



Grant Details

80683 - FY20 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

86687 - FY20 Yellowstone Country Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

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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?

PURPOSE

The sole purpose of Yellowstone Country Montana, Inc. (YC, YCMI) is to promote the five-county region (Gallatin, Park, Sweet Grass, Stillwater & Carbon) of Montana as a year-round destination for leisure & business travelers.

Yellowstone Country Differentiator: The “**Beyond Yellowstone**” experience that can be found throughout the YC region; the primary reason people come to Montana is to visit Yellowstone National Park; however, once (or in addition to) the park experience, the region offers the opportunity to “get away from your getaway by heading north of the park”. Visiting the world’s most famous national park is a must for many people, but we want to broaden that experience to encompass what can be found just outside the park.

PRIMARY GOAL

YC’s primary goal is to raise brand awareness of this region as a premier travel destination.

Objectives for meeting this goal:

- Implement strategic media campaigns that reach our targeted audience(s)
- Implement supporting resources for managing & tracking marketing & promotion campaigns
- Encouraging visitation to authentic cultural & heritage assets
- Sharing the "local flavor" through promotion of festivals & events throughout the region
- Highlighting the abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities

STRENGTHS

Yellowstone Country's core strengths include its main attractions—Yellowstone National Park and the Beartooth All-American Road—as well as countless cultural and recreational opportunities.

- **Yellowstone National Park** and its **Gateway Communities**: Three of the five entrances to YNP are located in YC, including the only year-round entrance at Gardiner, the northeast entrance at Cooke City/Silver Gate and the most-accessed entrance at West Yellowstone.
- **Scenic Drives**: Paradise Valley (Livingston to Gardiner), the **Beartooth All-American Road** (Red Lodge to Cooke City), Gallatin Canyon (Bozeman to Big Sky), Lake Loop (Bozeman to Norris), Absarokee Loop (Absarokee to Nye to Fishtail and back to Absarokee), and many, many other routes through Yellowstone National Park.
- **Alpine Ski Resorts**: Bridger Bowl, Big Sky and Red Lodge Mountain are three of the top ski resorts in the state.
- **World-Renowned Snowmobile Areas**: Cooke City, West Yellowstone, Crazy Mountains area, Gallatin River Corridor.
- **Nordic Skiing**: Nordic Centers and many miles of groomed trails throughout the region.
- **Culture and History**: From Native Americans and dinosaurs to mining, ranching and mountain men, the region offers a very interesting and unique blend of history and culture.
- **Annual Events**: Unique local festivals, farmers markets, fairs, community rodeos, Independence Day celebrations and countless other events, including long-running events like the **Big Sky Music in the Mountains** or **Montana BBQ Cook-off in Absarokee**, and newer events such as the **Sweet Grass Fiber Fest in Big Timber**.
- **Outdoor Recreation**: A sampling, in addition to other well-known offerings like skiing and snowmobiling, includes wildlife viewing in and around Yellowstone National Park, water recreation (fishing, boating, rafting, kayaking, swimming), ice climbing, hiking, snowshoeing and soaking in one of the region's hot springs, including the newest one: **Yellowstone Hot Springs** at Corwin Springs. For those who may wish to experience the western way of life, there are working ranch vacations or the more traditional "dude" ranch experiences.
- **Destination Lodging and Meeting Facilities**: Several communities in the region have properties and facilities that can accommodate small to mid-size meetings and conventions. Bozeman and Big Sky also have full-service entities with the capacity to host larger groups.
- **Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport**: As the busiest airport in the state, BZN offers the most direct flights and easy access to the entire region.
- **Open Lands**: Yellowstone Country features public access to BLM lands, Forest Service land and national parks, all just a short distance from any point in the region.
- **Four Montana State Parks**-provides recreation and culture/history: **Cooney Reservoir** is a premier outdoor/water recreation venue, and **Missouri River Headwaters** and **Madison Buffalo Jump** state parks are well known for both outdoor recreation and culture/history. **Greycliff Prairie Dog Town State Park** is unique and fun for family recreation. There are also camping and RV options located at or nearby the parks.

Dinosaur Trail-the trail has become a significant attraction across the state, and the Museum of the Rockies serves as an anchor facility on the trail.

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES

- Inclement Weather Conditions/Natural Disasters: Fire, floods, etc.
- Climate Change: Changes in climate affect recreational opportunities (such as fishing), the economy (tourism and related jobs) and our environment (wildlife and plant populations).
- Transportation Issues: Public transportation, seasonality of service.
- Economic Climate: Budget cuts.
- Infrastructure: As the number of visitors increases, infrastructure issues are a concern
- Crowding/Overuse in YNP: Real or perceived.
- Seasonality: Weather, amenities/service availability and staffing all have an impact on the potential growth of shoulder seasons.
- Opportunity to market shoulder season activities to Montana residents, empty-nesters and singles.
- Ability to entice a younger demographic with endless recreation and rich culture.
- Increased air service opens new markets.
- Increasing diversity and frequency of international visitors who may not be familiar with the outdoors or related challenges such as weather, distance and access. Additionally, there may be language and currency barriers.

MONTANA BRAND PILLARS

YC aligns effortlessly with Montana's Brand Pillars. There is an abundance of spectacular, unspoiled nature. Given the multitude of recreational options, the region certainly meets the definition of offering breathtaking experiences. As with the majority of Montana, our communities are known for having friendly, hospitable people who work hard to help make a visitor's experience one to remember.

- **SPECTACULAR, UNSPOILED NATURE** Yellowstone Country is anchored by two major iconic destinations: **Yellowstone National Park** and the **Beartooth All-American Road (BAAR)**. **Custer Gallatin National Forest**, **Absaroka-Beartooth** and **Lee Metcalf wilderness areas**. **BLM areas and city/county trail systems** are all within a short distance from population centers, so, one can be in any community in the region and truthfully say they are "surrounded by spectacular, unspoiled nature." YC is one region in the state that presents visitors both spectacular mountain vistas with panoramic valleys and sweeping, wide open plains just a short distance apart.
- **BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY, RELAXING HOSPITALITY AT NIGHT** As the Montana region that borders Yellowstone—America's first national park—there's something for both the adventurous and those who prefer the quiet side of the outdoors. Whether that includes hitting the ski slopes and trails, soaking in natural hot springs, camping in any season (and in any style of lodging), or exploring the great outdoors by hiking, mountain biking, snowmobiling

or even dog-sledding, Yellowstone Country has it all.

The region has a multitude of art galleries, nature centers, museums and historical sites. Local attractions, festivals and events offer fun opportunities for visitors to immerse themselves in community culture, whether it's attending a rodeo, taking in a lively music festival, participating in and/or watching an exciting winter ski or snowmobile event or just spending time taking in the surroundings.

Breweries and distilleries are popular, and YC is known as a great place to experience this "lifestyle" culture. Local eateries are always a top priority for visitors, and range from casual to fine dining, with cuisine available for any taste or dietary restriction/preference.

- **VIBRANT, CHARMING SMALL TOWNS THAT SERVE AS GATEWAYS** Showcasing the region's diverse, welcoming communities is an integral part of YC's marketing strategy. Each place has a unique local culture that makes it stand apart from neighboring towns. Explore Gardiner, Red Lodge, Cooke City, Livingston, Bozeman, Big Sky, West Yellowstone and every town in between. There are hidden (and not-so-hidden) gems for experiencing local community hospitality. Better yet, these communities are the gateways to whatever and wherever a visitor wants to experience.

Describe your destination.

Direct marketing campaigns and each of the associated marketing tools/resources (website, social media platforms, travel planner and scenic map, etc.) are all highly integrated, providing the right information at the right time during the inspiration, orientation and facilitation phases of trip planning.

