



*As this marketing plan is in its final stages of approval the world is dealing with COVID-19. The full impact of this global pandemic is yet to be determined but we know that it will have a substantial, long term impact on the tourism industry. Short term, Discover Kalispell has shifted from a marketing to messaging strategy, sharing appropriate messaging to the traveling consumer to let them know that we want them to visit Kalispell, just not now - Daydream Today, Travel Later. We are mitigating risks by reducing planned expenditures for the remainder of FY20 and adjusting projected revenue and expenditures for FY21. We are retaining brand awareness and connection with our loyal followers through newsletters, social media, VIC services, blog and website to push out relevant and current content. We are gathering resources and data and communicating regularly with local, regional and state industry stakeholders.*

*This marketing plan is predicated on conditions being normal, a plan that serves to promote our destination and achieve maximum ROI. The TBID and Bed Tax FY21 budgets that support this marketing plan have been decreased from their original projected revenues. Page 27 of this document addresses the adjustments and strategies that will enable Discover Kalispell to be nimble - to further adjust if needed based on local and state restrictions, traveler and community sentiment and revenue over the next 12 months. Discover Kalispell will work closely with the Kalispell Chamber and TBID Board of Directors to manage revenue, expenditures and promotional strategies outlined in this plan.*

## **ABOUT KALISPELL MONTANA**

What sets Kalispell apart is the way two worlds come together. This is a town dripping with history but not stuck in the past...our spirit is our balance, between our work life and our home life, and between playing and building, all while remembering what really matters, the time with each other and the land that keeps it all in perspective.

### **Kalispell's Nonresident Visitor Characteristics – ITRR**

- Group Characteristics: 19% all first-time visitors; 73% all repeat visitors; 77% plan to return within 2 yrs.
  - Primary reason for trip: 68% vacation/recreation/pleasure; 17% visit FRF or attend event
  - If on vacation, attracted for: GNP, mountains, family/friends, open space
  - Sites visited on trip: GNP, YNP, Flathead Lake state parks, other MT state parks; hot springs
  - Top activities: scenic driving, day hiking, photography, wildlife watching, shopping, camping, visiting other historical sites, local brewery, museums, Indian reservations, art exhibits, and attending festivals/events.
  - Residency of origin: WA, CA, BC, MN, AB, TX, AL, CO, ND, SC
  - Age groups represented: average age 58; median age 60; 55% male; 45% female; 21% 1<sup>st</sup> time visitor
  - (Source: ITRR 2019 Quarterly Non-Resident Survey – spent at least one night in Kalispell)

### **Expenditure Data**

Non-Resident visitors spent \$614M in Flathead County during 2018.

*(graph of expenditure categories in full version of marketing plan)*

### **Destination Facts**

- Lodging properties in Kalispell in 2019: 22 hotels with 1,950 rooms plus over 430 short term rental properties active in Kalispell during the peak season (AirDNA).
- New lodging property in 2019 and 2020: 1) Sherman Lodge, a five-room lodging operating in coordination with a fly-fishing outfitting service, a comfortable place to overnight and a base camp from which to launch their guided adventures. 2) Montana Basecamp RV Park opened summer 2019. The RV park is on 50 acres which adjoins a 22-mile paved trail system offering spectacular views. Currently featuring 62 RV sites but designed with phased plan to expand.
- Groups of 10-500 can be comfortably and adequately accommodated in Kalispell. Two conference hotels that can accommodate up to 280 rooms per night with over 26,000 square feet of meeting space.
- Glacier National Park: 3.05M recreational visitors in 2019.
- Kalispell's Glacier Park International Airport is served by five major airlines – Alaska, Allegiant, America, Delta, United - which fly to 14 cities (some seasonal).
  - New flights in 2019: non-stop service to Dallas, Chicago, Los Angeles and Phoenix/Mesa
  - Announced weekly non-stop to New York (LGA) beginning June 2020.
  - GPIA 2019 – 356,297 enplaned passengers, 16% increase over 2018.
- International Tour Operators: 121 tour operators offered product in Kalispell and 3,483 room nights book for \$1.1M in spending generated from Intl Travelers in Kalispell. (Source: RMI T.R.I.P. report)

### **Kalispell Strengths**

- Increased availability of non-stop flight destinations to Kalispell due to efforts by the airport and Glacier AERO represented by the Flathead Valley business and tourism industry.
- Energized community: Kalispell area was named the third-fastest growing micropolitan community in the nation for the third year in a row and ranked as the sixty-best micropolitan area in the U.S. for business start-ups. A strong economy leveraged by tourism, manufacturing, retail and health care.
- Core area and rail project: committed City and other stakeholder groups to enhance and develop the downtown core.
- Well-preserved cultural offerings: Conrad Mansion Museum, Hockaday Museum of Art, The Museum at Central School.
- State Parks: Kalispell is surrounded by eleven state parks providing trails, activities, interpretative visitor services, and water-based activities.

- Montana's iconic natural landmarks located in Kalispell's backyard: 32 miles from the entrance to Glacier National Park, 10 miles to Flathead Lake, surrounded by 2M acres of Flathead National Forest.
- Annual destination events that increase visitations such as Montana Spartan Race, Montana Indoor Soccer Championship, Skijoring at Rebecca Farm, The Event at Rebecca Farm, Three Blind Refs.
- Kalispell successfully accommodates conferences of 500+ utilizing two convention hotels and nearby overflow guest rooms. Proven track-record including features in national meetings publication and sterling testimonials.
- Ashley Creek Historic Venue: new event and wedding venue for up to 350 attendees plus outdoor venue to be developed summer of 2020.

