



**Grant Details**

**95522 - FY21 Region/CVB Marketing Plan**

101292 - FY21 Gardiner CVB Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

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**Comments**  
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**Community & Brand Support**

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

The small hamlet of Gardiner, known as "Nature's Favorite Entrance to Yellowstone National Park", is located in southwest Montana at the North Entrance to Yellowstone National Park. Nestled between the Absaroka-Beartooth and the Gallatin Mountain ranges, Gardiner is surrounded by approximately 10 million acres of public lands. The community enjoys year-round access to the Yellowstone River--the longest free-flowing river in the lower 48 states. Since the early 1880's, Gardiner has served as the original entrance to Yellowstone National Park and is graced by the historic Roosevelt Arch, dedicated by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903.

Our community's small-town Montana charm, natural splendor, and abundant wildlife make it a unique "home on the range" for our nearly 900 residents. Year-round access to Yellowstone's Northern Range truly differentiates Gardiner from other Yellowstone gateway communities. The community also enjoys a rich history as the original entrance to Yellowstone National Park, which has left a flavor of Old West heritage evidenced by historic buildings and the Roosevelt Arch.

In the mere months since the emergence of COVID-19 Gardiner has already experienced a significant economic impact. Gardiner is comprised of mainly small family owned and seasonally operated businesses – whose financial future is almost solely dependent on tourism revenue generated from May – September. Being that the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce & CVB rely on membership dues, resort tax collections, and the lodging tax to operate this economic impact is also being felt at our organization.

Since the implementation of Montana's stay at home order visitors to Gardiner have ceased. While this order has since been lifted, the phased reopening of our state has begun, and Montanans are encouraged to travel through-out the state – it is still not clear when the North Entrance to Yellowstone will open. Yellowstone's closure paired with the 14 day out of state traveler quarantine has been Gardiner's biggest challenge – as it makes clear communication with potential travelers and previously booked guests next to impossible.

In response to COVID-19 the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce & CVB has continuously evolved our marketing message making it clear to travelers that when the time is right Gardiner will be ready and we welcome your business. While phase 2 for Montana is set to go in place on June 1<sup>st</sup> and the Montana gates to Yellowstone are on track to also open on this date, June 1<sup>st</sup> is not definite for the reopening of the North gate, and presenting a transparent message will be crucial. With this in mind, moving forward our campaigns will still echo past successes – highlighting Gardiner's extensive local wildlife, small town charm, and historic past – and incorporate new messaging that underscores Gardiner's eagerness for the travelers return, heightened safety and cleaning practices, and ample open spaces perfect for social distancing. To ensure a successful recovery, from both an economic standpoint and for the safety of our residents, we recognize that above all else Gardiner's marketing message must be flexible – we are committed to doing just that.

**Strengths:** Our charming small town offers relaxing hospitality while providing full-service amenities. Many Gardiner restaurants offer local and sustainably grown produce and Montana raised beef. Visitors will find a diverse selection of accommodations including modern hotels and inns, rustic cabins, quaint cottages, relaxing B&B's, and vacation rentals. Our all-inclusive guest ranches offer our visitors horseback riding and fishing by day and cowboy cookouts and campfires by night.

Year-round access to Yellowstone National Park and easy access to Forest Service and BLM lands provide visitors with an array of recreation opportunities. These include whitewater rafting, ziplining, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, photography, wildlife watching, hiking, fishing, and soaking in hot springs.

Gardiner is currently enjoying the successful completion of a \$24-million-dollar infrastructure improvement as part of the nationally recognized Gardiner Gateway Project. The project's completion now provides visitors with vital amenities such as walkways, safer traffic routes, a Gardiner Visitor Information Center with 24-hour public restrooms, and the Roosevelt Stage in Arch Park. The Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) released a report in 2018 showing that visitor perceptions of Gardiner have improved since the infrastructure development, especially in the areas of cleanliness, well-maintained storefronts, and community friendliness.

**Challenges:** Challenges include residential housing shortages, short-term rentals creating a lack of affordable housing, public/private wildlife controversies, and lack of year-round staffing. In the winter and shoulder seasons, the lack of year-round staffing and a much

lower visitation rate make it difficult for businesses to remain open—resulting in a shortage of accessible visitor amenities. Gardiner’s remote location also presents issues for visitor access and awareness. When all park roads are open, some visitors may choose to bypass Gardiner on their way to Yellowstone National Park. A newly anticipated challenge will be navigating the final phase of the Gardiner Gateway Project which includes adding an additional lane and kiosk to improve traffic flow and reduce lines into the park. This phase will not be completed until end of 2021 and will cause delays for travelers entering Yellowstone through the North Gate.