INSPIRATION: Campaign messaging and imagery are specifically designed to address the Inspiration phase to targeted audience segments. **By leveraging YC's hashtags/taglines, #BoldlyGo and #BeyondYellowstone, the brand will continue to embody the spirit of visitors.** This messaging inspires visitors and potential visitors to view themselves, and their destination, through the lens of Montana's brand...free-spirited, adventurous, genuine and captivating.

Local events throughout the region also provide ample opportunities for creative, inspirational marketing.

Email communication to targeted audiences promotes specific opportunities at critical points throughout the year, allowing for relevant communication to reach the right people.

Social Media supports the Inspiration and Orientation phases, as we consistently engage consumers throughout a season or in relation to a specific community, event, attraction or activity. We utilize consistent blog posts to tell the stories of our culture, recreation, people and events and are seeing terrific engagement. Potential opportunities include: **increased social video content; Snapchat filters; Instagram takeovers, stories and video; Pinterest pins; and Facebook Live videos.** Finally, we'll continue to use unique hashtags (#beyond yellowstone #yellowstonecountry and #BoldlyGoMT) to encourage organic discussions specific to the YC brand.

Perhaps most critical, though, is our continued partnership and alignment of internal and external resources. We partner with communities and CVBs to develop a comprehensive social media plan, lining up internal and external resources to create efficiencies and ROI.

ORIENTATION AND FACILITATION: The Yellowstone Country website, call center, travel guide and scenic road map are the primary resources for helping travelers with the orientation and facilitation phases, although all have functions during the inspiration phase as well. These innovative resources are designed to make the travel planning process as easy and efficient as possible.

The website creates a seamless experience for visitors, providing an itinerary builder to facilitate planning while simultaneously gathering information to help target future communications to users' interests.

The call center provides personalized assistance to people interested in (or currently visiting) Yellowstone Country. It also provides the opportunity to gather data about visitors and prospective visitors, which informs future planning.

The travel guide provides in-depth information on the entire region, spanning seasons, activities and events.

The scenic road map helps draw people from Yellowstone National Park into the surrounding areas, offering many possibilities for scenic drives in the region.

In addition, Yellowstone Country participates in national press events in key markets, providing a unique opportunity for orientation and facilitation. Targeted marketing campaigns in these markets, aligning with press events, encourage additional and continued conversation. Branded promotional items provide an opportunity to keep top-of-mind presence with attendees. Following press events, custom itineraries are crafted for select media members to visit the region and provide targeted coverage to their respective audiences.

Finally, YC funds 10 Visitor Information Centers throughout the region. VICs provide an opportunity for staff, who are ostensibly local brand ambassadors, to engage visitors during all three phases, helping to create positive visitor experiences.

Optional: Include attachments here

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

YC identified a core group of target audiences in FY 17 and have continued marketing to them in subsequent years, while also adding in new markets identified through evaluation of research data, campaign tracking, social media analysis, locations where there's new/increased air service to MT & media outreach.

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

TARGET MARKETS

In FY 20, primary geographic markets include:

Pennsylvania (*Philadelphia)
California (Los Angeles, *San Diego, *San Francisco, Orange County)
Illinois (*Chicago)
Oregon (*Portland)
Colorado (Denver)
Texas (*Dallas/Fort Worth, Houston)
Georgia (*Atlanta)
Minnesota (Minneapolis/St. Paul)
Washington (Seattle)
Utah (Salt Lake City)

Based on FY19 inquiries (including website inquiries, live chats and incoming calls)

Asterisk locations represent press event focus areas in FY17, FY18, FY19.

In FY 20, secondary geographic markets include:

Columbus, OH
Charlotte, NC
Saskatchewan, Canada
Alberta, Canada
British Columbia, Canada

These markets were identified based on FY19 inquiries (including website inquiries, live chats and incoming calls).

Key Demographic Markets for Yellowstone Country:

City dwellers (i.e., not rural, not suburban)
Affluent with a household income over \$80k
Well-educated
Married with children

These characteristics were identified based on Destination Analysts reporting.

Key Psychographic Markets for Yellowstone Country:

Social Class - middle to upper class (in terms of disposable income)
Lifestyle - active, outdoor-recreation oriented, frequent travelers
Opinions - interested, but primarily influenced by desire to experience things for themselves
Activities and Interests - outdoor activities, history and culture, foodies
Attitudes and Beliefs - environmentally conscious, adventurous spirits, like nature
Technology-savvy - using mobile devices in all stages of planning and travel

These characteristics were identified based on Destination Analysts reporting.

b. What are your emerging markets?

EMERGING AND NICHE MARKETS

In-State Residents

If budget allows, we will create in-state 'staycation' campaigns for Montanans, promoting the spring and fall shoulder seasons. Messaging will encourage locals to take advantage of Montana's beauty and adventure, all while escaping the crowds of peak seasons.

A subset of the in-state audience is visiting friends and family members. This group is less likely to require the full spectrum of tourist services (i.e., hotels and restaurants), but very likely to show interest in experiencing Yellowstone Country. Family members visiting students at MSU and UM are a special segment to consider in this group.

Western Ski Audiences

Direct marketing to skiers who frequent western ski resorts (i.e., Colorado and Utah), in addition to a continued presence in Dallas, Chicago, Atlanta and San Diego, promoting YC's accessibility and adventure.

History Audiences

Travelers are often natural history lovers, with a yearning to learn about the world, it's people, places, and cultures. History ties so much together, and with a guide along the way to help make connections, historical facts and stories have a greater emotional impact. **According to ITRR 2018 non-resident data, 17% of visitors to the region are visiting museums and 20% are visiting other historical sites. This represents a significant increase over previous years; this is an emerging and/or growing market for us.**

Motorcyclists

Motorcyclists are a growing niche market who provide ample opportunities for targeted messaging within the region, and potentially in partnerships with neighboring regions. Opportunities include itineraries and maps featuring unique and appealing roadways, targeted media buys and a combination of in-state (drive) and out-of-state (fly-ride) messages. **NOTE:** Re the recent ITRR study **Motorcycle Touring in Montana: A Market Analysis**, motorcyclists tend to ride scenic routes, eat/stay local and spend an average of \$110.00 p/day.

Snowmobilers

Snowmobiling continues to expand in popularity and attract new audiences. Between guided trips and the option to go sled on your own, there's something for everyone. Snowmobiling campaigns could be focused within the region, or potentially in partnership with other regions. Similar to the motorcycle audience, snowmobile campaigns could include itineraries, maps, targeted media buys and a combination of in-state (drive) and out-of-state (fly-ride) messages.

Birding Enthusiasts

Birding has become a valuable niche activity, and there are plenty of locations within the region, and in neighboring regions, that continue to draw this group. One potential way to capture this audience would be to create a map of birding locations, such as the Missouri Headwaters State Park) and events such as Bridger Bowl's Raptor Festival in October. Detailed information could be provided by break-out maps of specific locations within the larger map. This could be accomplished within region, or with partner regions, ideally expanding to a state-wide birding map over time.

Military Families

Military families and bases present a unique niche marketing opportunity as well. Due to the nature of their work, military families often travel at various times throughout the year (not necessarily restricted to standard summer and winter trips), and tend to take longer vacations in comparison to citizen families. In addition, bases often provide news and communication outlets unique to bases, providing targeted channels to reach this group. There is an opportunity to test this niche marketing with an in-state audience at the Malmstrom Base. Again, this could be a project within the region or with partnering regions.

Craft Beverage Enthusiasts

Craft beverage venues (breweries, distilleries, wineries, cideries) have a growing following, and are found frequently throughout Montana. A targeted campaign could be considered for a craft tour, for instance.

Foodies

Promoting the region's best restaurants to travelers who are interested in fine dining, unique dining experiences and Montana's hospitality.

Mountain Bikers

ITRR statistics show 85% of non-resident visitors to the region are coming for vacation/recreation/pleasure. Although not a large amount of those surveyed by ITRR identified mountain biking as one of the premier recreational opportunities, direct inquiries to YC and information from other entities such as Pinkbike, Montana State Parks and the Southwest Montana Mountain Biking Association points to this being a growing segment for the region as there are substantial public lands and areas for this type of recreation.

