



**Grant Details**

**80683 - FY20 Region/CVB Marketing Plan**

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86706 - FY20 Kalispell CVB Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

**Grant Title:** FY20 Kalispell CVB Marketing Plan  
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**Community & Brand Support**

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*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?*

**About Kalispell Montana**

Here in the Flathead Valley life is awe-inspiring and simple at the same time. That ability to both lose ourselves – to wander in millions of acres of protected and pristine lands – or find ourselves by channeling the confident frontier spirit that drove the development of this regional powerhouse, is what makes this mountain community a destination. What sets Kalispell apart is the way two worlds come together. This is a town dripping with history but not stuck in the past. Without sacrificing that old Western charm, Main Street has been revitalized in recent years with new shops and restaurants injecting a modern feel into the classic Western architecture. Kalispell is an eclectic community with artists and bankers co-mingling over a plate of tapas, then moving down the street to shoot some pool. It's ballet class for the kids while mom and dad

browse through used books or sip a latte while a bass player picks away in the corner. Our spirit is in 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**

Group Characteristics: 15% all first time visitors; 73% all repeat visitors; 82% plan to return within 2 yrs

Primary reason for trip: 60% vacation/recreation/pleasure; 21% visit FRF or attend event

If on vacation, attracted for: GNP, mountains, family/friends, open space

Sites visited on trip: GNP, Flathead Lake state parks, YNP, other MT state parks; Natl Bison Range

Top activities: scenic driving, day hiking, wildlife watching, photography, visiting historical sites, shopping, camping, breweries, museums, Indian reservations, farmers markets, and attending festivals/events.

Residency of origin: WA, ID, Alberta, CO, WI, MN, IL, OH, CA, OR

Age groups represented: 36% - 55-65 years; 33% - 65-74 years; 20% - 35-44 years; 19% 45-54 yrs

(Source: ITRR 2018 Quarterly Non-Resident Survey – spent at least one night in Kalispell)

### **Expenditure Data**

Non Resident visitors spent \$530M in Flathead County during 2017.

### **Destination Facts**

Number of lodging properties in Kalispell: 22

Increased hotel room inventory in the Flathead Valley: 595 new guest rooms since 2016  
(2016 = 325; 2018 = 186; 2019 = 84)

Glacier National Park: 2.96M recreational visitors in 2018. Non-peak monthly increases:  
Mar +13%; May +9.7%; Sep +11.7%; Oct +8.9%; Nov +32.5%; Dec +41.6%.

Kalispell's Glacier Park International Airport (FCA) is served by five major airlines – Alaska, Allegiant, America, Delta, United - which fly to 13 cities (some seasonal).

- New flights secured for 2019: non-stop service to Dallas, Chicago, Los Angeles, Phoenix/Mesa
- 2018 - 307,076 enplaned passengers, a 14% increase

Intl travel: 110 tour operators offer product in Kalispell. Over 5,000 estimated room nights and \$1.4M in spending generated from Intl Travelers in Kalispell. (Source: 2017 RMI, T.R.I.P. report)

FVCC One Campaign: \$18M of new construction for new library, student center and performance/athletic facility.

Kalispell Core and Rail Redevelopment: project creates a rail-served industrial park on the outskirts of Kalispell, builds a beautiful new linear park with biking and walking trails in the downtown core, and opens up the Core Area and historic downtown to vast business opportunities.

### **Kalispell Strengths**

Increased availability of non-stop flight destinations to Kalispell due to efforts by the business and tourism community and Glacier AERO.

Energized community: Kalispell area was named the third-fastest growing micropolitan community in the nation for the second year in a row. A strong economy leveraged by tourism, manufacturing, retail and health care.

Core area and rail project: committed City and other stakeholder groups

Annual destination events that increase visitations: Montana Spartan Race, Montana Indoor Soccer Championship, Skijoring at Rebecca Farm, The Event at Rebecca Farm, Three Blind Refs

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.