**Opportunities:** The largest opportunity for tourism growth in Gardiner is in the winter and shoulder seasons. According to National Park Service vehicle gate counts for 2019, October through May only contribute to approximately 20% of total North Entrance visitation. The primary goal of our long-term marketing efforts continues to be focused on attracting more visitors during that time through a comprehensive marketing plan.

**Brand Pillars:** Gardiner aligns perfectly with the state’s brand pillars. Located at the heart of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, Gardiner is surrounded by unspoiled nature with beautiful vistas and landscapes home to some of the most abundant and diverse wildlife in America. Gardiner prides itself as the historic gateway to Yellowstone’s natural wonders. Our messaging focuses on the area’s abundant wildlife, authentic and local hospitality, and year-round recreational activities as the only year-round entrance to Yellowstone National Park.

**Describe your destination.**

**Inspiration:** We will continue to inspire potential visitors through a multi-faceted marketing plan that includes print, digital, and video advertisements and engagement. We’ll focus on the elements of Gardiner that make it unique and desirable—particularly the abundance of wildlife, small town charm, and historic ties to Yellowstone National Park.

**Orientation:** We’ll continue to build out Gardiner-specific website content including blog posts, events, activities, lodging, and winter season opportunities to message Gardiner as a destination unto itself, in addition to a comfortable and authentic base camp to Yellowstone National Park.

**Facilitation:** Our Visitor Information Center and friendly, accommodating business owners will help facilitate visitors to Gardiner, Montana. Trip planning materials, recommendations, and complimentary wifi are available for visitors at the Gardiner Chamber of Commerce Visitor Information Center. Our mobile-friendly website as well as our brand new, comprehensive visitor guide serve as valuable resources for our visitors throughout all phases of the travel decision process.

**Optional: Include attachments here**

Gardiner MT\_Visitor Perceptions Image and Spending Before.pdf

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

The target market for increasing all visitation remains the geo-traveler. Efforts should target promoting the outdoors to the authentic experience seeker and wildlife enthusiast.

**Adventurous families:**

Couples and families, ages 45-54

College-educated

United States: especially from California, Texas, Washington

Affluent \$80,000+ per year

Interested in travel

Source: 2018 Profile of the Winter Enthusiast study: Destination Analysts. FY20 VisitGardinerMT.com Google analytics

**Mature Nature-Based Travelers**

Interested in visiting Yellowstone National Park and partaking in activities such as scenic driving, day hiking, wildlife watching and nature photography.

Most often from Washington, California, Idaho, Illinois, and Utah

Affluent \$75,000 + per year

Median age 60

Travel in couples

Source: Gardiner and Yellowstone Country Nonresident Visitors: ITRR interactive data report 2018. FY20 VisitGardinerMT.com Google analytics

*b. What are your emerging markets?*

International travelers Interested in Yellowstone National Park

Most often from Canada, India, United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and France.

International travelers particularly from Canada, India, the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and France appear to be an emerging market for Gardiner, Montana. Data from 2019 Gardiner Visitor Information Center visitor surveys show that Chinese visitors have declined and visitors from Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia are our most common countries of origin for international travelers.

VisitGardinerMT.com Google analytics data from FY20 supports this information; it shows that the majority of international website users were from the aforementioned countries – India with 4,119 users, Canada with 1,615 users, the United Kingdom with 1,031 users, France with 701 users, Germany with 598 users, and Australia with 521 users.

Although this market has been on our radar thanks to tracking information from the Gardiner Visitor Information Center, the more regular use of Google analytics by Gardiner CVB staff has helped bring these emerging markets to the forefront of our attention. In FY20 we will continue to test these emerging target markets through the use of targeted social media posts and continued visitor tracking at the Gardiner VIC.

Source: 2019 Gardiner Welcome Center survey data. FY20 VisitGardinerMT.com Google analytics

**Optional: Include attachments here.**

c. What research supports your target marketing?