Entertainment Seekers

If budget allows, we will capitalize on visitors who are coming to Montana for entertainment purposes (i.e., concerts, festivals, rodeos, etc.), encouraging them to extend their visit to include time exploring Yellowstone Country. As new venues, such as Bozeman's historic Rialto Theatre, continue to sprout up, additional audiences will be drawn to Yellowstone Country for entertainment.

Dark Skies/Astro-tourism

Growing in popularity, this type of activity allows visitors to extend their day activities into the twilight hours, and encourages disconnecting from technology. YC will seek to partner with the public & private sector to identify & promote existing opportunities to engage in activities & programs in this sector. NOTE-YC, SEMT, MRC, CMT & MOTBD are currently discussing partnership ideas for FY 20-TBD.

Western Culture Seekers

With a wide variety of ranch-style accommodations spanning from working dude ranches to five-star venues, there are ranches to suit every visitor's idea of the perfect western vacation. Similarly, outfitters provide hands on, genuine experiences in Yellowstone Country. With many visitors drawn to an authentic Montana experience, ranches and outfitters provide another means to reach a niche audience.

International Visitors

Downloadable PDFs of brochures, travel guides, unique landing pages, etc.

Urban Areas

Marketing campaigns aligning with press events. Selecting urban areas of focus in relation to identified key markets. At a state level, anticipated markets include return trips to additional urban areas in California and Texas, in addition to new markets in New York, Pennsylvania and Minnesota.

Direct Flight Markets

Create awareness around direct flights and entice travelers to consider Yellowstone Country as their next destination.

The Bozeman Air Transportation Committee continues to work on bringing new and increased air service to the region through planning and marketing efforts. The committee is a public/private partnership between Yellowstone Country, Bozeman CVB, Big Sky CVB, Big Sky Resort, Yellowstone Club and the Gallatin Yellowstone International Airport. A recent report from BZN shows that to-date, 2019 is up 25% over the same 2018 timeframe.

Current Direct Market Flights include:

- Atlanta
- Chicago
- Dallas/Fort Worth
- Denver
- Detroit
- Houston
- Las Vegas
- Los Angeles
- Minneapolis/St. Paul

- New York La Guardia
- Newark
Phoenix
- Portland
- Salt Lake City
- San Francisco
- Seattle/Tacoma
- Long Beach

Optional: Include attachments here.

c. *What research supports your target marketing?*

Destination Analysts, Inc. found the following in its 2016 Montana Brand Exploration Research:

“Montana is an aspirational destination, and effectively converting this aspiration to visitation should well benefit the state’s tourism industry. When asked which of seventeen tested destinations they were likely to visit in the next five years, over one-in-five surveyed travelers selected Montana (21.0%). This level of interest in visiting Montana is notably greater than the rate of past visitation (21.0% vs. 13.8%), suggesting there exists considerable untapped demand.”

“Of all American destination types, international travelers have the most enthusiasm for U.S. National Parks, presenting Montana’s great potential for attracting international visitors.”

“Family travelers are a natural fit with Montana’s travel product, including that available in the eastern portion of the state. They are a large and lucrative segment. In the Montana Brand Exploration Survey, approximately one-third, 32.0 percent, of travelers reported having children under the age of 18 in their homes. Like high potential visitors, family travelers index high on outdoor psychographics, have high incomes and would expect to spend more and stay longer in the state than other travelers.”

“History buffs are also clearly a high-value audience that fits Montana perfectly. They represent over one-third, 34.7 percent, of the overall population of the state’s key target markets. History buffs score higher on the outdoor psychographic index, have higher incomes and would spend more and stay longer in Montana compared to travelers who are not history buffs. Again, this is a large and lucrative niche segment.”

“Although retirees are an important current audience for Montana, they are a smaller, lower-value segment. This group represents approximately 15 percent of the overall population of the state’s key target markets (14.7%). In an environment where limited funds are available to address marketing segments, retirees do not appear to represent a high-value segment. Using all of the data points used to evaluate the other niche segments, retirees are problematic. In short, they are less interested in outdoor experiences while traveling, less excited about Montana, have lower incomes and when reporting about their ideal trip to the state, appear to be less likely to be big spenders.”

“The three core elements...from an analysis of the data collected in this research are (1) unique natural encounters without giving up modern comforts, (2) comfortable isolation that attracts free-spirited adventurers, (3) a place for entirely new experiences and a place for new ways of experiencing the familiar.”

“Montana’s beauty is seen as different from that of its competitors. Its landscapes were described as feeling bigger and more open. As product differentiation is central to developing an effective brand platform, this should be considered a central element of how travelers perceive the state.”

ITRR 2018 non-resident study data shows the average length of stay for non-resident visitors to MT was 6.17 nights, with 71% of those in Yellowstone Country. 19% of groups included first-time visitors to the state, and 67% were repeat visitors. 69% of non-residents said their primary reason for visiting is vacation/recreation/pleasure.

According to ITRR’s **Focus on Activities** report, visitors are interested in the very activities Yellowstone Country is promoting:

• Removing the typical “mass” tourism activities for each quarter (scenic driving, recreational shopping, attending a family event), niche activities emerged as a favorite and meaningful experience during travelers’ Montana trips for each quarter. Day hiking, watching wildlife and nature photography were universal favorites for all four quarters. Additional niche activities per quarter were:

Q1: skiing/snowboarding, snowmobiling, visiting breweries, snowshoeing

Q2: Car/RV camping, visiting historic sites, visiting museums, visiting breweries

Q3: Car/RV camping, visiting historic sites, fishing/fly-fishing, visiting museums, visiting breweries

Q4: Limited data

The following 2018 ITRR data shows those activities visitors were participating in while in the Yellowstone Country region:

53% Scenic driving

47% Day hiking

45% Wildlife watching

38% Nature photography

29% Recreational shopping

26% Car / RV camping

20% Visiting other historical sites

17% Visiting museums

17% Visit local brewery

11% Skiing / snowboarding

11% Fishing / fly fishing

9% Visiting Lewis & Clark sites

9% Visit farmers market

9% Viewing art exhibits

8% Birding

7% Attending festivals or events

5% River rafting / floating

4% Visit local distillery, snowmobiling, visiting Indian reservations, horseback riding,

dinosaur attractions, golfing, canoeing / kayaking

3% Bicycling, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, motorcycle touring, attending performing arts

The **BZN airport** provided the following 2018 data (January 09, 2019):

v Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport (BZN) handled 1,342,290 passengers during 2018. This is an increase of 142,753 passengers (11.9%) compared to 2017 and is the ninth consecutive year of record-breaking passenger traffic. Annual passenger traffic has nearly doubled over the past 10 years and accounts for 30% of all airline passengers traveling to and from Montana.

Passenger totals in and out by airline brand in 2018 were:

- United Airlines – 482,631
- Delta Air Lines – 474,525
- Alaska Airlines – 175,541
- American Airlines – 112,593
- Allegiant Air – 64,665
- Frontier Airlines – 26,803
- JetBlue – 1,025
- Chartered Airline Flights – 4,507

Yellowstone Country provides staff funding for 10 VICs located throughout the region for the warm season Memorial Day – September. As a requirement of the funding, **VICs compile statistical information** including where visitors are from, how many in the party, primary/secondary reasons for travel to the area, types of activities they participate in, and events they plan to attend. Information provided by our VIC's continues to be a strong resource for identifying new geographic, demographic & psychographic target markets and crafting marketing strategy.

GOALS

1. Continue to raise awareness and build excitement about the "Yellowstone experience beyond the park" concept across all seasons.
2. Highlight the regional communities as unique destinations within the region.
3. Continue promoting Yellowstone Country's natural, cultural, heritage and recreational assets.
4. Continue working with local, regional & statewide partners to grow Montana's tourism economy.