### **Kalispell Challenges**

Weather conditions that are deviating from historical patterns pose a challenge when promoting outdoor recreation and outdoor events that rely on certain weather conditions. Changes in water temperatures impact fisheries and water-based activities. 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) continues to increase in Kalispell and Flathead County impacting the occupancy and ADR at traditional lodging properties.

Canada is a primary market for northwest Montana noted mostly in visitations for shopping and recreation as well as real estate investments. Alberta's economic momentum in 2018 was impacted by the discount on Alberta's oil which widened to record levels impacting jobs and available discretionary income for Alberta's residents for travel. Alberta economy is forecasted to grow 1.6% in 2019. The 2018-2019 9-month exchange rate was stated at 76.6 cents, lower than 2017-2018. (Source: Treasury Board and Finance, Government of Alberta, 2018-19 Q3 Fiscal Update and Economic Statement)

Potential increase in fuel tax to commercial airports (Montana legislation) challenging our ability to attract new carriers and flights.

### **Kalispell Opportunities**

**Destination and product development:** The increased number of sports and conference and event facilities being developed within our competitive set highlights 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 being 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.

**Increased average annual occupancy:** Glacier National Park and Glacier Park International Airport saw increased visitations in 2018 during the shoulder and winter months. Discover Kalispell strategy serves to increase the group, event and corporate visitations to help smooth out the seasonality of occupancy and ADR.

**Positioning and branding:** Discover Kalispell recently completed a destination tourism strategy plan which defines a broader and more differentiated positioning of Kalispell and our customer's loyalty. The identified strategies and action steps from the plan will be implemented during FY20.

**Enhanced consumer trip planning tools:** DiscoverKalispell.com executed a direct booking engine in FY19. That trip planning tool will be expanded to enable engaged travelers to seamlessly book lodging and activity packages.

### **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 other 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:*** A vibrant downtown that merges historical charm with contemporary culture.

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

### **Describe your destination.**

### **The Travel Decision Process**

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

During a traveler's quest for a one-of-a-kind trip they will encounter a 'whole world' of options. Montana in general and Kalispell specifically, are not necessarily top-of-mind destinations. To be part of a traveler's consideration set means understanding the visitor that would be attracted to our destination and the travel resources influencing their choices. Several studies have been conducted to gain insight into leisure travel intentions, motivators and detractors based on the knowledge that Americans don't take the vacation time they have earned. A study highlighted in USTravel.org shows these top motivation factors by gender: (see attachment)

Several factors can attribute to the catalyst to decide to plan a trip such as a desire for escape, rest, adventure or social interaction. An effective destination marketing campaign captures the attention of that motivated traveler.

#### ***Stage 1: Inspiration – Dreaming***

During the first stage of the planning cycle, travelers are gathering ideas and inspiration. This is when the traveler either decides the type of trip they are interested in, or researches destinations that fit the trip type they want. Cost of travel and availability of personal finances to travel will impact the destination and type of trip chosen. Airfare and distance to travel to and within Montana may impact the decision to select Montana. Consumers are checking an average of 38 websites before they click 'book' making it harder for a destination to get noticed. (Expedia Travel Group)

**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 – demonstrate the unique Kalispell culture
- Sponsored content in targeting and retargeting campaigns
- Emarketing to loyal fans – keep followers engaged
- Travel shows – 1:1 conversations with potential travelers in key markets
- Earned media/WOM – let others tell your story

**Stage 2: Orientation – Planning**

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

**Messages:** Highlight the 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:**

- Website – 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 emarketing 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**

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

**Messages:** Travelers are interested and motivated but probably have not finalized trip plans. To not lose them to another destination, make it easy for them to book. Connect travelers with hotels and activity providers, highlight 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
- Lodging and activity discount packages 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**

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.

**Stage 5: Sharing**

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

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

**Optional: Include attachments here**

About Discover Kalispell.pdf

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

### **Leisure – Consumer Travel Segment**

Kalispell is a mountain destination community attractive to travelers for its friendly/small town feel, community vibe and mindset, family-friendly accommodations and activities, affordability not found in a resort mountain destination, and proximity to iconic outdoor recreation including Glacier National Park.

