



Grant Details

80683 - FY20 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

86704 - FY20 Miles City CVB Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY20 Miles City CVB Marketing Plan
Grant Number: 20-51-020
Grant Status: Underway
Comments:
Applicant Organization: Miles City Area Chamber of Commerce
Grantee Contact: John Laney
Award Year: 2019
Program Area: DOC Office of Tourism
Amounts:
Contract Dates:

	Contract Sent	Contract Received	Contract Executed
Project Dates:	06/13/2019 <small>Proposal Date</small>	07/01/2019 <small>Project Start</small>	06/30/2020 <small>Project End</small>

Grant Administrator: Barb Sanem
Contract Number: 20-51-020
Award Year: 2019

Contract Dates

<small>Contract Sent</small>	<small>Contract Received</small>	<small>Contract Executed</small>	<small>Contract Legal</small>
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Project Dates 07/01/2019
 06/30/2020

Project Start Project End

Comments

Amendment Comments

Community & Brand Support

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

The Miles City CVB includes Miles City and an area surrounding the city limits for approximately 50 miles. The area consists mostly of badlands, flatlands, rolling hills, and unique sandstone formations. The badlands are to the north and east spreading all the way to Terry, Montana. These badlands are home to the majestic Calypso Trail as well as the Scenic Drive. The rest of the surrounds are predominately a mix of flatland and rolling hills. Sandstone formations are common and make interesting subjects for photographers as well as those interested in the effects that nature and time have on these soft and ever changing soils. The flatlands and rolling hills has proved to be very fertile soil to sustain many types of agricultural crops as well as a great place to raise livestock. This area is also known worldwide for its vast array of wildlife. It is home to deer, both mule and whitetail, antelope, and elk making it a hunter or photographers paradise. Miles City is bordered by rivers to the west and north. The Yellowstone River, the longest free flowing river in the world flows on the north side of Miles City and it welcomes the water of the Tongue River on the west side. The Yellowstone River, known as a pristine trout stream on the western side of the state changes dramatically as it flows east and becomes home to a completely different type of fishing in our area. It supports such species as walleye, catfish, sturgeon, northern pike, bass, and the prehistoric paddlefish. It also offers the bird hunter or watcher a vast array of birds such as ducks, geese, cranes, pelicans, and bald eagles in the "big bird" category all the way to fench and wild canaries. Along with fish and birds the river is also a great place to hunt for the Montana moss agate, unique to the Yellowstone River.

The Miles City area is a mecca for all kinds of history buffs. Fort Keogh, originally a remount station for the Cavalry is located in Miles City. It is now a USDA Range Experiment Station but many signs of the original fort still exist. This area was the site of many an Indian battle and is becoming more chronicled by the day bringing many more visitors interested in native American history here. Much of the residential area of Miles City is designated as the Historical District with homes built for Army officers, Railroad Executives, and cattle barons. Miles City has always taken pride in their ability to welcome people to our community. For the last 69 years Miles City has been home to the Bucking Horse Sale. The third full weekend in May, the sale brings people from all over the world to Miles City to take part in what has

become known as The Cowboy Mardi Gras. This event doubles the size of the town for the four day event.

Miles City is located on I-94 but is also to hub of Highway 59 north and south and highway 12 from the east. We are the shopping, medical, and business hub of eastern Montana. The size of our town and the ease and convenience of getting here makes us a destination for meetings, sports tournaments, meetings, and now small to mid size conferences.

Miles City offers alot of things for alot of visitors. From hunters to photographers we have wildlife, history buffs can learn about the old west, native Americans, the cavalry, the early farms and ranches of Montana, and the architecture of the 1800s. They can also find culture in the Waterwork Art Museum, as well as local theatre and music or do nothing in one of our local watering holes. We are proud of our town and the area around it, and the events we put on. That is both who we are and what we have to offer to the world and that is what we feel will come for the first time. What they find will bring them back.