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

YC is looking for additional opportunities to create co-ops impacting direct flight markets. For instance, Yellowstone Country has worked in cooperation with the air transportation committee (comprised of airport representatives, local partners the region & CVBs) to implement marketing campaigns in targeted markets to increase air service.

For FY 20, we are considering the following MOTBD Joint Ventures:

- Sojern
- Trip Advisor
- OnTheSnow
- VisaVue
- Possibly Parents Magazine

YC continues to partner with MOTBD and other Regions/CVBs on the Montana Dinosaur Trail attraction, which data is showing, is growing in popularity with visitors. A recent grant from MOTBD (and matching funds from funding partners) has allowed for a rebuild of the trail website in 2018.

YC also participates in the Greater Yellowstone Region Mapguide brochure joint venture project, providing funding for brochure updates & reprint projects as necessary, and provides funds for the annual MOTBD accommodations guide print project. We will continue to participate in the JV's as we feel they provide value to a visitor experience in the region.

Optional: Include attachment here.

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

YC will continue to foster partnerships with CVBs and other regions to allow for a greater impact of marketing efforts through social media, press trips, digital and print advertising and consumer collateral to promote tourism. In FY19, YC partnered with Glacier Country, Southeast Montana and Destination Missoula, as well as a number of in-region CVBs. We look forward to identifying additional opportunities inside—and outside—of our region in the future. For FY20, our focus will be to partner with other regions to promote common emerging and niche markets identified in this plan. In FY20, YC will participate in the TBEX Conference in Billings as a Gold Sponsor, a co-sponsorship with Visit Big Sky and in hosting three post-farm tours for attendees. Communities and CVBs throughout the region will work with YC on the FAM trips.

For FY20, we are considering these Joint Ventures with other Regions/CVBs:

- Glacier Country (Digital)
- Destination Missoula (Digital)
- Southeast Montana (Print & Digital)
- Possibly other CVBs in Region

Building partnerships with organizations and businesses throughout the region (for both Joint Venture & cooperative projects) will also continue to be a major focus for Yellowstone Country. We expect to have many opportunities to combine marketing efforts to help leverage branding and budgets, within both the public and private sectors. One opportunity would be to provide cost sharing for smaller communities to access data and conduct surveys through ITRR.

Due to scales of economy, many of the seven regional CVBs wouldn't be able to participate in large-scale efforts without YC's partnership. Therefore, it is a primary goal to continue offering creative marketing partnerships with feasible costs to our regional CVBs.

Additionally, YC will continue to vet opportunities to partner with Montana State Parks to promote the four state parks in the region as both stand-alone destinations and as part of the "bigger" experience. Comparing the average state park visitor demographic profile to the YC visitor profile shows there is a strong similarity in these audiences.

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

YC offers cooperative opportunities for regional CVBs and businesses. We work to provide a greater impact and opportunity for underfunded entities to advertise nationally. This year, we offered annual, winter specific, and warm season specific co-ops, with great participation.

YC region co-ops that have been the most successful have been those that help communities raise awareness and/or promote local events & activities. YC has also partnered with other regions & CVBs and businesses for several press trips and video shoots throughout the region. We expect the most successful JV's for FY 19 to include:

- YC-GC: Glaciers to Geysers snowmobile (winter) & motorcycle (warm season) campaigns. Since the warm season motorcycle promotion component has just begun, we don't yet have enough data to speak to this part; however, based on direct inquiries on our website and to our call center, the winter season snowmobile promotion component was very successful. One of the best things about this campaign is that all areas of the two regions is represented—the maps for both regions include even the smaller communities, which helps to raise community awareness.
- YC-SEMT: Although readership & distribution #'s for the SEMT travel guide are not yet available due to the guide just recently being available for distribution, YC's investment in the guide is projected to be very successful based on the increased awareness we will get for travelers in the southeast part of the state. We received 4 total pages of advertorial coverage in the guide, including the premier back cover. The investment package also included a leads package and digital & social media components.
- Trip Advisor JV's have given the entire region a strong presence on this venue, with the intention of continued growth and development as this platform becomes utilized to an even greater degree. As of 3/31/19, Bozeman CVB's CTR of 0.45% is well above the industry benchmark; additionally, Gardiner, West Yellowstone & Red Lodge's CTR's to-date are also exceeding benchmarks. Impression estimates for the full year were 518,000, so the 1,169,112 impressions the JV placement has garnered to-date is showing this is a very successful campaign.

Although these are cooperative & not JV's (because they include non-bed tax partners), these regional placements have also been very successful to-date in FY 19:

- Print: Partnerships with CVBs (Bozeman, Big Sky, West Yellowstone) and private partners (Bridger Bowl, Sage Lodge, etc.) in premier travel publications such as Master Skier Cross Country Journal, Powder Magazine, Ski Magazine,

Texas Monthly & San Diego Magazine means we are reaching a combined circulation of over one million. Inquiries to-date show we are definitely moving the awareness needle for these target audiences.

- **Publicity:** Partnering with the regional communities to showcase what they have to offer is key; even if there is not a CVB, we work with the local chamber s& business organizations to get travel journalists & influencers out in the communities. Even very small towns such as Fishtail & Emigrant have worked with YC to host writers & help tell thir respective stories to the traveling public.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Optional: Include attachments here.

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	Online/Digital Advertising	<p>The strategy for digital (and all media placement) is the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Setting a Goal - determining who we are targeting & the desired outcome 2. Creating an Effective Message - awareness, interest, desire, and action 3. Call to Action - drive traffic to the website, social media channels, etc. 4. Monitor & Measure - analysis of the placement's effectiveness <p>Digital advertising promotes awareness of outdoor recreation, spectacular nature and charming small towns in Montana's Yellowstone Country region. The primary seasonal focus is winter, followed by warm & shoulder seasons. This campaign includes a national focus, as well as placement in regional drive markets to push seasonal travel and metro areas with direct flights.</p>	<p>According to researchers at Marketing Land (marketingland.com), these are the key reasons for why DMOs should invest in digital advertising:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Digital Advertising Drives ROI 2. Digital Advertising Enhances The Effectiveness Of Non-Digital Media Channels 3. Digital Advertising Is Effective Across The Entire Customer Journey 4. Digital Advertising Drives Word-Of-Mouth At Scale 5. Digital Creative Drives Interaction & Lifts Brands 6. Digital Advertising Is More Efficient Than Traditional Media 7. Digital Advertising Is Essential To Reaching An Audience 8. Digital Advertising Is Even More Effective Than We Know 	<p>For all marketing efforts, the entire "journey" through the visitation phases will be analyzed: acquisition (what are we doing to attract the visitor - advertising message), behavior (what direction does the messaging take them) and outcomes (what was the impact to the region). Since the main call to action will be to drive audiences to the website, we will use the following metrics for digital campaigns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Estimated Impressions v. Actual Impressions 2. Clicks 3. Click Through Rate (CTR) 4. Cost Per 1,000 Impressions (CPM) 5. Cost Per Click (CPC) 	<p>Digital marketing not only has the ability to produce a high ROI, it helps enhance other forms or marketing. Studies have found that digital advertising helps drive perceptions, raises brand awareness and can have as narrow/wide a reach as marketers want. For YC, our digital marketing strategy is to reach a very targeted audience based on a specific activity, and then executed in conjunction with social media, print and broadcast media efforts. Our focus will be on the primary, secondary & emerging/new target markets identified in the plan narrative.</p>	\$430,000.00		
		<p>The strategy for print advertising is to place highly targeted advertorial and/or display content in key publications that reach a specific audience. Examples: Skiing, snowmobiling, lifestyle publications.</p> <p>Advantages of print media advertising:</p> <p>Specific Target Audience:</p>						