### **Kalispell Challenges**

- Sized between a larger Montana city and a resort town, Kalispell is neither. It's a burgeoning, thriving community that is best viewed and described as a small city with mountain-town amenities and culture. This distinction is an integral part of what sets Kalispell apart and vital to understand the competitive dynamics when setting expectations for seasonality of visitation, occupancy and room rates.
- Weather conditions are deviating from historical patterns which poses a challenge when promoting outdoor recreation and outdoor events. The impact of national media headlines around wildfires in GNP, as well as the wildfire smoke from surrounding states is impacting visitations to our area.
- Aquatic Invasive Species pose a threat to the Flathead basin waterways. The impact to Montana from zebra mussels alone is estimated at \$234M in mitigation costs and lost revenue. (Source: Flathead Lake Biological Station)
- Availability of short-term rentals (Airbnb, VRBO) is influencing traditional lodging occupancy and ADR. Airdna states Kalispell has 432 active STR's in the peak season with an average of 2.4 bedrooms per unit. That's an additional 1,036 rooms serving the visitors that is not reflected in occupancy data and benchmarking for Discover Kalispell.
- "Alberta's economy is expected to regain its footing in 2020 after a period of weakness in 2019. Real gross domestic product (GDP), a common measure of economic activity, is forecast to grow by 2.5% and surpass pre-recession levels" (alberta.ca/economicoutlook). This is based on current national and global situations which dictate the strength of the Canadian dollar. Kalispell is a popular destination for Alberta and southwest British Columbia for recreation and shopping, but visitations depend largely on the exchange rate.

### **Kalispell Opportunities**

- Destination and product development: The increased number of sports and conference and event facilities being developed within our competitive destinations highlight the need for Kalispell to prioritize the expansion of venues and other tourism assets.
- Environment: The natural environment is the cornerstone of Kalispell and its tie to agriculture and recreation. Discover Kalispell's commitment to be a steward of our resources will be integrated in our communication and promotional strategy and our alliances and partnerships with area non-profits and eco-conscious businesses.
- Growing Kalispell as a regional trade center: the Kalispell Chamber/CVB serves the local and regional business community by supporting appropriate land use policies and tax incentives and improving infrastructure that helps move the economy forward.
- Flathead Valley Community College One Campaign: \$18M of new construction for new library, student center and performance and athletic facility.
- Kalispell Core and Rail Redevelopment project:
  - Developed a rail-served industrial park on the outskirts of Kalispell.
  - Land formerly used by the rail tracks to be developed into a linear park with biking and walking trails in the downtown core.
  - Opens the core area and historic downtown to vast business opportunities.
- Positioning and branding: Discover Kalispell, through a refreshed brand strategy is building awareness of Kalispell as a destination in and of itself, not just a gateway to what's around it, while defining and sharing what makes Kalispell distinct.
- Enhanced consumer trip planning tools: DiscoverKalispell.com launched a direct booking engine. A trip planning tool that enables engaged travelers to seamlessly book lodging and activity offerings.

### **ABOUT DISCOVER KALISPELL**

Discover Kalispell is the destination marketing and stewardship organization for Kalispell, serving to protect and enhance the destination's resources, quality of life, and economic prosperity through comprehensive marketing, sales and service programs.

#### **Structure**

Discover Kalispell, the Kalispell Convention & Visitor Bureau, is a division of the Kalispell Chamber of Commerce. The Kalispell Chamber has served as the official tourism agency for the City of Kalispell since 1987. Discover Kalispell is funded through two contracts with public agencies and generates private funds through registration fees and sponsorships. The Chamber has contracted with the State of Montana for Kalispell's share of the lodging facility use tax since 1987. In 2010, the Kalispell Chamber CVB assumed administration of the Kalispell Tourism Business Improvement District under an agreement between the City, Kalispell hoteliers, and the Chamber.

#### **The Discover Kalispell Team**

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## **Purpose of Marketing Plan**

The FY21 marketing plan serves to direct the initiatives and spending for Discover Kalispell and inform and educate the board of directors, community stakeholders, Tourism Advisory Council and the City of Kalispell. The Bed Tax and TBID funds work in collaboration to support this marketing plan.

## **TBID Renewal**

On January 6, 2020 the Kalispell City Council approved the renewal of the Kalispell TBID district through June 2030.

## **2019-2020 Highlights**

- Discover Kalispell completed a brand strategic evaluation and refresh evolving the Kalispell brand to a destination as opposed to a hub, a place in and of itself, a travel experience shaped by the local culture.
- Newly designed 2020 Kalispell Visitor Guide which includes a smaller 'packable' size and features including tear-out maps, itineraries and directories.
- Discover Kalispell's 2019 spring/summer and 2019-2020 winter marketing campaigns garnered 7.7M impressions, 42,576 clicks to website. The seasonal campaigns plus year-round digital webpage. marketing produced increased conversions for newsletter sign up and visitor guide orders – 105% increase in visitor guide requests over 2018.
- Kalispell VIC processed over 11,269 inquiries in 2019, 8% increase over 2018.
- Discover Kalispell hosted the 7<sup>th</sup> annual Montana Spartan Race in 2019, hosting 7,817 registered racers and 1,500+ spectators. 46 states and 5 Canadian provinces represented. 5,235 racers traveled at over 100 miles to attend the race.
- Over 4,600 room nights booked for group/meeting & convention business through Discover Kalispell promotions for 2019 and beyond.
- Discover Kalispell offered hosted a workshop for industry partners about marketing to international visitors. Reps from Rocky Mountain International, Montana's state and regional tourism offices, and Rocky Mountain Holiday Tours presented marketing strategies and educated local hotel representatives and activity vendors on how to increase international business.