Consumer segment high potential visitors include family travelers, active matures, outdoor recreation seekers, adventure motorcyclists, arts and culture enthusiasts, and sports event attendees.

- Adventure motorcyclists take multiple trips per year and have a median age of 46. They spend nearly \$110 per day in Montana, mostly on restaurants and bars followed by lodging. Average length of stay is 2.45 nights. Preferred routes are scenic routes and designated scenic byway/highway of which Kalispell and NW Montana has several options. (ITRR Motorcycle Touring in Montana: A Market Analysis, 2019)

Key Geographical Markets are Washington, California (Los Angeles), Illinois (Chicago), and Alberta. Year-round promotions are targeted to Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, Spokane/CDA, and Calgary. Seasonal highlights are focused to the drive markets of Spokane/CDA, Seattle, Calgary, and Lethbridge.

### **Sports and Events Segment**

Discover Kalispell has created and organized major destination events since 2012. While this continues to be a key strategy in FY20 the Discover Kalispell grant program will be expanded to provide increased support for events and other tourism assets produced by community organizations.

- In 2018 and 2019 a partnership with Flathead Soccer Club enabled Kalispell to host major soccer events providing measurable visitations in early June, expanding the peak season increased occupancy.
- Discover Kalispell supports local academic leadership to bring state-wide tournaments and events to Kalispell.
- In FY19 Discover Kalispell supported organizers to host a large tribal event, as well as a variety of conference events, press media events, and community events that enhance the vibrancy of downtown.

### **Groups/Meetings & Conventions Segment**

Kalispell has twenty two TBID hotels and ranges from 6 rooms to 170 rooms per property for a total of 1,946 rooms in market. My Place, opening June 2019 is a limited service hotel with 84 rooms (included in the total). Larger flag properties in Kalispell include Hilton brands, Best Western, Radisson, Holiday Inn, LaQuinta, Marriott and Red Lion.

- Groups of 10-500 can be comfortably and adequately accommodated in Kalispell. The most common group size is 50-150.
- The two largest convention hotels can accommodate up to 280 rooms per night and have over 26,000 square feet of meeting space.
- Larger groups that require more meeting space can be easily arranged between the two convention hotels, with the efforts of the sales team, meeting coordinator and Discover Kalispell. Many affordable options for overflow rooms are located close to the convention hotels.
- Along with the convention hotel space there are numerous unique venues in Downtown Kalispell that also serve as part of Kalispell's cultural assets.

Destination choices are important to meeting planners to promote the maximum attendance. Trends by Benchmark and Social tables indicate that unique and purposeful experiences rank high on attendee preference. Groups are seeking post conference-hour adventures, pre and post excursions, and attendees want planners to provide meaningful teambuilding activities during the meetings according to Meetings Today Trends survey.

M&C Key Segment: Association continues to be a strong market for Kalispell. It has been the most reliable and dependable market largely due to the predictability of the rotation process, number of members and bylaws for state, regional and national.

Kalispell area was named the third-fastest growing micropolitan community in the nation for the second year in a row. Health care expansion, manufacturing and tourism continue growing at a rapid pace for the Flathead Valley. Industry professionals find it important to network with like-minded associates, to be a voice and advocate in their industry, and be exposed to industry trends. Joining associations helps provide them with a competitive edge, give insight and act as a resource to the organization.

M&C Geographical Market: Discover Kalispell has steadily been growing awareness and building relationships with planners in the Puget Sound area and will build on that momentum. Seattle is the closest major U.S. city to Kalispell. Other cities in the Puget Sound region include Tacoma, Olympia and Everett, Washington.

In addition to only being an eight hour drive from Seattle, Glacier Park International Airport offers three direct flights out of Kalispell daily and Amtrak train services from Whitefish. Seattle is often considered a regional location for association conferences because of the proximity to the airport, city amenities and coastal scenery. Kalispell offers the close proximity and city amenities however the differences are our mountainous scenery, friendly community, abundance of outdoor activities and all at a reduced out-of-pocket expense.