Consumer	Print Advertising	<p>In print media, the advantage of catering to specific target audience opens up countless opportunities for reaching the audience. There is a greater efficiency in resources, as ads reach the target audience.</p> <p>Loyal Readerships:</p> <p>In the print media industry, readership is mostly longstanding and loyal.</p> <p>Special Ad Positioning:</p> <p>A major advantage in magazine advertising is that an advertiser can request special ad positioning, bringing greater visibility to the brand.</p> <p>Credibility:</p> <p>Over a period of years, magazines create a vast pool of loyal readers who feel safe in its very credible environment.</p> <p>Long Life Span:</p> <p>Compared to websites or national newspapers, magazines enjoy the longest life span. Some magazines (Nat Geo) are treasured across decades.</p> <p>High Reach Prospective:</p> <p>Another advantage is that magazines have a high reach prospective. Magazines pass from family, friends, colleagues, etc.</p> <p>Glossy Ads:</p> <p>These are usually trend setting and eye catching. Maximum visibility is reiterated through magazine advertising.</p>	<p>Print advertising is an especially viable method when there is advertorial content that provides the opportunity for either in-depth messaging tailored for a niche audience, or more generalized messaging for mass media.</p> <p>http://www.contentmanagementsoftwares.net/Benefits_of_advertising_through_print_media.htm</p> <p>http://www.marketingprofs.com/articles/2014/24084/print-marketing-will-thrive-in-2014-and-beyond</p>	<p>The primary objective for print advertising is to raise brand awareness. To measure success, we will be looking at overall metrics such as website visitation, social media engagement, call center activity and requests for additional information.</p>	<p>Print advertising provides an opportunity to really "showcase" brand/destination awareness.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Making an "active" brand introduction to potential first-time visitors to the region and/or state. 2. Reinforcing the brand message by "reconnecting" with return visitors to show that there are always more, or different, experiences to be found on return visits. <p>Our focus will be on the primary, secondary & emerging/new target markets identified in the plan narrative.</p>	\$30,000.00		
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	<p>Using visual content across marketing methods provides an opportunity to help visitors conceptualize the type of experience they can have, and help them differentiate Yellowstone Country from other DMOs.</p> <p>Great imagery and video content helps to build brand awareness, as people are more apt to share information that includes these elements. The FY 18 emphasis was on obtaining imagery/video to enhance media campaigns through an integrated approach. Our strategy is to use the following guidelines for all visual content:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High quality beauty images & videos 	<p>http://www.steamfeed.com/visual-content-will-rule-digital-marketing-2014/</p> <p>https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/articles/youtube-insights-stats-data-trends-vol10.html</p> <p>http://blog.hubspot.com/blog/tabid/6307/bid/33423/19-Reasons-You-Should-Include-Visual-Content-in-Your-Marketing-Data.aspx</p> <p>https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reduction in leased, limited usage fees. 2. Increase in YC "stock" videos & images that can be used broadly for both advertising and marketing. 	<p>We continue to build our image and video library as we integrate our website content with our print and digital marketing. Owning these assets is a less expensive option than limited usage contracts, and allows for more flexibility in how the assets are used. Our focus will be on the primary, secondary & emerging/new target markets identified in</p>	\$20,000.00		

		<p>that depict what makes the region so spectacular</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engaging imagery that shows the audience possible experiences: dining, recreation, arts & culture, etc. Leveraging visual content for SEO purposes 				the plan narrative.			
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	<p>This segment encompasses multiple components of website work.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Continued development of features and offerings. The primary objective in FY19 was the continual development of a relatively new website. This included new updates in interactive messaging, blog curation, social media additions, pre-planned itineraries and access to past earned media, among others.. Content strategy. An ongoing focus is to continuously build content to give visitors a reason to return. This content will live on the website as well as being pushed through paid and earned channels. Site management & maintenance. Website management and maintenance includes electronic database creation and maintenance, regular photo/video updating, website performance tools & reports, adding to media & content libraries, link review & changes, testing & troubleshooting, training & technology assistance, and interfacing with MTOT and other tourism related organizations. Future planning. Develop plans for future website components / functionality to ensure the website provides value to users over time. 	<p>https://www.theedigital.com/blog/update-your-website-regularly</p> <p>https://www.nextflywebdesign.com/update-website-content/</p> <p>https://seositecheckup.com/articles/5-reasons-why-fresh-content-is-critical-for-your-website-and-seo</p> <p>https://www.intechnic.com/blog/why-content-is-the-most-important-thing-on-your-website/</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Constituent feedback regarding website experience. Positive growth in unique and repeat visitors. Increased goal conversions (requests for further information). 	<p>Our primary goal is to expand our branded web presence that compliments and strengthens the efforts in all Yellowstone Country marketing channels. The website serves as a resource/planning tool for both first-time and return visitors, so keeping content updated and "fresh" is a key component.</p> <p>The FY20 focus will be continuously increasing the amount of engaging content while researching updated best practices for SEO.</p>	\$50,000.00			
Consumer	Travel Guide	<p>The YC travel planner is intended as a resource for all three trip planning phases: Inspiration, Orientation & Facilitation. In keeping with the Montana brand platforms, the travel planner serves as an image rich INSPIRATION/MOTIVATION piece and the content aids in the orientation & facilitation phases.</p> <p>The objectives for the travel planner and/or road map is to provide inspiration to visit the region and to help guide</p>	<p>A study by www.independenttravelcats.com found the following:</p> <p>Research Findings: Interestingly, while more people actually reported using the Internet for travel, guidebooks were still rated as the most influential source of information by the travelers.</p> <p>Top 5 Sources of Information Before Travel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Internet (85%) Friends/Relatives (82%) Travel guidebooks (76%) Newspapers/magazines (70%) Travel agencies (57%) & Corporate/associates (57%) <p>Top 5 Sources of Information During Travel:</p>	<p>Based on the # of requests from visitors, reports from distribution managers, and feedback from Visitor Information Centers, the road map is an integral component of Inspiration, Orientation and Facilitation.</p>	<p>The FY20 regional travel guide will be a 2-year version, and the content will be engaging & experiential experience focused--more of an activities guide that helps them decide the places to go based on what it is they want to do.</p>	\$160,000.00			

		visitors into surrounding communities. Success will be evaluated based on distribution numbers and VIC feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel guidebooks (76%) • Personal experience (54%) • Friends/relatives (32%) • Internet (28%) • Travel agencies (25%) 						
Consumer	Joint Ventures	Joint Venture marketing projects will be identified & implemented for specific target geographic & demographic markets and may include any/all of the following: television, video, print, Internet, radio and display advertising. This would include cooperative advertising programs with MTOTBD & other Region/CVBs as applicable and/or as funds allow. As with all YC marketing, the Joint Venture projects YC participates in will be specific to promoting outdoor activities/recreational experiences.	See supporting research in digital and print advertising sections above.	Yellowstone Country can measure success (from a top-level view) by taking into account the additional marketing reach for the region due to the investment of Joint Venture dollars. In addition, each Joint Venture can be tracked and monitored with media performance reports, making it easy to identify direct impact.	As with all advertising, Joint Ventures can be evaluated based on performance reports. Our focus will be on the primary, secondary & emerging/new target markets identified in the plan narrative. Planned JVs for FY 20 include (but not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MOTBD JV opportunities • YC/CVB regional winter & warm season media placements, publicity events, social media partnerships • Partnerships with other Regions/CVBs--could include Dark Skies/Astro-tourism, MT Dinosaur Trail promotion, YC-GC Glaciers to Geysers promotions, TBEX 	\$360,000.00			
Consumer	Printed Material	Yellowstone Country will reprint its expandable scenic road map to help promote travel outside Yellowstone National Park and into the communities within the region. The map is joined with the Yellowstone Country Travel Guide to form a Travel Packet that is mailed out to those that have requested it. The strategy behind the map is to provide a visual, cost-effective print piece for distribution. It is not meant to replace the regional travel guide, but as a cost-effective alternative, YC will be able to move to a bi-annual travel guide, thereby reducing the cost of that publication significantly.	Yellowstone Country's agency (Windfall) conducted and gathered research from local and regional CVBs and VICs to see which travel collateral pieces were requested and picked up most frequently. They also surveyed the top interests of callers. Visitor FAQ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directional: How do I get to the park? How far is it to the park? • Activity based: What is there to do outside the park? What are some communities outside the park? Where are the hiking/biking/ATV trails? • Where can I get cell service or Wi-Fi? How are visitors using the guide? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitors pick up travel guides specifically for activity ideas and maps. • "Anything Yellowstone" • Love smaller maps that are easier to carry with around. 	Map requests will be carefully monitored by our agency and contact center to determine which marketing efforts work best to promote the map. CVB and VIC pickup rates and restocking requests will also be monitored to measure success for the project.	The map will serve as a call to action in our advertising campaigns, and will also encourage people to call or visit our website for more information. This will build our inquiry database for future marketing communications. GOALS Additional tool for visitors Highlight scenic drives Beartooth Highway Paradise Valley Scenic Loop Gallatin Canyon Yellowstone National Park Lake Loop Absarokee Loop Highlight off the beaten path communities, attractions, State Parks, trails, recreation areas and more. Inspirational content and photos	\$35,000.00			
		Direct marketing campaigns will be highly targeted and integrated. Email marketing will allow YC to build	https://blog.bufferapp.com/8-effective-email-strategies-backed-by-research https://www.forbes.com/sites/steveolenski/2014/09/26/email-marketing-most-effective-mobile-	YC will use one/more of the following KPIs to analyze & measure the success of direct email campaigns:	Email is effective because it's permission based. The people on our email list have opted in to receive messages. Email marketing makes sense because it's				

Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	relationships by providing the right information at the right time directly to people who already have made a connection to the region. We will use informative content & great imagery for inspiration - and to depict an experience.	marketing-most-difficult/#23249ecd3e28 https://www.inc.com/peter-roesler/study-shows-email-marketing-still-popular-and-effective-with-millennials.html https://www.campaignmonitor.com/resources/guides/email-marketing-new-rules/	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Click Rate 2. Conversion Rate 3. Unique Open Rate 4. Unsubscribe Rate 5. Bounces 6. Site Traffic 	usable on multiple devices and we can include social media, online video and other marketing elements all within one content-rich marketing message. Our focus will be on the primary, secondary & emerging/new target markets identified in the plan narrative.	\$28,000.00		
Marketing Support	Administration	The objective for use of this budget is to use the allowable 20% of the overall budget as efficiently & effectively as possible, yet still maintain a quality operation. The strategy to achieve the objective is to minimize fixed costs, utilize "best buys" when acquiring necessary assets and to prioritize costs based on a "needs" versus "wants" basis.	https://smallbusiness.chron.com/examples-budget-justifications-26023.html https://doresearch.stanford.edu/training/cardinal-curriculum-level-2/proposal-and-budget-preparation-ora-1120/proposal-and-budget-preparation-create-budget/budget-justification	YC strives to use less than the allowable 20% for Administration, thereby allocating more funds to the marketing endeavors, and less to operations management. Success will be measured by evaluating our ability to minimize operation costs enough that we don't use the full 20%.	The Administrative budget is the operations budget that allows us to pay wages, operate an office, buy equipment & conduct business as an organization.	\$200,263.00		
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	OPPORTUNITY marketing projects will be identified & implemented for specific target psychographic, geographic & demographic markets. This would include cooperative marketing ventures with private and/or public partners that meet the overall goals, objectives & strategies identified in YC's marketing plan.	Good information exists that supports a business maintaining an Opportunity and/or Crisis Fund budget--being prepared for the unexpected makes good business sense. https://www.quora.com/How-do-opportunity-costs-affect-the-capital-budgeting-decision-making-process https://finance.yahoo.com/news/why-opportunity-fund-141838751.html	All YC's Opportunity projects will be evaluated against the following statements: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Plan for the unexpected. An Opportunity project will be exactly that--unexpected, new, unforeseen at the beginning of the year.2. Viable projects. Opportunity projects must support the marketing goals & objectives, and must support & integrate with all our marketing efforts.3. Prove the value. Each Opportunity project will have specific measurable objectives to measure against.	Reasons for setting aside Opportunity funds for a business are pretty much the same as one does it for personal finance--to have the capital to invest in something unforeseen that helps achieve goals & objectives. YC's OPPORTUNITY budget is intended to be a reserve of funds so as to be able to take advantage of opportunities & ideas that come up during the course of the year. YC does not wish to tie up a large sum of money at the beginning of the year for the "unknown", so we allocate a small budget, then look to increase this budget should viable projects present themselves. Our focus will be on the primary, secondary & emerging/new target markets identified in the plan narrative.	\$1,000.00		
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	This budget supports distribution of YC's printed materials to both resident and non-resident visitors, shipping, postage and the call center. As the primary means of distribution to both regional outlets and identified out-of-state hubs, YC contracts with Certified Folder Services and CTM to distribute travel planners and scenic maps. These facilities store the YC travel planners & fulfill bulk order requests, and stock the planners in eligible rest areas and brochure racks.	In relation, Montana Office of Tourism in past research reporting of its own showed as high as 30% increase in visitation from travelers able to make contact with the call center or visitor information resources live or via live chat. The call center provides a time tested resource to receive inquiries and visitor/campaign results opportunities and manage that information into global campaign research on effectiveness but also future adjustments to the brand, marketing campaigns, advertising creative, public relations, and much more. The call center is an integral service piece to the overall marketing program YCMI and has allowed for significant improvement in reporting, fulfillment processing time, and capturing visitor data essential to helping build a successful marketing strategy for the region.	Distribution of the travel planner and map are tracked & analyzed. This includes distribution to out-of-state locations on Certified Folder routes and CTM routes, in-state rest areas, Yellowstone, the 10 regional VICs, local Chambers and as a fulfillment piece for direct inquiries to the call center, guest book sign-ups on the website and consumer advertising campaigns.	Fulfillment is a necessary support function for all the marketing programs. Printed materials distribution, call center functionality, shipping and postage are all integral parts of running the business.	\$90,000.00		
		The strategy for funding VIC staffing includes utilizing local knowledge to help improve the visitor						

Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	<p>experience and having staff help increase awareness of the local community, region and state. The regional VICs are a vital component of YC's efforts to entice travelers to visit, stay longer and do more while in Montana. Although use of the Internet for trip planning is increasing, once on the ground, travelers want to have local knowledge and interaction to help them have the best experience possible. Funding VICs is a good investment since it allows us to provide a tangible benefit for visitors, as well as giving YCMI an opportunity to leverage partnerships with the local chambers/communities. Having on-site, trained travel counselors is a vital support service, working in conjunction with our marketing campaigns to help showcase the multitude of unique attractions, scenery, events and properties in the regional communities.</p> <p>What Visitor Information Centers Can Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal interaction and engagement with visitors • Display Brochures, rack cards, guidebooks & other printed material • Offer a Taste Community -What better way to sell your destination than one-on-one interaction with the traveler. • Dining & Lodging Information for visitors • Crucial travel information such as road closures, fires, floods, etc. 	<p>The total # of visitors assisted during the FY 18 funding period (Memorial Day weekend-Labor Day 26) held steady over the same timeframe the previous year, serving 400,000+ visitors in the 10 regional VICs. Some VICs reported visitor increases, while two reported a decrease. The largest increases reported were at the Bozeman Airport, West Yellowstone & Livingston VICs.</p> <p>ITRR 2018 Non-resident data shows that of the 185 survey respondents who answered questions about using a VIC as an information, 100% said they utilized a VIC, and 25% said it was the most important info resource for them.</p> <p>https://aboutourism.wordpress.com/2010/08/11/tourist-information-centers-as-a-vital-component-for-providing-quality-visitors-services-the-cases-of-athens-cape-town-manchester/</p> <p>https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/10548400903356178</p> <p>https://skift.com/2015/03/23/rethinking-the-visitor-center-in-the-age-of-connected-travelers/</p>	<p>Visitor numbers and satisfaction are key performance/success metrics in helping determine each year if funding the VICs are a viable use of marketing dollars. determine target geographic demographic markets. Primary objective for this program is to provide information services to the visitors both before and after arrival. VIC's are a key component for all three phases of trip planning, especially the orientation & facilitation phases. A secondary objective is to obtain as much visitor information as possible for use in monitoring trends & changes in demographic/geographic/psychographic travel profiles that can be used to help guide marketing efforts.</p>	<p>The VIC program is an integral part of YC's overall marketing effort & continues to be very successful. <i>Visitor Information Centers are one of the most important communication channels with which to attract and educate travelers about the benefits of visiting the state.</i> VIC's provide key support for visitors to the region by offering a variety of services in the planning phases of travel and after they arrive at a destination. In addition to being an information source, travel counselors are essentially an influencer--they can have an impact of travel plans from the beginning through to the actual trip experience.</p>	\$120,000.00		
		<p>Research has shown that cultural tourists "tend to be older, better educated and earn more money than the travelling public as a whole" and "generally spend more</p>			<p>Cultural Tourism is form of tourism that allows tourists be immersed in local cultural related activities such as rituals and festivities. It leads the destination in providing opportunity for authentic cultural exchange between locals and visitors. For destinations, it encourages local communities to embrace their culture and boost economic growth, developing culturally geared tourism programs; encourages destinations to celebrate and promote what distinguishes their communities for an authentic exchange between locals and</p>			