2019 visitor survey data from the Gardiner Visitor Information Center shows our visitors are most often from Texas, California, and Washington, and spend their time primarily wildlife watching and enjoying Yellowstone National Park. Internationally, Canada continues to rank first followed by the United Kingdom, Australia, Germany, and France following for the top five. This is relatively consistent with years past, although visitors from China have shown a steady decline.

Drawing from information outlined in the Gardiner Visitor Information Center data, ITRR reports, results from our digital ad campaigns through our web agency TDG, and VisitGardinerMT social media/Google analytics, we believe our target markets can be divided into three categories: adventurous family travelers, mature geotrailers, and international visitors. In the attached document you will see detailed metrics supporting our target markets. Before reading it is important to note the countries the in the Google Analytics Demographics FY2020. You will see that India, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Bangladesh are among our top 10 international visitors to the VisitGardinerMT website and we have not identified them as a target market. After discussing the traffic with our web agency, TDG, it was found that while these were top visitors to the site the audience's the bounce rate was extremely high and amount of time spent on the site was extremely low. We concluded that these were most likely informational campaign bots and not a potential target market.

- Promote the Gardiner destination in a way that we can anticipate exceeding the forecasted bed tax collections.
- Increase visitor travel to the Gardiner area in the winter and shoulder seasons
- Increase visitation to the State particularly during the shoulder and winter seasons
- Increase our digital presence including social media reach/engagement by 25% and website traffic by 50%
- Increase our digital campaign results by 20%
- Maintain our metric reporting system that has comprehensively tracked marketing and campaign success in previous years.

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

We would like to continue to participate in Joint Ventures with MOTBD as our budget allows. As a smaller organization with limited funding, these opportunities to participate in larger campaigns and content creation are invaluable.

We have found great success in online advertising as a cost effective means of promoting our brand and would like to continue to seek out options for content creation and online advertising campaigns - especially to showcase our new seasonal promotional videos which were completed in FY19.

Optional: Include attachment here.

FY21 Gardiner Target Markets Supporting Data.pdf

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

We would love to participate in Joint Ventures with Yellowstone Country and our regional CVBs to bring influencers and/or travel writers to Gardiner in the winter months. We feel that Gardiner offers a highly desirable winter experience with our abundant wildlife and opportunities for cross-country skiing and snow tours in Yellowstone National Park. Due to budget constraints it would be valuable to us to partner with Yellowstone Country or other regional CVBs in order to make this happen in FY21.

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

**Yellowstone Country-TripAdvisor**

For several years now we have participated in the TripAdvisor Pages Joint Venture offered through Yellowstone Country. TripAdvisor is a key platform for destination marketing and we have found the ability to have a presence on this site and the ability to provide content to be moderately successful. We hope to see improvements in our banner ad and click through rates and impressions in the future and will continue to monitor the metrics of these ads to determine if we want to continue this program in FY21.

**MTOT RootsRated JV-**

In FY18 we took advantage of the match program with Rootsrated to create custom content for our webpage and online platforms. With limited staffing we are not able to create content as frequently as we would like and we have found that blog posts and articles are key drivers to our webpage. Unfortunately, we were disappointed in the partnership overall; we provided our own local writers and received very few original photo assets (most were public domain photos available on the Yellowstone NPS Flickr page). It has proven easier and more cost effective to hire local writers directly to produce blog content.

Optional: Include attachments here.

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Optional: Include attachment here:

**Marketing Segment, Method & Budget**

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Describe your method.	Provide supporting research/statistics.	How do you plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale for this method.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Add'l Atchmnt
		In the coming year Gardiner plans to leverage partnerships with the State, Yellowstone Country, and regional partners.		<b>Yellowstone Country</b> We will continue to gauge our impressions and engagement on TripAdvisor. If we are able to partner on another print and leads campaign we will measure success by the engagement with our received	We have a small operating budget and partnering with other tourism organizations allows us the ability to enter bigger markets and leverage a team of experts that would otherwise be unavailable to us.			

