



Grant Details

68892 - FY19 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

72766 - FY19 Southeast Montana Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY19 Southeast Montana Marketing Plan
Grant Number: 19-51-007
Grant Status: Underway
Comments:
Applicant Organization: Visit Southeast Montana
Grantee Contact: Brenda Maas
Award Year: 2018
Program Area: DOC Office of Tourism
Amounts:
Contract Dates: Contract Sent 06/20/2018 Contract Received 07/01/2018 Contract Executed 06/30/2019
Project Dates: Proposal Date 07/01/2018 Project Start 06/30/2019 Project End
Grant Administrator: Barb Sanem
Contract Number: 19-51-007
Award Year: 2018

Contract Dates

Contract Sent Contract Received Contract Executed Contract Legal

Project Dates
 07/01/2018
 06/30/2019

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?

A BRIEF HISTORY

Originally called "Custer Country," Visit Southeast Montana began in 1984 as an organization charged with helping bring tourists to the region. It was named for one of its most famous attractions, the Little Bighorn Battlefield. In 1987 the Montana Legislature enacted a 4 percent Lodging Facility Use Tax to fund tourism promotion organizations. At that time, Custer Country became one of six state-funded tourism regions in the state. This organization continued to market the 13 counties and two Indian Reservations of Southeast Montana until 2010. The Billings Chamber of Commerce received the contract from the Montana Department of Commerce to manage the region and the organization moved from Forsyth to Billings. In 2012, the Custer Country Board of Directors voted to change the name of the region to "Visit Southeast Montana."

From a traveler's perspective, it may seem like there is not much "out here" but the FY19 campaign will demonstrate otherwise.

THE ORGANIZATION

Visit Southeast Montana is a private, nonprofit organization managed by the Billings Chamber of Commerce. We serve as a voice for Southeast Montana's tourism and hospitality industries, seeking to promote the region's many attractions, events and communities while ensuring that tourism is recognized as one of the region's top economic drivers, especially when changes to local and state-wide legislation are considered. Visit Southeast Montana consists of two full-time staff members under contract with the Montana Department of Commerce and is directed by a board consisting of no more than 21 members from across the region.

Visit Southeast Montana partners with the region's three Convention & Visitors Bureaus (Billings, Miles City and Glendive) along with hoteliers, chambers of commerce and other tourism-related entities including state parks, county and federal organizations, plus private businesses ranging from coffee shops and restaurants to guide services, art galleries and private tour operators. The stakeholders and tourism partners of Southeast Montana provide the essence, flavor, identity and unique character of the region.

MISSION

The mission of Visit Southeast Montana is to increase tourism to Southeast Montana by increasing the awareness of our region, showcasing our cultural heritage, developing memorable experiences and educating our residents about the economic benefits of tourism.

IDENTITY

Key Characteristics

This vast region, blessed with a diversity of people, geography and cultures, prides itself on connecting with visitors who enjoy our six very distinctive characteristics:

1. Outdoor Recreation - There is no doubt that opportunities for outdoor recreation abound across Southeast Montana – many exist on public lands and waterways. Fisherman will appreciate the world-class fishing opportunities available along the Bighorn and Musselshell Rivers, Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area (BCNRA) and the Paddlefish Harvest along the banks of the Yellowstone River near Glendive, along with an emerging bass fishery on the Yellowstone River. Hunters continue to pay premium prices to travel to the Powder River area to bag trophy deer and antelope. The Bull Mountains near Roundup are a rising star for elk hunters, and Eastern Montana is becoming known throughout the surrounding states for being great bird hunting country, allowing hunters to stretch their hunting season with pheasant, grouse, chukers, ducks and geese. Hiking and camping enthusiasts will relish the freedom and solitude of the Custer National Forest, Chalk Buttes, Terry Badlands and Medicine Rocks State Park, along with the fore-mentioned Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. Makoshika State Park, Montana's largest state park, features some of the nation's most spectacular badlands scenery while the Terry Badlands remain pristine.

This key characteristic is shared across the region and dovetails perfectly with the newly-created Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation. Director Rachel VandeVoort spent two days in the region in March of 2018 and strong collaboration with that office will continue.

2. Western Authenticity - Many states and regions like to think they possess true western culture, but in SEMT's rural communities, as well as the cities such as Billings and Miles City, visitors can get a true picture of everything that was right about the Old West. From Montana's largest state fair in Billings to feel-good, small-town rodeos, Southeast Montana communities have kept western hospitality alive. Standout western events include the Bucking Horse Sale in Miles City, the NILE and Chase Hawkes Rodeos in Billings and Little Bighorn Days in Hardin – from ranch rodeos to larger circuit Professional Bull Riders, the region hosts a rodeo almost every weekend of the warm season, plus plenty in other months. Authenticity is the key word when listing this strength. Simply traveling across the region solidifies that experience when a visitor may have to wait for cowboys to herd their cattle across the road or they experience the western lifestyle while visiting Southeast Montana's small communities and businesses.

3. Historical Significance - Southeast Montana contains a wealth of historical sites which are internationally known and are of great significance to the story of America. The Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, site of Custer's Last Stand and the nation's most famous Native American victory, is located in Bighorn County and is the third most-visited destination in Montana behind Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks. Pompeys Pillar National Monument bears William Clark's signature and is one of the only examples of physical evidence remaining from the Lewis and Clark Expedition.

Many other state parks, museums and historic sites tell their own stories of pioneer life on the prairie, the Native American struggle to leave behind their nomadic way of life and the impact of the cattle trade on the American West. From large and well-known to more intimate, all are part of the story of the American West and can be experienced in Southeast Montana.

4. Accessibility and Facilities - Southeast Montana is fortunate to contain two of the state's busiest highways, Interstate 94 and Interstate 90. Billings Logan Airport boasts United, Delta, American and Alaska/Horizon Airlines direct service to 10 destinations, including the most-recently added direct service to/from Dallas/Fort Worth along with extended seasonal direct service to/from Chicago from United Airlines. This brings travelers directly into Southeast Montana. Billings has the state's largest and most advanced convention facilities with capacity for up-to 700 attendees, many who will extend their professional trip with personal travel. Shoppers are also drawn to the region's boutiques and major shopping centers. Lodging opportunities in Southeast Montana are incredibly diverse, including everything from 4-star hotels, to charming bed and breakfasts, RV parks, rustic camping, hunting and fishing lodges.

5. Dinosaur Adventure - The plains, prairies and buttes of Southeast Montana are dinosaur country. Famous dinosaurs taken from the Southeast Montana area of the Hell Creek Formation include Tyrannosaurus Rex, Maiasaura and Triceratops. Walk with the dinosaurs in Makoshika State Park and visit three museums and facilities that are active members of the well-established Montana Dinosaur Trail. The museums showcase the many paleontological treasures which have been discovered in Eastern Montana. Museums of particular interest to dinosaur enthusiasts include the Carter County Museum, Glendive Dinosaur & Fossil Museum, Frontier Gateway Museum and the Makoshika State Park Interpretive Center. Individuals and families can also opt for a private fossil dig or work with a new "fossil hunting" program in Makoshika State Park. This broad category includes fossil and rock collectors.

6. Native American Culture - When visitors from the eastern U.S., Europe, and Asia visit the West, they are innately curious about Native American culture. They grew up reading stories and watching the movies about the tribes that once dominated the American West. Southeast Montana is fortunate enough to play host to Crow Fair, one of the last great Native American cultural events, held annually on the Crow Reservation. This event gives visitors

the opportunity to witness how Native American culture has evolved and the importance the tribes continue to place on their history and traditions. The Northern Cheyenne reservation contains an incredible variety of historical sites, as well as opportunities to purchase hand-made gifts and educational experiences presented by local tour guides. The history of the region is inseparable from the history of the tribes who live in it to this day.

Key Challenges Facing the Region

1. Perception that Montana is far away and difficult to travel to - According to the 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, Montana is perceived as challenging to access with associated time and cost that prohibits visitation. Conversely, Colorado (the top regional competitor) was cited as the best destination in regard to scenic beauty, potential for vacation road trip, family-friendly environment, national parks, winter recreational activities and places "I most want to visit." However, Montana as a whole and Southeast Montana specifically are well-positioned to capitalize on Colorado's weaknesses: crowded attractions; lack of or losing authenticity; high costs and over-development. Lastly, the increase of direct flights to Billings (most notably the recent American Airlines Billings – Dallas/Fort Worth) will facilitate more tourists traveling directly to Southeast Montana. For some urban travelers, they may spend more time traveling to the airport from their home than they will actually flying to Southeast Montana.
2. "Regions" are confusing - Tourists typically do not travel via regions, but rather travel to destinations. That is where the identity starts. A marketing campaign that weaves destinations with geographic location will enhance the brand. Additionally, regional partnerships will help strengthen the brand within both the state and four-state region. While the Montana brand should, and does, include Southeast Montana, it is easy for the individuality of the region to be lost within the great whole. The challenge is to be distinctive while still be intertwined within the Montana brand.
3. Distances Between Services - Today's traveler has higher expectations in terms of cellular service and connectivity to a global network. The distances between towns and services are a challenge to Southeast Montana – yet it is that very element that also enhances its appeal, as long as travelers know what to expect. For example, placing the "get away from it all" concept into a mini-marketing campaign that includes tear-off and downloadable maps and itineraries can help orientate the traveler. Additionally, educating the staff at the three regional Visitor Information Centers about the rest of the region will facilitate sharing of regional information.
4. Underdeveloped Tourism Product - Research from both Destination Analytics and the Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research has identified outdoor recreation as a top activity for Southeast Montana's target audience. Despite the wealth of unspoiled nature available, little infrastructure exists for many areas. Strengthening partnerships within the region will help identify tourism products that need assistance for wayfinding, signage and potential promotion. Additionally, working with these partners to secure tourism grants from the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development may help overcome the funding obstacles. The newly-created Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation is a key partnership. Additionally, while Tribal Tourism is undeveloped and not necessarily well-organized nor consistent, the newly-created Tourism Region is taking great steps forward. Visit Southeast Montana has and will continue to collaborate in those efforts.

Alignment with Montana's Brand Pillars

The Montana Brand consists of three pillars, with which Visit Southeast Montana aligns:

1. More **spectacular, unspoiled nature** than anywhere else in the lower 48;
2. **Vibrant and charming small towns** that serve as gateways to our natural wonders; and
3. **Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.**

Southeast Montana is where the mountains meet the prairies and the rivers flow. As such, the region defines "spectacular, unspoiled nature" with Glendive being a primary example of a "gateway to natural wonders" (as found in Makoshika State Park). Unspoiled nature abounds in Southeast Montana, from the Big Sky Back Country Byway and Calypso Trail near Terry, to the haunting rock formations at Medicine Rocks State Park near Ekalaka, to the immense and majestic beauty of the Bighorn Canyon. The region is dotted with charming small towns such as Broadus, where a cowboy can still turn horses-and-wagon on the extra-wide main street to Terry, the home of Eveyln Cameron - each town exudes its own personality, built by generations of families, industry and storied events.

Long-standing events such as the Bucking Horse Sale (since 1950) or Crow Fair (100 anniversary in 2018) showcase "breathtaking experiences by day" while the "relaxing hospitality by night" can be found throughout the region's unique dining experiences and array of lodging options from rustic camping to luxurious facilities like Northern Hotel in Billings. The beauty of Southeast Montana lies in its natural wonders and the plethora of options for travelers and tourists alike.