Miles City is not without challenges as we have pointed out before. This year we have another big one looming over our heads. As mentioned in years past we have no commercial air service, and while we continue to work with fixed wing operations we have not been successful in bring one to town. This summer and next will be particularly troublesome due to the fact that MDT is changing out the interstate bridge over the broadway interchange. This is the route into town from the south. It is also the home for all of our motels so we will need to monitor this situation very closely.

Finally how do we align with Montana's brand? Miles City is a vibrant and charming small town, we are surrounded by spectacular unspoiled nature, we offer breathtaking experiences daily, as well as relaxing hospitality. We just need the opportunity to show this off. By being a good steward of our bed tax funds it is our plan to capture visitors and show off what Miles City is.

Describe your destination.

We will inspire visitors with our area landscape, outdoor recreational offerings such as hunting, fishing, bird watching, and photography opportunities. We will also showcase our western history, native history, and military history. We will accomplish this through social media, radio and TV, print advertising, as well as partnering with Visit Southeast Montana and MOTBD. We will keep our website fresh and colorful with current photos and banners chronicling past, present, and future events.

We will help the orientation process by offering events that showcase what we are offering to the visitor. We have a varied inventory of attractions so it is necessary to highlight all of our offerings. We will accomplish this as stated before with a combination of social media and various forms of timely advertising. With our VIC in our office we can also offer hands on word of mouth assistance.

As stated above we our the Miles City VIC offering us the ability to assist visitors on a much higher level. We are also the Miles City Area Chamber of Commerce so we have the ability to capture the visitor from a different venue. We have the ability to actually sit down and help make plans, not only for thrier time in Miles City, but for the rest of their time in Montana.

Optional: Include attachments here

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

ITRR as well as Arrivalist defines are target market as being from Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Colorado, Washington, Idaho, Nebraska, Texas and Montana. It would suggest visitors that are driving to the two National Parks. We are seeing visitors from Idaho and Washington lately which would indicate a merging market. Due to sample size in our area from ITRR it is difficult to dial it in but Arrivalist has given us great research figures. We lean toward families searching for history and the western experience, Native American and cavalry history, and dinosaur enthusiasts. The fall brings hunters and fisherman of all ages, prodominately male, but that falls off as the seasons close. We have a large base of people seeking the beauty of the badlands, in all four seasons. We still see people following the Lewis and Clark Trail, usually a bit older visitor with no real time schedule, and as with most small eastern communities our sports and school events bring a great deal of traffic to Miles City.

We will target the outdoorsman, both for hunting, fishing, and photography, the western history and culture visitor, the Indian and dinosaur follower, as well as sports and community event goers. We will also look into the visitor that is looking to just relax. Our way of life is very inviting to many people.

b. What are your emerging markets?

We think one of the biggest emerging markets is nature photography. With the quality of cell phone cameras more and more people are paying attention to their surrounding for the possibility of that breathtaking shot. We live in some of the most naturally photogenic areas available to the traveler. From sandstone formations to the northern lights pictures happen day and night. Another market we are looking at is the snowmobiler. We are seeing many North Dakota and Minnesota vehicles loaded with machines headed to the Bighorn Mountains. That makes us a great overnight stop. We have also increased our efforts to market both the Range Riders Museum and the Waterwork Art Museum with multiple funding sources to increase visitations for their events as well as their day to day visitations.

Optional: Include attachments

here.

c. *What research supports your target marketing?*

We can see where the biggest segments of our visitors are coming from based on ITRR data and we can see from collection reports the best and the worst of times. We can see upticks during the hunting seasons, we know that summer is obviously our biggest time of the year. Going back to our emerging markets we are seeing movement in the early fall and late spring which leads us to believe that we are seeing the older traveler, or snowbird, but also that we are seeing people spending time before or after the summer rush. One other sign we have been watching for the last few years are the crowds at the BHS. The sale always was the week before college finals in Montana and we would see the college students having one last fling. Now college gets out before the sale and the crowds are still big and maybe growing some. We sell the advanced tickets for the BHS and learn a lot about the folks that are coming and it is an older, more financially comfortable crowd. Many taking extra time to see other parts of the state while they are here. Who doesn't like the old west?