## **WHY DESTINATION MARKETING IS IMPORTANT FOR COMMUNITIES**

Tourism is a competitive industry. When selecting a mountain community for a vacation destination there are many states and cities to choose from. A destination can no longer assume that if they build it they will come. Destination marketing organizations such as Discover Kalispell strive to implement a tourism promotion strategy that over time will increase the competitiveness of the destination, and in turn increase revenues, taxes and local employment. New residents often began as visitors creating a virtuous cycle of economic benefits which begins with travel promotion.

Impacts of destination promotion for a community are far-reaching. Non-resident visitors spent \$3.64 billion in Montana (preliminary 2019) and \$614 million in Flathead County (2018) (ITRR). Those dollars impact a wide range of local business such as restaurants, retail, hotels, outfitters and guides, groceries, gasoline, and rental cars.

Investment in tourism assets provides long term benefits. New businesses such as restaurants and breweries are an important part of the local experience's that visitors are attracted to but are also enjoyed by residents. When a community creates the right conditions for destination development, investment, and promotion, tourism is an economic lever that supports a strong sustainable economy.

Discover Kalispell works as a community partner to support and develop assets that are attractive to visitors but also support the quality of life for residents. Discover Kalispell's comprehensive regional and national campaigns raise Kalispell's profile, which assists the community in receiving new and expanded air service, new industries and employers, and the economic impact of recruiting conferences and events. Travelers' wants and needs as well as their methods of trip planning are constantly changing. The promotional tactics used by a DMO to reach potential visitors need to be current, effective, and genuine to the destination's local culture to garner visitor engagement as well as support and buy-in from the local community. This is achieved with adequate funding and organizational structure and expertise within the DMO.

The role of a DMO has evolved to extend beyond just marketing. A destination's tourism marketing brand works closely with local organizations and governments to be an active partner in the holistic health of the community. Some of the current priorities include:

- Growth – how much is too much regarding visitation levels. Residents are questioning a DMO's contribution to peak seasons and the impact to resources and infrastructure. Discover Kalispell weighs its marketing dollars to promote fall, winter and spring. The summer peak season is not actively promoted through paid advertising. We use earned media, social media and newsletter marketing to promote areas and activities outside of Glacier National Park and actively guide visitors to off-the-beaten-path experiences.
- Development – DMO's are not just marketers, they are advocates and stewards of the destination's development resources. Discover Kalispell is actively supporting the following initiatives: Glacier AERO to develop new and expanded air service, the Kalispell core area and downtown development projects, Kalispell arts and culture including our three downtown museums, educating in-market and potential travelers on Leave No Trace principles to help protect our natural resources, and honoring and promoting the culture of northwest Montana.
- Workforce – adequate workforce is a key initiative for the Kalispell Chamber Convention & Visitor Bureau. The 2020 workforce initiative includes a multi-year workforce program supporting

Kalispell's three top industry sectors: tourism and hospitality, manufacturing and occupational trades, and bioscience.

## THE MONTANA BRAND AND KALISPELL

Kalispell fits perfectly with the Montana Brand enabling Discover Kalispell to work cooperatively with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development and Montana region and CVB partners.

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

**Vibrant and charming small town:** Kalispell's vibrant downtown offers Montana-inspired dining, spirits and brews. Situated perfectly between Glacier National Park and Flathead Lake, blending four-season adventure and soul-stirring beauty for an unforgettable experience.

**Breathtaking experiences by day, relaxing hospitality at night:** Making waves on Flathead Lake, rafting the Middle Fork, cycling the Going-To-The-Sun road, exploring 'The Bob', or viewing fall's dramatic transformation in the Flathead National Forest. However you choose to spend the daylight hours, your evenings will be full of hearty food and homey accommodations in Kalispell.

### Describe your destination.

## THE TRAVEL DECISION PROCESS

People love to plan trips based on what they see in photos, especially those that they follow on social media. It is for many, the top media to acquire inspiration – spark ideas for the next great vacation.

We travel for different reasons such as business, wellness-health, visiting family, educational travel. For the leisure traveler the top reasons include seeing new cultures and customs, experiencing the outdoors, conquering new adventures, having time to think and reflect and creating memories with friends and family. Whatever the reason and wherever one decides to travel, the trip planning cycle is not always a linear path and includes several different stages. Our goal as a DMO is to insert ourselves into that trip planning cycle. To be part of a traveler's consideration set means connecting with the visitor that would be attracted to our destination and the travel resources influencing their choices. An effective destination marketing campaign captures the attention of that motivated traveler.

When it comes to travel, inspiration is everywhere. As a result, the purchase path is full of twists and turns. It ranges from days to months, stretches across thousands of touchpoints, and generates a mountain of data in the process. (Thinkwithgoogle.com)

Google asked travelers in the U.S. how they plan a trip starting with what inspires them to travel.

(graphic included in full marketing plan)

Even after booking may continue to research based on their needs, which often does not include price: 95% visit travel-related sites after booking, 74% re-research a trip, 8% cancel and rebook.

A traveler's needs include a variety of aspects such as dog-friendly hotel, things to do, local's favorite places to eat, or wellness options.

(graphic included in full marketing plan)

Steps a DMO can use to be in the right place at the right time during the travel planning process:

- Focus on needs, not price: travelers are wanting the right trip for their needs, understand what motivates them.
- Let consumer behavior guide the marketing strategy: there is no single path to purchase, use data to identify the potential interaction points with travelers.
- Build relationships early with search: destination searches help to identify travelers that are narrowing their search to a trip that matches your destination.
- Connect across the travel journey: messaging platforms, social media, staying connected with newsletters and current information on website.