Discover Kalispell attends trade shows that target Pacific Northwest meeting planners such as Connect, Smart Meetings and MPI. Previous attendance at these shows has given Discover Kalispell the opportunity to retain engagement with those planners through our quarterly M & C E-news and annual FAM trips. Small Market meetings fits Discover Kalispell's criteria for both meeting size and the variety of planners. A new show for Discover Kalispell in FY20 is MPI-Cascadia which focuses on the Pacific Northwest meeting planners and has educational programs for both planners and suppliers.

Referral Program: The Bring it Home campaign is a referral program in its fourth year. It has proved to be successful in bringing in conventions of up to 500 attendees. Locals receive a \$10 gift card for every meeting or group referral they give. Our local professionals are passionate about where they live and relieved there are resources like the Discover Kalispell that can help support the group, both financially and as boots-on-the-ground assistance. The Kalispell Chamber of Commerce continues to be a strong resource for Discover Kalispell with their membership of over 700 businesses and associations. We are able to market the Bring it Home program, educate our community about Discover Kalispell's services through luncheons, newsletters and chamber staff.

Market Segment Occupancy Report: The majority of Kalispell's TBID hotels provide monthly market segment occupancy data. The segments include Corporate, Events, Government, Group, Tours and Transient/Leisure. Discover Kalispell compiles the information and utilizes the statistics for market strategy direction and keeping apprised of Kalispell trends. For example, during FY17 the average corporate segment occupancy was 14% of total and in FY18 it increased to 19% with increases noted in all quarters from the reporting hotels. This is contributed to the retail, corporate and highway construction occurring in the Flathead Valley. Higher transient occupancy was noted for those months and group percentages were higher compared year over year, providing compression to non-conference hotels. Discover Kalispell uses the report to closely monitor the tour group numbers with anticipation of steady growth as a result of the hosting International Roundup and increased promotional efforts to domestic and international tour operators. (see attachment)

### **Communication to Key Market Segments**

Discover Kalispell utilizes monthly, quarterly and annual campaigns to promote Kalispell as a travel destination and to promote the professional services provided through Discover Kalispell for meeting planners and tour operators.

Content marketing campaigns are ongoing through social media, search ads, website marketing, and travel guide promotion. Seasonal campaigns promote shoulder season events and local experiences.

Attendance at consumer travel shows in the Calgary, Spokane and other markets generate new followers and provide means to continue engagement with existing followers.

Discover Kalispell is an integral part of community conversations to keep stakeholders and residents informed about tourism-related activities and the importance tourism plays in the local quality of life and to be an advocate for protection of resources.

Quarterly e-news campaigns are sent to Discover Kalispell's consumer database, a targeted meeting planner database, and a tour operator database of domestic and international tour operators. Each newsletter has audience specific content and images.

The convention hotels and meeting room stats are featured in a downloadable Kalispell Meeting Guide along with group specific information. The website provides a link to lodging packages associated with Kalispell convention, sports and group rates, and the Meetings & Group section expands on services, unique venues, and group meal planning.

Discover Kalispell continues to educate the local business community and tourism stakeholders on the economic impact attained through meetings and group business and this is achieved through presentations, monthly newsletters, and incentives to refer a meetings and conventions through the Bring it Home Campaign.

*b. What are your emerging markets?*

### **Leisure – Consumer Travel Segment**

Emerging markets: Based on new non-stop flights to Kalispell, an emerging market for FY20 is Texas (Dallas). Additionally, FIT group travel is a key market segment enhanced by Discover Kalispell's tour operator and supplier promotions and partnerships with RMI and MOTBD.

- Kalispell's Glacier Park International Airport is served by five major airlines which fly to 13 major cities (some seasonal).

### **Tours Groups Segment - Domestic and International**

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. Discover Kalispell will seek out tour groups both domestic and international and clubs that focus on history, culture and local signature events.

