



## Grant Details

### 68892 - FY19 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

---

72764 - FY19 Whitefish CVB Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

**Grant Title:** FY19 Whitefish CVB Marketing Plan  
**Grant Number:** 19-51-028  
**Grant Status:** Underway  
**Comments:**  
**Applicant Organization:** Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc.  
**Grantee Contact:** Dylan Boyle  
**Award Year:** 2018  
**Program Area:** DOC Office of Tourism

<b>Amounts:</b>				
<b>Contract Dates:</b>	Contract Sent		Contract Received	
<b>Project Dates:</b>	06/20/2018		07/01/2018	06/30/2019
	Proposal Date		Project Start	Project End
<b>Grant Administrator:</b>	Barb Sanem			
<b>Contract Number</b>	19-51-028			
<b>Award Year</b>	2018			
<b>Contract Dates</b>				

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?*

The purpose of the Explore Whitefish Marketing Plan is to sustainably grow the economy of Whitefish by emphasizing its desirability as a travel and recreation destination to non-resident visitors who appreciate and respect the character of the place. Our mission is to build a high level of awareness and intent to travel by developing support for Whitefish as a premier year-round mountain town. This includes increasing the occupancy for lodging facilities in Whitefish. Established by the City of Whitefish, Explore Whitefish is the officially designated organization charged with tourism promotion and marketing of Whitefish. The organization also provides critical support for visitor information services, travel infrastructure development, market research, and public relations.

Whitefish, Montana is an authentic mountain town located in the northern Rockies, home to some of the world's most beautiful mountains and spectacular, unspoiled nature. Just 25 miles from Glacier National Park, Whitefish offers close access to the hanging valleys and emerald peaks of this World Heritage Site. The summer season has historically been the busy season for Whitefish, with Glacier National Park as a key draw. Whitefish Lake, at the edge of town, has also been a popular warm season draw. Research also indicates that visitors are attracted to Whitefish because of the distinctive and inviting qualities of the downtown and Central Avenue district. Increasingly, visitation includes those who come to Whitefish without any particular activity as a prime motivation, other than to spend time enjoying the various shops, restaurants and gallery options of the town's eminently walkable downtown core.

The world-class ski slopes and facilities of Whitefish Mountain Resort serve as a key driver for winter visitation to Whitefish. The relationship between the mountain resort and the town of Whitefish is symbiotic. As a result, improving and enhancing the connectivity of the mountain and the town experience helps improve the economic outcomes of both and improves the overall visitor experience as well. Whitefish Mountain Resort summer activities have expanded considerably over the last several years, improving the summertime vitality of the mountain resort experience as well as enhancing the overall attraction of Whitefish as the preferred place to base a northwest Montana and Glacier National Park region vacation.

Whitefish aligns perfectly with the Montana Brand pillars. In all our ads and collateral, we serve up beautiful high resolution photos of the scenic beauty and incredible nature that surrounds us. Photos of our iconic downtown are an important part of our collateral. Visitors are very attracted to our downtown and it is a primary economic driver for the town. In addition, we try to counter the preconceived notions that Montana is remote and does not have adequate facilities by showcasing the beautiful lodging and incredible dining that can be found here.

While the incredible scenic and wild landscapes that surround Whitefish are a key and compelling inspiration to travel to Whitefish, these landscapes are placed in the context of hospitality. The broad majority of travelers are intimidated by wildness without the tempering possibility of civilization. Beyond the adventure of wilderness by day, they want a good place to eat and comfortable place to sleep. We utilize the Montana Brand pillars in unison to create this cohesive and encompassing Whitefish experience which is communicated in our marketing efforts.

## STRENGTHS

- Whitefish aligns perfectly with the three Montana Brand pillars
  - More spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48
  - Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders
  - Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night
- Proximity to Glacier National Park — National travel forecasts have predicted an increase in travelers expressing an interest in visiting sites managed by the National Park Service. In addition, the significant name recognition that Glacier National Park holds among North American and international travelers provides an advantage to "putting Whitefish on the map" for potential visitors. According to the National Park Service, visitors to Glacier National Park spent an estimated \$250.8 million in local gateway communities during 2016. An estimated \$82.8 million of those dollars were spent on lodging, comprising the highest percentage of expenditure at 33% of the total expenditures. Visitation to Glacier National Park continues to increase each season with over 3.3 million visitors in 2017, a 16% increase over 2016. Increased visitation provides us with the opportunity to highlight the many visitor experiences available outside of Glacier National Park, particularly in Whitefish.
- Downtown Whitefish and the alluring character of the town's built structures — Research indicates that visitors are attracted to the character and scale of Whitefish, especially the town's Central Avenue district. These are attributes that form the foundation of the town's appeal to visitors who stay in, or around the community, eat at the town's various restaurants, and shop at local stores. Additional amenities such as pedestrian friendly sidewalks, miles of trails and ability to see the night's sky all add to the Whitefish character.
- Access to recreational activities — A wide variety of recreational opportunities in and around Whitefish is a major draw for visitors. These include Whitefish Mountain Resort, the Whitefish Trail, Whitefish Lake Golf Club, Whitefish Lake, and the Whitefish River, as well as the trails, rivers and scenic roadways in and around Glacier National Park.

## CHALLENGES

- Limited Transportation Infrastructure — Public transportation options and visitor infrastructure services in and around Whitefish and Glacier National Park are fewer than those provided at competitor destinations.
- Uncertain Weather — During some years, low snow levels in the winter hamper winter visitation and spending while summer fire seasons affect willingness for visitors to travel in summer and fall.
- Market Perception — Research performed by the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development in key destination markets reveals that Montana is perceived to offer lower quality amenities and services to visitors. While Montanans are perceived as being friendly, it should be distinguished that this friendliness does not automatically translate into a guest's perception of a high level of service.

- Lack of Competitive Pricing for Air Access and Limited Seats — When compared to mountain communities with which Whitefish competes for destination visitors, airline seats to Glacier Park International Airport are limited, with fewer flights, limited markets and are priced higher. Within the state, deboardings at Glacier Park International Airport (269,037 in 2017) accounted for 14% of the total deboardings in the state, trailing Missoula (19%), Billings (21%), and Bozeman (30% - See Appendix).
- Highly Seasonal Visitation Patterns — Visitation patterns to Whitefish are highly seasonal with the majority of visitation occurring during the high demand months of July and August. This seasonality impacts the operating effectiveness of Whitefish businesses that must accommodate these aforementioned demand swings.
- The Going-to-the-Sun Road — The Whitefish summer tourism season is directly tied to the opening and closing dates for automobiles on the alpine section of the Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park.
- Gasoline Prices — The fluctuation of gas prices affects willingness to travel to Whitefish in two ways. Lower gas prices have the ability to spur domestic travel as the cost of driving or flying becomes less expensive. Conversely, the Canadian dollar is a commodity based currency and the exchange rate can fluctuate based upon higher or lower gas prices. As a major producer of oil, lower gas prices often mean a less advantageous exchange rate for Alberta visitors.
- International Travel — The strength of the U.S. dollar in addition to the uncertain political climate related to international travel to the U.S. has the potential to result in a decrease of international travelers.