Marketing Support	Cultural Tourism	<p>money on holiday, stay longer in a particular area and participate in more activities than other tourists."</p> <p>As part of our commitment to partners, YC's strategy for the Cultural Tourism grant program is to provide regional communities with financial & marketing support for culinary, sporting, musical, & heritage activities, and/or lifestyle culture the community is promoting. The strategy is to work with these partners to develop & promote more "product" in communities that helps increase visitation, but also raises awareness of communities and/or events as a destination within the region & state.</p>	<p>http://culturaltourism.thegossagency.com/cultural-tourism-whitepaper/</p> <p>According to the Travel Industry Association of America, roughly eighty percent of the 150,000,000+ adults who travel more than fifty miles from their homes can be considered "cultural tourists." Thirty percent of adults state that specific arts or a cultural or heritage event influenced their choice of destination on their last trip. Cultural tourism and the interest in culture among travelers--particularly affluent, active, and frequent travelers-- is on the rise.</p> <p>In FY 18, YC provided grants for six community events and/or cultural happenings/projects in the region. Each of the funded events reported increased attendance from the previous year. Additionally, each event was able to offer more for attendees to see & do at the event.</p> <p>https://www.gounesco.com/cultural-tourism-sustainable-development/</p> <p>http://www.westerncity.com/article/how-arts-and-cultural-tourism-spur-economic-development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in attendance over previous year for each event • Expansion of the product/offerings--events continue to grow and have more to offer visitors • Increase social media engagement for the event, community and region; thereby helping to raise awareness 	<p>visitors. Linking tourism with heritage and culture can do more for local economies than promoting them separately. That's the core idea in cultural heritage tourism: save your heritage and your culture, share it with visitors, and reap the economic benefits of tourism. Additionally, promoting cultural assets in conjunction with outdoor recreation opportunities shows potential visitors the wide spectrum of activities in the region, thereby encouraging doing more and staying longer.</p> <p>Economic benefits – Cultural Tourism can provide direct benefit to the business community, such as lodging, dining, shopping, etc. Visitors' expenditure generates income for the local community.</p> <p>Social benefits – Cultural Tourism can bring about a real sense of pride and identity to communities by showcasing distinct characteristics of ways of life, history and culture in an area.</p>	\$30,000.00		
Marketing Support	Research	<p>YC's research strategy is geared toward 'getting to know' the visitor; drilling down to find out more about who is coming, why, when, where and what they are doing while they are here. The results of these measures will help YC to market itself better to visitors.</p> <p>Research projects will be focused on these outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the people who are the region's visitors • Help define how best to advertise to the target market • Help define our competitive edge 	<p>https://medium.com/@BizzBeeSolution/5-reasons-why-market-research-is-crucial-for-your-business-a27b77fa8264</p> <p>https://business.tutsplus.com/articles/why-is-marketing-research-important--cms-31593</p> <p>https://www.business.com/articles/research-important-for-marketing-professionals/</p> <p>https://blog.marketresearch.com/why-market-research-is-important-for-strategic-decision-making</p>	<p>Success will be measured by having useful, relevant data for developing and/or revising both short-term & long-term marketing strategies.</p>	<p>Research is powerful business tool to understand people's behaviors and the cause and effect those behaviors have on travel decisions. Research brings another voice to the conversation—the target audience's—that is objective, free of organizational bias and can be used for planning and for evaluating purposes.</p>	\$20,000.00		
		<p>YC will produce promotional items & materials to be used in conjunction with hosted press trips and media outreach/events. We want to make sure that the cost of producing the right promotional product will achieve levels of recall that isn't always doable with general media advertising.</p>	<p>Create lasting awareness</p> <p>Research from the Promotional Products Association International (PPAI) in the USA shows that 62% of people remember the name and details associated with a specific promotional product. "A good promotional item should become an ongoing reminder of your brand, every day that it is used. Brand awareness & loyalty can result from the use of a promotional items, creating an immediate appreciation and gratitude that forges a positive link. By including your contact details on a product, new customers are also more likely to call you as you are at such easy reach. It's a great long-term business card!"</p> <p>Five bits of wisdom for tradeshow and/or event promotional items/giveaway:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Make sure your giveaway makes sense to your brand and isn't overused as a giveaway."—<i>Jennifer Seyler</i> 2. "Give them something YOU-branded that they will use after the show is over."—<i>Paula</i> 	<p>The strategy used for deciding what and/or how much will be based on the following criteria for these items:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are they a good fit for the YC brand? 	<p>Out of sight, out of mind — leaving event attendees with not only our advertising message, but good promotional products can effectively spearhead them to</p>			

Marketing Support	Promotional Items	<p>Out of sight, out of mind — leaving event attendees with not only our advertising message, but good promotional products can effectively spearhead them to follow up and build a relationship with us. Using promotional items at media events & press trips will add personal value to YC's general marketing message.</p>	<p><i>Ledbetter Sellergren</i></p> <p>3. "Smart, engaging, creative choices that engage the audience's imagination, trigger a memory your brand promise, that are practical and useful within your industry are the best bets for effective giveaways." —<i>Dave Poulos</i></p> <p>4. "Choose something useful or practical that has the potential to be put into everyday use." — <i>Jay Veltz</i></p> <p>5. "Be sure that what you select has a long shelf life and the quality is there, even if it means paying a little more." —<i>Barbara Sanner</i></p> <p>https://blog.epromos.com/trade-show-event-attraction-promos/guide-to-custom-trade-show-giveaways/</p> <p>https://www.qualitylogoproducts.com/blog/21-promotional-products-posts/</p>	<p>2. Are they functional?</p> <p>3. Do they provide a "splash" factor?</p> <p>Additionally, YC may produce event support materials such as signage, table covers, banners, etc. as needed.</p>	<p>follow up and build a relationship with us. Using promotional items at media events & press trips will add personal value to YC's general marketing message.</p>	\$5,000.00		
Publicity	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	<p>Media Outreach & Press Events in key markets provide YC an opportunity to compliment paid media campaigns in the same markets simultaneously. The strategy behind our press events is to engage directly with targeted press to inform them about what the region has to offer by interacting in a conversational way. We will also use promotional giveaways to help keep brand awareness forefront following the event and encourage social media interaction during the actual events.</p>	<p>Hosting media events is a relatively new endeavor for YC, and to date we've held events in Dallas, Chicago, San Diego, Atlanta, Philadelphia, San Francisco and Portland.</p> <p>The positive effect of media events has included an increased interest in our region from travel writers, an increase in inbound press trips, and an increase in social media and traditional media coverage. These events also help us in identifying potential familiarization visitors from our event attendees.</p> <p>Paired with advertising campaigns in these targeted areas, press events have proven effective in broadening key markets.</p>	<p>By tracking media coverage following events, in addition to monitoring changes in web and call center inquiries following events (and associated media placements), YC can capture the overall effect of having a physical presence in key markets.</p>	<p>Given the press coverage to date paired with ongoing media relationships, YC feels media events are a sound investment to raise brand awareness, promote direct flights (and simple connecting flights) into the region, and partner with regional businesses & CVBs to promote specific activities and communities.</p>	\$50,000.00		
		<p>Social media marketing is no longer a novel part of a marketing mix, it is now a crucial piece of the overall strategy. Ever-evolving, social media is a heavy populated arena and staying ahead of the curve is essential.</p> <p>Experts from leading social media management companies agree that rebuilding trust in social media involves not just the quality of the content, but the context in which it is delivered. People are turning back to immediate friends, family and acquaintances for insights on brands they trust, therefore increasing engagement is paramount to our success.</p> <p>Looking at the top trends for 2019, we built our social media strategy based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building engagement through rich content in blog posts, emails and social media posts • Creating a Facebook group for Western Ski Enthusiasts • Utilizing user generated content built around hashtags 						

