

GOALS

- Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana year-round outdoor destination--deliver a strong, consistent message across all seasons.
- Seek & implement partnerships with public/private sector to better inform visitors of important historical, cultural and natural resources assets and to help leverage limited marketing budgets.
- Continue to build & update inventory of regional images & videos for all seasons for use in branding & marketing efforts, as well as for awareness/motivational use in printed materials (travel guide) and on the website.
- Build the "pull" aspect of the YC website and social media offerings through robust, rich, and timely content providing a reliable source for information about events, activities, festivals, etc. throughout Yellowstone Country, especially targeting small communities and less populated areas.

Optional: Include attachments here.

5. Cooperative Opportunities

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

Yellowstone Country's markets the region as a recreational mecca (primarily outdoor recreation), so our first priority is to vet out those opportunities that fit our marketing strategy. The largest part of our media placement budget is allocated to winter because that is where we see the largest growth potential.

Depending on available options, budget and fit, we would continue to consider viable warm season co-ops as a part of our warm season promotion. Currently, the majority of our warm season placement is digital, with some print advertorial in the mix.

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

Yellowstone Country continues to seek opportunities to co-op with both public & private partners to promote outdoor recreation. Additionally, a major goal is to promote the cultural & heritage assets found throughout the region through our Cultural Tourism grant program.

YC will continue to vet opportunities to partner with Montana State Parks to promote the four state parks in the region as both a stand-alone destination and as part of the "bigger" experience; i.e. stay longer, do more. Comparing the average state park visitor demographic profile to the YC visitor profile shows there is a strong similarity--they "look" the same!

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

Successful regional partnerships include the NY-Newark direct flight promotion that brought together the CVB's, local T-bids, the region and private sector businesses, and all partners reported great results for driving traffic to their websites; additionally, the Bozeman airport reported strong #'s for the flights--in fact, there will now be a 2nd NY flight this year (NY-LaGuardia). Another successful partnership within the region was to have a strong Montana-Yellowstone Country presence in both digital & print venues (Outside, Powder, On the Snow) and of course, the Warren Miller co-op, which has been very successful for everyone involved. On a smaller scale, but equally important projects, were the Northern Range (Gardiner & Cooke City), Montana State Parks video project (2 minute videos of the four state parks located in the YC region), FAM/press trips with other regions and private partners, Gardiner Gateway project, and the Hebgen Lake Ice Fishing Derby.

We feel each of the partnerships have been very successful. Some, such as the Big Timber "Salute to Our Heroes/Baxter Black" event provided a considerable economic boost to a small community in the shoulder season (April) when there was not much happening otherwise. There was great support from the locals, but the lodging properties and retailers reported they had strong sales from out-of-town visitors. The event coordinators also reported visitors came from across the state, but also from neighboring states (WY, SD, ND) and even a few came from Canada.

Although we will attach some type of quantitative measurement to each cooperative project, it's important to recognize some of the projects are equally, if not more successful, in terms of qualitative success: leveraging existing marketing budgets, industry & community partnership building and brand awareness.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Include pie chart here.

[FY 15 BUDGET PIE CHART.docx](#)

Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	Provide a brief rationale.	Plan to measure success?	Marketing Method Evaluation	Estimated budget for each method.	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Atchmnts
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	<p>Consumer Advertising digital marketing promotes awareness of outdoor recreation activities in Montana's Yellowstone Country region and Yellowstone National Park. Primary focus is winter, followed by warm & shoulder seasonal activities. This campaign will include a national focus, as well as placement in regional drive markets to push seasonal travel and in the metro areas where we have direct flights. Our keyword campaigns will continue in both winter & warm season in order to promote outdoor activities.</p> <p>FY 15 placement: Digital Media</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keyword Campaign: Google, Facebook 	<p>Proven Results: Our keyword campaign is still in process. We are continuously monitoring through analytics, and revising our buys based on season, activity and most searched terms. To date, there are 1,689 clicks, with 1,460 new visitors. Returning visitors account for 14%, which is a good percentage and an overarching goal which is to increase return visitors to the site.</p> <p>Digital campaign referrals (driven to website via URL) 17,698</p> <p>Bright Roll 13,641</p> <p>TOTAL CLICKS on the YC website: 31,339</p>	<p>The majority of our digital placements have performed well for the previous two years, especially those that are directed to a niche target audience. Since the majority of trip planning is now done online, we utilize specific travel focused ad networks, as well as outdoor sites and sites focused on entertainment and who</p>	<p>Marketing Objectives: Creating awareness, urgency to visit, and building a strong image of what Yellowstone Country has to offer. The call to action will be to visit the region website.</p> <p>To evaluate success, we will analyze key indicators such as site visits, pages viewed, search keywords, click through rates and bounce rate, as well as continuously increasing conversions through signing up, downloading</p>	\$285,000.00	No		