### Discover Kalispell strategies to reach consumers throughout the planning cycle:

#### Stage 1 - Inspiration

Messages: Speak to the desire for a trip that includes a mountain community, outdoor recreation, relaxation, friendly-small town feel, and free-spirit adventure while also addressing safety, availability of modern comforts, and dispelling perceptions of Montana being difficult to access. Include messaging in our promotions that shows the affordability of a Montana vacation once they arrive and the unique experiences and memories they'll receive (Glacier National Park, Flathead Lake). Highlight family-friendly events and activities. Tell an inspiring story of what makes our community special.

Most travelers are also considering the trip in the inspiration stage and the budget continues to have a strong influence throughout the planning cycle.

Tools:

- Destination websites – discoverkalispell, visitmt, glaciermt
- Targeted content and search marketing
- Discover Kalispell social media channels
- Blogs, articles, and inspiring photos & videos to demonstrate the unique Kalispell culture
- Sponsored content in targeting and retargeting campaigns
- Emarketing to keep followers engaged
- Travel shows – one-on-one conversations with potential travelers in key markets
- Earned media to let others tell your story

### **Stage 2: Orientation – Planning**

Messages: Highlight the diverse events and activities, downtown Kalispell, variety of dining choices, locally made products, and suggested outdoor itineraries. Soften the perception that they will be isolated (being without common amenities) and the perceived challenges of harsh weather. Highlight local food, craft beverage scene, arts and culture, recreation, and natural resources.

Tools:

- Discoverkalispell.com
- Consumer reviews and ratings on travel platforms
- Be present on popular travel sites
- Strong call to action in all content
- Customized content for newsletter database
- Local events calendars
- Video to highlight events and activities so they can imagine themselves in the picture
- Checklists to incentivize trip planning – i.e. 10 day-hikes within 30 minutes of Kalispell

### **Stage 3: Facilitation – Booking**

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

Tools:

- Mobile-friendly website
- Lodging booking engine on DiscoverKalispell.com
- Activity booking links on DiscoverKalispell.com
- Reliable sources for questions - VIC, travel guide, response to questions posted on social media
- Season-specific and niche activity content on website and social media
- Links to a variety of maps on DiscoverKalispell.com
- Resources - i.e. list of boat rentals and guided tours on Flathead Lake with complete contact info
- Visitor Information Center that's open year-round

### **Stage 4: The Experience**

Messages: Travelers rely on mobile to get their bearings once arriving at a destination. Once they are here, a destination and other tourism businesses need to be present with resources on websites, apps, and social media, including a way to tap into local knowledge.

Tools:

- Mobile-friendly website with up-to-date event calendar
- Wayfinding signage
- Maps and itinerary suggestions on DiscoverKalispell.com and travel guide
- Making sure that local businesses know what Discover Kalispell is and what resources we have available so they can refer their customers.
- Visitor Information Center that's open year-round with maps, itinerary suggestions and knowledgeable travel coordinator to find the answers to their questions.

### **Stage 5: Sharing**

The goal is to create loyal fans that will share trip photos on social media and tell stories about their adventures at the next party and family gathering.

**Back to Stage 1** with the next traveler

**Optional: Include attachments here**

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

## KEY MARKET SEGMENTS

Discover Kalispell utilizes a variety of marketing and promotional strategies to reach leisure travelers and implements a targeted group sales strategy to grow the meetings, convention and group travel segments. The goal: to introduce travelers to the numerous offerings in and around Kalispell, while also helping them choose to overnight in Kalispell.

Discover Kalispell uses data from Google Analytics, ITRR, Visa Vue, mobile arrival data and Tourism Sentiment Index to determine high value geographic and psychographic markets from which to obtain the highest ROI from marketing and other promotions.

### Consumer

Summer is not actively promoted through paid advertising. Discover Kalispell uses earned media and social media primarily to actively guide visitors throughout Kalispell and the valley, introducing them to off-the-beaten-path/unknown experiences.

For winter, Discover Kalispell focuses on the destination's well-rounded winter offerings and place a larger emphasis on guided experiences that combine the area's outdoor recreation with indoor amenities like museums, wellness and dining.

Year-round, and especially during shoulder seasons, Discover Kalispell focuses on promoting annual and community events and unique activities.

Key Segment/High Potential Visitors:

Outdoor recreation seekers

Arts and culture enthusiasts

Sporting event travelers

Emerging Segments: Adventure motorcyclists, educational travel

Key Geographical Markets –

Winter	Missoula, Seattle, Los Angeles, Spokane, Great Falls	
Spring	Seattle, Phoenix (May/June), Spokane, Missoula	Emerging: LA, Dallas
Summer	Los Angeles, Dallas, Seattle, Spokane, SF-Oakland	Emerging: NY
Fall	Phoenix (Sept), Seattle, Los Angeles, Missoula, Spokane	Emerging: Dallas

### Sports and Events

Discover Kalispell serves as host and partner to bring numerous sporting and other types of destination events to Kalispell. Events range from large national and international events such as the Montana Spartan Race to regional youth events like the Montana Indoor Soccer Championship. Partners include high school athletic directors, venues such as Flathead County Fairgrounds, Majestic Valley Arena and Flathead Valley Community College, community event organizers and national event promoters.

Key Focus: regional or expanded national events during the shoulder seasons and indoor events taking place in winter.

Grants: Discover Kalispell offers grant funding for new and expanding events based on an application and scoring process directed by the TBID board of directors.

<https://discoverkalispell.com/grants/>

## Meetings and Conventions

Association continues to be a strong market for Kalispell. It is the most reliable and dependable market largely due to the predictability of the rotation process, number of members and time of the year. Traditionally our focus has been primarily regional and national. Discover Kalispell will build on relationships established within the state getting more involved with our Montana associations.