Describe your destination.

The Travel Decision Process

The typical traveler makes travel decisions in a three-phase process. These phases are Inspiration, Orientation, and Facilitation.

The **INSPIRATION PHASE** is the one in which the traveler is made aware of the general product and develops a desire to visit the destination. This phase is masterfully executed by the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, which uses Montana's key tourism draws to bring nearly 12 million visitors to the state each year.

The **ORIENTATION PHASE** is where the traveller begins researching the details of his or her trip. This phase focuses on the route the traveler will take to arrive at their chosen destination and the mode of transportation they will use to get there.

The **FACILITATION PHASE** is where the traveler tries to find things to see and do at the destination and on the way to the destination. This may include planning alternate routes and overnight stays to break the drive up into manageable daily distances.

Visit Southeast Montana will focus on the Orientation and Facilitation phases. In this way we can target the 'low hanging fruit' already traveling through our region on the way to Yellowstone National Park and other Montana destinations. Additionally, we can emphasize how Southeast Montana fits with the Montana brand for outdoor recreation, for example, without the disadvantages like over-crowding and expensive fees found with other DMOs. Finally, we will also promote the Inspiration and Facilitation phases to regional travelers, including residents of central and western Montana. We have determined this will be the most effective way to target our limited budget.

Optional: Include attachments here

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

By looking at everything we do through the lens of the Travel Decision Process, Visit Southeast Montana is better able to strategically focus its marketing efforts to maximize the positive economic impact through tourism to our region with our limited budget. As such, our geographic, demographic and psycho-graphic target markets will be the same as those of the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development.

Geographic and Demographic

According to the 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, the High-Profile Visitor (HPV) is not only attracted to Montana, he/she sees the destination as more attractive and competitive when compared to its regional competition. The HPVs are:

- City dwellers (not rural and not suburban)
- Married with children
- Well-educated
- Affluent (>\$80K)
- Younger (average age 36.4)
- Frequent travelers
- Male-oriented (54.3% male vs 45.7% female)
- Strongly attracted to and familiar with Montana's tourism offerings
- Likely repeat visitors
- Outdoor-oriented travelers (psychographic index)

The HPV's desired activity on a Montana trip relates directly to their psychographic profile of being outdoor-oriented travelers with these favored activities, as indicated in this graph.

The Destination Analysts study (pages 44 - 45) also notes the HPV's desired activities include:

#1: day hikes;

#3: dining out in restaurants;

#5: Visit Lewis & Clark-related historical sites;

#6: Drive scenic byways;

#7: Explore small towns and villages;

#8: Visit geological/dinosaur-related historical sites;

#9: Visit Native American history or cultural sites; and

#10: canoeing, kayaking or boating.

With the exception of #s 2 and 4 (GNP and YNP), all of these experiences are found in and emphasized by Southeast Montana, specifically Pompey's Pillar National Monument, Little Bighorn National Monument, Bighorn Canyone National Recreation Area and the Montana Dinosaur Trail.

It is obvious that Visit Southeast Montana has ideal offerings for the HPV.

Additionally, Destination Analytics identified two niche markets: Family travelers and history buffs. Both niches strongly align with Southeast Montana's strengths with history buffs fitting a cross-section of historical significance, western authenticity and Native American culture.

Visit Southeast Montana's Board Input

This target market information, plus a short survey, was recently shared with Visit Southeast Montana's Board of Directors for their "feet on the ground input." The Board shared their thoughts on target market in the attached image.

Board members prioritized the target market as follows:

1. Family travelers, as identified in 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, Inc.;
2. Regional travelers – defined as visitors from the greater regions surrounding SEMT including northern Wyoming, South Dakota and North Dakota along with all residents of Montana;
3. Road-trippers, as identified in 2016 Montana Destination Brand Research Study by Destination Analytics, Inc., from the Midwest, especially those on way to YNP or GNP.
4. Repeat visitors;
5. Other regional travelers from surrounding 10-state area;
6. History buffs;

7. And, a select segment of international travelers, specifically from the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia, as identified and assisted by Montana Travel Trade Office.

According to ITRR's 2017 Nonresident Visitation, Expenditures & Economic Impacts study, Overseas Visitors averaged \$1,015 per trip with an average stay of 5.82 days, compared to \$635 total per trip for an average of 5 days for Domestic Visitors. Therefore, aligning with the Montana Travel Trade Office's focus on UK, Germany and Australia makes sense.

b. *What are your emerging markets?*

When looking at emerging markets and considering the plethora of outdoor adventure opportunities, such as Short Pines near Glendive and the Terry Badlands, we will focus on mountain bikers and OHV (Off Highway Vehicle) riders. These adventurers fit well with what the region has to offer, especially Bureau of Land Management's public lands. Additionally, we have identified the Canadian market, specifically the city of Regina and Saskatoon, in Saskatchewan, as an additional emerging market.

Optional: Include attachments here.

SEMT Marketing Plan Funnel.pdf

c. *What research supports your target marketing?*

The report, *Montana: Destination Brand Research Study*, which was funded by MOTBD and completed by Destination Analytics, Inc. (attached) provides valuable information about the state's brand along with opportunities that align with Visit Southeast Montana's offerings.

This information closely aligns with Visit Southeast Montana's 2010-11 research project, which provided insight of Visit SEMT's target markets as well as many other aspects of Visit SEMT, in regard to how to best achieve the mission. A brief summary of the findings is attached under "Miscellaneous Attachments."

SEMT also incorporates ITRR data, when applicable, to further enhance understanding of the target market.

STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Grow In-region Partnerships

A region as physically large as Southeast Montana is truly diverse, and as the foundation of Visit Southeast Montana, regional partners and stakeholders must be committed and strong. It is also within this diversity that the region's strength lies. To grow and further enhance those relationships, we will focus on:

FY19 ACTION

- a) Continuing with the herculean effort to reach each Tourism Partner – new and existing – to realize the full potential of strong relationships.
- b) Spend quality time within the region, presenting Visit Southeast Montana's successes and emphasizing the advantages of working with the region on joint, no-cost ventures such as the website. These quality interactions will also develop stronger inter-region communication to feed website, social media and earned media content (OnlyinMontana.com, for example).
- c) Evaluate Tourism Partner Workshop surveys from FY18 to develop additional, ready-to-implement topics and workshops for Partners.
- d) Continue efforts to connect with and assist Tribal Tourism, especially as it pertains to promotion of events and listings on Southeast Montana's website.
- e) Promote the Tourism Partners segment of the new website, emphasizing the tools for Partners, such as ordering bulk guides, News You Can Use (eblasts) and no-cost business listings.
- f) Continue sharing the Master Calendar of Events, encouraging Partners to submit their events to promote them online
- g) Identify "go to person," known as Film Ambassador, in each community to work with Montana Film Office to assist with locations; assist Film Ambassador as necessary.

FY19 MEASUREABLES

- a) Ensure that at least 50% of Tourism Partners update their business listings on the website.
- b) Track number of presentations (plus attendance at each) to in-region partners such as chambers, civic groups and the like. Give 8 presentations in FY19.
- c) Increase visitation to Tourism Partner segment of new website by 25%
- d) Add 6 SEMT Film Ambassadors to list at Montana Film Office.

- e) Build partner database of 1,590 (April, 2018) by 5% (add 80 new Tourism Partners).
- f) Conduct marketing workshop for Tourism Partners (in 1-3 locations across SEMT).

1. Develop Marketing Partnerships

Rather than be an island looking for visitors, we will reach outside the region to facilitate and strengthen relationships with neighboring states, regions and DMOs along with MOTBD bureaus and programs. Initial steps could be a regional familiarization tour ("fam"), working cooperatively at larger leisure travel shows and/or initiating new cooperative marketing campaigns such as downloadable and/or printed inter-regional maps and itineraries. Working under the Montana brand we have, and will continue to, promote Southeast Montana as a destination to international markets, specifically UK, Germany and Australia, via the Montana Travel Trade Office. Additionally, we will:

FY19 ACTION

- a) Invite other Montana regions (specifically Missouri River Country, Southwest and Central) to collaborate on initiatives targeted specifically to the History Buff market (i.e. battlefields or Lewis & Clark sites).
- b) Continuing the Montana Dino Trail relationship (includes three locations in SEMT, plus three other MT regions).
- c) Work with connections specifically with tourism contacts in Sheridan, Cody and Gillette, Wyoming; Rapid City/Black Hills and/or State of South Dakota; and, Theodore Roosevelt NP, Medora and/or State of North Dakota (with potential for quarterly calls).
- d) Connect with Tribal Tourism and collaborate when fits target market.
- e) Strengthen burgeoning relationship with Montana Film Office.
- f) Connect website with at least 5 Partner Organizations, for example, Montana Wilderness Association (guided hikes).
- g) Increase collaborative projects with Montana State Parks, including advertising efforts.

FY19 MEASUREABLES

- a) Produce thematic-specific itineraries and/or blog post (i.e. history) in collaboration with other regions.
- b) Collaborate on (3) film opportunities within the region.
- c) Collaborate with Dino Trail organization to produce 1-2 media releases, possibly in conjunction with release of new *Jurassic World* movie (late June, 2018).

1. Support Tourism Product Development

Growing in terms of service and sophistication is necessary for success in today's tourism market. Travelers expect the conveniences of home with an authentic yet urban edge to their experience. As thus, we will support the development of new tourism products, as allowed within regulations, plus share our knowledge, expertise and influence to move a project forward. By focusing on Goal #1, we will be able to identify and refer tourism projects to MOTBD for further assistance. Additionally, we will monitor legislative policies that could affect tourism.

FY19 ACTION

- a) Share public policy statement across the region, specifically in presentations (see above).
- b) Seek projects that need assistance, specifically local (i.e. Trail to The Little Bighorn), state parks (i.e. Plenty Coups, Pictograph, Rosebud Battlefield and Makoshika), national parks and monuments and hunting/fishing (i.e. FWP).
- c) Continue dialog with Montana Office of Outdoor Recreation plus spearhead Outdoor Recreation Roundtables (similar to one conducted with Rachel VandeVoort in March of 2018) for information sharing.
- d) Ensure that all legislators and county commissions are included on News You Can Use and invite them to attend regional presentations.

FY19 MEASURABLES

- a) Share new public policy statement, which reflects Visit Southeast Montana's mission, with all regional representatives, plus share completed tourism projects (i.e. Custer Circle).

1. Produce Quality Marketing Initiatives

Visit Southeast Montana's marketing methods will continue to follow the Inspiration- Orientation-Facilitation strategy outlined in this Marketing Plan. A key component, however, will be the integration across platforms along with branding and consistent messaging. For example, while social media may highlight upcoming events, it will incorporate the ever-growing photo library while weaving pre-designated messages (i.e. Southeast Montana is not as far away as you think) into the overall landscape. This seamless melding of messaging will be subtle but consistent from advertising, to social media, to branding and collateral, to media relations and appeal to the ever-growing global market.