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Advertising: Bright Roll, Madden Media, AdTegrity, iExplore, Live Intent, Canadian newspapers, Rapid City Journal, Bismarck Tribune, KSL.com, BismarckOnline.com, On the Snow • eNewsletter Campaigns 	https://retargeter.com/blog/general/9-reasons-you-should-be-advertising-online	reach affluent audiences. We are also able to target geographically and psychographically.	travel planner, downloading pdf's and increasing time on site.				
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	<p>The strategy for print advertising is to have advertorial and/or display content in key publications that target the outdoor recreation audience. The primary objective is to target a niche audience based on the specific activity being promoted (EX: Silent Skier, SnoWest, FasterSkier, etc.), and secondarily, to target a broader travel audience where the message is more about showcasing the region as a year-round destination.</p> <p>The niche market publications could include one/more from this list: Free Skier, Powder, On the Snow, Silent Sports, SnoWest, Cross-country Ski Magazine, etc. Raising awareness of the region as a destination will be the focus for placing advertorial in publications such as the following: Outside Magazine, Horizon/Alaskan Air magazines, NGT.</p> <p>Given that the FY 13/14 niche market placements performed better on average, in FY 14 we concentrated on more niche placement (Powder Magazine, Warren Miller Magazine, The Master Skier, Far West Ski Guide). The results to-date (our winter campaigns run through April) have been very strong, and so we will continue with this strategy for our FY 15 print placement so that we have two year's worth of results for a better comparison.</p>	<p>According to the following article, branding messages and display ads in newspapers and print publications have a strong ROI.</p> <p>Cross-media study shows print advertising has highest ROI</p> <p>04 February 2014 · By Erik Grimm</p> <p>Read more: http://www.inma.org/blogs/research/post.cfm/cross-media-study-shows-print-advertising-has-highest-roi#ixzz30Ov33phK</p> <p>Also, according to the Utah Marketing Blog & News: http://www.marketing2utah.com/print-advertising-viable-commodity/</p> <p>1. It Has History People have come to trust print advertising in a way that they often don't trust digital marketing. History can often lead to longevity.</p> <p>2. It is Versatile Secondly, print advertising is extremely versatile. Print ads appear everywhere from magazines to billboards, the sides of buses to the sides of entire buildings. Print doesn't depend on an electronic or digital connection to make an impact.</p> <p>3. It is Simple Print advertising is simple and quiet. When you flip through a magazine, you might even stop to look over the ads. In fact, magazine ads have one of the highest success rates in the marketing industry. People don't mind a simple print ad displaying a product in a delicate way. They much prefer that to something flashing loudly at them from some screen.</p> <p>4. It is an Art Form Over the many years of its history, print advertising has developed into quite an art form. Designers and artists will often spend a lot of time creating these ads, carefully considering visual impact and creativity; something with immediate impact that will capture people's attention and minds.</p>	<p>Since print advertising is primarily about brand/destination awareness, we look at it in two ways, depending on the publication audience:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making an "active" brand introduction to potential first-time visitors to the region and/or state. 2. Reinforcing the brand message by "reconnecting" in a sense with return visitors in that they are taking the time to read your ad because they've had a positive previous experience. 	<p>The primary objective for print advertising is to raise awareness, with the call to action again being driving consumers to the website. Measuring the success would be looking at common KPI's such as CPI, circulation, readers responses, etc, but we will also be looking at specific actions, such as ordering or downloading the travel planner, signing up for the e-newsletter, engaging with us through social media channels, watching videos or viewing photo galleries on the website.</p>	\$75,000.00	No		
				<p>6 Reasons Why Images are Important</p> <p>If you have an online store, issue press releases or even just have a Facebook business "page", then here are 6 reasons to publish images and photos as part of your business marketing tactics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles with images get 94% more total views 		<p>The goal here is to raise awareness and brand Yellowstone Country region</p>				

Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Yes	<p>YC continues to build a comprehensive photo and video library for use in advertising campaigns, social media, the blog, and on the website. Our strategy is to obtain new stills & video for a minimum of two key communities & 3-4 activities each year, with the primary focus being to show people actually having their own experience. For example: a shoot in Livingston could cover the 4-day July 4th celebration where individuals/families engage in a multitude of activities for both day and evening, and the community attractions and hospitality are showcased.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Including a Photo and a video in a press release increases views by over 45% 60% of consumers are more likely to consider or contact a business when an image shows up in local search results In an ecommerce site, 67% of consumers say the quality of a product image is "very important" in selecting and purchasing a product In an online store, customers think that the quality of a products image is more important than product-specific information (63%), a long description (54%) and ratings and reviews (53%) Engagement rate on Facebook for photos averages 0.37% where text only is 0.27% (<i>this translates to a 37% higher level of engagement for photos over text</i>) <p>http://www.jeffbullas.com/2012/05/28/6-powerful-reasons-why-you-should-include-images-in-your-marketing-infographic/#SFjEsyLfY7zvTPhM.99</p>	<p>Purchasing specific photography & video is necessary for some of our media messaging, but having a comprehensive inventory allows us to regularly change/update imagery content on our website, and having readily available imagery/video to support social media & blogging efforts is essential.</p>	<p>as a premier Montana year-round outdoor destination. This will be measured by continued growth of our social media venues--as stated above, fans engage at a much higher rate for social media information that includes some type of imagery. Measuring success will include analyzing actions such as whether our website users are watching videos & viewing photos galleries and whether the use of videos & imagery in our social media channels is creating a fan advocacy in that they are commenting, posting & sharing the content.</p>	\$60,000.00	No	
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	Yes	<p>This segment encompasses three different components of website development.</p> <p>1. SEO is a critical component in FY 15. We will continue our SEO work on keywords, key phrases, linking and Internet presence assessments and updates.</p> <p>2. Technology upgrades are also critical for SEO and will allow for addition of new pages, graphic design enhancement, database development, project management, consulting, site analysis, and new hardware, software or network enhancement purchases as required, photos, video, & text, testing & implementation, social media website development and integration with existing website.</p> <p>3. Site management & maintenance-would include electronic database creation and maintenance, regular content/photo/video updating, website performance tools & reports, adding to media & content libraries, link review & changes, test & troubleshoot, training & technology assistance as needed, interface with MTOT and other tourism related organizations.</p>	<p>Metrics from the recent Yellowstone Country website audit conducted using the Digital Marketing Model reflected some key trends & insights that help steer us in our efforts to continually improve the site:</p> <p>Google Organic Search Tra?c is up 11% from 2013 • Overall Tra?c (Sessions) are down 13%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall Bounce Rate has improved 24% to 47% (was 62%) Social Media Visits are up 206% over 2012 Overall Conversion Rate is up Google CPC is doing good things Winter page is getting the most tra?c but also, with our skiing page, has an extremely high bounce rate. West Yellowstone page performed quite well City pages did great with relatively low bounce rate Yellowstone park page bounce rate continues to improve 	<p>The world of technology is ever-changing, and it's critical to keep our website updated & fresh. The site serves as the primary information resource for visitors coming to the region, as well as having all of our marketing campaigns driven to the site for tracking & analysis.</p> <p>Our main focus is to add more content which will improve our SEO as well as keep people on the site longer to explore other areas and activities. We will also be doing site improvements to keep in line with advancing technology.</p>	<p>The primary objective for the website is to raise awareness and drive users to specific actions that will help move them from the inspiration phase to the orientation & facilitation phases.</p> <p>We will be using the website analytics tools to continually monitor the website, so success will be measured by our ability to effectively & efficiently address areas of the site that need improvement, and adding key components that will help move the needle of awareness. We will also look at website visits, continuously increasing conversions through signing up, downloading travel planner, downloading pdf's, increasing time on site & improved organic search.</p>	\$55,000.00	No	
				<p>A significant amount of visitors to the region still request a hard copy of the travel planner:</p> <p>Direct Inquiry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phone- 1, 315 					