Discover Kalispell plans to put more focus on the Montana associations and the organizations they belong to, for example Montana Society of Association Executives. Many organizations continue to grow in their membership, we need to keep Kalispell on the forefront. Within the Pacific Northwest, the Puget Sound area will remain in our geographical market. Cities in the Puget Sound region include Tacoma, Olympia and Everett. Seattle is the closest major U.S. city to Kalispell and in addition to being only an eight-hour drive from Seattle, Glacier Park International Airport offers three direct flight out of Kalispell daily and Amtrak services to Whitefish. We have included Oregon within the geographical market because of the easy access to Kalispell and the number of regional associations located in Salem and Portland.

Key Segment: State, national and regional associations

Key Geographical Market: Montana, Pacific Northwest region – Seattle, Oregon

## Tour & Travel

Kalispell has the right elements, affordability and unique experiences to attract domestic, regional and international tour companies, as well as clubs and specific interest hobby groups.

Domestic tours offer niche travel experiences to include seniors, cultural, historical and motorcycle tours.

International tour operators are especially interested in offering unique, off-the-beaten-path experiences to travelers. Favorites include national parks, recreational activities, western and cultural experiences and historic tours.

Discover Kalispell will work with tour companies offering national park, cultural, historic itineraries, motorcycle trips and internationally with tour operators that are in Germany, Australia, Italy, France, United Kingdom, Benelux and Nordic Regions – The Great American West as part of Rocky Mountain International.

Key Segment:

- Domestic groups that promote niche travel to include seniors, cultural/historical and motorcycle tours.
- International tour operators that promote outdoor recreation, national parks, cultural and historic experiences to travel planner in their countries.

Key Geographical Market: Tour operators that work in Germany, Australia, Italy, France, UK, Benelux and Nordic Regions (RMI).

*b. What are your emerging markets?*

## Emerging Markets

Consumer -

Segments: adventure motorcyclists, educational travel

Geo: LA, Dallas, NY

**Optional: Include attachments here.**

*c. What research supports your target marketing?*

## DESTINATION MARKETING INDUSTRY TRENDS

*“2020 travel trends reflect not so much where you can go, but who you can be while you’re on the road. Carbon offsetting is on. Microcations get big. Green hotels check in. Single-use plastics phase out. Giving back takes hold. Women-only trips shine. Wellness vacations turn to nature.”* National Geographic



Social Media – with over 40% of the world’s population on social media (HubSpot) it’s important that a DMO leverage the platforms as an integral part of a targeted marketing campaign. Social media enables a destination to portray a visual story, sharing experiences a traveler can have which inspires travel.

“For DMOs, Instagram and Facebook have the power to create dynamic experiences that engage with travelers by telling the visual story of a destination using photos and video.” Sojern

Social media statistics for 2019 (blog.Hub Spot):

- 42% of the world's population uses social media. That's 3.2 billion users worldwide. (Emarsys)
- To break it down, 90.4% of Millennials, 77.5% of Generation X, and 48.2% of Baby Boomers are active social media users. (Emarketer)
- 54% of social browsers use social media to research products. (GlobalWebIndex)
- Each person spends an average of 2 hours and 22 minutes on social networks and messaging. (Globalwebindex)
- 366 million new people started using social media in the past year. That’s more than a million new people joining social media every single day. (Hootsuite)

Use of Influencers – social influencers with a niche travel segment following enable a DMO to reach a target market through a trusted source, providing a customized experience in market for the influencer that fits their audience increases the consumers intent to visit.

Local sources to tell an authentic story – today’s travelers don’t want a list of what there is to do, they want to feel the experience through authentic content curated from locals and loyal visitors. No longer is a list of 5 Things To Do In Winter for example enough, consumers want to understand what its actually like to be in Kalispell, why those that live here love it.

Mobile resources – travelers rely on mobile more and more during the early stages of trip planning and on their trip. Marketers can integrate tools that are available through travel tech leaders within the DMO’s platforms such as Google mapping, online booking for lodging and activities, video, and virtual reality.

Travelers versus locals – residents need to understand the role and outcomes of a DMO’s work, viewing increased visitor dollars not as THE end goal but as a means to achieving various ends – a multifunctional purpose that includes locals in the equation.

Group and M&C–

Destination Analysts 2019 annual online survey of meeting planners: In total, 482 completed surveys were collected, presenting a full spectrum of experienced meeting and event planners. Markets represented were corporate (53.1%), national/international association (41.3%), state/regional association (21.0%), third-party planners (29.7%) and SMERF planners (44.8%) including those who regularly plan meetings and events for social, military, educational, religious and fraternal organizations as well as government, non-profit, sports, ethnic/multicultural and reunions.

Meeting Success Metrics-Overall:

(graphic included in full marketing plan)

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

1. Attendee Satisfaction-SMERF Planners
2. Number of Attendee Registrations-Association Planners
3. Client Satisfaction-Third-Party Planners
4. Achieving Meeting Goals-Corporate Planners
5. Overall Experience of the Meeting-Corporate Planners

Importance of Destination Attributes-Overall:

Top five most important overall destination attributes and the type of planners who rated them the highest:

1. Hotels Quality -Third-Party Planners
2. Hotels Rates - Association Planners
3. Overall Cost of Holding Meetings in the Destination - Association Planners
4. Geographic Location - Corporate Planners

## 5. Meeting Facilities - Third-Party Planners

(graphic included in full marketing plan)

Top five most important services that CVB's provide and the type of planners who rated them the highest:

1. Personalized Hotel Selection Assistance - Association Planners.
2. Incentive Packages to Hold Your Meeting/Event in Their Destination - Third-Party Planners.
3. RFP Distribution - SMERF Planners.
4. Personalized Venue Selection Assistance - Association Planners
5. Advice/Recommendations for Vendor Selection - Third-Party Planners

Eprodirect is a hospitality marketing agency who focuses exclusively on the meetings and convention segments of the hospitality industry. Discover Kalispell has done successful M & C campaigns with Eprodirect to promote FAM sign ups and meetings in Kalispell. Annually they conduct an online survey for their clients. The survey was conducted from October 1 through October 31, 2019 with a total of 392 meeting planners participating.