FY19 ACTIONS

MARKETING STRATEGIES

a) MARKETING SUPPORT:

Visit Southeast Montana will continue to operate out of the shared offices in Billings; the close proximity to Visit Billings staff facilitates collaboration and promotion of Southeast Montana when larger groups and tours stop in Billings or with media groups that move through the region. Additionally, we will continue to work with MOTBD's international market specialists to enhance the United Kingdom, German and Australian markets. Within the region, we will continue to serve our tourism partners both formally and informally by being a point of contact, sharing information from MOTBD along with social media opportunities, a quarterly newsletter and low-cost marketing strategies.

b) CONSUMER TRADE SHOWS: In terms of leisure travel shows, this year we will again attend the Northwest Outdoor Show (Minneapolis) with potential to explore a show in Denver, Chicago and/or other regional shows, including those in Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota. We will explore opportunities to attend larger shows cooperatively with other regions or CVBs and invite Board members or Tourism Partners (including the Office of Outdoor Recreation and MOTBD), where appropriate, to share their regional expertise with show attendees. We will also explore the option of a history-travel show as it fits the above-identified market.

c) PUBLICITY, SOCIAL MEDIA & MEDIA RELATIONS: With the newly-completed and expanding website, we will increase focus on earned media in FY19, regionally, nationally and internationally, by selectively nurturing relationships, including publications/editors, freelancers and social influencers. The service from Cision (earned media tracking & media/freelancer database service) is a key component to this strategy. The addition of a media room and blog (fresh content) to the website will also facilitate interest and will be promoted socially. With Roundup International in Spearfish, SD, in spring of 2019, we will already have tour operators and international media in-market; plans for a cooperative fam tour with MOTBD Travel Trade is in the initial planning stages, as are other media fams. These tours are also an ideal opportunity to collaborate with the CVBs within the region, and with other regions, customizing to each groups' specific interests.

d) CONSUMER ADVERTISING: The bulk of the budget lies within this realm and will focus on the audiences identified above via very targeted digital advertising. We will also use a combination of digital, print and potentially geo-fencing to target the niche audiences described above. In partnership with Windfall, SEMT's agency of record, we will vet qualified leads from both the call center and from Yellowstone Country and Glacier Country's opt-in lead lists to target those with plans to visit Montana, those who have visited one of the national parks and/or those who will drive through Southeast Montana to get to a national park (i.e. Midwestern states), thus enhancing the "Accessibility" strength identified above.

e) PHOTO LIBRARY: Stunning photography is a key element to the inspirational piece of the marketing funnel. We will dedicate funds to continue to build the photo library (considerable progress has been made in FY18), seeking to purchase photos for multiple uses (i.e. advertising, travel guide, travel show booth, social media, etc.) rather than purchase for one-time uses. Additionally, we will incorporate photo rights into social influencers agreements, thus stretching those dollars. Hosting photo contests is another consideration.

f) PRINT PROJECTS:

The Visit Southeast Montana Travel Guide is the foundation of all marketing efforts—it tells the story of Southeast Montana. The guide has evolved from being a bi-annual guide with no advertising to an annual, private-fund project with a sophisticated magazine-style format. During FY18, Visit SEMT personnel, Board and Agency of Record evaluated the guide along with numbers, with three cover options presented to the Visit Southeast Montana Board in April of 2018. The guide will be printed and distributed, with an emphasis on newly-acquired images. We will continue to distribute the guide as widely as possible, with special attention going to vetted quality leads acquired from Glacier and Yellowstone Countries' media buys; this piece functions as the heart of SEMT's print collateral.

Additionally, we will develop and print thematic itineraries for the targeted markets (i.e. historic tour for those interested in Indian Wars). The itineraries are useful for all types of visitors: regional; those traveling to/from the national parks; fly-and-drive; and international. The itineraries will compliment newly-developed (FY18) thematic Southeast Montana maps, which are tied to the website and social media.

g) TELEMARKETING/FULFILLMENT:

The travel guides and other collateral must get into the hands of the traveler. To facilitate that, we have dedicated additional funds fulfillment and distribution (contracts to be considered as they approach renewal dates). Additional collateral (such as thematic maps and itineraries) will be available from distribution center, regional VICs and via download from the website. Tourism Partners can also order the travel guide in bulk.

h) WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

While VisitMT.com, the MOTBD's website may serve as the first point of contact for Montana visitors, the Southeast Montana website can provide more details along with regional-specific inspiration, orientation and facilitation. In FY18, Visit Southeast Montana's agency of record, Windfall, created a new website, which "scrapes" content from VisitMT.com but still allows for more creative and timely control at the region's level. However, websites are not static; the site will grow with new and fresh content and images, evolving as new tourism products develop. Additionally, funds will be used to continually enhance SEO and other optimization techniques. A newly-improved media room, travel blog and master calendar of events will be added to the website, further enriching the user's experience.

FY19 MEASURABLES

- a) Increase media tours and social influencer visits, 6 fams/25 individuals total.
- b) Increase social media numbers, i.e. followers, engagement, shares by 25%.
- c) Increase number of consumers in database from 6,380 (as of April, 2018) to 8,000+.
- d) Increase earned media, I.E. 10 national articles/segments and 20 regional articles/segments.
- e) Update website and increased traffic numbers by 100%.
- f) Establish CTR on digital media of .3%
- g) Establish 15% open rate on Consumer eblasts.

In conjunction with the detailed marketing strategies outlined previous, Visit Southeast Montana will distribute funds according to the following budget demonstrated below.

One major change, as approved by the Visit Southeast Montana Board of Directors in April of 2018, moves the visitor's guide from state marketing dollars to a privately-funded opportunity. This liberates approximately \$75,000, which was re-allocated back into marketing and advertising. Compared to FY18, the re-imagined budget allows for:

- Nearly \$30,000 more for online and print advertising
- New allocation for Out of Home advertising (\$5,000)
- Almost double in Joint Ventures (\$7,500)
- Nearly double in Opportunity (\$8,900)
- Returns International Powwow (\$4,000)
- More than double regional/new tradeshow – history focus (\$5,000)
- Continue to enhance photo/video budget (\$10,000)
- Add SEO, optimization to new website (\$9,500)

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

We would like to continue working with the MOTBD on co-ops in national print and online publications. We have found the online co-ops with the state to be particularly effective in driving traffic to our website.

Social media influencers are an emerging marketing strategy, and we would like to partner with MOTBD to explore options that are very specific to the Southeast Montana experience.

Co-ops in the form of journalist and tour operator fam trips through the Visit Southeast Montana region have also been beneficial and we would like to see those continue along with attending the Rocky Mountain International Roundup show.

We are open to all opportunities, including non-traditional and experiential marketing methods, particularly those those align with Road Trippers and Repeat Visitors.

Optional: Include attachment here.

Montana Brand Exploration Research - Final Report of Findings V2 - Novme... (004).pdf

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

As noted in Visit Southeast Montana's Overall Goals above, we will actively seek relationships with both inter-region CVBs and DMOs and with neighboring states, regions and DMOs. The continued success of the Dino Trail is an excellent example of a Joint Venture between regions, CVBs and DMOs in Montana. Additionally, creating itineraries for those traveling between YNP - Black Hills/Mount Rushmore - Theodore Roosevelt National Park in

additional to newly-initiated efforts with the Office of Outdoor Recreation and the Montana Film Office. We also seek to collaborate with Tribal Tourism entities to continue to promote Native American events and venues for visitors.

Overall, Visit Southeast Montana will consider any and all Joint Ventures.

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

As noted above, the Dino Trail, which includes three locations in Southeast Montana and has regional support, is an excellent example of a successful Joint Venture; it continues to move forward in a robust fashion.

Additionally, Visit Southeast Montana has worked with Miles City and Visit Glendive to promote the May events like the Paddlefish Harvest and the Bucking Horse Sale and other regional events via advertising (print and online) in Distinctly Montana. Visit Billings and Visit SEMT collaborated on a "Your Trailhead to Adventure" buy in *Northwest Travel*; with Southwest Montana in *True West*; and, with MOTBD in the *Family Fun* buy for FY18. All of these efforts were amazing opportunities and data is still being collected.

In FY17, a JV social influencer with MOTBD was not the most ideal -- specifically because the influencer visited out of season (Feb) despite our best effort to dissuade her. As a result, we now ask more specific details about deliverables from influencers.

We have engaged in out of home, national print, national and regional online, Fam Tours and trade shows with MOTBD and FWP. Of these the online, fam tours and tradeshow components were the most successful, though we wouldn't consider any of the co-ops we've engaged in with the state to be failures; some are simply stronger than others but all have benefit.

Overall, we plan to continue with joint ventures whenever possible and feasible.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Optional: Include attachments here. SEMT18-19 Marketing Plan FINAL to TAC.pdf

Optional: Include attachment here:

Marketing Segment, Method & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Describe your method.	Provide supporting research/statistics.	How do you plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale for this method.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Add'l Attchmnt
Consumer	Opportunity Marketing	Opportunity Marketing is just that -- an opportunity that arises that was not anticipated at the time of marketing plan development. Visit Southeast Montana requested Opportunity Funds to 1) attend the Travel Blog Exchange in 2018, and 2) Sponsor the	Attending the 2018 TBEX Conference with Visit Billings staff will better allow Visit Southeast Montana staff to meet 500-800 bloggers, journalists, photographers and social media influencers at the same venue. Additionally, attending TBEX 2018 will help better understand the inspiration that motivates TBEX attendees and thus create a better, stronger fam experience for the [EMBARGOED] 2019 TBEX North America Conference, which will be held in Billings. Additionally, attending the 2018 conference will provide brand lift; a rich networking opportunity with the UGC target-rich environment; and, build strong relationships with TBEX organizers and attendees alike.	Based on previous experience with convention/conferences, we know that having staff attend the 2018 TBEX, including a pre-fam, for training and attendance-building, will greatly enhance planning efforts and allow Visit Southeast Montana to maximize the 2019 conference in Billings. Therefore, having staff attend the 2018 TBEX, within the allocated budget, to gain and apply this knowledge to the 2019 conference will make this marketing method a success. Sponsorship of TBEX 2019 will be measure by total number of	Visit Southeast Montana staff attended the 2018 TBEX event, gaining insight into the actual event plus the pre-fam and speed networking components. Additionally, staff connected directly with several bloggers that "fit" the region, one of whom was invited to SEMT in June, 2019 (see Publicity segment for details). The remainder of the TBEX sponsorship will be	\$7,000.00	Staff attended TBEX 2018, within budget, and brought back several ideas for pre-fams, plus a better, stronger understanding of how to work with TBEX attendees. As a result, Visit Southeast Montana collaborated with Visit Billings as a TBEX 2019 sponsor to host six pre-fams at the 2019 conference, in addition to a region-specific post-fam (post-fam executed and cost incurred in FY20). See the attached itineraries for the 6 pre-fams (3 fams x 2 days). These fams were conducted as a huge collaborative effort with many, many tourism partners and included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bighorn Canyone by the Water • Get Hooked on Southeast Montana • Wing Over Prairies to Hike & Hunt Fossils If Visit Southeast Montana would have had to pay for all the services (including bus transportation; guided fishing on Bighorn River; pontoon rental in the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area; and charter Cape Air flight from BIL to GLV) the fams simple would not have been possible. See the FY20 reports for more details, as the conference did not happen until September 2019 and earned media reports	FY19 SEMT_Opportunity_TBEX pre-fams.zip