Kalispell hosted the 2018 International Roundup in April (IRU). It brought in over 40 tour operators to experience Kalispell first-hand. The event had not been held in our area in over 20 years and the likelihood of hosting it again won't come around for another 20 years due to the rotation process between states and cities. The Montana Office of Tourism & Business Development contracts with Rocky Mountain International (RMI), which is the organization responsible for IRU. They specialize in international tourism marketing and PR. RMI works with Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, North and South Dakota. The countries that market this region are United Kingdom, Germany, Australia, France, Italy, Benelux and Nordic and they all have a RMI representative in each country.

Discover Kalispell markets to the group travel segment through tour operator media outlets and attending industry shows including IRU, International Roundup, and IPW, International Pow Wow, in cooperation with MOTBD and other CVB's and regions.

**Optional: Include attachments here.**

The Travel Decision Process.pdf

*c. What research supports your target marketing?*

### **Destination Marketing Industry Trends**

Content – authentic and engaging content – is the strongest tool for a DMO to build engagement, advocacy, and positive word of mouth recommendations. The key to engaging content is telling a story about your destination and its local culture. The trends to watch when creating a content marketing strategy include:

1. IGTV and Instagram (IG) Stories: IG stories launched in 2016 and have grown 11 times faster than standard Feed posts, and comprise 47% of all IG content by major brands (Block Party via Destination Think). The introduction of IGTV switches a user's feed from square images to full-screen vertical video. It is stated that 'Stories will soon outperform the traditional news feeds of FB and IG in terms of engagement and growth' (Destination Think, 12/21/18).
2. Changing algorithms: social media platforms change their algorithms all the time. DMO's need to consider a strategy that diversifies your channels and focuses on your organization's goals for that platform. Facebook has become more about quantity and commercialization rather than a place to connect with friends and family. Viewership has slowed in recent years while its ad revenue jumped by 42%. (Entrepreneur.com, *Why social media has become so toxic and what to look for next*)
3. Influencers: Not all influencers are created equal and can be difficult to determine who is a high-quality influencer that will get your content out to your target market.
4. If the locals are supporting tourism and behind what the DMO is doing then it is effective to involve locals in marketing campaigns to effectively convey the culture and vibe of the destination.
5. Search engine optimization and search marketing are more important than ever. When beginning to research a trip, 48% of North Americans use a search engine to conduct the initial search. Additionally more than half of travelers under 34 use a general search engine to check lodging prices and find the best deal. (Hearst Bay Area Blog, 7 Tourism Marketing Trends Evolving in 2019). A strong content marketing strategy should go across all platforms and include SEO/SEM marketing.

Real-time optimization of campaigns should be an integral aspect of marketing campaigns on any platform. Understanding your audience, targeting, testing, adjusting, retargeting are a continual process during any campaign. Messaging and content crosses all platforms, tying your brand and message together seamlessly the entire way down the funnel.

The Travel Trends Report of 2019 by TrekkSoft highlights top trends for tour operators:

1. Last minute bookings are increasing: 'Bookings are generally made 13 days in advance. On mobile, this window narrows to just 5 days.
2. Advanced booking is preferred for multi-day tours. The report highlights a shift with multi-tours and activities being booked further in advance as a preferred option for travelers.
3. Travelers are visiting new destinations: 22% of participants of the survey have seen a visible increase of visitors from new destinations.
4. Requesting new experiences. Tour operators are receiving requests for unique, once-in-a-lifetime experiences, mostly common amongst millennials. Ecological and educational tours are also in demands.
5. Local history and culture experiences including walking tours continue to be a popular offering.

Destinations Analysts surveyed 831 meeting planners that represent a full spectrum of meeting and event planners with experience in a variety of industries, including corporate (42.4%), national/international association (42%), state/regional association (26.8%) and third party planners (25.6%), as well as those who regularly plan city-wides and those solely focused on self-contained meetings (44.9%).