**Describe your destination.**

## THE TRAVEL DECISION FUNNEL: INSPIRATION, ORIENTATION, FACILITATION

The overall vision for Whitefish is to have integrated communication throughout the travel planning funnel.

**Inspiration.** At the highest levels of communication, Explore Whitefish leverages the Montana branding guidelines in its selection of imagery and development of creative content, while applying its own Whitefish spin on things. We want to foster an emotional connection with this combination of imagery and creative content so that the viewer will move forward with the primary call to action, which is to visit ExploreWhitefish.com.

**Orientation.** Orientation to new opportunities is administered through interactive maps within the Explore Whitefish website, as well as companion maps within the Travel Guide and a printed town map available for visitors at kiosks and visitor centers. All maps have a consistent look between them. Depending on the method of communication, the location of Whitefish within the state, or its proximity to other points of interest in the region is detailed.

**Facilitation.** Facilitation (connecting users with stakeholder businesses) is achieved by empowering individual businesses with the capacity to create and maintain business information, specials, packages, video and events that are displayed at ExploreWhitefish.com. The travel guide and locator maps are made available at local visitor information kiosks, visitor information centers and business locations throughout the town.

**Optional: Include attachments here**

FY19 Executive Summary.pdf

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

## KEY MARKETS FOR WHITEFISH, MONTANA

Our potential visitors are targeted by geographic location, demographic characteristics, and values that distinguish our overall potential visitor as a “high potential visitor” (as defined by research conducted by Destination Analysts) and our niche visitor as a “geotraveler” (as defined by research conducted by ITRR, the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and the National Geographic Society). The following section provides information on the distinguishing characteristics of potential visitors defined by MOTBD along with the core geographic markets for Whitefish.

## HIGH POTENTIAL VISITORS FOR MONTANA

Recently, the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development (MOTBD) engaged in a destination brand research study with Destination Analysts in which the characteristics of the most desirable visitors to Montana were defined. The “High Potential Visitor” profile aligns with the demographics and psychographics of the geotraveler that Explore Whitefi has been marketing to and has had significant success.

## MONTANA’S HIGH POTENTIAL VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

*Source: Destination Analysts, Montana Destination Brand Research, 2016*

- 60% have HHI (Household Income) above \$80,000
- 54% Male, 46% Female
- 68% have college degrees or above
- Average age: 36.4 years old
- Expected Days Spent in Montana: 8.1
- Expected Total Expenditures in Montana: \$1,887
- Frequent travelers who live in urban areas yet are outdoor-oriented travelers and heavy consumers of recreational activities

## WHITEFISH NICHE VISITOR: GEOTRAVELERS

Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of the place being visited including its environment, culture, heritage, landmarks and the well-being of its residents. According to the ITRR study, “Statewide Vacationers to Montana: Are They Geotravelers,” the strong geotraveler spent the most money per day while traveling in Montana (\$141.79) followed by the moderate geotraveler (\$134.10) and the non geotraveler vacationer spent (\$133.27). Visitors who agreed with the principles of geotourism spend more money per day while traveling in Montana than non geotravelers. A 2016 ITRR Study, “The Importance of Traveler Spending on Locally Produced Goods & Services,” further examined geotraveler spending. The results of this study showed that visitor groups who purchased “Made in Montana” products, items from local farmers’ markets, and who used local guides and outfitters spent \$184.76 more per stay than visitors who did not purchase these products and services.

**Geotravelers are high-value, low impact visitors who appreciate the unique characteristics and natural values of the places they visit.** They place a high value on authentic travel experiences that respect and support the local character of place and its environment, and are less likely to become discouraged in their travel experiences by travel distances, difficulties and variable weather, especially during the shoulder seasons.

**Values** – Creative, curious, connected, engaged, adventurous, independent, mindful.

*Source: Geotraveler Exploratory, Alexis Sanford, 2008.*

**Attitudes** – Immerse yourself in the culture, go off the beaten trail, get out of your comfort zone, allow for spontaneity, take a risk, pay attention, go now.

*Source: Geotraveler Exploratory, Alexis Sanford, 2008.*

- A segment of the U.S. total travel market estimated to include over 55 million people.
- They seek authenticity in travel experiences.
- They seek out opportunities to experience businesses and activities that are locally unique.
- Travel is an important part of their “lifestyle” and they often combine learning with travel.
- They spent a disproportionate amount of their income on travel compared to other travelers.
- They are more likely to be aware of their own impact, both environmental and community, on the places they are visiting.

## NONRESIDENT WHITEFISH VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

*Source: 2017 ITRR NonResident Visitor Study*

- 91% visited Glacier National Park
- 58% traveled as a pair (2 persons)
- Average group size was 2.3
- 67% have HHI (Household Income) above \$75,000
- 51% Male, 49% Female
- 22% were first time visitors
- Average age of visitor was 54 years old

- Average length of stay in Montana was 5.91 nights

## NONRESIDENT WHITEFISH VISITOR AGE GROUPS REPRESENTED

*Source: 2017 ITRR NonResident Visitor Study. The total response percentage exceeds 100% because the question allowed for multiple choices thus the total number of answer choices selected were greater than the number of respondents*

- 25% Under 18 years old
- 12% 18-24 years old
- 18% 25-34 years old
- 16% 35-44 years old
- 18% 45-54 years old
- 35% 55-64 years old
- 34% 65-74 years old
- 14% 75 and older

## TOP FIVE NONRESIDENT VISITORS TO WHITEFISH ACTIVITIES WHILE IN MONTANA

*Source: 2017 ITRR NonResident Visitor Study*

- 68% Scenic driving
- 60% Day hiking
- 44% Nature photography
- 37% Wildlife watching
- 29% Visit local brewery

## WHERE NONRESIDENT VISITORS TO WHITEFISH PRIMARILY COME FROM

*Source: 2017 ITRR NonResident Visitor Study*

- 10% California (11% in 2016)
- 10% Colorado (3% in 2016)
- 7% Minnesota (6% in 2016)
- 7% Alberta (9% in 2016)
- 6% Washington State (13% in 2016)
- 5% North Dakota (1% in 2016)
- 55% Everywhere else in the U.S. and the world (without any regular pattern)

*b. What are your emerging markets?*

## CORE GEOGRAPHIC MARKETS FOR FOCUS

Explore Whitefish will focus its attention during this fiscal period on potential visitors who match the geotraveler profile in the following geographic markets. It is possible that opportunities will arise in additional markets in partnership with other tourism organizations, such as the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development. In these instances, Explore Whitefish may extend its efforts beyond these core focus markets.

- **Seattle, Washington (Puget Sound Area)** – Seattle and the Puget Sound area have been historically strong markets for Whitefish. The existence of the Amtrak train route has made this connection logical, as well as daily direct flights. Explore Whitefish invests in print, digital, and out of home campaigns in this market as well as actively cooperating with Whitefish Mountain Resort (WMR) on multi-channel marketing campaigns. During 2017, approximately 6% of visitors surveyed who spent at least one night in Whitefish originated in the state of Washington.
- **Portland, Oregon** – The existence of the Amtrak train route has made this connection logical, as well as seasonal direct flights and short connecting flights the rest of the year. Explore Whitefish invests in print, digital, and out of home campaigns in this market as well as actively cooperating with Whitefish Mountain Resort (WMR) on multi-channel marketing

campaigns. During 2016, approximately 4% of visitors surveyed who spent at least one night in Whitefish originated in the state of Oregon.