Consumer	Joint Ventures	<p><b>Yellowstone Country</b> We would like to continue to partner with Yellowstone Country on the TripAdvisor program as well as have the ability to participate in fam tours, print, and digital marketing opportunities like we were able to do in FY20.</p>	<p>We have found that by partnering with organizations in our region, county, and state the benefits are exponential, including but not limited to an elevated print and online presence.</p> <p>In FY20 we were able to partner with Yellowstone County on a print campaign that not only gained us exposure to potential visitors in Midwest Living and Sunset Magazines but from this joint venture we received over 200 valuable marketing leads that were used to specifically target travelers via mail and email. Our participation in programs like this have helped us to make the most of our small operating budget and limited staff time and promote awareness of Gardiner as a year-round destination.</p>	<p>leads such as email click through rates and number of travel packs we are able to mail out. If we are able to partner with YC on a fam tour, success will be measured by deliverables such as earned media, social media posts, and photos of Gardiner. If we are able to partner with Yellowstone Country on at least 3 joint ventures we will deem this successful.</p>	<p>In response to the COVID-19 pandemic we believe that allocating a large portion of our budget to Joint Ventures will help us remain flexible and open to opportunities that would increase Gardiner's awareness as a destination. We understand that people will be re-evaluating how they make their travel decisions and that we may have to market the warm season in addition to the shoulder and winter seasons. We believe that partnerships with the State, Yellowstone Country, and regional partners will give us the most leverage to do so.</p>	\$10,000.00		
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	<p>We will create a desired list of shots on the images and/or videos we feel are missing in our collection (food/dining and annual community events/culture) and put out a request to local photographers for high resolution photos for which we will own exclusive rights. These photos will then be available for use on the website, print advertising campaigns, social media advertising campaigns, online advertising campaigns, and promotional products.</p>	<p>Because people respond positively to visual content, simply adding a relevant photo to your print, online and social media campaigns can grab someone's attention. Brilliant images can increase engagement and traffic. Research has shown that including images and video in marketing is important for some of the following reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When people hear information, they're likely to remember only 10% of that information three days later. However, if a relevant image is paired with that same information, people retained 65% of the information three days later. (Source)</li> <li>• Using the word "video" in an email subject line boosts open rates by 19% and click through rates by 65% Eyetracking studies show internet readers pay close attention to information carrying images. In fact, when the images are relevant, readers spend more time looking at the images than they do reading text on the page. (Source)</li> <li>• Facebook posts with images see 2.3X more engagement than those without images. (Source)</li> </ul>	<p>Success of this method would be determined by the ownership of 5-10 high resolution photos and/or video for use in advertising campaigns and on social media for the next several years.</p>	<p>In FY20 we were able to significantly build out our photo library. However, we are requesting funding again this year to give us the ability to add images and/or video of future community events/culture, food/dining, and purchase a photo for our next Visitor Guide cover if need be.</p>	\$1,000.00		
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	<p>In FY21 we will continue to focus on better showcasing our promotional videos on our website, monitoring downloads of our new travel guide, and making routine updates as needed from our website agency provider to ensure a successful consumer facing site.</p>	<p>The majority of travelers are now using the internet to plan, book, and research their vacations. Having a well-rounded web presence is essential to marketing a destination.</p> <p>The VisitGardinerMT website is up 35% compared to FY19. See attached Google analytics yearly report_FY20 .</p> <p><a href="https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1592&amp;context=ttra">https://scholarworks.umass.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1592&amp;context=ttra</a></p> <p><a href="http://www.adweek.com/socialtimes/online-travel-industry/467349">http://www.adweek.com/socialtimes/online-travel-industry/467349</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.statista.com/statistics/185454/technology-used-to-plan-leisure-travel-in-the-us-2011/">https://www.statista.com/statistics/185454/technology-used-to-plan-leisure-travel-in-the-us-2011/</a></p>	<p>Success will be measured by increased web clicks on our promotional videos, continue building to our email list with at least 200 more useable email addresses, and at least 200 or more travel guide downloads.</p> <p>We will also measure overall success of our website using Google analytics to see increased traffic to the website. Specifically, we would like to see an increase in our website visitors by 40% or 168,000 people.</p>	<p>Our website is the most comprehensive information source for travelers looking to come to the Gardiner area. For many it is the first point of contact we have in sharing our destination and what experiences and amenities our area has to offer.</p>	\$2,300.00		google analytics yearly report visitgardinermt_FY20.pdf
		<p>In FY18, Gardiner's Facebook following increased by over 200%, followed by a 30% growth in FY19 and a 25% growth in FY20. From FY19 to FY20 Gardiner's Instagram following</p>		<p>We will track the success of paid boosts, likes, and ads in terms of reach and engagement over the next year using Facebook and Instagram analytics. The metrics for likes,</p>	<p>We have found that this method of marketing allows us the ability to leverage our unique location and the experience of others have while visiting our community to tell the story to potential travelers. Recent findings have concluded that</p>			