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

1. Attendee satisfaction - Corporate Planners
2. Number of attendee registrations - Association Planners
3. Client Satisfaction -Self Contained Planners
4. Overall meeting experience -Self Contained Planners
5. Achieving meeting goals - Self Contained Planners

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

1. Geographic location -Self Contained Planners
2. Meeting facilities -Third Party Planners
3. Hotels-quality - Third Party Planners
4. Hotels-rates - Citywide Planners
5. Overall cost of holding meeting in destination - Association Planner

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

Top five most important services that a CVB provides for mid-sized meetings and the planner that perceived them to be the most value:

1. Printed destination guidebooks for attendees - Association Planner
2. Local events calendar - Third Party Planner
3. Digital marketing material - Association Planner
4. Personalized hotel selection assistance - Third Party Planner
5. Incentive packages to hold your meeting in that destination - Third Party Planner

The biggest challenge that meeting planners remain to have is staying within the budget and identifying a centrally located destination. CVB assistance is likely to be valued by those planners with budget restraints and accessible location options. The free professional services through Discover Kalispell and expanded air services available in our area surprise many planners. Kalispell is the perfect meeting destination to support our planners and grow conference attendance through: 1) our iconic location near Glacier National Park and Flathead Lake, 2) quality lodging options, 3) incentive options, 4) assistance with attendance promotion, and 5) our welcoming community.

## **FY20 Marketing Plan – 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 a sports and event destination by building relationships with state, regional and national promoters, tournament directors as well as local organizations.
5. Provide sponsorships through the Discover Kalispell grant program for programs and services that enhance the visitor assets and economy.
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 in the downtown and core area redevelopment projects.

## Objectives

1. Increase occupancy at TBID hotels by 2% during FY20 (as measured by TBID collections).
2. Increase unique visitors to website by 15% over FY19. (FY18 = 172,178, 11% increase over FY17)
3. Increase visitor guide downloads on Discoverkalispell.com by 25%.
4. Increase consumer newsletter database by 10% over FY19 (equates to additional 1,370 opt-in subscribers).
5. Measure the engagement of followers with Discover Kalispell social media channels through increased retweets, comments, shares, clicks and conversions.
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 KCVB signature events on budget and with increased room night pickup.
9. Increase database of qualified and interested meeting planners and tour operators by 30% over FY19 (equates to additional 356 opt-in subscribers).
10. Retain engagement of meeting planner and tour operator database through quarterly newsletters.
11. Attend two tradeshows to promote Kalispell as a meeting and group travel destination.
12. Host one meeting planner FAM of qualified planners 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 Discover Kalispell Bring It Home program for a total of 40 referrals in FY20 (22 referrals in FY18).

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

Discover Kalispell will partner with MOTBD in joint ventures for digital and print campaigns and in FY20 will participate in the Visa Vue program. Other cooperative projects include press trips - domestic and international, and trade shows such as IPW and IRU.

Discover Kalispell regularly sponsors the Crown of the Continent Geotourism Map Guide project.

**Optional: Include attachment here.**

Supporting Research - Destination Marketing Trends.pdf

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

Discover Kalispell has participated in a variety of joint ventures/cooperative projects with Glacier Country, Destination Missoula and Explore Whitefish including press trips, media events, trade shows such as IMEX, and marketing campaigns. We look forward to continued partnerships when the appropriate opportunities arise.

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

During FY19 Glacier Country and Discover Kalispell partnered to sponsor **Your Forests Your Future - Flathead National Forest** as part of our continued efforts to push visitors out of GNP during the peak season and to highlight the other treasures we have in our area. It is a national campaign run by a partnership between the U.S. Forest Service, the nonprofit organization Salmon Valley Stewardship, and the media company More Than Just Parks. It serves to engage Americans in shaping the future of their national forests through visually stunning content and multimedia tools for engagement, and connect them to recreation amenities.