		Travel Blog Exchange in Billings in September, 2019.	The FY19 Visit Southeast Montana marketing plan focuses heavily on earned media, and this event dovetails completely into that strategy. If TBEX 2019 brings 600 attendees and 6% are 1M-plus reach bloggers, it would cost approximately \$2.7M to bring those same bloggers to Billings, based on creative fees alone.	participants in Visit Southeast Montana hosted pre-fams. Our goal is to connect directly, and have posts from, with at least 15 bloggers.	reported in the FY20 marketing plan because the event is scheduled for September, 2019.		are still being tracked. Visit Southeast Montana six pre-fams were attended by 42 bloggers, which resulted in multiple social posts. We exceeded the goal of 15 connections and consider this method a success. We would certainly consider attendance-building and/or conference sponsorship if an opportunity happens again in the future.	
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	Out of Home Advertising has returned to the Visit Southeast Montana marketing plan. We hope to collaborate on outdoor space, if possible. Additionally, we will also look for opportunities to influence on-the-ground travelers within or about-to-enter the region.	Data from Phocuswright shows that 38% of tour and activity bookings are happening on the same day or up to two days before the activity. Many of these bookings take place in-destination, while consumers are already traveling.	We can measure ROI using traffic counts (vehicles) or visitation numbers. The measurement should correlate closely to the OOH topic (i.e. MT Dino Trail promotion - increased numbers at local dino facilities, tours booked and/or Makoshika Park visitation increase).	The research noted above ties Out of Home advertising to the Road Tripper market identified on pages 7-8 of the FY19 Marketing Plan (attached).	\$5,000.00	In FY19 Visit Southeast Montana included two OOH (billboards) in the Rapid City area, with a "Discover Southeast Montana - Take Highway 212" call to action. The static board yielded 2,914,160 impressions and the digital board, which included 3 panels/images, yielded 739,080 impressions. Both boards included an image of Medicine Rocks State Park, which experience record peak season (June 1 – August 31) visitation with 9,613 visitors (402 more than last year). The final numbers are not yet available for Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, however the NPS personnel expect attendance to be similar or higher than previous year while Pompeys Pillar National Monument (which were also featured) did have slightly lower number of visitors with 29,518 in 2019 compared to 31,168 in 2018. However, 2019's visitation number was second highest over past seven years. Based on these metrics, we consider this marketing segment a success and will certainly consider it in the future, based on budget, media availability and media mix.	FY19 SEMT OOH Proof of Performance.zip
Consumer	Print Advertising	This method includes ad production and media purchasing for print advertising. As an important element of Visit Southeast Montana's media mix, regional media will primarily promote events and weekend/short-vacation travel. Some ads may be produced as a co-op with MOTBD, others in conjunction with regional partners. For example, collaborative efforts within-region can maximized budget while intra-region collaboration will provide a bigger picture of Southeast Montana within the tourist's National Park itinerary (i.e.	Print advertising remains relevant, especially for niche markets. People are still reading print publications. According to a 2016 Nielsen report, 169 million Americans still read newspapers regularly and three-fourths of that group reads the print edition specifically. Additionally, unlike a digital ad, a print ad stays around as long as the publication is around. This is especially relevant when looking at publications like magazines and travel planners. Additionally, a 2015 study by Temple University Fox Center for Neural Decision Making used neuroscience to gauge how people responded to physical and digital	We will track website traffic and lodging tax dollars. In addition, we strive for a reach of 2 million, including niche markets.	Print advertising allows us to reach a different audience than online advertising while also complimenting online ads with an integrated approach. We will spend a slightly larger percentage of our budget on online advertising; however, we will favor print ads that include an editorial component, thus creating more opportunity to inspire and motivate the niche audience while including facilitating details. A good example of this strategy	\$60,000.00	In FY19, we continued with Out Here campaign, focusing on Visit Southeast Montana's pillars: Outdoor Recreation, Western Authenticity; Historical Significance; Dinosaur Adventures; and, Crow and Northern Cheyenne Cultures. We also continued the storytelling aspect of that campaign with taglines like "Out Here the Land has a Story to Tell" and "Out Here, Big Sky Meets Big Adventure" to highlight opportunities in the Southeast Montana region while implementing the website as the call-to-action. When purchasing media, we were especially cognizant in looking for value-added media placements. For example, the Glacier Country travel guide buy included a print ad in the guide plus banner ads and 6,143 warm season leads, which were then added to the e-blast list. [See the Electronic Newsletter Marketing Segment for details on this communication strategy.] In addition to national markets, we worked in niche markets like the history buff with buys in True West magazine; the advertorial piece was JV with Missouri River Country and Southwest Montana and further supported with solo Visit SEMT advertising in a subsequent issue. This buy was another that included multiple components [See Digital Advertising segment]. We also targeted the international audience – especially UK, Germany and Australia, following the lead of MT Travel Trade office – with a buy in the Brand USA publication. It is translated into 13 editions/languages and	SEMT FY19 Media Plan Non-Digital & Print Performance_FINAL.pdf

		<p>the road-tripper audience as identified by the 2016 Montana Brand study and further detailed in the attached Visit Southeast Montana Marketing Plan). Other niche markets like history buffs or sportsmen/women also fit well with the print medium. Additional print ads may focus on niche and/or emerging markets, specifically mountain bikers and OHV riders (as identified on page 8 of the attached FY19 Marketing Plan).</p>	<p>ads. In short, respondents spent more time reviewing the print ads; print ads yielded higher levels of recall; and print ads caused more activity in brain areas associated with value and desire, key markers of purchase interest. Furthermore, 2015 research conducted by Millward Brown Digital found that print achieved the highest levels of brand favorability and purchase intent of any measured media. Information collected from ITRR and Destination Analytics also support this method.</p>		<p>includes a print ad in <i>True West</i> magazine. The FY18 multi-media buy, in collaboration with Southwest Montana, was based on a print ad and reached 915,000 consumers with a passionate interest in Western American History and Heritage Travel - a perfect fit for two regions that include two major battlefields (Little Bighorn & Big Hole).</p>		<p>distributed to 21 countries.</p> <p>Buys in regional travel guides and <i>Yellowstone Journal</i> focus on the repeat traveler and regional visitors.</p> <p>Another niche market includes Montana road-trippers, which we targeted through regional newspapers and feature publications like <i>Outside Bozeman</i>. That ad, in particular, was placed near an article about the Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area.</p> <p>With a reach of 3,340,464, we consider this marketing segment a success and will continue to use it, especially when we can find combination or advertorial-type buys. In addition, warm season lodging tax collections for July 1 – September 30, 2019 increased by 1% in 2019 over 2018 while Visit SEMT's website saw a 168.21% increase in site visitors in FY19. The print advertising marketing segment was part of this overall strategy.</p> <p>See Attachment 2 below for a sample print ad. All proof of performance is on file with Visit Southeast Montana.</p>	
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	<p>Online advertising will be used to promote Visit SEMT to all targeted markets as identified on page 8 of the FY19 Marketing Plan (attached) during all three phases of the travel decision process. The strategy includes native ads, some banner ads and re-targeting, plus digital paid content. Online advertising will be both regional and national and will direct traffic directly to the Visit Southeast Montana website and, in some cases, to the SEMT Facebook page. Additionally, a portion of the budget may be</p>	<p>Advertising has always been about location, location, location. And digital advertising has the flexibility to be at the right location at the right time. A recent study by Deloitte found that Americans collectively check their smartphones nearly 8 BILLION times per day -- that provides ample opportunity for Visit Southeast Montana to be in front of the identified target throughout the entire travel-decision process, from inspiration on forward. According to <i>Digital Advertising</i>, 70% of website visitors who are re-targeted with ads are likely to visit your site. And, according to 2016 report from <i>MarkMonitor</i>, 68% of global consumers book their travel online. We use this research to very specifically target our advertising</p>	<p>Success will be measured based on Visit SEMT's web analytics. The Visit SEMT Board has set goals for the SEMT website to reach in terms of unique visits to the website. Google Analytics will be used. Each online advertisement can be tracked and</p>	<p>Online advertising is by far the best way to reach a targeted audience. The analytics we receive from our website give us valuable information as to the engagement</p>	\$183,000.00	<p>Online advertising allows us to better target a specific consumer based on his/her online behaviors. Overall in FY19, digital advertising resulted in 19,073,150 impressions with 46,130 clicks and .24% CTR. Compared to FY18 [15,363 clicks and .19% CTR], Visit Southeast Montana is particularly pleased with this marketing segment's overall and continually improved performance.</p> <p>The <i>True West</i> (JV with Southwest MT & Missouri River Country), which focused on the history buff niche market, was again a strong performer. This multi-media buy included a print advertorial and display ads plus digital banner ads, native article, e-newsletter and social content. Digitally, it performed very well with the following stats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native article: 1.08% CTR (goal of .25%) • Facebook posts: 2.59% CTR (goal of .90%) • Overall CPC: \$3.88 (goal of \$4.00 CPC) • Overall impressions: 108,225 with 629 clicks and average 1.29% CTR <p>Combined with print reach of 75,000 and with the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument (LBBNM) being a regional anchor (~300K visitors/year), these results reinforce a strong interest from history-buff market, which we work to enhance and expand.</p> <p>Another strong performer, the <i>iExplore</i> buy, featured "7 Things to Love Out Here in Southeast Montana" custom content article, e-newsletter, banner ad and social content. We are especially impressed the native article's performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 536,608 impressions • 20,521 article page views, 2.5K shares and 1:15 minutes on page • 2284 clicks with 0.43% CTR (goal of 0.06%) • \$2.15 CPC (goal of \$4.00) <p>This is another digital buy that we plan to strongly consider in</p>	SEMT FY19 Media Plan Digital Performance_FINAL.pdf