				<p>Email- 113</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Website Guestbook-9,126 <p>TOTAL 10,554</p>					
Consumer	Travel Guide	Yes	<p>The YC travel planner is intended as a project for all three trip phases: Inspiration, Orientation & Facilitation. The 56-page full color, informational layout provides the visitor a visual & informational guidebook of the vast variety of experiences available year-round in the region. The guide will serve as the fulfillment piece for direct inquiries, and will be in print form & E-published on the YC website, in a download/printable version.</p>	<p>According to a recent survey on www. skift.com:</p> <p><i>This single-question survey was administered to the U.S. internet population from Aug 16-Aug 19, 2013 through Google Consumer Surveys</i></p> <p>What do you use for travel information when traveling in an unfamiliar place on your holidays? And the results are interesting, to say the least. Print guidebooks are still used by 10 percent of the population asked, almost the same as those who use mobile apps during travel. Online sources are used by about 20 percent, while a good 25 percent use all three sources: print, online, and mobile.</p> <p>Also, according to a blog discussion on www.tripologist.com regarding whether printed guidebooks are still a good resource in the digital age, the blog author had this to say:</p> <p>"In my opinion, the answer is yes. Throughout my travels I've usually traveled with a guidebook, but have gone without one from time to time. I find a physical guidebook is a great companion for travel. If you're like me and don't travel with a phone connected to the internet, a guidebook can be an invaluable resource. It provides maps, dining recommendations, and bits of trivia that can help make your travel experiences more interesting."</p> <p>Reader responses included the following reasons why printed materials are "in vogue": a great backup to mobile/digital when travelling in a remote area, better visual maps, provide local information & tidbits and (in my opinion, the best reason) they provide a visual inspiration piece for before & during and a memory keepsake after the travel is completed.</p> <p>http://tripologist.com/discuss/do-we-need-travel-guidebooks/</p>	<p>In keeping with the Montana brand platforms, in addition to being a fulfillment piece & planning resource the travel planner serves as an image rich INSPIRATION/MOTIVATION piece designed to excite potential visitors and inspire them to make the dream vacation to Montana a reality!</p>	<p>The objectives for the travel planner are to provide inspiration to visit the region and to provide a resource that pushes potential visitors to a specific behavior response; booking a trip, visiting specific sites, communities, attractions, etc. once they have arrived. We will analyze the the distribution channels (Certified racks, bulk orders through Chambers/VICs/businesses, direct inquiries, pdf downloads from the website, and website guest book requests to determine if the travel planner is being used as intended.</p>	\$104,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	Administration		<p>The Administrative budget is the operations budget that allows us to pay wages, operate an office, buy equipment & conduct business as an organization.</p>				\$126,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures		<p>JOINT VENTURE marketing projects will be identified & implemented for specific target geographic & demographic markets and may include any/all of the following: television, video, print, internet, radio and display advertising. This would include cooperative advertising programs with MTOT & other Region/CVBs as applicable and/or as funds allow.</p>				\$100,000.00	No	
			<p>This budget supports distribution of YC's printed materials to non-resident and resident visitors, toll-free phone service, shipping and postage. As the primary means of distribution to both regional</p>		<p>Fulfillment is a</p>	<p>Distribution of the travel planner through the various distribution methods will be tracked & analyzed. This includes distribution to out-of-state locations on Certified Folder routes</p>			

Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	No	outlets and identified out-of-state hubs, YC contracts with Certified Folder Services to distribute the travel planners. CFS stores the YC travel planners & fulfills bulk order requests, stocks the planners in eligible MT state rest areas, and CFS brochure racks located along the Yellowstone route including the Bozeman & Billings airports in the baggage claim areas.		necessary support function for all the marketing programs; printed materials distribution, toll-free line, shipping postage are all integral parts of running the business.	(Denver, Pocatello/Idaho Falls, Salt Lake City, Seattle), in the state rest areas, along Certified's in-state Yellowstone route, through the 10 regional VICs, local Chambers and as the fulfillment piece for direct inquiries to the office, guest book sign-ups on the website and for the consumer advertising campaigns.	\$40,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing		OPPORTUNITY marketing projects will be identified & implemented for specific target geographic & demographic markets and may include any/all of the following: television, video, print, Internet, radio and display advertising.				\$40,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage		The regional VICs are a vital component of YC's efforts to entice travelers to visit, stay longer and do more while in Montana. The number of travelers stopping at regional VICs is significant; many people are stopping at community VICs as they move through the state, not just at the main entry points. VIC travel counselors cite that visitors often indicate they find the first-hand information they receive at the centers to be the most valuable travel resource once they are in the area. This program allows chambers the opportunity to operate more hours, employ travel counselors who are trained & knowledgeable about the region, and to provide information assistance. More and more visitors use the Internet for trip planning; however, once on the ground, they want to have local knowledge and interaction to help them have the best experience possible. Although not a conventional use of promotion & marketing dollars, this project is a good use of our funds since it allows us to provide a tangible benefit for visitors, as well as giving YCMI an opportunity to leverage partnerships with the local chambers/communities. Having on-site, trained travel counselors is a vital support service, working in conjunction with our marketing campaigns to help showcase the multitude of unique attractions, scenery, events and properties in the regional communities.	For Yellowstone Country's 2013 VIC staffing program, there were 10 participating VICs. The VIC budget was \$98,000.00. The funding period was from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend. As reported by the VIC administrators, the total # of visitors served in the region was 143,085, a total of 46 people were paid wages (avg \$10.41 p/hour) using this funding. West Yellowstone obviously has the highest #s but if you take them out of the mix, most of these VICs are seeing the an average of 5,000 visitors during this 3-month timeframe. While that may not seem like a huge amount, that number of people spending money in a small community is very significant to the local economy. Some interesting articles supporting VIC's as an integral support function for the tourism industry: http://www.arizonaguide.com/press-room/press-releases/arizona-office-of-tourism-supports-local-visitor-information-centers-with-grant-funding http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10548400903356178#preview	Yellowstone Country's Visitor Information Centers serve as gateways to the state and are located on major travel arteries throughout the region. Travelers are greeted by information specialists who provide valuable travel information, book hotel rooms and offer directions. The state travel guide, maps, a variety of brochures and other collateral materials are available to those traveling to or through Montana.	Primary objective here is to provide information services to the visitors. Visitor numbers and satisfaction are key performance/success metrics in helping determine each year if funding the VICs are a viable use of marketing dollars. YC will analyze the VIC report provided by each participating effort, make comparisons to previous years, and	\$90,000.00	No	
			The Strategic Plan's High-Level Strategy #3 talks about the			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poll each of the cultural heritage tourism institutions to identify how many people are currently employed at 			

Marketing Support	Cultural Tourism	Yes	<p>"balanced brand promise" by "making a clear connection between the natural wonders and the welcoming communities" and within that connection is the opportunity to show the geotraveler the extensive cultural & heritage assets that abound throughout the region.</p> <p>As part of our commitment to partners, YC's strategy is to actively support new/existing cultural tourism events/happenings/venues. This ranges from historic sites and museum collections to art, language and those unique parts of everyday life that make the region so special. Every opportunity should be taken to promote interest and pride in the history and culture of Yellowstone Country.</p>	<p>The Cultural & Heritage Traveler 2013 Edition, http://mandalaresearch.com/images/stories/free_download_CH_2013.pdf</p> <p>The President's Committee on the Arts & Humanities has many case studies of successful cultural tourism programs: http://www.pcah.gov/cultural-tourism</p>	<p>Linking tourism with heritage and culture can do more for local economies than promoting them separately. That's the core idea in cultural heritage tourism: save your heritage and your culture, share it with visitors, and reap the economic benefits of tourism.</p>	<p>museums, historic sites and other cultural heritage tourism attractions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tally number of persons - artists, storytellers, craftspeople, tour guides, event coordinators – directly engaged in/benefiting from cultural heritage tourism. Ask local destinations and/or institutions to track the number of new businesses - hotels, restaurants, attractions, retail, services – generated annually from cultural heritage tourism development and visitation. 	\$25,000.00	No
Publicity	Social Media	Yes	<p>Strategy:</p> <p>Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana year-round outdoor destination through use of Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness venues to help increase visitor awareness of people, places, festivals, events & attractions, thereby encouraging them to stay longer & do more while in the region.</p> <p>Implementation of the strategy:</p> <p>Post 2 to 3 times per week, mixing content with featured articles and shorter tidbit posts.</p> <p>-Make sure that content is compelling to increase and retain readers.</p> <p>-Plan out blog posts up to 3 months in advance using an editorial calendar, choosing stories and assigning writers.</p> <p>-Use an experienced freelance writer to write up to one post per week, depending upon budget.</p> <p>-Create regular blog topics that are engaging, like different regular sections of a magazine. Ideas include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundups- A weekly or 	<p>Key statistics for current Social Media venues:</p> <p>Blog:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Visitors 1316 Unique Visitors 810 Subscribers 71 <p>Twitter Stats (from Feb 18-Mar 17, 2014)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,108 total followers (100 new followers in past month) 4,845 Tweets to-date (up from 4,024 last month) <p>Facebook Stats: 20,034 likes (up from 19,700 last month)</p> <p>Largest # of Fans out-of-state:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Los Angeles, Ca Salt Lake City, UT Chicago, IL Seattle, WA Portland, OR Houston, TX Spokane, WA 	<p>Social Media is an integral component of the overall marketing strategy; it supports the Consumer Advertising & Publicity/Public Awareness campaigns, and has proven to be a very effective way to not only push information out in a timely manner, but</p>	<p>The objectives for social media center around advocacy & awareness: Are people affected, are they aware of and are they using the content?</p> <p>Continue to analyze the relevant website, blog, FB & Twitter statistics to monitor growth, trends and areas that need</p>	\$15,000.00	No