Our goals are to bring more visitors and promote longer stays. It is also a goal to cultivate repeat visitors. We want to increase our average stay to 1 from .8. We will encourage event sponsors to plan in advance so we can have a schedule of events far enough out so that people can plan ahead for return visits.

We will work much closer with Visit Southeast Montana to promote Miles City as well as the rest of the region for day trips.

We will promote the Range Riders Museum as well as the Waterworks Art Museum with a combination of available funds.

We will get involved with joint ventures as affordable along with actively participating in the new initiative plan.

Continue to work with the Chamber and the BHS to provide an avenue for magazine articles and advertising (free of charge)

Increase our web presence as well as TV by using commercial footage as banner material with the same ad.

We will always be mindful of the State Brand as it pertains to us as a community

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

We have never felt we had the funds to enter into any joint ventures but with some of the ideas coming out of the initiative plan we will try to become a player in some of the opportunities. The similarities with the communities in the 94 corridor should make it more affordable and compatible for all of us to market together holding each community's cost down.

Optional: Include attachment

here.

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

With the Initiative in its infant stages we think that rather than formulating a plan we would like to wait back, study the research that is forthcoming, and be part of developing a plan at a later date. We are fully committed to the success of the initiative and feel working with the other CVB, and Visit Southeast Montana, with the help of the MOTBD some good stuff should happen.

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

As stated before we haven't done many joint ventures in the past. Also as stated before we do plan to this fiscal year.

Optional: Include attachments

here.

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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	Printed Material	Miles City CVB plans to print a promotional brochure for Miles City. We will craft the brochure to inform our target markets as described by ITRR and Arrivalist. We will target growing markets such as nature photography and day travelers.	We will utilize beginning inventory of the piece versus the ending inventory to judge the reception of the piece to monitor it's value.	We plan to measure the success as mentioned above by monitoring the requests from visitors as well as the number taken from our VIC as well as local hotels and other local establishments that have them available.	We will produce a value piece to describe things to do and see in Miles City. We will be careful to keep it fresh and to make sure it is pertinent to all our market segments. We will base its content on available research.	\$3,000.00		
Consumer	Radio & Television Advertising	We will use research made available from all avenues especially ITRR and Arrivalist. We will utilize this to reach our most important target audiences. We will also study demographics and geographical reach so as to place our ads in the best areas to secure the visitors we are trying to reach. We will use cost as a criteria.	Miles City CVB uses coverage maps, formats, cost, and demographics to justify placements for both Radio and TV. We will tag all ads with an address to afford the availability of analitic results as well as on site event monitoring for results of success or not.	We will monitor analytics resulting from posted addresses on all of our ads as well as events monitoring to track increases of attendance. We will also watch to see if we are increasing our overnight stays from last years .08 to 1. as shown on Arrivalist.	The Miles City CVB would like to use \$2,000.00 for radio advertising and \$4,000.00 for TV advertising. Please see attachment about radio advertising. As far as TV, we have found for our money the best placement is with KULR in Billings. All our placements, both radio and TV will be 30 seconds in length utilizing the best affordable run times. Radio will always be run 6 am until 7 pm. TV will be best placment for the targeted audience.	\$6,000.00		Radiofy20.docx
Consumer	Print Advertising	We wil place ads in the most effective places based on demographics utilizing the locations we are attracting the most visitors based on research from places like ITRR and Arrivalist. We will ad website addresses and phone numbers as a more timely approach to research also.	Our placements will be directed toward were we see as the most visitations based on as many avenues as possible such as ITRR and Arrivalist. We will monitor success based on event attendance and inquiries received at our office. We will monitor success based on those numbers as well as how it is performing in our quest to increase overnight stays ffrom .08 to 1.	WE will monitor success based on visitor counts at all evnts advertised We will also place social media addresses on all ads to secure solid analitics of our advertising. As stated before our goal this year is to increase our length of stayto 1, up from .8	Miles City sponsors many events with a varied demographic so placements of print ads is a challenge. We have many western events, but we also have art shows, sporting events, bluegrass festivals, classic cars shows, a four day fair, new walking trails, and we will target new markets as they are identified such as nature photography. Print ads are a great way to	\$5,000.00		