		<p>dedicated to the direct flight markets, which will bring travelers directly into Southeast Montana. This is an ideal opportunity to collaborate with Visit Billings CVB.</p> <p>The digital advertising strategy includes TripAdvisor and Sojern, plus other Joint Venture opportunities that leverage funds.</p> <p>This marketing segment also includes funds for advertising agency services such as creative services, marketing strategies, media placement and production services.</p>	<p>on websites where users are in the process of planning a vacation, or may be planning a vacation. In late FY19, we also plan to add video to Southeast Montana's integrated digital approach.</p> <p>We also know, based on experience, that working with an advertising agency to purchase media gives Visit Southeast Montana greater buying power. Windfall, Inc. the agency of record, works with Visit Southeast Montana works from marketing plan and budget development, to annual marketing strategies, to creative, execution, implementation and reporting. Visit Southeast Montana staff would not be able to accomplish goals without agency assistance.</p>	<p>its success or failure will be determined in this fashion.</p> <p>For marketing services, we will measure success by the amount saved through Windfall's media buying power.</p>	<p>the target market has with each ad and whether it leads them to spend significant time on our website learning about SEMT.</p>	<p>FY20.</p> <p>Visit Southeast Montana also dedicated a portion of the social media budget to paid digital, which is highlighted under the Social Media segment.</p> <p>The TripAdvisor buy, which traditionally has a high CPM at \$18 plus, did not perform well in FY19 with a \$14.78 CPC with only 0.06% CTR (398 clicks on 620,549 impressions), therefore we will not continue this buy in FY20; the funds will be re-allocated to other digital opportunities.</p> <p>Visit SEMT's website saw a 168.21% increase in site visitors in FY19. The digital advertising marketing segment was part of this overall strategy. Our overall goal for digital media was set at .3%. Google Display Benchmarks, spring 2017 delivered an average 0.12% CTR for tourist destination campaigns. Considering all these factors, including increases from FY18, we consider the overall 0.24% CTR and this marketing segment a success; we are pleased with this marketing segment and will continue using it, modifying the portfolio of buys based on previous performance, target markets and best ROI.</p> <p>See Attachment 3 for a sample ad. All proof of performance is on file with Visit Southeast Montana.</p> <p>Regarding agency services, please see attachment 6, which outlines the FY19 media plan (print, digital, social, OOH) at a total of \$402,176. Windfall's media buyer was able to negotiate rates to \$215,168 for FY19. That is a savings of \$187,008; however, Visit Southeast Montana paid Windfall \$58,660 for creative fees/account managment in FY19. Considering those savings, we consider this marketing method a success and will continue to use it in the future.</p>	
		<p>Consumer shows, such as the Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis, primarily target directly to the leisure traveler, allowing us to provide specific guidance and printed information in a one-on-one arena, often to people who are already planning trips to Yellowstone or Glacier and are in the Orientation and Inspiration phases of the travel decision process. This also aligns with the Road Tripper market. The same could be true for shows in Denver and other direct-flight markets and/or</p>	<p>The year-long research project undertaken by SEMT, as well as up to date information collected from ITRR, support this project. Please see the Marketing Plan Narrative for information regarding SEMT Research. Additionally, we are taking information about outdoor adventures directly to the high potential visitor (HPV) as</p>	<p>Success will be</p>	<p>These shows allow us to build relationships and speak face-to-face both with the potential traveling public and tour operators who bring a number of international travelers to our state each year.</p>	<p>These venues provide opportunities to "sell" directly to the consumers, inspiring those who are "shopping" with images of the region along with a positive feeling that a trip to Southeast Montana would be a great experience and/or answers to very specific questions. Coupled with corresponding advertising and individual follow-up, leisure shows provide brand lift along with education and general awareness of the opportunities available within the region.</p> <p>In FY19 we attended the Great American West Roundup International meetings and the Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis, which attracts outdoor enthusiasts from the Minneapolis-St. Paul (MN) metro area plus western WI residents. MN is the #2 state for non-resident hunting licenses in SEMT. This market is also identified as the "Midwest road tripper" in the 2016 MT Brand Analysis plus fits Visit SEMT's "outdoor recreation" pillar.</p> <p>Based on our experience at the Northwest Sportshow in 2017, we invited Bob Gibson, FWP Region 5 Information & Education Manager, to attend with Visit SEMT in FY18 and again in FY19 – he is "in strong demand" at the booth. Bob wore his FWP uniform and was incredibly helpful, answering and detailing inquiries specific to MT hunting and fishing regulations (which can be complicated for non-residents) and how to access hunting locations—both via outfitter and via public land (DIY hunters). His in-depth knowledge was well-received with attendees often seeking him out or listening to his conversation with others – we consider this partnership with FWP to be invaluable. A representative from Glendive CVB also helped work the booth, mainly as a training opportunity.</p>	

Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	<p>regional shows. Travel tradeshows are appointment-based shows and target international tour operators. The Roundup International Conference is only for tour operators/receptives who focus on the four-state region and offers an excellent opportunity to develop relationships with these quality operators. The International Powwow, attending in conjunction with MOTBD, is a bigger conference, yet exposes the region to an even broader audience, including potential international media. For both international conferences, building relationships over time and keeping Southeast Montana's opportunities in front of these operators is an on-going process. Over the past year, we have noticed more interest in routing from YNP to TRNP in North Dakota -- with a perfect transition through the SEMT region.</p>	<p>identified by the Destination Analysts, Inc. study. As mentioned in our narrative, one of the aspects of our target market is that they are already considering a trip, or a return trip, to Montana. We travel to these shows to provide orientation and facilitation to those already somewhat familiar with the region. According to ITRR's 2017 Nonresident Visitation, Expenditures & Economic Impacts study, Oversees Visitors averaged \$1,015 per trip with an average stay of 5.82 days, compared to \$635 total per trip for an average of 5 days for Domestic Visitors. Therefore, aligning with the Montana Travel Trade Office's focus on UK, Germany and Australia makes sense and has the potential for a strong ROI.</p>	<p>measured based on the number of sign-up sheets collected at consumer shows(which are added to the Consumer Database) and by contacts made and meetings conducted at International Roundup. Based on our experience, we strongly believe that being present contributes to awareness and brand lift for both travel trade shows and leisure travel shows.</p>	<p>At these venues we can ask the operator specific questions about their clients' needs or ask the traveler what interests them (outdoor adventure, history, Native American culture, dino trails, dining/night life, etc.) and tailor our responses to specifically and accurately promote what Southeast Montana offers that coincides with their wants and needs. The tour operators are always asking, "What is new?" and by being present, we can answer and increase interest during dialogue.</p>	\$16,500.00	<p>While tradeshows ROI is are difficult to measure, we note the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2019 attendance was slightly lower than with 29,638 attendees compared to 32,683 in 2018 • Based on attendance, we estimate personal interactions with 5-10%, which equates to 370-741 individuals per day for 4 days or 1,480-2,964 individuals total • Distributed ~400 travel guides • Shared ~400 hunting/fishing rack cards detailing MT hunting & fishing info (new in FY19) • Shipped & used all of 1 box of MT maps (250) • Distributed ~50 Family Fun guides • Distributed ~200 SEMT History tear-off maps, nearly 100 SEMT scenic maps and nearly 100 Trail to the Little Bighorn maps • Added 48 email addresses to consumer email list <p>At the show we noticed a growing disinterest in sharing an email address (likely a privacy issue) along with a desire for less collateral. See the Electronic Newsletter marketing segment for more details on how email contacts are incorporated into the communications strategy.</p> <p>Based on our personal interactions, we estimate 90% of those who stopped at the booth know where MT is located; and, 70%+ have visited MT, have a MT trip planned or have MT on their "bucket list."</p> <p>Overall, we learned that (beyond the hunting opportunities, which was easily of the most interest) many attendees are interested in the national parks, but also in the value of NPS pass and/or Golden Age pass to visit LBBNM, Pompeys Pillar and other attractions outside of the Parks. We also fielded questions about camping, hiking, ATV trails, horse trails and the like.</p> <p>This is strong show for us, as demonstrated by guide requests at the call center (MN was #2 and WI #3). We will continue to give this show strong consideration in the future.</p> <p>For international markets, the Great American West Roundup (formerly Rocky Mountain International) targets tour operators specific to Europe, New Zealand and Australia who sell MT, SD, ND, ID and WY as a destination. Staff maximized 42 formal appointments plus met informally with those individuals and others. Visit SEMT collateral was shared with all and representatives were added to the SEMT database of international representatives. Based on these numbers, we consider this marketing segment a success and will continue to participate in Great American West's Roundup in the future. These relationships build and strengthen from year-to-year as familiarity with the region matures and new destination development projects come online. They are further strengthened when combined with a pre-fam, as we did in FY19 in collaboration with MOTBD's Travel Trade group. [See <i>Publicity marketing segment for details.</i>]</p>	SEMT_hunting_fishing_handout_03_19.pdf
		<p>Stunning photography is a key element to the inspirational piece of the marketing funnel. In FY18 we will dedicated significant funds to boost the Visit Southeast Montana photo library, seeking to own photos for multiple</p>	<p>Fresh, inspirational imagery is crucial to strong marketing initiatives and provide the Inspiration piece of the funnel. Research conducted by Visit SEMT staff at tradeshow events, in visitor information centers and other places has shown that there is a need for</p>		<p>In FY18, we combed partner contacts, looking for shared images and video. We will continue that process and also share SEMT's images (that are not in an active</p>		<p>In FY18 Visit Southeast Montana revitalized the photo video library with 72 images covering SEMT's pillars of outdoor recreation; Western authenticity; historical significance; dinosaur adventures; and Native American culture, plus we held a photo/video shoot in June of 2018.</p> <p>We continued that effort in FY19. The year's main focus was photo and video content that featured "older" models enjoying the history of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument and a photo/video shoot focused on hunting and fishing. We create efficiencies using volunteer or low-cost local models</p>	

Consumer	Photo/Video Library	<p>uses (i.e. advertising, travel guide, travel show booth, social media, etc.) rather than purchase for one-time uses. That process continues now (May of 2018) and into FY19.</p> <p>Additionally, we will incorporate photo rights into social influencers agreements when and where possible, thus stretching those dollars. In a new venture that will start in FY18 and continue into FY19, we are also shooting video and creating a small variety of video products to be launched across various platforms, including the website, through media campaigns and via leisure and tradeshow.</p>	<p>fresh, quality awe-inspiring photos to promote the region.</p> <p>Studies show that while people only remember 10% of things they hear and 20% of what they have read, around 80% of people remember things they see or do. And, Simply Measured found that there was not only a 46% increase in content engagement for brands but an additional 65% increase in photo and video engagement.</p> <p>For example, one of our new tradeshow booth "skins" shows an image of a man and dog, pheasant hunting. We received far, far more questions about upland bird hunting at that show (Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis) than in the previous year. While this is "unofficial" research, the value and message of imagery cannot be disregarded.</p>	<p>Without stellar images, Visit Southeast Montana's message would be only words and thus, would struggle to inspire. We strive to add at least 35 new images to the photo library this year while remaining within the budget.</p>	<p>campaign). Additionally, we will also work with MOTBD to secure images of Southeast Montana if and when the opportunities arise. As another option, we will consider hosting a photo contest to both build excitement about regional images plus acquire the use of those images, provided this can be accomplished within the rules and regulations. We could also look to photography students for a collaborative project -- in short, we will maximize the budget to build a very robust photo library.</p>	\$10,000.00	<p>(including family and hunting dogs of marketing personnel) and bartering with a tourism partner for guide services during a "slower" time.</p> <p>More than 40 new images have been used in hunting-specific marketing, including social media, consumer eblasts, blog posts, website, plus print and digital advertising. Video was used in a :30 TV commercial that ran during the Fall, 2019 (FY20) airing of <i>The Flush</i> and/or <i>Rooster Tales</i>. Video footage (budget covered Voice Over work, too) was also used in an inspirational video that we distributed in various time segments and across various platforms (i.e. social media; consumer eblast; paid social; in-stream video network and connected TV [see <i>Media Report attached to Online Advertising for reporting details</i>]). The full-length video runs at the top of Visit SEMT's Facebook page, is embedded on www.southeastmontana.com, is used during presentations and can be viewed at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D41-iDdsBqk.</p> <p>We consider this method successful because we met our objective of 35 new image with 40 images (had less than 5 for hunting prior to FY19) and created three videos (2:00; :15 and :10) plus a :30 TV commercial. Additionally, we completed the objective within the designated budget.</p> <p>In addition, we acquired an additional 40 images (for a total of 75 images) from journalist/photographer Donnie Sexton [see <i>Publicity/Earned Media/PR marketing segment</i>] as a value-added component of her farm in region in June of 2019. The images were actually acquired in FY20 but her work was done in FY19.</p> <p>We will continue to both purchase images for marketing use, plus plan and shoot in-house video and photos to maximize efficiency while continuing to build Visit Southeast Montana's photo/video library. Digital photo and video are on file at Visit Southeast Montana.</p>	
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	<p>In FY18, we opted to move the Visit Southeast Montana website away from the MOTBD website umbrella to allow for more control and creativity. While still maintaining the Montana brand, the new SEMT website aligns with the Visit Southeast Montana brand and creative. Additionally, FY19 will see website expansion and enhancements such as a news room, potential blog, more detailed listing with locations for newly-developed itineraries and video.</p> <p>A website is</p>	<p>Research has shown that the most commonly used source for travel planning is online research using DMO websites and other online sources.</p> <p>According to TrekkSoft.com's <i>Travel Trend Report 2018</i>, 82% of tour and activity bookings processed by TrekkSoft take place on a company's website or mobile app, with 64% being researched and booked by women (with 64% being age 34 or younger). Additionally, AARP's <i>2017 Travel Trends</i></p>	<p>Success will be measured based on increases in key web analytics. Our goal was ambitious, looking for a 100% increase in website traffic as per the marketing plan.</p>	<p>A vibrant, fresh website is simple crucial in today's environment. To be without is suspect.</p>	\$19,000.00	<p>FY19 was the first full year of the updated website, which was moved from under MOTBD's umbrella. However, <i>southeastmontana.com</i> still pulls business listings from <i>visitmt.com</i>, which has been a bit tricky at times and requires some extra massaging. The "new" site is mobile-friendly and features hero photos and the new video content.</p> <p>In FY18, <i>southeastmontana.com</i> tracked 32,559 total users, including 30,374 new users, with 69,082 page views. In contrast, in FY19 the new website recorded 87,327 total users with 149,841 page views. The data (translated into a bar graph), also shows a sharp increase/decrease based on Visit Southeast Montana's warm season advertising campaign.</p> <p>These statistics -- key web analytics - provide a great snapshot of the site's performance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 168.21% increase in site visitors • 116.9% increase in page views <p>According to the FY19 marketing plan, our goal was 100% increase in traffic numbers, so we consider this marketing method a solid success and will continue to employ this method in the future.</p> <p>Please see the attached document for more details on website traffic, including top pages visited, keywords and states of origin (for website traffic). We will also add that keywords are noted and used in future content development.</p>	FY19 SEMT Website Traffic Report.xlsx