Consumer	Social Media	<p>increased 53%. To continue to increase our audience reach and brand exposure we will use targeted social media boosts and paid likes ads on a variety of social media content including beautiful photos, blog post links, videos, and community events that align with the Gardiner brand. In addition, we will work with local writers to create content for our VisitGardinerMT blog to assist visitors with travel planning, inspire future trips, and increase time spent on our website.</p>	<p>At the start of 2020 there were 3.8 billion social media users worldwide, 49% of the world's total population. Social media continues to grow as a tool for consumers to educate themselves about travel options, share information with other travelers, and purchase lodging and tours. Social media allows our organization to represent the story of our community and illustrate the experience visitors will have while simultaneously leveraging the power of recommendation – friends seeing other friend's posts and being persuaded to visit our area. (Source: <a href="https://datareportal.com/social-media-users">https://datareportal.com/social-media-users</a>)</p> <p><a href="https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/">https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.statista.com/statistics/185454/technology-used-to-plan-leisure-travel-in-the-us-2011/">https://www.statista.com/statistics/185454/technology-used-to-plan-leisure-travel-in-the-us-2011/</a></p> <p>Also see attached social media analytics from 2019-2020.</p>	<p>reach, engagement, demographics, etc. will be reported on quarterly followed by a plan to adjust our strategy in response to the outcome of these metrics.</p> <p>Specifically, Increasing Facebook page likes/follows by 5% each quarter: Quarter one 5% or 39,900; Quarter two 5% or 41,895; Quarter three 5% or 43,990; Quarter four 5% or 46,190</p> <p>Increasing Instagram page likes by 20% each quarter: Quarter one 20% or 5,760; Quarter two 20% or 6,912; Quarter three 20% or 8,294; Quarter four 20% or 9,953.</p>	<p>a barrier to Montana tourism includes a lack of awareness of the destination in general, and social media is a proven successful way to foster awareness of our Yellowstone gateway community and as a Montana tourism destination. In recent years, social media has become a pay-to-play environment for business pages, and we believe our presence on social media will increase dramatically if we're willing to play.</p> <p>In response to the COVID-19 pandemic we believe that allocating a large portion of our budget to Social Media will greatly leverage the Gardiner brand awareness. As social media is a key player in how travelers plan their vacations dedicating such a large sum makes sense as one of the best ways to not only engage with them but keep them up to date on an ever evolving matter.</p>	\$7,000.00		social media yearly report visitgardinermt_2020.pdf
Consumer	Printed Material	<p>We plan to use traditional printed materials in combination with digital marketing to best reach our audience. We have found that printed materials are good for brand recognition and support for our other marketing campaigns, especially those for events. Printed materials could include but are not limited to rack cards, posters, flyers, stickers, postcards, mailers, and window clings.</p>	<p>Results show that tested advertisements employing premium-print technologies convey a greater sense of uniqueness and prestige than conventional advertising, boost consumer attitudes toward an advertisement as well as toward the brand and enjoy higher ratings on measures of willingness to buy, positive word of mouth, and consumer willingness to pay a price premium.