The Flathead National Forest was the first forest featured in Montana. The film was released nationally on March 27<sup>th</sup> and had accompanying national media releases including promotion through national partners

such as Nat Geo, Outside Magazine, The Weather Channel, Conde Naste, REI, North Face and others. The film which contains stunning photography shot last fall can be accessed here: <https://yourforestsyourfuture.org/forests/flathead>.

As a sponsors of Your Forests Your Future Discover Kalispell and Glacier Country received all high resolution imagery and video b-roll to use in our campaigns. The Discover Kalispell logo was included in the national campaign promotions and where applicable, included a link to campaign landing page: <https://discoverkalispell.com/things-to-do/flathead-national-forest/>. The campaign was successful and will continue to benefit our marketing with the assets we received as part of our sponsorship.

In FY19 Discover Kalispell participated in a broad, comprehensive cooperative project with MOTBD, Glacier Country and Explore Whitefish to promote new non-stop air service from Dallas, Los Angeles and Chicago to Kalispell, Glacier Park International Airport June-September 2019. Campaign run dates are April - June.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Optional: Include attachments here. Marketing Plan and Budget - Bed Tax FINAL.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	Social Media	Update and manage social media channels that foster consumer engagement and enhance cross platform consistency. Discover Kalispell currently uses Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and You Tube.	Social media has changed how people research trips, make decisions and share experiences. (Hospitalitynet.org)	Increased level of engagement on social media channels, measured by number of followers and post impressions.	Majority of travelers (across all demographics) use social media to connect with their sphere of influence, acquire information, purchase products, get consumer reviews and share their personal travel experiences.	\$2,000.00		
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Secure usage rights for new photos and videos that support the consumer, group, and event marketing segment initiatives.	Images touch all types of travelers during each phase of the decision process. The images and videos are used on a variety of media to include but not limited to social media, online advertising, website marketing, other multi-media marketing.	Imagery is branding tool used as part of the overall success of a campaign or platform.	Images play an important role in promoting a destination and engaging potential visitors.	\$2,000.00		
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Discover Kalispell will attend at least two travel shows during FY20 that support our key and emerging markets.	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 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.	\$2,400.00		
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 which locates 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.	\$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 - ROI - 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.	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.	\$23,500.00			
Events	Multi-Media Marketing	Depending on the event and the target market a variety of media may be used to promote the event to increase registrations: print, digital ads, social media advertising or radio.	Event participants learn about events through word of mouth and trusted sources within that sport's network. Various media can be utilized to reach that narrow target market to promote our event and solicit registrations.	Measured by event registrations and spectator volume.	Use a variety of media to promote the event in markets that have existing teams/participants to increase event awareness and registrations.	\$1,000.00			
Events	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	Story pitches and press releases announcing event in target markets to solicit teams and also to promote teams that are attending event through their hometown media.	Participants register for our signature events from across the U.S. and Canada. We have successfully used the event as the story pitch, either through promotion a team within their hometown newspaper or just the uniqueness of the event for our state, to enable Kalispell to permeate markets that we could not have normally afforded.	Measured by event registrations and spectator numbers.	This method enables us to connect with media outlets that reach the geographic and/or demographic markets and reach teams/participants engaged with the event to increase event awareness.	\$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 EMpowermint subscription, 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 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.	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 and 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. Social media advertising is the most targeted way to get our message out and is used in most campaigns. 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 publications and networks for resources and new destinations. Discover Kalispell's group marketing campaigns will select the media that best reaches the target market for that campaign.	Success will be measured based on the media used and the objectives for each campaign.	Discover Kalispell's group marketing campaigns include a variety of media based on selected geographic and demographic markets and the cost of media in that particular DMA.	\$10,000.00			
		The outreach funds are used to support Voice of Montana Tourism, an important	The outreach funds are seen as	Support Voice of Montana Tourism to host a business & legislative round table in Kalispell	Outreach funds will be used to enable Discover Kalispell to support tourism				