		dynamic and this strategy includes continuous optimization, plus SEO and SEM to assist with organic searches and placement.	<i>Report</i> , notes that 41% of Boomers will book at the airline/hotel/car website.				We would also like to highlight Visit Southeast Montana's new blog, which was added to the website in FY19. The blog is tied to the overall consumer communication strategy, which includes a push to the Consumer list via 1-2 e-blast/month. We continue to monitor the site's performance and further enhance both content and usability.	
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Consumer-facing E-newsletters will be sent out from time to time to inform those in our consumer database of interesting tourist attractions in SEMT, as well as upcoming events. This strategy will be used in conjunction with social media, news releases and hallmark event promotion.	Research shows that online research is the number one way visitors plan future vacations. Our E-Blasts use this media to inspire and guide potential visitors to relevant areas of our website where they can receive information in planning their trip. It has been proven that email marketing is the king of the marketing kingdom with a 4,400% ROI and \$4 for every \$1 spent, as noted on CampaignMonitor.com.	Success will be measured based on analytics we receive on our database, such as "opens" and "click throughs." We set a 15% Open Rate as our goal for FY19. The email campaign also provides brand lift in the consumer world.	Email is a convenient medium to help inform our database of upcoming events which are time sensitive. Additionally, we will incorporate newly-acquired photos into this method and tie it to social media campaigns.	\$2,000.00	<p>This marketing method focuses on using e-blasts to reach Consumers with inspirational messages, highlighting upcoming events, things to do while visiting Montana and/or news events relevant to tourism. We use the CRM MailChimp and FY19 added leads from <i>Yellowstone Journal</i> (10,970) and <i>Destination Missoula</i> (6,143) ad buys for a total of 22,720 consumer subscribers on June 30, 2019.</p> <p>In February of 2019, we launched the Visit Southeast Montana blog including e-blasting content to the Consumer database on a regular basis (1-2x/month, depending on the season).</p> <p>Throughout FY19 we sent 10 e-blasts to Consumers, including five as part of the "new" blog e-blasts. Overall, Visit Southeast Montana averaged a 15.85% open rate with .765% click-through rate (CTR). However, after the "new system" was put in place, which included pushing e-blast traffic to the Visit SEMT blog, we averaged a 15.62% open rate with a 1.22% CTR.</p> <p>Additionally, Visit Southeast Montana connected with 139,784 consumers via e-blast. If 1.22% clicked thru, then 1,705 consumers were exposed to the Visit SEMT blog. Continuing the math, if we divide the 1,705 consumers by total cost of \$2,500, we have \$1.46 cost per click (CPC).</p> <p>The e-newsletter is part of Visit Southeast Montana's modified communication strategy (started in late February 2019) in which blogs and/or news are posted and then "blasted" to the consumer list. The same content is pushed out through social media channels. We incorporate news release and earned media through these same channels, thus efficiently maximizing all content.</p> <p>While we fell a bit short of the overall e-newsletter open rate goal of 15%, the "new" strategy (post-blog launch) did exceed the 15% goal, therefore we consider this method a success and will continue to employ it in subsequent years as a key component of Visit SEMT's multi-platform communication strategy.</p>	SEMT Consumer Newsletter March 7, 2019.pdf
Consumer	Printed Material	This line item provides for funds to produce targeted print pieces promoting more specific aspects of Visit Southeast Montana (as noted on page 13 of the attached FY19 Marketing Plan). These print pieces may include, but are not limited to, rodeo calendars of events for cowboy-related events, hunting and fishing information and targeted itineraries that compliment the	Our own research conducted at travel trade shows and other events has shown that targeted pieces grab attention. For example, we gave away ~ 1,500 maps over 2 days at the Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis -- potential visitors were very interested in the region-specific scenic map. By producing smaller pieces with	Success will be measured based on reports from staff attending events where the pieces are handed out. We will also measure success by distribution numbers with a goal of distributing at least	Supplementary printed materials will compliment and work in conjunction with the new Visit Southeast Montana website.	\$5,000.00	<p>While Visit Southeast Montana has moved the traditional travel guide to being a private fund project, we utilized this marketing segment to print niche pieces. A group of tourism partners in the Forsyth area created a destination development product, which was branded as the Trail to the Little Bighorn, and Visit Southeast Montana used the existing map template to create and print a map of these 19 roadside markers of the U.S. 7th Cavalry's activities that led up and resulted from the Battle of Little Bighorn. This product focuses on the history buff niche market.</p> <p>We printed 1,000 full-color Trail to the Little Bighorn tear-off maps (20 pads/50 maps per pad) and distributed 1750 in FY19 (including maps printed in-house). Therefore, we distributed more than 100%.</p> <p>It is difficult to connect a printed piece to a booking, but we can provide personal evidence that visitors – in this case, history buffs – find these pieces both inspirational and educational. Entities that focus on that market, like Big Horn Associates</p>	little-bighorn-trail-map.pdf

		<p>newly-developed FY18 thematic maps.</p> <p>Additionally, these items could include cooperative efforts with within and intra-region. The budget includes production, print and shipping costs.</p>	<p>more specific information that meets the needs or wants of the reader, they will be more inspired to take action.</p>	<p>75% within the first year of printing.</p>			<p>(national group with special interest in the Battle of Little Bighorn) and The Historical Museum at Fort Missoula, specifically requested 150 and 100 maps respectively. Based on distribution numbers and personal conversations with history buffs at shows like the Northwest Sportshow in Minneapolis, and we consider this a successful marketing segment. We will continue to create print products as they fit the marketing plan.</p>	
Marketing Support	Research	<p>This line is simply a placeholder for potential research project(s), particularly one in conjunction with a CVB or another region.</p>	<p>Research always makes a marketing segment more valuable.</p>	<p>To be determined if/when a research project is embarked upon.</p>	<p>To be determined if/when a research project is embarked upon.</p>	<p>\$100.00</p>	<p>No bed tax funds were used for this marketing method.</p>	
Marketing Support	Outreach	<p>We will use this segment to offer support to Visit Southeast Montana's Tourism Partners. For example, in FY18 we offered (2) workshops specializing in Digital Marketing Strategies and expect to consider a similar format for FY19.</p>	<p>By offering our expertise and marketing support to Visit SEMT's Tourism Partners, we strengthen the entire region and industry. This collaboration logically flows directly into the Visitor Facilitation piece of the funnel.</p>	<p>We will track attendance and post-workshop surveys to determine success.</p>	<p>Please see the narrative on page 10 of the attached FY19 Marketing Plan for details.</p>	<p>\$1,000.00</p>	<p>In FY19 Visit Southeast Montana again hosted Marketing Workshops for Tourism Partners at two locations in the region: Billings and Miles City. Topics included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Southeast Montana's Marketing Toolbox; • How to Maximize the Travel Blog Exchange in Southeast Montana; • Introduction to Social Media; • Maximizing Facebook & Instagram; and, • Make Your Grant Application Stand Out. <p>The workshops were well-attended with 18 in Billings (it was very cold, poor weather day = several no-shows) and 23 in Miles City. Comparatively, the FY18 workshops were attended by 19 in Billings and 15 in Miles City. Based on increased attendance year-over-year and 14 completed post-workshop questionnaires, we consider this method a success and plan to employ it in the future.</p> <p>Visit Southeast Montana also identified presentations as way to meet objective of grow in-region partnerships, with a goal of giving eight presentations in FY19.</p> <p>Staff gave nine presentations across the region including to Leadership Miles City; Roundup Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors; and, Powder River County Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture (Broadus), reaching ~189 individuals. Having surpassed the goal of eight presentations, we consider this method a success and plan to implement it in FY20.</p> <p>Additionally, staff attended the series of Eastern Montana Tourism Initiative Meetings, which were incredibly valuable and continued into FY20.</p>	
Marketing Support	Marketing Plan Development	<p>This strategy is a line item holder, in the event that funds are available and the SEMT Board sees the need to re-evaluate the region's overall strategies.</p>	<p>To be determined if segment is used</p>	<p>To be determined.</p>	<p>To be determined.</p>	<p>\$100.00</p>	<p>This segment was not used in FY19.</p>	
		<p>In our FY19</p>						