- **Chicagoland (Chicago core and northern suburbs to Madison, Wisconsin)** – This has been a target market for the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development (MOTBD) for many years. During FY18, Explore Whitefish engaged in its fourth consecutive comprehensive cooperative marketing campaign with Whitefish Mountain Resort in the Chicago market with the assistance of MOTBD. There is currently a weekly winter seasonal direct flight from Chicago O’Hare (ORD) to Glacier Park International Airport (GPJA). Daily direct flights were added during the 2017/2018 holiday season which did not exist in past years. A significant expansion of seats for summer service was also added in 2017. During 2017, approximately 1% of visitors surveyed who spent at least one night in Whitefish originated in the state of Illinois.
- **Minneapolis, Minnesota** – This has been a historically strong market for Whitefish in terms of visitation and ease of travel due to daily direct flights and Amtrak service. During FY19, Explore Whitefish will increase investment in this market for the first time in a number of years in order to continue building awareness of Whitefish as a premier travel destination. During 2017, approximately 7% of visitors surveyed who spent at least one night in Whitefish originated in the state of Minnesota.
- **California (San Francisco/Oakland & Los Angeles)** – Although California consistently ranks as a top market of visitors to Whitefish, the addition of enhanced direct air service has made California a core geographic market for Explore Whitefish. Weekly winter seasonal direct flights from San Francisco (SFO) to Glacier Park International Airport (GPJA) were flown for the first time during the 2016/2017 season. During FY17, Explore Whitefish engaged in a comprehensive cooperative marketing campaign with Discover Kalispell and Whitefish Mountain Resort in the San Francisco market with the assistance of MOTBD. Direct daily service during the summer of 2017 was added for San Francisco and daily direct summer service for Los Angeles is scheduled for 2018. During 2017, approximately 10% of visitors surveyed who spent at least one night in Whitefish originated in the state of California.
- **Regional Drive-To (including Spokane, Coeur D’Alene, British Columbia)** – Explore Whitefish invests in regional drive-to markets as these potential visitors have the ability to travel on short notice, particularly during the shoulder seasons. Although the amount of investment is significantly smaller than the aforementioned core geographic markets, we believe it is important to continue to raise awareness and intent to travel in these regional drive-to markets.

## ESTABLISHED GEOGRAPHIC MARKETS

Explore Whitefish has identified the following established geographic markets due to current and historic visitation numbers, as well as historical investment in marketing. Although this market is very important from a visitation perspective, Explore Whitefish is currently choosing to invest in the core geographic markets identified above as having the largest potential for growth.

- **Alberta**– Alberta has been a historically strong market for Whitefish. Awareness of Whitefish as a premier travel destination has been well established and the fluctuations in currently exchange play the single biggest factor in increased or decreased visitation and expenditures to Whitefish. During 2017, approximately 7% of visitors surveyed who spent at least one night in Whitefish originated in the province of Alberta. In 2016, this number was 9%.

**Optional: Include attachments here.**

*c. What research supports your target marketing?*

We utilize many sources for our research that validates our marketing plan. The non-resident data collected by ITRR is an invaluable tool for determining where our customers come from, what they do, how much they spend, what they like and do not like. We also use data from the US Travel Association (USTA) for broad industry indicators as well as Smith Travel Research and nSight for data on lodging occupancy and lodging search traffic. In addition, the information provided by the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development (MOTBD) regarding the effectiveness of campaigns, ad awareness, likelihood to travel, etc. also determines the co-op advertising opportunities in which we participate.

## MARKETING PLAN GOALS

- Support the brand identity and presence of Whitefish, Montana in the marketplace as a destination for active experience-seeking travelers.
- Encourage destination visitation from the core and emerging markets.
- Aggressively showcase varied winter vacation experiences in and around Whitefish and Glacier National Park.
- Position special events messaging to enhance visitation during the “Secret Season” of May-June, and the “Summer Plus” season of September-October.
- Position Whitefish as the basecamp for Glacier National Park visitors with the natural, cultural, and culinary assets of Whitefish.
- Improve “Secret Season” visitation by promoting bicycling, wildlife viewing, birding, fly fishing, golf, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, performing arts, culinary experiences, and community events.
- Improve “Summer Plus” visitation by promoting fall foliage, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, performing arts, culinary experiences, and community events.

- Stimulate the publication of feature stories in national and regional publications, digital media, and broadcast media.
- Encourage corporate retreats and improve meeting and convention market with emphasis in shoulder seasons.
- Expand the pursuit of new airline markets to improve access, ease, and affordability of travel.
- Collaborate with regional and state tourism partners, including Glacier National Park, to develop and build out support for shoulder season visitation.
- Assist in the creation of a Whitefish Tourism Master Plan in conjunction with the City of Whitefish.

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

## **MOTBD COOPERATIVE MARKETING**

Explore Whitefish has actively participated in the past and anticipates participating in the future in a variety of cooperative marketing programs with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development (MOTBD). Explore Whitefish participation in MOTBD marketing programs in the past have primarily centered around spring, fall, or winter campaigns. Winter MOTBD cooperative campaigns that focused on the destination ski market have been of particular interest to Explore Whitefish. Spring and autumn cooperative campaigns that are focused on the active outdoors traveler within our core geographic markets have also been of particular interest. Without the lead of MOTBD and their financial assistance, Explore Whitefish would be unable to make a significant impact in these markets. In FY19, Explore Whitefish will consider cooperative opportunities and research cooperative opportunities which align with our budget, timing, and marketing goals.

**Optional: Include attachment here.**

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

## **OTHER COOPERATIVE MARKETING EFFORTS**

Explore Whitefish actively cooperates with Whitefish Mountain Resort (WMR) on multi-channel marketing campaigns in key markets including Seattle, Portland, Chicago, and San Francisco. Explore Whitefish also cooperates locally with Glacier AERO (Airline Enhancement and Retention Outreach), WMR, and Discover Kalispell to promote inbound travel on new and expanded air service to Glacier Park International Airport.

Explore Whitefish partners with Glacier Country Regional Tourism including cooperative consumer advertising, media events, special events, press trips, FAM trips, research, and groups marketing.

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

## **PAST COOPERATIVE MARKETING EFFORTS (SUCCESSFUL AND NOT SUCCESSFUL, WHY?)**

Explore Whitefish has engaged in many cooperative marketing initiatives with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development in the past. These initiatives have been measured separately by Explore Whitefish through independent ad tracking. We have made adjustments to future participation based on previous tracking. We have found the most success in MOTBD cooperative efforts that are aligned with our primary seasonal and geographic targets.