The meeting planner profile consisted of:

- 57.4% worked as a professional planner for more than 10 years
- 26.2% of respondents plan more than 25 meetings per year
- Survey respondents include:
  - Independent/Third Party Meeting Professionals 28%
  - Association Meeting Professionals 29%
  - Corporate Meeting Professionals 22%
  - Government 7%
  - Other 12%
  - The majority (60%) are not members of a professional industry organization.

Primary key take-a-ways for Discover Kalispell are:

- To learn about meeting facilities, planners are most likely to use hotel websites (79%). Other sources include internet search engines (60%), and CVB websites (58%).
- Meeting planners continue to find a great deal of value in FAM tours, meeting facility guides and new hotel openings.
- 66% of planners like to be engaged on LinkedIn, although surprisingly only 3% prefer to be contacted (solicited) through LinkedIn.
- 78% find value in using a CVB for RFP distribution and destination assistance.
- Planners seem to find facility views and virtual tours to be the most helpful when selecting a meeting venue.
- Planners continue to read trade publications, but don't often use them as their primary source to learn about meeting venues.
- Saving time and money are the most important benefits for planners engaging in multi-year contracts.

## GOALS & OBJECTIVES

### Goals

1. Increase year-round visitations from non-resident domestic and international travelers.
2. Generate earned media for Kalispell in targeted U.S. and International markets.
3. Build relationships with visitors as demonstrated through increased usage, engagement and conversions on media platforms.
4. Continue to position Kalispell as the sports and event destination within northwest Montana by building relationships with state and local organizations and regional and national promoters and tournament directors.
5. Provide sponsorships through the Discover Kalispell Grant program which support new and expanding events and develop visitor asset.
6. Promote Kalispell as a destination for domestic and international tour group travel.
7. Continue to build database and relationships with tour operators, domestic and international.
8. Continue to build database and relationships with active meeting planners in key markets and segments.
9. Promote Kalispell and the services that Discover Kalispell provides to local businesses and organizations for meeting and convention referrals.
10. Play an active role as a voice for tourism in the state and the community through positive publicity and outreach and involvement.

## Objectives

1. Increase occupancy at TBID hotels by 2% during FY21 (as measured by STR Report).
2. Increase engagement of website users on DiscoverKalispell.com through increasing average pages per session and session duration during FY21. (FY19 = avg 2.94 pgs/session; 1:36 session duration)
3. Increase visitor guide requests by 25% over FY20.
4. Increase consumer newsletter database by 15% over FY20 (equates to additional 2,500 opt-in subscribers).
5. Measure the engagement with Discover Kalispell social media channels by 1) increasing followers on Instagram by 10%, and 2) obtain an average post engagement on Facebook of 4%.
6. Host minimum of one press trip with travel media from key demographic or geographic markets.
7. Promote Kalispell for sports event travel through key industry publications and direct marketing to tournament organizers and promoters.
8. Successfully produce Discover Kalispell signature events: on budget.
9. Increase database of qualified and interested meeting planners and tour operators by 15% over FY20 (equates to additional 600+ opt-in subscribers).
10. Retain engagement of meeting planner and tour operator database through quarterly newsletters.
11. Attend two tradeshow to promote Kalispell as a meeting and group travel destination.
12. Host two individual FAMs for qualified planners or tour operators who have never been to Glacier Country.
13. Connect and engage with meeting planners through one targeted advertising campaign.
14. Promote Kalispell to domestic and international tour operators through one advertising campaign.
15. Increase referrals to the KCVB Bring It Home program to a total of 35 referrals in FY21 (17 referrals in FY19).

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

Discover Kalispell partners with MOTBD in digital and print campaigns and research joint ventures. Other cooperative projects include press trips, trade shows such as IPW and IRU and photo and video asset sharing.

Discover Kalispell FY21 Marketing Plan and Budget - Bed Tax.pdf

**Optional: Include attachment here.**

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

Discover Kalispell partners with Glacier Country and in-region CVB's on a variety of projects such as media events, press trips, meeting planner FAM's, trade shows, and crisis management planning.

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

Print - JV Parents Magazine for last two years. Successful in that it also provides travel guide leads.

Digital - partnered with MOTBD, WCVB and GC on comprehensive digital, OOH and press trip campaign to promote new flights and new airline. Successful due to ability to leverage reach of each partner and the cooperative funding enabled us to make an impact in large markets such as LA and Dallas.

Research - KCVB subscribes to Visa Vue which has provided useful data at a price that KCVB could afford and it then provides MOTBD with Kalispell data.

Photo-Video assets - sharing of assets is highly valuable.