<p>Publicity</p>	<p>Social Media</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curated Instagram and Facebook stories for each community Increased paid posts Continued focus on video <p>Build blog content. Continue to tell the stories of the people, places and adventures in Yellowstone Country. This content helps drive our organic traffic, which is currently 14.2% of our total website traffic, an increase of 145.56% over FY18. This content is pushed out via our social channels and to our email list. Email open rates are averaging 18.21%, versus the industry average of 14.65%, indicating our strategy is working.</p> <p>Create Facebook Groups. Building smaller audience groups around specific places and activities is becoming a necessary way to engage people with specific interests. Facebook groups also allow you to avoid algorithms, therefore making your content more relevant to the audience. Forming a group also creates demand; it is human nature to want to be a part of a group of like-minded people.</p> <p>Focus on Curated Instagram and Facebook Stories. Stories are growing 15x faster than feed-based sharing. (Hootsuite, Social Media Trends, 2019.) Our strategy is to use this method to highlight our communities by creating stories for each area, which can be saved in Highlights. Content will be a mix of original photos and video coupled with our user generated content campaign using the hashtag #BeyondYellowstone. This campaign encourages visitors to tag their photos along with their (#location) and #Montana. A weekly giveaway of a Yellowstone Country Montana hat encourages people to engage with the hashtag, and we are providing small posters and business card size reminders for visitors, which chambers and visitor centers can use to help promote the campaign. The goal is to generate content showcasing personal, authentic experiences.</p> <p>Amplify Paid Posts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hootsuite annual report on the latest global trends in social media, 2019: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Rebuilding trust: Brands get human as the circle of trust on social media tightens. Storifying social: Content teams adapt as Stories offer new formats for sharing. Closing the ads gap: More competition on paid social requires marketers to up their game. Cracking the commerce code: Improved social shopping technologies (finally) fuel sales. Messaging eats the world: Customers demand better 1:1 social experiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5 Data-Backed Social Media Trends You Need to Know for 2019. https://buffer.com/resources/social-media-trends-2019 14 Social Media Trends That Every Marketer Should Know About In 2019 https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescommunicationscouncil/2019/02/01/14-social-media-trends-that-every-marketer-should-know-about-in-2019/#623ed3c03796 Stories are surpassing feed-sharing. Now what? Stories are growing 15X faster than feeds, so behavior must evolve. https://techcrunch.com/2018/05/02/stories-are-about-to-surpass-feed-sharing-now-what/ 5 Social Media Marketing Trends That Will Dominate 2019 Social Media Today. https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/5-social-media-marketing-trends-that-will-dominate-2019/543477/ 11 Game-Changing Social Media Trends to Watch for In 2019. https://socialmediaweek.org/blog/2018/12/11-11-game-changing-social-media-trends-to-watch-for-in-2019/ 10 Social Media Trends to Watch in 2019. https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/324901 7 social media trends to watch in 2019, Sprout Social. https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-trends/ 	<p>Increase in social media traffic to website by 20%.</p> <p>Continued growth and engagement in our social media following year over year. Our priority is engagement over a specific number of followers.</p> <p>Increase number of blog posts to 30 per year; 1/3 on outdoor recreation, 1/3 history and culture, 1/3 stories of the people, places and communities.</p> <p>Start a Facebook Group for Western Ski Audiences, build engagement by starting dialogues and encouraging members to contribute.</p> <p>Create Instagram and Facebook Stories for each community. Populate with both our own photos and videos as well as user generated content from visitors, CVB's, Chambers and other tourism partners.</p> <p>Increase our paid social media posts based organic content that is performing well.</p> <p>In conjunction with our website goals, see positive growth in unique and repeat visitors.</p> <p>Increase email open rate to 20% from 18.21%. This is a steady, but reasonable growth rate on top of an already high average.</p>	<p>Social Media is an integral component of the overall marketing strategy. It supports the Consumer Advertising & Publicity/Public Awareness campaigns, gives us a platform to support local tourism stakeholders, engages both new and repeat visitors, and allows us to continuously tell the Yellowstone Country story.</p>	<p>\$36,000.00</p>
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		<p>Watching organic content that performs well and re-purposing it into paid ads gives us the advantage of knowing we are speaking directly to what interests people. We currently do this with our blog posts, but by watching the trends, we can create more effective social ads based on proven interests.</p> <p>Continue Focus on Video. Through collaboration with board members, CVB directors and local businesses we will continue to send and share video content from around the area. To date in FY19, followers have viewed over 142K minutes of video on Facebook.</p>						
Publicity	Press Trips	<p>Following each outbound press event, YC evaluates attendees and reaches out to a select group to explore the region. Travel writers and social influencers are hosted on a variety of trips - spanning from individual trips to group trips - with custom itineraries and activities depending on each unique audience.</p>	<p>From our outbound press trips, we have hosted inbound journalists with arrangements, complimentary services & goods and regional guides, at little to no cost to the region. These journalists were on assignment or freelancing stories regarding outdoor recreation activities, which is the primary focus of YC marketing campaigns. These included: whitewater rafting, golfing, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, camping, bird watching, Nordic & alpine skiing, snowboarding, ice climbing, snowmobiling and wildlife viewing in Yellowstone National Park.</p>	<p>The objective is to increase brand awareness through storytelling.</p> <p>We can measure success through publicity values, but also through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did we reach the target audience? • Did it build awareness of our destination and/or specific activity? • Reach & social engagement • Lead generation by content, channel, and initiative. • Quantity & quality of coverage • # of articles produced 	<p>Working with the media is an important way for Yellowstone Country to tell our story; it helps personalize the experience for visitors and supports consumer advertising campaigns. This is part of the inspiration phase, but also serves a purpose as part of the orientation phase.</p> <p>See FY18 results attached.</p>	\$40,000.00		
						\$1,705,263.00		

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	\$140,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$400,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$68,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel Guide	\$150,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$35,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$20,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Joint Ventures	\$507,546.00	\$0.00
		\$1,420,546.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Research	\$20,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$208,294.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	\$86,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$120,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cultural Tourism	\$50,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Promotional Items	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
		\$490,294.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Social Media	\$58,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Press Trips	\$23,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	\$50,000.00	\$0.00
		\$131,000.00	\$0.00
		\$2,041,840.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
FY 20 Budget Pie Chart	FY 20 Budget Pie Chart 5-1-19.xlsx	17 KB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
FY 20 Required (signed) Documents	FY 20 signed docs.pdf	1.0 MB