**Optional: Include attachments here.**

**Optional: Include attachments here.**

Optional: Include attachment here:

## Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	How do you plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Are you using private funds to support this method? (optional)	Non bed tax funds used? Yes/No (optional)	Add'l Atchmnts
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	<p>We advertise in publications within our target markets with alignment to the geotraveler and other demographic profiles that have been outlined for Whitefish. Print opportunities, especially in cooperation with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development in national active travel specific media channels, are also pursued. This method comprises 8% of our public consumer advertising budget.</p> <p>Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. The consumer advertising budget for each strategy is allocated to the seasonal media buying plan.</p> <p><b>Summer Plus</b></p> <p><b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>The target audiences for this time period are those who do not currently have children in school, have adult children, or do not have children. This primarily means a target audience of 35 and older with HH income over \$75,000.</p> <p><b>PSYCHOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>Travelers seeking active experiences such as scenic driving, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-</p>	<p><b>Summer Plus &amp; Secret Season</b></p> <p><b>SUPPORTING RESEARCH &amp; STATISTICS</b></p> <p>Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of their economic impact. Research by ITRR indicates that nonresidents who travel to the state via air spend more money per day and stay longer than the average nonresident traveler group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Average Nonresident Travelers:</b> The statewide average 2017 nonresident traveler group to Montana (2.23 people) spent an average of \$128.12 per day. With an average length of stay of 4.73 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$606.</li> <li><b>Fly-in Nonresident Travelers:</b> The statewide average 2017 fly-in nonresident traveler group arriving in Montana (2.13 people) spends an average of \$213.30 per day. With an average length of stay of</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summer Plus</b></p> <p><b>MEASURING SUCCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resort Tax Collections for 3rd and 4th quarters (September - October)</li> <li>Lodging Tax Collections for 3rd and 4th quarters (September - October)</li> <li>Glacier National Park Recreational Visits (September - October)</li> <li>Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (September - October)</li> <li>Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard (.07%) for online advertising</li> </ul> <p>Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery Display Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement</p> <p><b>Winter</b></p>	<p><b>Summer Plus</b></p> <p>Occupancy history in Whitefish shows that during the period of late June through August the town is at its busiest. From late August into early September, occupancy levels are still strong, but begin to wane. The objective is to extend the peak summer season and grow occupancy and business levels in the autumn for the time period of September to the end of October. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities, fall events, and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during this time period that cannot be experienced if Whitefish</p>	\$5,000.00	<p>This method was successful. We saw strong gains in year over year website sessions for many of the months we ran seasonal campaigns. We did have a few months of decreased website sessions but that coincided with an increase in time on site. Our conclusion is that we brought very interested visitors to the website who spend longer than average on the site, which indicates success in our highly targeted marketing in those months. Overall, we saw strong gains throughout the year in collections for Whitefish City Resort Tax and Whitefish Lodging Tax, as well as strong seasonal visitation to Glacier National Park during summer plus (fall), winter, and early secret season (spring).</p>	Yes	Yes	FY19 Marketing Method_PrintAdvertising.pdf

fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, paddling, and hiking. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary autumn activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.

#### GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE

Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.

#### Winter

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

For the 2016/2017 season, the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) estimated that there were 9.2 million domestic active skiers or snowboarders (NSAA 2017 U.S. Snowsports Participants Report). Since we are targeting a small percentage of the domestic population, and particularly those active participants with household incomes of \$75,000 or greater, we can most efficiently reach this target through niche channels.

#### WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary

- 75% have HHI (Household Income) above \$75,000
- 51% Female, 49% Male
- 37% were first time overnight visitors (up from 34% the previous year)
- 63% were repeat overnight visitors (down from 66% the previous year)
- Average age was 44.5 years old
- 30% of overnight visitors used air

6.92 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,476.

- **Difference:** \$870 in additional spending per fly-in statewide nonresident travel group. In addition, all 2017 nonresident traveler groups arriving at Glacier Park International Airport (2.44 people) stayed longer (7.62 days) long and outspent average statewide nonresident travelers by an estimated \$1,076 per trip (total trip expenditure of \$1,682).

#### Winter

#### SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS

In FY18, Explore Whitefish engaged in its fourth consecutive comprehensive cooperative marketing campaign with Whitefish Mountain Resort in the Chicago market with the assistance of MOTBD.

This campaign continues to focus on the Whitefish winter experience with a strong call to action to take the direct flight from Chicago O'Hare (ORD) to Glacier Park International Airport (GPIA). During the 2017/2018 ski season, lodging revenue at Whitefish Mountain Resort from the Illinois market increased by over 15%. We believe that these types of statistics show the effectiveness of our winter marketing efforts and the partners are looking to engage in the same multichannel cooperative approaches for the 2018/2019 ski season.

#### MEASURING SUCCESS

- Resort Tax Collections for 4th and 1st quarters (December – April)
- Lodging Tax Collections for 4th and 1st quarters (December – April)
- Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (December - April)
- Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard (.07%) for online advertising

Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery Display  
Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement

#### Secret Season

#### MEASURING SUCCESS

- Resort Tax Collections for 2nd quarter (May – June)
- Lodging Tax Collections for 2nd quarter (May – June)
- Glacier National Park Recreational Visits (May - June)
- Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (May - June)
- Click-through-rates (CTR) above

were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with fall experiences in Glacier National Park such as scenic driving, fall foliage, wildlife watching, and hiking. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to Summer Plus marketing efforts.

#### Winter

Whitefish offers a world-class ski and snowboarding experience, including unique winter events, yet destination visitation to the town is still significantly lower than the summer season. As a result, Explore Whitefish has allocated 60% of its overall consumer advertising budget to winter ski marketing efforts. These efforts also seek to focus on the winter experiences in Glacier National Park, including sightseeing, snowshoeing, and nordic skiing. The

We will continue to use this method in the future.

- travel (down from 32% the previous year)
- Average number of nights on trip: 5.4 nights (down from 5.6 the previous year)
- Average number of days skied/snowboarded 3.8 days (down from 3.9 days the previous year)

**WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT VISITOR AGE GROUPS REPRESENTED**

*Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary*

- 2% Under 18 years old
- 9% 18-24 years old
- 18% 25-34 years old
- 24% 35-44 years old
- 19% 45-54 years old
- 17% 55-64 years old
- 10% 65-74 years old
- 2% 75 and older

**WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT LOCATION OF ORIGIN OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO WHITEFISH**

*Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary*

- 14% Washington State (8.6% in 2015/2016)
- 13% Alberta (23.4% in 2015/2016)
- 8% Montana (8.6% in 2015/2016)
- 6% Minnesota (7% in 2015/2016)

**PSYCHOGRAPHICS**

We apply largely our overall traveler profile to the ski market. Experiential preferences for authentic travel are more likely to appreciate and enjoy Whitefish and then return again in subsequent years. The top reasons for choosing Whitefish for a winter destination were cited as "experience of a prior winter visit" and

industry standard (.07%) for online advertising

*Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery, Display*  
*Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement*

perception that Glacier National Park is closed in the winter continues to be a challenge and our increased efforts to showcase these winter experiences will hopefully help to dispel this myth.

**Secret Season**

The objective is to begin the visitor season earlier and grow occupancy and business levels in the spring and early summer for the time period of May and June. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during these time periods that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with spring experiences in Glacier National Park such as biking or hiking the Going-To-The-Sun Road and wildlife watching.

"affordability compared to other results" and "snow conditions" and "the Town of Whitefish" (Whitefish Mountain Resort 2016/17 Visitor Research Summary). It is important that we acquire new, repeat customers, not simply attract one-time visitors who are not a good fit for the Whitefish experience and as a result will not likely return. The addition of marketing the aforementioned Glacier National Park winter experiences provide additional breathtaking experiences for a day off for skiers and snowboarders as well as those who do not alpine ski or snowboard.

**GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE**

We focus our efforts within our core geographic markets of Seattle, Portland, regional drive-to markets, California, and Chicago metro areas. In Chicago, we are specifically raising awareness of winter direct air service. We also leverage cooperative marketing opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development.

***Secret Season***

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

The target audiences for this time period are those who do not have kids in school. This primarily means dual- income, no-kids and those 45 and older with HH income over \$75,000.

**PSYCHOGRAPHICS**

Travelers seeking active experiences such as bicycling, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, non- motorized water sports, and horseback riding. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary spring activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the

Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to spring and early summer marketing efforts.

			purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.								
			<b>GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE</b>  Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.								
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	No	Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. The consumer advertising budget for each strategy is allocated to the seasonal media buying plan.	The Whitefish travel experience cannot be conveyed in the most effective way to potential travelers without a visual understanding of the experience. From the charming and vibrant downtown, to skiing at Whitefish Mountain Resort, to visiting Glacier National Park, imagery is paramount to capturing the interest of potential travelers to Whitefish.	Although one hundred percent of the success of our online, print, and out-of-home campaigns cannot be attributed to the purchase of appropriate and vibrant photo and video content, this does play a significant role in our success. Therefore, we use the same measurements as we do for our online and print campaigns.	Compelling photo and video content are vital to the success of our online, print, and out-of-home campaigns. We utilize local photographers as much as possible because of their knowledge of our tourism products.	\$5,000.00	This method was successful. We saw strong gains in year over year website sessions for many of the months we ran seasonal campaigns. We did have a few months of decreased website sessions but that coincided with an increase in time on site. Our conclusion is that we brought very interested visitors to the website who spend longer than average on the site, which indicates success in our highly targeted marketing in those months. Overall, we saw strong gains throughout the year in collections for Whitefish City Resort Tax and Whitefish Lodging Tax, as well as strong seasonal visitation to Glacier National Park during summer plus (fall), winter, and early secret season (spring). Overall, our online/digital campaigns performed at or well above the click-through-rate industry standard of .07%.  We will continue to use this	Yes	Yes	

								method in the future.			
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	<p>We advertise on websites in our stated target markets as well as nationally through cooperative opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development. Native Content Marketing, for example, is used to engage new visitors and customers through relevant stories, interactives and video content. This method comprises 61% of our public consumer advertising budget.</p> <p>Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. The consumer advertising budget for each strategy is allocated to the seasonal media buying plan.</p> <p><b>Summer Plus</b></p> <p><b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>The target audiences for this time period are those who do not currently have children in school, have adult children, or do not have children. This primarily means a target audience of 35 and older with HH income over \$75,000.</p> <p><b>PSYCHOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>Travelers seeking active experiences such as scenic driving, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, paddling, and hiking. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary autumn activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.</p>	<p><b>Summer Plus &amp; Secret Season</b></p> <p><b>SUPPORTING RESEARCH &amp; STATISTICS</b></p> <p>Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of their economic impact. Research by ITRR indicates that nonresidents who travel to the state via air spend more money per day and stay longer than the average nonresident traveler group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Average Nonresident Travelers:</b> The statewide average 2017 nonresident traveler group to Montana (2.23 people) spent an average of \$128.12 per day. With an average length of stay of 4.73 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$606.</li> <li>• <b>Fly-in Nonresident Travelers:</b> The statewide average 2017 fly-in nonresident traveler group arriving in Montana (2.13 people) spends an average of \$213.30 per day. With an average length of stay of 6.92 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,476.</li> <li>• <b>Difference:</b> \$870 in additional spending per fly-in statewide nonresident travel group. In addition, all 2017 nonresident traveler groups arriving at Glacier Park</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summer Plus</b></p> <p><b>MEASURING SUCCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resort Tax Collections for 3rd and 4th quarters (September - October)</li> <li>• Lodging Tax Collections for 3rd and 4th quarters (September - October)</li> <li>• Glacier National Park Recreational Visits (September - October)</li> <li>• Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (September - October)</li> <li>• Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard (.07%) for online advertising</li> </ul> <p><i>Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery Display Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement</i></p> <p><b>Winter</b></p> <p><b>MEASURING SUCCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resort Tax Collections for 4th and 1st quarters (December – April)</li> <li>• Lodging Tax Collections for 4th and 1st quarters (December – April)</li> <li>• Website sessions,</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summer Plus</b></p> <p>Occupancy history in Whitefish shows that during the period of late June through August the town is at its busiest. From late August into early September, occupancy levels are still strong, but begin to wane. The objective is to extend the peak summer season and grow occupancy and business levels in the autumn for the time period of September to the end of October. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities, fall events, and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during this time period that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with fall experiences in Glacier National Park</p>	\$39,000.00	<p>This method was successful. We saw strong gains in year over year website sessions for many of the months we ran seasonal campaigns. We did have a few months of decreased website sessions but that coincided with an increase in time on site. Our conclusion is that we brought very interested visitors to the website who spend longer than average on the site, which indicates success in our highly targeted marketing in those months. Overall, we saw strong gains throughout the year in collections for Whitefish City Resort Tax and Whitefish Lodging Tax, as well as strong seasonal visitation to Glacier National Park during summer plus (fall), winter, and early secret season (spring). Overall, our online/digital campaigns performed at or well above the click-through-rate industry standard of .07%.</p> <p>We will continue to use this method in the future.</p>	Yes	Yes	FY19 Marketing Method_OnlineAdvertising.pdf

**GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE**

Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.

**Winter**

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

For the 2016/2017 season, the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) estimated that there were 9.2 million domestic active skiers or snowboarders (NSAA 2017 U.S. Snowsports Participants Report). Since we are targeting a small percentage of the domestic population, and particularly those active participants with household incomes of \$75,000 or greater, we can most efficiently reach this target through niche channels.

**WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS**

Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary

- 75% have HHI (Household Income) above \$75,000
- 51% Female, 49% Male
- 37% were first time overnight visitors (up from 34% the previous year)
- 63% were repeat overnight visitors (down from 66% the previous year)
- Average age was 44.5 years old
- 30% of overnight visitors used air travel (down from 32% the previous year)
- Average number of nights on trip: 5.4 nights (down from 5.6 the previous year)
- Average number of days skied/snowboarded 3.8 days (down from 3.9 days the previous year)

**WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT VISITOR AGE GROUPS REPRESENTED**

International Airport (2.44 people) stayed longer (7.62 days) long and outspent average statewide nonresident travelers by an estimated \$1,076 per trip (total trip expenditure of \$1,682).

**Winter**

**SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS**

In FY18, Explore Whitefish engaged in its fourth consecutive comprehensive cooperative marketing campaign with Whitefish Mountain Resort in the Chicago market with the assistance of MOTBD. This campaign continues to focus on the Whitefish winter experience with a strong call to action to take the direct flight from Chicago O'Hare (ORD) to Glacier Park International Airport (GPIA). During the 2017/2018 ski season, lodging revenue at Whitefish Mountain Resort from the Illinois market increased by over 15%. We believe that these types of statistics show the effectiveness of our winter marketing efforts and the partners are looking to engage in the same multichannel cooperative approaches for the 2018/2019 ski season.

referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (December - April)

- Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard (.07%) for online advertising

Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery Display  
Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement

**Secret Season**

**MEASURING SUCCESS**

- Resort Tax Collections for 2nd quarter (May –June)
- Lodging Tax Collections for 2nd quarter (May –June)
- Glacier National Park Recreational Visits (May - June)
- Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (May - June)
- Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard (.07%) for online advertising

Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery, Display  
Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement

such as scenic driving, fall foliage, wildlife watching, and hiking. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to Summer Plus marketing efforts.