Marketing Support	Administration	Marketing Plan Budget, Visit Southeast Montana is budgeting the full 20% allowable for Administrative Expenses. Our strategy in doing so is to take a conservative stance in terms of how much of the Administrative Budget will ultimately used. By budgeting for the full 20%, we don't run the risk of going over budget for allowable Administrative expenses.	Based on previous experience, we know that a DMO like Visit Southeast Montana needs an administrative budget to efficiently and effectively execute the marketing plan.	As per statute, the maximum allowed for administration is no more than 20% of the total marketing budget of new revenue. We will consider the method successful if the total spend falls within these parameters. As long as the administrative side of SEMT continues to run smoothly, and the funds are used in a responsible matter, we will continue the method to be a success.	Administrative expenses, including mileage reimbursements for travel to stakeholders and events across this vast region, are necessary for the fulfillment of Visit Southeast Montana's mission.	\$109,000.00	The amount spend on administration of Visit Southeast Montana falls within the allowable 20% of the budget, therefore we consider this method a success and will continue to employ it in the future.	
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	Visit Southeast Montana will employ a full-time Marketing Manager and a part-time Social Media/PR Manager in FY19. The Marketing Manager is responsible for implementation of marketing and public relations projects as assigned. A full job description is attached. The Social Media/PR Manager assists the Marketing Manager and will develop, manage and monitor publicity and communications projects and programs. A complete job description is attached.	All of our research has shown that it is necessary to market a region to travelers in order to encourage them to visit and to see sights and attractions which might not otherwise be known to them. Marketing staff is necessary in order to facilitate the many projects and tasks needed in order to accomplish this.	Success will be measured dependent on annual marketing goals set by the SEMT Board of Directors. Marketing Personnel are also evaluated annually by John Brewer, CEO of Visit Southeast Montana.	These positions are a very efficient and cost effective means to handle our marketing. The value of the local knowledge of the region, relationships with stakeholders and familiarity with events cannot be overstated.	\$75,000.00	As the "feet on the ground" throughout the large 13-county region, the Marketing Manager and Social Media & Marketing Administrative Assistant stand as authorities on all tourism attractions, events and activities. This central point of contact serves as liaison and shares detailed knowledge with MOTBD, regional partners and stakeholders, and the agency of record, making the position essential to promoting the entire region. In terms of measurement, Visit Southeast Montana Board of Directors and John Brewer report high satisfaction with marketing staff and their efforts to meet marketing objectives and goals. Annual reviews are on file at the Billings Chamber of Commerce (which manages the Visit Southeast Montana contract). We met our objective and will continue to employ this marketing method.	SEMT Admin Position Description.zip
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	Staff from Montana's tourism regions are strongly encouraged to attend the Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Tourism Advisory Council meetings. This line item sets	Based on previous experience, we know that information shared at TAC meeting, along with the professional networking, is a valuable component of successfully marketing the Montana brand.	Success will be measured by staff attendance at TAC meetings and the Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation.	Funding is needed for car rentals, mileage, hotel reservations, food per diem, and other misc. expenses during travel to TAC and Governor's Conference	\$2,500.00	At least one representative from Visit Southeast Montana attended every TAC meeting plus the Governor's Conference in FY19, including a well-received presentation of the FY20 marketing plan at the June, 2019 meeting. We met our objective and will continue to employ this marketing method.	

		aside funding to allow us to do so.			meetings.		
Marketing Support	Professional Development	This line item provides funds for Visit Southeast Montana staff to attend Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) Conference on Travel & Tourism, or similar industry-specific training.	According to <i>The Business Journals</i> , "Professional development helps employees continue to not only be competent in their profession, but also excel in it." This statement is important to the Visit Southeast Montana organization.	Success will be measured via a report from the Visit Southeast Montana staff member who attends the conference as to what they learned and how they will apply the knowledge to promoting the region.	Industry-specific conferences provide staff with the opportunity to network with fellow DMO employees and to learn about new trends, opportunities and technology in the destination marketing industry. It's important that staff remain up to date on what is happening amongst other DMOs from states throughout the nation.	\$5,000.00	Staff did not attend professional training in FY19
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	This method covers expenses to field inquiries (calls, email) from potential visitors and provide them with requested printed material via mail. Expenses include agency fees, shipping, postage and storage. This method also covers the cost to distribute the Visit Southeast Montana travel guides to locations across Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota, primarily to locations frequented by travelers.	Research conducted by Visit SEMT, MOTBD and ITRR has shown that Travel Guides and phone inquiries are ways in which visitors gather information and plan trips. Fulfillment, both in mailing brochures to those who request them, and in answering toll-free phone calls regarding a visit to Southeast Montana, helps provide these services to potential visitors. Also, 2016 ITRR research indicates that 25% of people use brochure information racks.	Success will be measured based on the number of calls fielded and material sent. At the end of the fiscal year these numbers will be compared to expenses to determine whether it is the most efficient way to meet customer needs.	Some ads and printed material, plus the website, feature a toll-free number encouraging travelers with questions to call and/or request a travel guide. It's important we continue to provide this service to potential visitors. We add the collected email addresses to the Consumer e-blast database, continuing to grow that communication line. Additionally, we distribute travel guides to locations throughout Montana, Wyoming and South Dakota to keep that	\$33,300.00	<p>Visit Southeast Montana continued its contract with Corporate Cost Control (formerly known as Mars Stout) for Travel Guide fulfillment via calls, online inquiries and email.</p> <p>The Call Center handled 7,592 inquiries and sent 17,002 guides in FY19. The top states of origin for inquiries, outside of Montana include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Texas 2. Minnesota 3. Wisconsin 4. Illinois 5. California 6. Florida 7. Pennsylvania <p>Part-way through FY19, we added "Inquiries by Interest" to the Corporate Cost Control's tasks with the following top results:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scenic Driving 2. History 3. Little Bighorn Battlefield 4. Wildlife 5. Lewis & Clark Trail <p>To measure success, we looked at travel guide inquiries, which increased by 222.10% and total number of guides sent, which increased by 66.56%.</p> <p>Visit Southeast Montana contracted with Certified Folder and distributed 41,500 travel guides, mainly via six routes across the region, including 566 locations. We blanketed both the Rapid City/Black Hills area (233 locations) and Yellowstone National Park (100) to encourage those "on the ground" (especially Midwestern "Road Trippers" as identified in the 2016 Montana Brand Analysis) who travel to those popular destinations to stop in Southeast Montana during their travels. Please note that we again realized a 10% savings on this service by paying the entire year in advance.</p> <p>In terms of on-the-ground fulfillment, CF distributed both 2018 and 2019 Travel Guides over FY19, with ongoing distribution</p>

					inspirational and guiding piece at the forefront of travelers' minds.	of the 2019 guide into FY20. Broken down, the distribution cost is \$2.05/guide. Economically, we could not distribute to those quantities and variety of locations for a lesser amount. Based on the numbers of travel guides distributed, we consider this segment a success and will continue to use both services in FY20.		
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	This method may fund grants to Visit Visit Information Centers to help them maintain operations and/or pay for improvements (within the state rules and regulations including signage) so they can better meet the needs of Visit SEMT visitors. As the eastern gateway of the state, it is vital that the VICs receive visitors, at least during warm season.	Research conducted by the Montana Office of Tourism has shown that VICs are important and that it is vital to provide VICs and their staff with the tools and knowledge they need to provide a good experience to the visitor. Without support from Visit SEMT, these VICs would have drastically reduced staffing/open hours.	Success will be measured based on feedback from the VICs, which is gathered from first-hand experiences and signup information sheets from visitor interaction, that will be submitted in report format.	A visitor's experience once they arrive in the region is vital in encouraging them to make a return trip. VIC's are the first place visitors go with problems or questions, and it is important to insure that they have the resources to maintain regular hours and to properly staff their visitor centers.	\$15,000.00	<p>Visit Southeast Montana supports three gateway Visitor Information Centers (Hardin, Broadus and Wibaux) seasonal staffing needs via a grant process. The Visit Southeast Montana Board of Directors sees these VICs as essential to the visitors' experience in the region and supports operation whenever possible; VIC management agrees that these funds and services are vital for the "small-town charm" and welcome that is part of the Montana brand.</p> <p>In FY18, the Visit SEMT Board decided to modify the existing grant award process, requiring grantees to submit reports prior to funds being awarded. Therefore the \$15,000 budget designated for the 3 VICs was intentionally rolled to FY19 and allocated to the VIC Funding segments.</p> <p>The VICs submitted reports in FY19 with the follow details:</p> <p>Big Horn County VIC = 11,236 total visitors</p> <p>Top 10 States of Origin</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MT 2. CA 3. WA 4. CO 5. TX 6. FL 7. IL 8. WI 9. AZ 10. WY <p>Powder River VIC = 6,583 total visitors</p> <p>Top 10 States of Origin:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MT 2. WA 3. IO 4. MO 5. IL 6. SD 7. MN 8. FL 9. TX 10. WI <p>Wibaux VIC = 12,086 total visitors</p> <p>Top 10 States of Origin:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. MN 2. WI 3. MT 4. ND 5. MI 6. WA 7. IL 8. CA 9. OH 10. FL <p>We will continue to use this method as budget allows and the Visit SEMT Board approves. The VICs are a one-on-one touchpoint at gateway locations. With a combined total of 29,905 personal interactions, it breaks down to \$1.99/person – a cost-effective method for sharing information about Montana and encouraging return visitation.</p>	Combined VIC Totals.xlsx
							<p>Joint Venture projects allow us to leverage funds with SEMT's Partners. In FY19 we continued the long-standing collaboration with the 14 Montana Dinosaur Trail partners, with supplemental support to create a video from each partner facility in the region: Carter County Museum, Frontier</p>	

Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	<p>Visit Southeast Montana considers the Joint Ventures line item a vital budget segment because it is basically a "2 for the price of 1" opportunity, plus Joint Ventures allow us the look both within and beyond the region to find similarities (ie: Little Bighorn and Big Hole Battlefields) and market thematically. These funds are specifically designated for use in joint marketing projects with lodging tax entities, including CVBs, Regions and the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development.</p>	<p>It simply makes sense to participate in Joint Ventures - leveraged funds go farther, so this \$7,500 budget line becomes \$15,000 or more.</p>	<p>Plans to measure success for projects utilizing Joint Venture funds will be made depending on the details of the project.</p>	<p>We have found Joint Ventures with the MOTBD to be extremely effective in fulfilling our mission and marketing Visit Southeast Montana to the largest number of targeted potential visitors. We feel that by also participating in Joint Ventures with CVBs and Regions, we can further expand the success we've seen working with MOTBD. Collaboration simply makes sense. Joint Ventures also foster the partnering relationship that remains vital across the state.</p>	\$7,500.00	<p>Gateway Museum and Makoshika State Park. We also attend the annual Montana Dinosaur Trail partners' annual meeting.</p> <p>The completed videos are now available on the MT Dino Trail website s https://mtdinotrail.org/ and also via YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=montanadinosaurtrail.</p> <p>We measure success of the trail by year-over-year visitation numbers with supplementary information on numbers of passports purchased and number of Trail "finishers."</p> <p>In the SEMT region, both Makoshika State Park and Carter County Museum are in operation year round and will not have calendar year 2019 numbers until early January, 2020. However, reports indicate that Makoshika is on track to match 2018 visitation numbers – and this included having the main road closed from August 20, 2018 – June 3, 2019, which negatively affected visitation.</p> <p>Carter County Museum's numbers are not yet final, however current visitation is at 5,718 (with 136 attributed to Trail), which is an 11.16% increase from 2018. The Frontier Gateway Museum reported a 5% increase in visitation. With eight facilities reporting at this time, the overall Trail visitation is up 4% over 2018 (10 left to report). Additionally, there are 56 Trail Finishers to date, which is a record over 2018's 24 and a huge increase over the previous record of 38.</p> <p>The Trail has also experienced a 15% increase in passports sold with 716 to date, compared to 618 in 2018. This number will, of course, increase as more facilities report by Jan. 1, 2020.</p> <p>Based on these numbers, we consider this segment a resounding success and will continue to support the Montana Dinosaur Trail – we are stronger together and this collaborative effort should be a template for other destination development partnerships.</p> <p>Visit Southeast Montana also contributed to the printing 2019 Accommodations Directory as requested by MOTBD. With 45,000 total copies distributed, Visit Southeast Montana's cost was \$0.0060/copy and we consider this a success also and will likely contribute to this joint venture in the future, too.</p> <p>In FY19 Visit Southeast Montana was invited by Glendive Chamber/CVB for a joint venture geo-fence of the Billings Hill Climb event, promoting the Short Pines OHV near Glendive to the event attendees and participants. The mini-campaign totaled 124,974 impressions with 586 clicks for a 0.75% CTR. For a \$750 investment, we consider this project a success and will consider this type of JV in the future.</p> <p>Other JVs are included in the Print and/or Digital Advertising segments with details in the Media Performance Report attachments.</p> <p>We will continue to invest in Joint Ventures in a case-by-case basis, as opportunities arise.</p>	Billings Hill Climb JV report.docx
		<p>As previously stated, collaboration makes sense. In the past Visit Southeast Montana has offered Cooperative Marketing Grants to</p>	<p>Each organization which receives</p>	<p>Plans to measure</p>	<p>Most of the applicants for Cooperative Marketing funds are from small communities attempting to increase tourism to their town. Often times they would be unable to move forward with their project without the</p>			

Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	<p>non-profit tourism related businesses throughout the region Successful applicants must demonstrate that the project (for which funds are being requested) will benefit Visit Southeast Montana by increasing tourism to the region. All TAC regulations must be met in order for funding to be given and the committee favors new projects and events over others.</p>	<p>Cooperative Marketing Funds must provide research showing how the funds provided helped increase tourism to Visit Southeast Montana. Over the past several years, the research we've received has clearly shown that by providing funding for projects, we are indeed leveraging our tourism dollars in the most effective way possible</p>	<p>success for projects utilizing Cooperative Marketing funds will be made depending on the details of the project. Typical measurements included increased attendance at events, increased paid admission to a facility or creation or improvement of a tourism entity.</p>	<p>matching grant funds we supply. By offering Cooperative Marketing funds, we are helping to improve Southeast Montana's tourism infrastructure and promotion of small events and communities in a way we could not if we were to undertake the projects alone. In addition, Cooperative Marketing reinforces strong partnerships within the region and that helps tourism overall.</p>	\$10,000.00	<p>In FY19 we changed the Cooperative Marketing Grants reporting protocol and timelines to be a more efficient model, ultimately requiring awardees to submit a completion report prior to releasing funds. Therefore this \$10,000 marketing segment was conducted but not completed in FY19, rather funds were rolled into FY20 to award to projects approved in FY19 but completed and reported in FY20. This marketing method will be evaluated in that fiscal year.</p> <p>We believe this modification will increase efficiency (i.e. Staff only handling reports once, rather than back-and-forth) and plan to continue the method in subsequent years, as budget allows.</p>	
Publicity	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	<p>Public relations, earned media and media tracking are all strategies that allow Visit Southeast Montana to stretch the marketing dollar. Hosting media events for new tourism products or collaborating to bring media to a major or new event will leverage even more dollars into trackable product. This strategy compliments the Fam strategy.</p>	<p><i>Marketshare</i> notes that word-of-mouth has been shown to improve marketing effectiveness by up to 54%. And, again, Nielsen study shows that 92% of consumers believe suggestions from friends and family more than other advertising.</p>	<p>We will measure success by the quantity of articles, blogs, content, images and video produced directly from our PR and media efforts.</p>	<p>This strategy includes cooperatively contracting a media tracking and database service with Visit Billings. This massive database allows us to mine for writers, bloggers, influencers and the like to cover very specific topics. We'll once again use the history buff example, noting that different writers may have a similar interest but a variety of outlets.</p>	\$8,000.00	<p>In FY19, Visit Southeast Montana staff tracked 32 total pieces of earned media - nine with a regional reach and 23 with a national reach. In contrast, using the Cision media tracking service, we accumulated 807 earned media pieces - these are pieces we would not find, tracked or known about without Cision's service. We do consider this segment a success because we cannot track these alone and the results greatly exceed goals. In addition, we contract the service at an industry-affordable rate, based on the sharing cost with Visit Billings. We plan to continue using this marketing segment.</p> <p>We also used this marketing segment to support staff while they are conducting publicity work in the region. For example, staff expense from the Miles City Bucking Horse Sale while hosting journalist Mark Bedor (see Publicity/Fam Tours) or meeting with journalist and photographer Donnie Sexton is included in this segment. She produced a piece for Budget Travel, which can be viewed at: https://www.budgettravel.com/article/montana-southeast-history and via the earned media report attachment. Donnie also produced "Good Eats" pieces that were distributed across the Lee Newspaper network (again, see the earned media report). Lastly, by agreement Donnie provided 40 photos to Visit Southeast Montana as a "value added" component of this publicity segment</p> <p>Additional work from these journalists (plus Aaron Theisen) will be available on the FY20 earned media report - they visited late in FY19 and finished work is not yet published/produced. See attachment 4 for itinerary details, noting that these journalists were not accompanied 100% of time by Visit SEMT staff and are less "formal" allowing journalists to create their own stories.</p> <p>While only one article has been produced to date, Aaron Theisen shared that he has an assignment from <i>DirtRag</i> (magazine focused on mountain biking adventures) - both print and online to be produced in early 2020.</p> <p>Considering the minimal expense to support these journalist and the quality of what has been produced and/or what will potentially be produced, we do consider this segment a success and plan to continue it in FY20.</p>	FY19 SEMT Earned Media Tracking.zip

<p>Publicity</p>	<p>Social Media</p>	<p>Funds in this segment support efforts in the social media realm including social media influencers, event promotions or "boosts" and other ways to enhance organic social media content throughout the region. This strategy also includes paid social media to specific target markets.</p>	<p>Research also shows that social media, including social media influencers, supports brand lift, places opportunities in front of followers and inspires "followers" to act. Nearly 70% of people would rather learn about products through good content. And 68% of consumers spend time reading blog content and other content from a brand that they find interesting. Additionally, according to the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Center for Marketing Research, 77% of millennials make a purchase both online and in-store after viewing something on Facebook. <i>Fluent</i> noted that the top three social media for Millennials and non-Millennials (age 35+) are Facebook, YouTube and Instagram.</p>	<p>Social media analytics will provide a solid measure of success. Plus, in our experience, quality social media content continually provides a strong brand boost.</p>	<p>Social media continues to gain in popularity and markets. While the majority of content will be created and/or gathered in-house, we will sometimes contract with social influencers to supplement and gain access to different audiences. Plus, social media is an ever-changing, ever-growing platform that allows for creativity and experimentation.</p>	<p>\$12,000.00</p>	<p>Social media remained a vital but low-cost component of Visit Southeast Montana's marketing plan in FY19. Staff maintains Facebook and Instagram channels at minimal costs, promoting content that is a combination of organic, credited, user-generated and social influencer/paid content. For example, during the time that family blogger Jill Robbins (<i>met during TBEX 2018, see Opportunity marketing segment</i>) was in-region, we shared her content and later her blogs via the Visit Southeast Montana channels, thus amplifying the reach to both the SEMT audience and Ripped Jeans & Bifocal's audience.</p> <p>In addition, as blogs (new in FY19) are posted, we strategically post that content, pushing the viewer from social channels to the blog on southeastmontana.com, as part of the multi-channel communication strategy described above.</p> <p>Facebook started FY19 with 19,465 and ended with 22,249, which equals a 14.3% increase while Visit Southeast Montana's Instagram account started with 5,677 followers and ended with 5,810 followers = 2.34% increase.</p> <p>We also dedicated a portion of the social media budget to paid advertising, which allows for ultra-targeted messaging at very low costs. In FY19 we ran three paid social campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm season landing page = 2.49% CTR and \$0.19 CPC • Warm season video promo = .26% CTR and \$0.76 CPC • Facebook Likes = 1.52% CRT and \$0.65 CPC <p>We will note that the promotional video had the lowest CTR with .42% but 57,683 of 782,865 (7.4%) impressions maintained a 10-second+ view. [<i>See digital performance report under Online Advertising above.</i>]</p> <p>Although we fell short of the 25% increase, we are pleased with the overall social media performance and consider the paid social, in particular, a success. In FY20, we will modify the mix of content types, likely increasing the percentage of paid social in the marketing plan.</p>	<p>FY19 Social Media Brief.docx</p>
		<p>This method sets aside funds for familiarization tours through Southeast Montana for tour operators,</p>			<p>Fam tours are an important method of educating potential tour operators to bring groups into SEMT. Operators rarely are willing to add an area to their product line unless they have experienced it</p>		<p>In FY19, Visit Southeast Montana collaborated with MOTBD's Travel Trade staff and Visit Billings on three international fam trips. The first, which was led by Brand USA focused on the Australia & New Zealand markets, included 10 tour operators, highlighted Crow Fair and then brought attendees through the region. We featured our natural wonders with a hike in Makoshika State Park and our small-town charm with lunch at the GEM/Beaver Creek Brewery in Wibaux.</p> <p>As mentioned under Tradeshow, we collaborated with MOTBD's Travel Trade and Visit Billings to host a pre-Great American West Roundup fam, which included six international tour operators. In addition to Billings' activities and attractions, we highlighted the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, Cheyenne Indian Museum at St. Labre Indian School and Powder River County Museum in Broadus, all along the Warrior Trail on the way to the meetings in Spearfish, SD.</p> <p>Upon request from MOTBD, we co-hosted a representative from Dutch-based Atlantic Dream Vacations. A corresponding current itinerary, which includes an overnight in Billings plus the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument can be viewed here: https://www.atlanticdreamvacations.nl/amerika/autorondreisen-amerika/24-autorondreis-cowboys-en-indianen</p>	

Attachment 4	FY19 SEMT Fams.zip
Attachment 5	FY19 SEMT Budget to Actual Comparison Report.xlsx
Attachment 6	SEMT FY19 Media Plan_March FINAL.pdf
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	\$60,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$203,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$16,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$19,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
		\$325,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$22,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$109,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	\$75,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$7,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$10,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Professional Development	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	\$33,300.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Marketing Plan Development	\$100.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Research	\$100.00	\$0.00
		\$281,500.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	\$8,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Social Media	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Fam Trips	\$9,000.00	\$0.00
		\$29,000.00	\$0.00
		\$636,000.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
2016 Montana Brand Research	Montana Brand Exploration Research - Final Report of Findings V2 - Novme... (004).pdf	3.0 MB
FY19 Marketing Plan - Visit Southeast Montana	SEMT FY19 Marketing Plan FINAL TO TAC.pdf	2.5 MB
SEMT Marketing Plan Funnel	SEMT Marketing Plan Funnel - FY19.pdf	12 KB

SEMT Projected Budget FY19

SEMT Projected Budget FY19_pie_chart.pdf

11 KB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description

File Name

File Size

Certificate of Compliance FY19 Application for Lodging Tax Revenue
Pledge of Understanding and Compliance

FY19 Visit SEMT MPlan Compliance Docs.pdf

779 KB