					get in front of the right people for the each event as well as general advertising.			
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	The Miles City CVB has plans to expand our website to make event attendance planning more user friendly. The Miles City Chamber office serves as a clearing house for tickets to almost all events. It is our hope that we can develop a way to track locations of the attendees as well as get a feel for pre-attendance numbers. Also by being event specific we can also push lodging bookings increasing overnight stays.	We have great analytics at our disposal to see the effectiveness of our site. Our plans to measure success is based on the same structure we utilize as research. These numbers give us great direction as well as a great measure of success. We want to see increases in all of our measureables or to be able to identify were we need to change.	We can access our analytics on a daily basis so we can measure success or failure very rapidly. Going back to last years marketing plan that was done almost the same time as this is we see that our visitors per day is up by 56, average stay is up .05, our search engine visitor is up by 11% facebook by 5% and the other is down by 16%. We get 77% of our traffic from mobile devices and 23% from desktops compared to 50-50 last year. These numbers give great direction.	We have found that all the research says "Fresh is Best" so that is our direction. Our current analytics (April 24, 2018 - April 29, 2019) show Average visitor per day is 287 or 104,755 per year. Visitors are averaging 3.17 minutes staying on the site. Visitors go to an average of 6.27 pages per visit. Search engine referrals account for 44% of our visitors, facebook another 38% and the final 18% from othersources.	\$4,000.00		
Marketing Support	Administration	The Miles City CVB uses its admin. budget for rent and office supplies as needed to do the operations of the Miles City CVB as well as house the local VIC for Miles City and other cities, regions, the State of Montana, and surrounding states. This is a year round facility offering both information and a one on one experience for our visitors.	We have a defined goal based on much research and using our admin. dollars to the best of our abilities while staying within our 20% of total budget and in accordance to rules and regs is our goal.	It will be a success if we accomplish our goals and stay within our budget and rules and regs.	We utilize these funds in accordance with the rules and regs. being mindful to not exceed 20% of the total budget.	\$5,490.00		
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	We will use the budgeted funds to attend TAC and Governors Conference meetings. We will only request reimbursements for legal expenses as written in the rules and regs.	The information gathered at these meetings is vetted by TAC and MOTBR for its value to us and our operation.	Attending these meetings while staying within the budget and gaining the most knowledge possible, sharing valuables with my board will be our measure of success.	The Miles City CVB uses bed tax funds to offset travel expenses incurred attending TAC meetings as well as the Governors Conference on Tourism.	\$2,500.00		
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	We are excitingly awaiting this plan to roll out and plan to play a very active roll in its	We will make sure that anything we enter into has been fully researched.	We will measure success using best practices when and if the	The Miles City CVB is going to allocate funds to actively participate in the Eastern	\$7,000.00		

		success.		time comes.	Montana Initiative.			
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	We want to have a line item with the new initiative coming so as to be able to participate.	We will make sure that anything we enter into has been fully researched.	We will evaluate using best practices when and if the time comes.	This is a placeholder in case a project would come up that would benefit the Miles City CVB and one of our partners.	\$1,000.00		
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	We have used this category in years past when we have presented a plan that wasn't in the works at marketing plan time. This year with the Initiative in the works this may prove to be the most important category we have.	The research will depend on the specifics of each project.	We will evaluate using best practices when and if the time comes.	The Miles City CVB uses this as placeholder for use in the event that something that will enhance our plan would come up during the fiscal year. We appreciate the ability to add projects, with approval, or aid an existing line item, again with approval, if it proves to have great value and falls in line with the state brand.	\$3,456.00		
						\$37,446.00		

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	Print Advertising	\$6,860.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Radio & Television Advertising	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
		\$20,860.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$5,490.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$3,456.00	\$0.00

Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
		\$24,446.00	\$0.00
		\$45,306.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
pie chart fy 20	pie chart FY20.xlsx	16 KB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
compliance forms	FY20_Tax_Mplan_Compliance.pdf	271 KB