**Winter**

Whitefish offers a world-class ski and snowboarding experience, including unique winter events, yet destination visitation to the town is still significantly lower than the summer season. As a result, Explore Whitefish has allocated 60% of its overall consumer advertising budget to winter ski marketing efforts. These efforts also seek to focus on the winter experiences in Glacier National Park, including sightseeing, snowshoeing, and nordic skiing. The perception that Glacier National Park is closed in the winter continues to be a challenge and our increased efforts to showcase these winter experiences will hopefully help to dispel this myth.

Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary

- 2% Under 18 years old
- 9% 18-24 years old
- 18% 25-34 years old
- 24% 35-44 years old
- 19% 45-54 years old
- 17% 55-64 years old
- 10% 65-74 years old
- 2% 75 and older

**WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT LOCATION OF ORIGIN OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO WHITEFISH**

Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary

- 14% Washington State (8.6% in 2015/2016)
- 13% Alberta (23.4% in 2015/2016)
- 8% Montana (8.6% in 2015/2016)
- 6% Minnesota (7% in 2015/2016)

**PSYCHOGRAPHICS**

We apply largely our overall traveler profile to the ski market. Experiential preferences for authentic travel are more likely to appreciate and enjoy Whitefish and then return again in subsequent years. The top reasons for choosing Whitefish for a winter destination were cited as "experience of a prior winter visit" and "affordability compared to other results" and "snow conditions" and "the Town of Whitefish" (Whitefish Mountain Resort 2016/17 Visitor Research Summary). It is important that we acquire new, repeat customers, not simply attract one-time visitors who are not a good fit for the Whitefish experience and as a result will not likely return. The addition of marketing the aforementioned Glacier National Park winter experiences provide additional breathtaking

**Secret Season**

The objective is to begin the visitor season earlier and grow occupancy and business levels in the spring and early summer for the time period of May and June. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during these time periods that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with spring experiences in Glacier National Park such as biking or hiking the Going-To-The-Sun Road and wildlife watching. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to spring and early summer marketing efforts.

			<p>experiences for a day off for skiers and snowboarders as well as those who do not alpine ski or snowboard.</p> <p><b>GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE</b></p> <p>We focus our efforts within our core geographic markets of Seattle, Portland, regional drive-to markets, California, and Chicago metro areas. In Chicago, we are specifically raising awareness of winter direct air service. We also leverage cooperative marketing opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development.</p> <p><b>Secret Season</b></p> <p><b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>The target audiences for this time period are those who do not have kids in school. This primarily means dual- income, no-kids and those 45 and older with HH income over \$75,000.</p> <p><b>PSYCHOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>Travelers seeking active experiences such as bicycling, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, non- motorized water sports, and horseback riding. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary spring activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.</p> <p><b>GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE</b></p> <p>Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.</p>								
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	Yes	We explore opportunities to advertise on and around public transportation, including bus wraps, digital displays and billboards, particularly with cooperative partners such as Whitefish Mountain Resort in our	<b>Summer Plus &amp; Secret Season</b>	<b>Summer Plus</b>	<b>Summer Plus</b>	\$15,000.00	This method was successful. We saw strong gains in year over year website sessions for many of the months we ran seasonal	Yes	Yes	FY19 Marketing Method_OutofHome.pdf
				<b>SUPPORTING RESEARCH &amp; STATISTICS</b>	<b>MEASURING SUCCESS</b>	Occupancy history in Whitefish shows that during the period of late					
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resort Tax Collections for 3rd and</li> </ul>						

target markets. This method comprises 23% of our public consumer advertising budget.

Our consumer advertising is based around visitation in our shoulder seasons and our strategy is broken out into the following three categories: Summer Plus, Winter, and Secret Season. The consumer advertising budget for each strategy is allocated to the seasonal media buying plan.

#### Summer Plus

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

The target audiences for this time period are those who do not currently have children in school, have adult children, or do not have children. This primarily means a target audience of 35 and older with HH income over \$75,000.

#### PSYCHOGRAPHICS

Travelers seeking active experiences such as scenic driving, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, bicycling, non-motorized water sports, horseback riding, paddling, and hiking. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary autumn activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.

#### GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE

Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.

#### Winter

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

For the 2016/2017 season, the National Ski Areas Association (NSAA) estimated that there were 9.2 million domestic active skiers or snowboarders (NSAA 2017 U.S. Snowsports Participants

Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of their economic impact. Research by ITRR indicates that nonresidents who travel to the state via air spend more money per day and stay longer than the average nonresident traveler group.

- **Average Nonresident Travelers:** The statewide average 2017 nonresident traveler group to Montana (2.23 people) spent an average of \$128.12 per day. With an average length of stay of 4.73 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$606.
- **Fly-in Nonresident Travelers:** The statewide average 2017 fly-in nonresident traveler group arriving in Montana (2.13 people) spends an average of \$213.30 per day. With an average length of stay of 6.92 days, this equates to a total trip expenditure of approximately \$1,476.
- **Difference:** \$870 in additional spending per fly-in statewide nonresident travel group. In addition, all 2017 nonresident traveler groups arriving at Glacier Park International Airport (2.44 people) stayed longer (7.62 days) long and outspent average statewide nonresident travelers by an estimated \$1,076 per trip (total trip

4th quarters (September - October)

- Lodging Tax Collections for 3rd and 4th quarters (September - October)
- Glacier National Park Recreational Visits (September - October)
- Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (September - October)
- Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard (.07%) for online advertising

Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery Display Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement

#### Winter

#### MEASURING SUCCESS

- Resort Tax Collections for 4th and 1st quarters (December - April)
- Lodging Tax Collections for 4th and 1st quarters (December - April)
- Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (December - April)
- Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard

June through August the town is at its busiest. From late August into early September, occupancy levels are still strong, but begin to wane. The objective is to extend the peak summer season and grow occupancy and business levels in the autumn for the time period of September to the end of October. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities, fall events, and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during this time period that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with fall experiences in Glacier National Park such as scenic driving, fall foliage, wildlife watching, and hiking. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to

campaigns. We did have a few months of decreased website sessions but that coincided with an increase in time on site. Our conclusion is that we brought very interested visitors to the website who spend longer than average on the site, which indicates success in our highly targeted marketing in those months. Overall, we saw strong gains throughout the year in collections for Whitefish City Resort Tax and Whitefish Lodging Tax, as well as strong seasonal visitation to Glacier National Park during summer plus (fall), winter, and early secret season (spring). In addition, we were able to raise awareness of new secret season (spring) air service this year as part of a cooperative campaign with MOTBD, Discover Kalispell, and Glacier AERO.

We will continue to use this method in the future.

Report). Since we are targeting a small percentage of the domestic population, and particularly those active participants with household incomes of \$75,000 or greater, we can most efficiently reach this target through niche channels.

#### WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT VISITOR CHARACTERISTICS

Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary

- 75% have HHI (Household Income) above \$75,000
- 51% Female, 49% Male
- 37% were first time overnight visitors (up from 34% the previous year)
- 63% were repeat overnight visitors (down from 66% the previous year)
- Average age was 44.5 years old
- 30% of overnight visitors used air travel (down from 32% the previous year)
- Average number of nights on trip: 5.4 nights (down from 5.6 the previous year)
- Average number of days skied/snowboarded 3.8 days (down from 3.9 days the previous year)

#### WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT VISITOR AGE GROUPS REPRESENTED

Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary

- 2% Under 18 years old
- 9% 18-24 years old
- 18% 25-34 years old
- 24% 35-44 years old
- 19% 45-54 years old
- 17% 55-64 years old
- 10% 65-74 years old

expenditure of \$1,682).

#### Winter

#### SUPPORTING RESEARCH & STATISTICS

In FY18, Explore Whitefish engaged in its fourth consecutive comprehensive cooperative marketing campaign with Whitefish Mountain Resort in the Chicago market with the assistance of MOTBD. This campaign continues to focus on the Whitefish winter experience with a strong call to action to take the direct flight from Chicago O'Hare (ORD) to Glacier Park International Airport (GPIA). During the 2017/2018 ski season, lodging revenue at Whitefish Mountain Resort from the Illinois market increased by over 15%. We believe that these types of statistics show the effectiveness of our winter marketing efforts and the partners are looking to engage in the same multichannel cooperative approaches for the 2018/2019 ski season.

(.07%) for online advertising

Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery Display  
Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement

#### Secret Season

#### MEASURING SUCCESS

- Resort Tax Collections for 2nd quarter (May-June)
- Lodging Tax Collections for 2nd quarter (May-June)
- Glacier National Park Recreational Visits (May-June)
- Website sessions, referrals, time on site, and bounce rates (May-June)
- Click-through-rates (CTR) above industry standard (.07%) for online advertising

Source: Google, Rich Media Gallery, Display  
Benchmarks: Tourist Destinations Image Placement

Summer Plus marketing efforts.

#### Winter

Whitefish offers a world-class ski and snowboarding experience, including unique winter events, yet destination visitation to the town is still significantly lower than the summer season. As a result, Explore Whitefish has allocated 60% of its overall consumer advertising budget to winter ski marketing efforts. These efforts also seek to focus on the winter experiences in Glacier National Park, including sightseeing, snowshoeing, and nordic skiing. The perception that Glacier National Park is closed in the winter continues to be a challenge and our increased efforts to showcase these winter experiences will hopefully help to dispel this myth.

#### Secret Season

The objective is to begin the visitor season earlier and grow occupancy and business levels in the spring and

- 2% 75 and older

**WHITEFISH MOUNTAIN RESORT LOCATION OF ORIGIN OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO WHITEFISH**

*Source: 2016/17 Whitefish Mountain Resort Visitor Research Summary*

- 14% Washington State (8.6% in 2015/2016)
- 13% Alberta (23.4% in 2015/2016)
- 8% Montana (8.6% in 2015/2016)
- 6% Minnesota (7% in 2015/2016)

**PSYCHOGRAPHICS**

We apply largely our overall traveler profile to the ski market. Experiential preferences for authentic travel are more likely to appreciate and enjoy Whitefish and then return again in subsequent years. The top reasons for choosing Whitefish for a winter destination were cited as "experience of a prior winter visit" and "affordability compared to other results" and "snow conditions" and "the Town of Whitefish" (Whitefish Mountain Resort 2016/17 Visitor Research Summary). It is important that we acquire new, repeat customers, not simply attract one-time visitors who are not a good fit for the Whitefish experience and as a result will not likely return. The addition of marketing the aforementioned Glacier National Park winter experiences provide additional breathtaking experiences for a day off for skiers and snowboarders as well as those who do not alpine ski or snowboard.

**GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE**

We focus our efforts within our core geographic markets of Seattle, Portland, regional drive-to markets, California, and Chicago metro areas. In Chicago, we are specifically raising awareness of winter direct air service. We also

early summer for the time period of May and June. The approach for this time period is to develop and communicate narratives for adventures, activities and specific reasons for visiting Whitefish during these time periods that cannot be experienced if Whitefish were visited during another time of year. As we continue to position Whitefish as the basecamp of Glacier National Park, the narrative will lead with spring experiences in Glacier National Park such as biking or hiking the Going-To-The-Sun Road and wildlife watching. Explore Whitefish has allocated 20% of its overall consumer advertising budgets to spring and early summer marketing efforts.

			<p>leverage cooperative marketing opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development.</p> <p><b>Secret Season</b></p> <p><b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>The target audiences for this time period are those who do not have kids in school. This primarily means dual- income, no-kids and those 45 and older with HH income over \$75,000.</p> <p><b>PSYCHOGRAPHICS</b></p> <p>Travelers seeking active experiences such as bicycling, wildlife viewing, hiking, birding, golf, fly-fishing, non- motorized water sports, and horseback riding. Cultural and culinary experiences such as dining, shopping at local shops, attending performing arts, and community events are also considered primary spring activities for Whitefish. This includes traveling to Whitefish primarily for the purpose of relaxing, strolling the streets and shops and trying out great dining and nightlife options.</p> <p><b>GEOGRAPHIC AUDIENCE</b></p> <p>Seattle and Portland, Regional Drive-To.</p>								
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	No	In order for the WCVB to effectively and strategically operate, the organization has set aside public funds to support a portion of the salary necessary for the marketing coordinator position. This position is paid from a combination of public and private funds.	WCVB staff is necessary to meet the goals and objectives of the organization. In particular, the 7 essential functions of the WCVB Marketing Coordinator's job description would not be successfully completed without having this staff member.	We measured success based upon the execution of the essential functions outlined in the WCVB Marketing Coordinator's job description.	The objective for the Marketing Publicity Personnel budget is to use these funds effectively and efficiently to execute the goals and objectives of the organization based upon the job description for the WCVB Marketing Coordinator.	\$37,000.00	We were successful in meeting our overall objective through the 7 essential functions of the WCVB Marketing Coordinator's job description. This included Website & Online Communications, Visitor Fulfillment, Social Media, Administration, Group Sales, Reviewing Media Buying, and Collateral. We will continue to use this method in the future.	Yes	Yes	WCVB Job Position Marketing Sales Coordinator.pdf

Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	No	The WCVB is required to attend all meetings of the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) as well as the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation. As these meetings take place all over the state, we require support for travel and expenses to attend.	This is a required method of the annual WCVB Marketing Plan and based on experience, it is an efficient and effective method to use to meet the requirements of the Rules and Regulations.	We measured success based upon meeting attendance and reports back to the organization regarding information learned at the meetings.	The objective for this method is for the executive director to attend required meetings in order to obtain information from each meeting that will be shared with our Board of Directors and Business Membership in order to support all marketing efforts. We will measure the success of this method tracking attendance and through the reports back to the organization.	\$1,500.00	This method was successful as we met our objective. The executive director attended all TAC meetings and the Governor's Conference. In addition, members of the WCVB Board of Directors attended the conference. The Executive Director reported back to the board of directors at the bi-monthly meetings with new resources, information, research, best practices, and marketing updates which were obtained through the meetings and conference. We will continue to use this method in the future.	No	No	
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	Yes	Throughout the year, new marketing opportunities present themselves that were not specifically budgeted for. Money is therefore set aside to examine these opportunities and potentially act upon them if they are in line with our marketing strategy.	In the past, we have found success in cooperative opportunities which arose during the fiscal year which were not specifically budgeted for. Opportunity marketing funds were imperative to take advantage of these opportunities.	We measured success based upon, but not limited to, the success measurements outlined in the annual marketing plan.	The objective of this method is to set aside funds for new marketing opportunities which present themselves throughout the year that were not specifically budgeted for. In order to determine how opportunity marketing funds are spent, we rely on strategies set forth in the annual marketing plan.	\$200.00	Depending on the opportunity, we measure success in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to, the success measurements outline in the annual marketing plan. This year, these funds were not utilized and thus success was not measured. We will continue to use this method in the future.	Yes	Yes	
Marketing Support	Outreach	Yes	Explore Whitefish engages in various methods of tourism education, including customer service training for front line	Top-notch hospitality is vital to the overall visitor experience and plays a significant role in repeat visitation. Customer	We measured success through the mission and work of Voices of Montana Tourism, including	The objective for this method is to build awareness of	\$1,500.00	Voices of Montana Tourism conducted 31 presentations statewide	No	No	

			employees and supporting Voices of Montana Tourism.	service training in order to educate front line employees on the importance of this aspect of the visitor experience is a wise investment. In addition, educating Montanans about the economic value of the tourism industry helps to not only build awareness of the importance of the tourism industry to Montana's economy but has the ability to instill respect for the industry and those who work in the tourism industry.	their statewide presentations.	the importance of the tourism industry to Montana's economy while instilling respect for the industry and those who work in the tourism industry. We will measure the success of this method through the mission and work of Voices of Montana Tourism, which the WCVB Financially supports through this method.	reaching 1,500 people, including the Montana Ski Areas Association, Montana Bed & Breakfast Association, Montana Association of Chamber Executive, and other statewide groups which have representation from Flathead County. During FY19, Explore Whitefish staff also participated in the Flathead Business Education Roundtable hosted by Voices of Montana Tourism. This method was successful and will continue to use it in the future.			
Marketing Support	Research	Yes	In order to gauge the effectiveness of our marketing and public relations efforts, Explore Whitefish will take part in research. For the first time, Explore Whitefish engaged in Visa Vue, a cooperative research project provided by the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development (MOTBD).	We utilize many sources for our research that validates our marketing plan and gauges the effectiveness of our marketing and public relations efforts. The non-resident data collected by ITRR is an invaluable tool for determining where our customers come from, what they do, how much they spend, what they like and do not like. We also use data from the US Travel Association (USTA) for broad industry indicators as well as Smith Travel Research and nSight for data on lodging occupancy and lodging search traffic. In addition, the information provided by the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development (MOTBD) regarding the effectiveness of campaigns, ad awareness, likelihood to travel, etc. also determines the co-op advertising opportunities in which we participate.	We measured success based upon receiving relevant data which would assist us in evaluating our target markets and monitoring seasonal visitation expenditures.	The objective of this method is to obtain visitor expenditure data for Whitefish which can help to evaluate marketing performance and help inform future marketing strategies.	\$5,800.00	This method was successful as this cooperative research project provided Explore Whitefish with invaluable expenditure data for visitors to Whitefish which we had not previously had. This data aided in evaluation of marketing efforts for geographic target markets as well as helping to inform the FY20 Explore Whitefish Marketing Plan. We will continue to use this method in the future.	Yes	Yes

**Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments**

- Attachment 1** Winter FY19 WCVB Website and Campaign Reports.pdf
- Attachment 2** Secret Season FY19 WCVB Website and Campaign Reports.pdf
- Attachment 3** Summer Plus FY19 Website and Campaign Reports.pdf
- Attachment 4** WCVB FY19 Marketing Method Project Completion.pdf
- Attachment 5** FY19 - Public Funds Budget v Actual.pdf
- Attachment 6** FY19 - Budget to Actual Comparison Report - Pie Charts\_CORRECTED VERSION.pdf
- Attachment 7** FY19 - Partnership Spent of Total Marketing Budget\_CORRECTED VERSION.pdf
- Attachment 8** MOTBD EMERGENCY GRANT COMPLETION FORM FY19.docx
- Attachment 9**
- Attachment 10**

**Marketing Method Budget**

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget (optional)
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$97,678.00	\$39,000.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$5,000.00	\$15,000.00
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	\$36,092.00	\$25,000.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$5,000.00	\$12,000.00
Consumer	Joint Ventures	\$0.00	\$0.00
		\$143,770.00	\$91,000.00
Marketing Support	Research	\$5,800.00	\$10,000.00
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	\$37,000.00	\$3,000.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$200.00	\$3,500.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
		\$46,000.00	\$16,500.00
		\$189,770.00	\$107,500.00

**Miscellaneous Attachments**

Description	File Name	File Size
2016 Nonresident Expenditures for Flathead County (ITRR)	2016_FlatheadCountyNonresidentExpenditures.pdf	134 KB

2017 Montana Airport Deboardings	2017 Montana Airport Deboardings.png	36 KB
2017 Nonresident Expenditures by Montana Airport (ITRR)	2017 Nonres Airport Expenditure Profile.pdf	712 KB
2017 Whitefish Nonresident Visitor Data (ITRR)	2017_Nonresident Visitors_Whitefish.pdf	46 KB
WCVB FY19 Public Budget Pie Charts	FY19 Marketing Plan Public Budget Pie Charts.pdf	118 KB
WCVB FY19 Total Budget Breakdown	FY19 Marketing Plan Total Budget Breakdown.pdf	71 KB
FY19 Total Budget Pie Charts	FY19 Marketing Plan Total Budget Pie Charts.pdf	234 KB
Geotourism: Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and the National Geographic Society	Geotourism The New Trend in Travel TIA.pdf	526 KB
Number of Active U.S Participants Overall and by Equipment Type (NSAA)	NSAA Participants 2017.pdf	182 KB
WCVB FY19 Marketing Plan	Whitefish Marketing Plan FY19_v4.pdf	989 KB
WCVB Winter Sample Creative	WhitefishCVB_half_Dec2017.pdf	1.6 MB
WCVB Summer Plus Sample Creative	WhitefishCVB_Sept17_NWTravel.pdf	5.8 MB
WCVB Secret Season Sample Creative	WhitefishCVB_Warm18.png	1.0 MB
WCVB Winter Sample Creative 2	Whitefish_Platform.pdf	713 KB

## ***Reg/CVB Required Documents***

---

<b>Description</b>	<b>File Name</b>	<b>File Size</b>
FY19 Applicant's Certificate of Compliance, Application for Lodging Tax Revenue, Pledge of Understanding and Compliance	FY19 Required Documents.pdf	1.3 MB
WCVB Board Minutes 04 09 18	WCVB Board Meeting Minutes 04 09 18.pdf	52 KB
Whitefish City Council Minutes 04 02 18	Whitefish City Council Meeting Minutes 04 02 18.pdf	335 KB