			<p>monthly roundup of dining, lodging, and activities pertaining to a town within Yellowstone Country (Ex. Historic bars in the area, great museums, etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Real Stories- an interview with a local character. Fun Facts- All about Yellowstone Country YC Outdoor Adventures- a look at a specific adventure, from the eyes of someone experiencing it (dog sledding, skiing, Yellowstone winter tours, etc.) Top Five Lists- such as "The top 5 ways to stay warm in Yellowstone Country winter," "The Top 5 ways to get around Yellowstone without a car." <p>-Design keywords and topics to allow posts to fall under sections on the website and, once there is enough content, be archived in a manner that is helpful for those planning a trip to Yellowstone Country. For example archived content would be Food & Drink, Activities, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phoenix, AZ New York City, NY Las Vegas, NV Minneapolis/St Paul <p>Social media campaigns are not aiming for a click through; they are focused on engagement of followers/fans.</p> <p>Direct traffic from social media venues to the Yellowstone Country website:</p> <p>-- 184 visits to the website via social media channels since Jan. 1 (almost 80% from Facebook)</p> <p>--They have the second-highest time on site at and the second highest number of page views per visit</p> <p>Here are more insights from Facebook:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average of 25-40 Timeline views per day – this is people that go to the Yellowstone Country Facebook page and view the timeline from there Doubled the organic reach (people sharing and liking unpaid) has doubled since last period Paid advertising has boosted our reach by about 18K views per day since the end of February Nobody has reported as spam (which is a testament to the quality of the content) or chosen to "hide" any posts. 	<p>allows us to engage with both potential new visitors and repeat visitors.</p>	<p>improvement. This analysis would include looking at visibility, responsiveness, content posts, sharing, engagement (page likes, # of new fans/followers, engagement rates, post reach, visits, etc.).</p>			
Publicity	Fam Trips	Yes	<p>The goals for the publicity program include generating editorial placement within travel media outlets, including newspapers, consumer publications, travel trade media, broadcast outlets and the Web.</p> <p>The Yellowstone Country press trips are coordinated to tell a story about the vast recreational, cultural and historical opportunities in Yellowstone Country. The overall goal is to supplement our advertising efforts by going a step further to reach potential visitors. Travel journalists help tell our story in a much more personal fashion than just traditional advertising media alone. This venue creates the extra "bang for the buck," to highlight key vertical markets, such as culture, community festivals & events and outdoor recreation.</p>	<p>http://www.travelmontana.org/ourprograms/FY11PubValueReport.pdf</p> <p>http://www.islandecho.co.uk/news/dmo-generates-1-8m-worth-media-coverage/ Suces stories about how media relations can tell the story and present the image you want to portray.</p>	<p>Working with the media is an important way for Yellowstone Country to tell our story; it helps personalize the experience for visitors and supports the consumer advertising campaigns. This is part of the inspiration phase, but also serves a purpose as part of the orientation phase.</p>	<p>The objective is to increase brand awareness through storytelling.</p> <p>We can measure success through publicity values, but also through asking ourselves these questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did we reach the target audience? Did it build awareness of our destination and/or specific activity? 		\$5,000.00	No
								\$1,020,000.00	

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$285,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$75,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$60,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel Guide	\$104,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$55,000.00	\$0.00
		\$579,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$126,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	\$40,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$40,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$90,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cultural Tourism	\$25,000.00	\$0.00
		\$421,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Social Media	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	PressTrips	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
		\$20,000.00	\$0.00
		\$1,020,000.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

File Name	Description	File Size
FY 15 BUDGET PIE CHART.docx (30 KB)	FY 15 budget pie chart	30 KB

Region/CVB Required Documents

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