</p> <p><a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257881050_Is_An_Advertisement_Worth_The_Paper_It's_Printed_on_The_Impact_of_Premium_Print_Advertising_On_Consumer_Perceptions">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257881050_Is_An_Advertisement_Worth_The_Paper_It's_Printed_on_The_Impact_of_Premium_Print_Advertising_On_Consumer_Perceptions</a></p> <p>Specifically, The GCVB had to do one reprint in FY20 of our Gardiner postcard that are handed out to visitors. Meaning that over 1,200 Gardiner postcards were distributed to visitors. Additionally, it is worth noting that while the Gardiner stickers did not require a reprint in FY20 their stock was incredibly low at the end of the fiscal year indicating that supply and demand were closely matched. This supports the effectiveness of this method.</p>	<p>We will monitor the number of printed materials, including but not limited to stickers, brochures, postcards, and flyers, that visitors and other visitor centers request from us. Our goal will be to distribute at least 75% of the printed materials throughout the fiscal year before we need to do a reprint.</p> <p>The more stickers, postcards, etc. that are distributed the more awareness the public will have of Gardiner as a brand and destination.</p>	<p>Our primary goal is to promote Gardiner as a year-round destination. Summer visitors act as ambassadors for our community. We want to take advantage of educating summer visitors on experiences they could have if they return in the winter or shoulder seasons as well as have them leave with information to pass along to their network on traveling in the Gardiner area.</p> <p>Gardiner enjoys strong partnerships with the network of Montana and Wyoming CVBs, by providing printed materials to our partners we can leverage these partnerships to spread the message of our brand.</p>	\$500.00		
Consumer	Print Advertising	<p>We want to combine traditional advertising materials with digital advertising to create a comprehensive marketing plan. We hope to continue advertising in magazines and newspapers that we gaged as successful in FY19 &amp; FY20, such as Explore Yellowstone and the West Yellowstone Visitor Guide. We will also be open to new print advertising opportunities that have a digital component to promote shoulder and winter seasons and special events in the area during shoulder and</p>	<p>Destination Analysts   <a href="https://www.destinationanalysts.com/insights-updates/">https://www.destinationanalysts.com/insights-updates/</a> Print usage in travel planning has risen close to 50% of American leisure travelers and the use of DMO print visitor guides has risen to just over 20%. While this rise may not signal any longer term trend there is clearly no evidence of a long-term decline in print or DMO guide usage. According to the State of the American Traveler, an independent research report by Miles Partnership, print has consistently shown strength and even slow growth in print usage over the last five years. 24.4% of travelers rely on offline media including TV, printed newspapers, magazines, etc. for travel inspiration.</p> <p>Miles Partnership   <a href="https://www.milespartnership.com/state-american-traveler">https://www.milespartnership.com/state-american-traveler</a> The State of the American Traveler, Destination Analysts Despite 72%+ of Millennials using smartphones in trip planning (vs. only 26% of Baby Boomers) they are just as likely to use print overall, almost as likely as Baby Boomers to order an official print guide and more likely to visit a DMO website. Multimedia—indeed, "Masses of Media"—is critical for reaching and engaging with younger US travelers. State of the American Traveler, Miles Partnership</p>	<p>The success of this method will be measured by the completed design and placement of at least 2 print ads in a variety of regional and local publications that focus on our target market. Success will also be measured by staying with in budget.</p>	<p>Our goal is to reach potential visitors with information on all fronts on how they can enjoy Gardiner in the shoulder and winter season. In FY21 we would like to earmark funds for traditional marketing to be sure to reach all demographics.</p>	\$1,500.00		