Crisis Management planning - open communication channels and sharing of planning documents with MOTBD and area partners when dealing with wildfires, PR crisis and currently the Coronavirus situation.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Supplement to FY21 Marketing Plan - Coronavirus Planning and Recovery.pdf

Optional: Include attachment here:

### Marketing Segment, Method & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Describe your method.	Provide supporting research/statistics.	How do you plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale for this method.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Add'l Attchmnt
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Secure new photos & videos that support the PR, social media & advertising.	Images touch a traveler during each phase of the decision process through social media, online adv., and mobile marketing.	Completion of photo/video shoot and/or acquisition of assets that meet our criteria within the available budget.	Images play an important role in promoting a destination and engaging with potential visitors.	\$2,000.00		
Consumer	Social Media	Update and manage social media sites that foster consumer engagement and enhance cross platform consistency. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube.	42% of the world's population uses social media. That's 3.2 billion users worldwide (Emarss).	Increased level of engagement on social media channels, measured by number of followers and post impressions.	Majority of travelers (all demographics) use social media to connect with their friends, family and brands and influencers that they follow. Also to share travel experiences and access consumer reviews.	\$2,000.00		
Consumer	Multi-Media Marketing	Depending on campaign objectives, media will be selected that will provides the highest ROI. Print advertising in lifestyle publications that speak to a specific target market are effective in building brand awareness. Social media advertising is the most targeted way to get our message out and is used in most campaigns. Out of home elements such as digital billboards at airports are a good way to promote a new non-stop flight for example. Banner ads on selected websites are used to reach targeted consumers and connect them back to our website/campaign landing page.	Social media is used extensively for trip planning and along with other online advertising provides measurable ROI and can be tested and modified quickly if an ad is not performing up to expectations. A targeted approach with print advertising that provides accompanying editorial delivers content to an already engaged audience.	Success will be determined according to the media used per campaign. Social media and online advertising insights provide impressions and CTR. When a campaign specific landing page is used then website analytics can be included to measure success. Most campaigns are structured increase conversions such as visitor guide requests and newsletter subscriptions.	Discover Kalispell's consumer marketign campaigns include a variety of media based on the geographic and demographic market we are promoting to and the cost of media in that particular DMA.	\$15,000.00		
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Discover Kalispell hopes to attend at least one travel show during FY21 that supports our key and emerging markets. Depending on available revenue.	Travel shows attract travel enthusiasts that pay an entrance fee to meet travel marketers in a professional setting. Travel shows and events allow a destination to directly connect with a target market to increase awareness of a destination and promote visitations.	Number of brochures distributed and opt-in subscriber emails collected.	It is an economical way to connect directly with travelers that meet our geographic and/or demographic markets. One-on-one conversations allow us to create a strong inspiration to move the interested traveler into the orientation phase of trip planning.	\$1,100.00		

Consumer	Printed Material	Design and production of maps and niche brochures.	Through the use of targeted printed materials distributed through a variety of channels (fulfillment requests, brochure racks, distribution at travel shows) we are able to engage with potential visitors and lead them to our website and social channels to learn more. Niche brochures also play a role as suggested itineraries which are important in trip planning.	Used in conjunction with our website for brand awareness. Success is measured by distribution of the printed materials through the distribution channel defined for each print project.	The Kalispell tear-off map is a popular item which includes an area map and detailed Kalispell map that includes locations of hotels. Other niche brochures that have been supported in the past are the Flathead Valley Breweries, Wineries, Cideries, and Distilleries map, hiking brochures, and birding brochure.	\$1,000.00		
Group Marketing	Group Marketing Personnel	Discover Kalispell utilizes the part time services of a group sales manager to administer group marketing projects which include, but not limited to, development and maintenance of IDSS, responding and managing group and event RFP's, attending travel trade shows and events, meeting planner and domestic and international tour operator FAM trips, and outreach and marketing campaigns targeted to the group segment.	Group travel and meeting and convention marketing serves to create visitations during targeted months. Connecting with the target audience requires dedicated personnel to effectively communicate and create innovative solutions. Destination Analysts online survey of meeting planners showed the most important services a CVB provides include: personalized hotel selection assistance, incentive packages, RFP distribution, personalized venue selection assistance and recommendations for vendor selection.	Growth in Discover Kalispell's database of meeting planners and tour operators from our target markets, acquisition of RFP's, and leads obtained at group shows and events.	Group travel, meeting and convention marketing is a key segment and strategy for Discover Kalispell.	\$12,000.00		
Group Marketing	Multi-Media Marketing	Depending on the campaign objectives, a variety of media will be used to get the best return on investment. Print advertising in trade publications are effective in building brand awareness. Banner ads on selected websites are used to reach meeting planners and tour operators and connect them back to our website campaign landing page. Newsletter marketing through trade publication database can be a part of a group marketing campaign strategy.	Meeting planners and tour operators look to trusted trade sources and networks for information on meeting destinations.	Success will be measured based on the media used and the objectives for each campaign.	Montana and Kalispell are not typically top of mind when meeting planners are considering a meeting or group travel destination. To gain awareness of the services, expertise and amenities that Kalispell has we utilize media that connects with planners and provides the highest reach with each particular segment.	\$2,000.00		
		Administration fund include required costs for operation of the KCVB such as rent, supplies, postage,	Administrative/operational costs are necessary to	Maintain operational costs	Operational and staffing costs are essential to operate			