Marketing Support	Outreach	entity to advocate for and communicate importance of the tourism industry to the economic health of Montana.	assisting in the promotion and security of the tourism brand within the state.	to educate Flathead County legislative delegation and local industry professionals.	related organizations that are important to advancing the Montana tourism industry.	\$1,000.00			
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 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.	\$800.00			
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	Discover Kalispell supports a full time year-round travel counselor and additional seasonal coverage at the VIC. 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.	During 2018 the Kalispell VIC received 10,306 inquiries.	Total number of inquiries to VIC, number of fulfillment packets requested and support expanded hours at the VIC to be open 7 days a week between mid-June and 2nd weekend of September.	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 on the ground visitors engaged with our destination.	\$39,400.00			
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.	\$3,000.00			
Marketing Support	Wayfinding	The existing Wayfinding system needs to be maintained to provide visitors with 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.	Wayfinding is important for people to make their way through unfamiliar areas because it improves efficiency, accessibility, and decreases frustration, time spent giving or looking for directions, and directs visitors to our amenities and services. When you have a great experience in an unfamiliar place, chances are you were able to navigate your visit easily without much frustration. When you enjoy 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.	The wayfinding 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.	\$4,000.00			
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.	\$10,000.00			
Marketing Support	Administration	Admin funds include required expenses for operation of the KCVB such as rent, supplies, postage, bookkeeping, equipment, tech support, janitorial, miscellaneous and employer costs related to staff wages/taxes.	Administrative/operational costs are necessary to successfully operate a business/organization.	Maintain operational costs within established budget.	Operational and staffing costs are essential to operate a business.	\$21,600.00			

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 2018 935 fulfillment packets were requested, a 46% decrease of 2017 primarily due to increased number of online downloads of the guide.	Measure 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.	\$4,300.00		
Marketing Support	Research	Kalispell CVB subscribes to the Tourism Sentiment Index data from Destination Think. Funding will enable us to receive our second report which covers online conversations about Kalispell during 2018, conversations that indicate traveler's perceptions of Kalispell's tourism product and provides feedback on the strengths and weaknesses that can have an impact on a potential traveler's perception of our destination.	Market research consistently shows that word of mouth is and always has been the predominant influence on the travel decision-making process. In the world of online and digital communication, peer-to-peer conversations are one of the most trusted sources of information for selecting travel destinations and determining which experiences to try. Capturing the sentiment of word of mouth is a powerful way to monitor the success of a destination.	Success will be measured by receiving the report and utilizing the data in marketing decisions.	Marketing strategy must be based on data, both data from current and past visitors to Kalispell as well as our competitive set destinations.	\$5,000.00		
						\$145,000.00		

**Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments**

- Attachment 1
- Attachment 2
- Attachment 3
- Attachment 4
- Attachment 5
- Attachment 6
- Attachment 7
- Attachment 8
- Attachment 9
- Attachment 10

**Marketing Method Budget**

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget (optional)
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Social Media	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$2,400.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Multi-Media Marketing	\$28,500.00	\$0.00

		\$39,900.00	\$0.00
Events	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	\$250.00	\$0.00
Events	Multi-Media Marketing	\$250.00	\$0.00
		\$500.00	\$0.00
Group Marketing	Group Marketing Personnel	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
Group Marketing	Multi-Media Marketing	\$6,500.00	\$0.00
		\$18,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$21,600.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$985.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$39,400.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$6,975.33	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Wayfinding	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	\$9,300.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Research	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
		\$98,260.33	\$0.00
		\$157,160.33	\$0.00

**Miscellaneous Attachments**

Description	File Name	File Size
Pie Charts	FY20 Pie Charts.pdf	402 KB

**Reg/CVB Required Documents**

Description	File Name	File Size
Application of Lodging Tax Revenue	Application for Lodging Tax Revenue.pdf	256 KB
Certificate of Compliance	Certificate of Compliance.pdf	268 KB
Certification of Board Action	Certification of Board Action.pdf	308 KB
Pledge of Understanding and Compliance	Pledge of Understanding and Compliance.pdf	258 KB