		winter season.							
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	<p>With the help of our web agency TDG, in FY21 we will focus on brand awareness campaigns designed to reach likely travelers to the Yellowstone region in the winter and spring of 2020 and 2021. These campaigns will mimic the campaigns we delivered in FY20, both of which rendered impressive results. As in FY20 the campaigns will utilize the Google ads network to serve our target audience a series of responsive display ads that focus on Gardiner's abundant wildlife and year-round access to Yellowstone. Both campaigns will use a combination of advertising tactics including remarketing to individuals who are compelled to visit the VisitGardinerMT website.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In FY20 we ran three different digital ad campaigns – all of which yielded impressive results showing that online advertising is worth the funding (see attached FY20 TDG Digital Campaigns Results Compiled).</li> <li>2. As of March 2019, a study by the World Internet Users Statistics found that 56.3% of the world's population is online, an increase in 1,104% in the last 10 years. 89% of North America's population is online. <a href="https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm">https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm</a></li> <li>3. In 2018, the #1 method nonresident visitors to Montana used to plan their trips was through an online search. (2018 ITRR Interactive Data Report). <a href="http://itr.umd.edu/">http://itr.umd.edu/</a></li> <li>4. Over 70% of U.S. travelers agree that they "always" use their smartphones when traveling, up from 41% in 2015. Travelers most frequently use their mobile devices to research activities or attractions, to locate shopping areas and restaurants, or to look up directions. (Google Consumer Insights, 2018)</li> </ol>	<p>Success of these efforts will be measured by impressions served, clicks recorded, and an increase in VIC traffic and North Entrance gate traffic in the fall and winter. Specifically, using numbers from our Spring Digital Ad Campaign improving impressions served by 5% or 2,404,017 and clicks by 15% or 29,760.</p>	<p>With the majority of American consumers using the Internet and with the rise in mobile phone use, a strong digital campaign strategy has become a critical component of any well-rounded marketing campaign.</p> <p>In response to the COVID-19 pandemic we believe that allocating a large portion of our budget to Online Advertising will greatly leverage the Gardiner brand awareness. Based on the success of our digital campaigns in FY20 as travels start to plan their vacations post pandemic this and a key way to keep Gardiner top of mind as their destination no matter the season.</p>	\$7,500.00			FY20 TDG Digital Campaigns Results Compiled.pdf
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	<p>Using leads generated in FY19 and FY20 and new leads from VisitGardinerMT, we will continue to send out a quarterly newsletter that will include original blog posts, trip planning advice, listicles, photos, and upcoming events. Our inaugural Quarterly Travel Newsletter had a 23.6% open rate and a 4.6% click rate. We have since extensively added to our audience and see this as a valuable communication tool to potential visitors. This will be sent from our marketing platform MailChimp - funds will primarily be used to cover our subscription service to this program.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. According to ExactTargets' "Mobile Behavior report" (2014), 91% of consumers check their email at least once per day on their smartphone, making it the most used functionality.</li> <li>2. For every \$1 spent, \$44.25 is the average return on email marketing investment. (Experian)</li> <li>3. "Most email marketing services today, like Constant Contact or MailChimp, base the cost of a subscription on the number of people you have in your contact list. While this price will vary for everyone, it is normally much cheaper than other forms of advertising." (AddisonClarkOnline.com)</li> <li>4. Our inaugural Quarterly Travel Newsletter had a 23.6% open rate and a 4.6% click rate.</li> <li>5. Destination Analysts   <a href="https://www.destinationanalysts.com/insights-updates/">https://www.destinationanalysts.com/insights-updates/</a> 66.4% of travelers rely on the opinions of in-person and/or through direct contact (email, text, etc.) for travel inspiration.</li> <li>6. Google   <a href="https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/feature/travel-customer-journey-in-2020">https://www.thinkwithgoogle.com/feature/travel-customer-journey-in-2020</a></li> <li>7. Phocuswright   <a href="https://www.phocuswright.com/Free-Travel-Research">https://www.phocuswright.com/Free-Travel-Research</a>                      "Brands can seize opportunities to personalize consumer experiences, even before they embark on a trip. With more travelers turning to digital for assistance, marketers can connect with customers when they first express intent through online inspiration or research. Travel companies can segment their audiences, combine first- and third-party data, and use machine learning to connect with customers. As traveler behavior continues to evolve, expectations will continue to rise. Navigating these changes can be challenging, but digital provides more opportunities than ever for marketers to meet traveler intent and expectations at every turn. And that's a trip worth taking."</li> </ol>	<p>Success will be measured by the size of our email subscribe list and maintaining open rates and click-through rates while staying within our budget parameters. Specifically, maintaining at least a 90% the subscriber base in our or email communications, a 35% open rate, and 6% click rate on our campaigns. Currently, we are at a 95% subscriber rate but as our audience grows we believe maintaining a 90% rate would still reflect success.</p>	<p>In FY18 - FY19 we spent time building our online audience and producing relevant online content to assist visitors with their trip planning process. In FY 19 &amp; FY20 we secured a collection of email leads from a digital advertisement through National Parks Media and a Joint Venture digital &amp; print advertisement in Midwest Living Magazine. We would like to utilize this content and these leads to continue our quarterly travel newsletter for potential Gardiner visitors.</p>	\$375.00			
		Visitors interested in							