Marketing Support	Administration	bookkeeping, equipment, tech support, janitorial and employer costs related to staff wages and taxes.	successfully operate a business/organization.	within established budget.	a business.	\$23,600.00		
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	Discover Kalispell's Director will attend TAC meetings and the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism.	Funding and marketing plan are approved by TAC, attendance at TAC meetings is required.	Attend meetings within final fiscal year budget and adhering to approved per diem and travel policies.	Attendance at TAC meetings is a requirement as stated in the rules and regulations for the use of bed tax funding. Governor's Conference on Tourism provides insights and education for destination marketers.	\$1,000.00		
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	Discover Kalispell supports a full time year-round travel counselor. VIC staff maintains informational resources, responds to inquiries submitted by phone, email, and walk-ins, compiles and inputs VIC data, completes fulfillment requests, solicits, trains and oversees volunteers, and collects visitor information and satisfaction levels. Establish methods to distribute visitor guides and maps during weekend over the summer as this year's budget does not support additional seasonal VIC staffing.	During 2019 the Kalispell VIC received 16,028 inquiries.	Total number of inquiries to VIC, number of fulfillment packets requested.	The VIC staff is an important touch point for Kalispell as a travel destination and for the Kalispell Chamber/CVB particularly when welcoming a first time visitor. It is imperative that adequate staffing and services be maintained to provide effective visitor services and keep potential and in-market visitors engaged with our destination	\$36,000.00		
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	Discover Kalispell will be open to evaluating opportunities as they arise. Potential projects will be evaluated by whether it meets our marketing plan goals and objectives and compliments our marketing strategy.	Previous fiscal years have shown that there are opportunities that come available during the year.	Success will be determined based on the individual projects selected for opportunity funds.	Opportunity funds are in place to allow the Discover Kalispell to participate in co-op or other marketing and/or publicity opportunities that come available during the year.	\$2,000.00		
Marketing Support	Outreach	The outreach funds are used to support Voice of Montana Tourism, an important entity to advocate for and communicate importance of the tourism industry to the economic health of Montana.	The outreach funds are seen as assisting in the promotion and security of the tourism brand within the state.	Support Voice of Montana Tourism to host a business & legislative round table in Kalispell to educate Flathead County legislative delegation and local industry professionals.	Outreach funds will be used to enable Discover Kalispell to support tourism related organizations that are important to advancing the Montana tourism industry.	\$1,000.00		
		The existing Wayfinding system needs to be maintained to provide visitors with	Wayfinding is important for people to make their way through unfamiliar areas because it improves efficiency, accessibility, and decreases frustration, time spent giving or looking for directions, and directs		The wayfinding			

Marketing Support	Wayfinding	accurate information presented in a professional manner. Funds will be used for maintenance and replacement of existing signs when necessary due to damage, or when new signs are identified that need to be included in the sign system.	visitors to our amenities and services. When you have a great experience in an unfamiliar place, chances are you were able to navigate your visit easily without much frustration. When you enjoy a visit to a destination you will find yourself wanting to frequent that destination more often. (Importance of Wayfinding, Actually We Create)	Success is measured by keeping all signs within the comprehensive wayfinding system in good working order.	signs throughout Kalispell serve to direct visitors to amenities such as the VIC, parks, museums and downtown. Maintenance of the signs is critical to present a good first impression to visitors.	\$1,000.00		
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	Discover Kalispell will evaluate available joint ventures as presented by MOTBD and participate in those that meet our criteria and support our marketing objectives.	Promotion of Montana is most effective if the DMO's use creative and messaging that supports the Montana brand. Participating in joint ventures opportunities with MOTBD supports that marketing cohesion.	Success will be measured based on the individual joint venture projects we participate in.	Participating in joint venture projects enables Discover Kalispell to leverage MOTBD's expertise, resources and reach to meet our marketing segment objectives.	\$5,000.00		
Marketing Support	Research	Kalispell CVB seeks to acquire traveler research specific to Kalispell. KCVB subscribes to the Tourism Sentiment Index data from Destination Think. Funding enables us to receive our third report which covers online conversations about Kalispell during 2019, providing feedback on the strengths and weaknesses that may have an impact on a potential traveler's perception of our destination. KCVB also participates in the partnership with MOTBD to get Visa Vue data specifically for Kalispell. Funding will be used for one of these products or a different research product if other viable option is identified.	Data-driven marketing makes it possible for an organization to monitor performance on a regular basis. Marketers must use data to gain insights into the tastes, preference, behaviors and habits of their audience and then make necessary changes improve conversions rates.	Success will be measured by receiving the report and utilizing the data in marketing decisions.	Marketing strategy must be based on data, data from current and past visitors to Kalispell as well as our competitive set destinations.	\$7,000.00		
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	Phone, postage and supplies to fulfill visitor information requests through the Kalispell VIC. Fulfillment piece is the Kalispell Visitor Guide and other niche brochures and maps as requested.	In 2019 3,055 fulfillment packets were requested, a 55% increase over 2018 primarily due to effective retargeting ad campaigns.	Success will be measured by the total number of inquiries to VIC, fulfillment packets requested, and digital downloads of travel guide.	A visitor information center is the first point of contact for many visitors. It is important to have the operations and staffing in place to answer questions and send requested information to keep the potential traveler engaged with our destination.	\$6,300.00		
						\$118,000.00		

## Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments

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Attachment 1

Attachment 2

Attachment 3

Attachment 4

Attachment 5

Attachment 6

Attachment 7

Attachment 8

Attachment 9

Attachment 10

## Marketing Method Budget

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Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget (optional)
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Social Media	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Multi-Media Marketing	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$1,100.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
		\$21,100.00	\$0.00
Group Marketing	Multi-Media Marketing	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Group Marketing	Group Marketing Personnel	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
		\$14,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$23,600.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$36,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Wayfinding	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Research	\$7,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	\$6,300.00	\$0.00
		\$82,900.00	\$0.00
		\$118,000.00	\$0.00



**Miscellaneous Attachments**

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<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>File Size</b>
KCVB Pie Charts	KCVB FY21 Pie Charts.pdf	266 KB

**Reg/CVB Required Documents**

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<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>File Size</b>
Application for Lodging Tax Revenue	Application for Lodging Tax Revenue.pdf	26 KB
Applicants Certificate of Compliance	Bed Tax Applicants Certificate of Compliance.pdf	224 KB
Pledge of Understanding and Compliance	Pledge of Understanding and Compliance.pdf	27 KB