Consumer	Travel Guide	<p>visiting the Gardiner area can request, either online or on the phone, a comprehensive travel guide with a full business directory and information on traveling to the area at different times of the year. Easy access to a quality piece full of information will help the potential visitor make their destination decision as well as extending their stay.</p>	<p>According to national travel statistics 79% of requests are online or downloaded. Once the visitors guide is in their hands, 70% actually travel to the destination. Once they are on the ground 80% use it as a planning resource and 71% extend their stays as a result of the visitors guide.</p> <p><a href="https://independenttravelcats.com/travel-research-are-travel-guidebooks-still-useful-in-the-digital-age/">https://independenttravelcats.com/travel-research-are-travel-guidebooks-still-useful-in-the-digital-age/</a></p> <p>Travel and Tourism Research Association  <a href="https://tra.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Value_of_Print_White_Paper_Final_June_01_2017_Chris_Adams.pdf">https://tra.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Value_of_Print_White_Paper_Final_June_01_2017_Chris_Adams.pdf</a></p> <p>53% of US travelers report using a printed resource in planning their travel in the previous 12 months; 896 million trips were taken in the last 12 months by this group of US travelers; 24% of US travelers indicated they used an official destination visitor guide in the past 12 months to plan a trip; 400 million leisure trips were taken by this group of US travelers in the past year – spending an estimated \$161 billion; 88% of readers who were undecided indicated that the official visitor guide influenced their decision to visit of visitors to make specific planning and booking. Official visitor guides are used by up 79% decisions on their trip. Visitors use the official visitor guides to make decisions on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o 79% activities and attractions to enjoy</li> <li>o 54% places to eat or enjoy</li> <li>o 21% places to stay</li> </ul>	<p>We will measure success by tracking increased requests for travel planners, reporting on the number of guides downloaded from VisitGardinerMT.com, and reporting the number of Visitor Guides distributed and requested from regional and various state airports and visitor centers, and local businesses.</p>	<p>Placing a comprehensive travel planner and experience guide in the hands of visitors both before and during their stay will increase awareness of Gardiner as a year-round destination.</p>	<p>\$1,000.00</p>		
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	<p>The Executive Director and Office Manager will attend the TAC meetings as well as the Governor's Conference (along with a CVB committee member when feasible) to present marketing plans and/or stay abreast of the current trends and updates.</p>	<p>Attendance of at least one individual is required at the TAC meetings and Governor's Conference according to MOTBD rules and regulations. With our small operating budget and staff, attending these conferences have provided us with valuable insights that has helped leverage the Gardiner brand.</p>	<p>Traveling expenses remain within budget.</p>	<p>It is necessary for us to have funds budgeted in this area so that the Director and Office Manager can attend the meetings required to fulfill the parameters of the funding.</p>	<p>\$1,300.00</p>		
Marketing Support	Administration	<p>We are a small but growing Chamber of Commerce/CVB with limited funding. Administrative Funding will support the salary of the Executive Director and Office Manager while they work on CVB related items. For FY21 we will continue to subscribe to Adobe InDesign and Adobe Acrobat to be able to create original content for both online and print advertising platforms. These funds will also be used to pay for items such as legal notices for RFPs, bank account and checking fees, and postage.</p>	<p>Administration costs are a necessary line item in the budget. We anticipate to put 20% of new revenue collected toward administration.</p> <p>The Gardiner CVB has used Administration funds every year since becoming a CVB. While it may not be directly supported by specific research, past experience has demonstrated that our organization's operations and successful marketing relies on administrative funds. Often the Administration funds budget is added to or combined with other administrative funds provided by the joint operation of our Gardiner Chamber of Commerce. Without these funds it may not be economical or feasible to have permanent staff administering the CVB.</p>	<p>Maintain costs within the budget.</p>	<p>This is an operational method employed by the organization in order to adhere to the state statute and governing rules and regulations.</p>	<p>\$4,926.00</p>		
		<p>In FY19 we spent a significant portion of our budget and staff time on producing an industry-standard, comprehensive visitor guide to assist visitors in planning their trip to Gardiner. In FY20 we established a disbursement</p>	<p>To support this method in FY20 the GCVB was able to drop ship 12,480 comprehensive Gardiner travel guides to 57 different locations in the states of Montana, South Dakota, Utah, Wyoming, and North Dakota. We also experienced a consistent theme of out of state locations requesting more guides &amp; daily requests to have planners mailed to prospective visitors.</p>	<p>Success will be measured by the placement of our</p>	<p>At the Gardiner Visitor Center we carry a large amount of printed material from across the state and</p>			

Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	<p>strategy that includes drop shipping guides to regional visitor centers and airports, various state visitor centers and airports, mailing them upon request, keeping them well-stocked in the Gardiner Visitor Center and local businesses, and dropping them off in-person at regional visitor centers and airports when convenient.</p> <p>In addition, funds in this category will be used to continue to stock our visitor center with partner materials that are relevant to our visitors.</p>	<p>DMA West released a report from a study done in conjunction with Destination Analysts regarding DMO Visitor Guides that support this information as well. Some of the highlights follow:</p> <p><b>Usage &amp; Trip Behavior:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nearly 70% of potential visitors actually travel to the destination after receiving the DMO visitor guide</li> <li>The majority of visitor guide requestors initially learn about the DMO's visitor guide on the DMO's website or through search engine results &amp; ads, versus it being a habit to order visitor guides.</li> <li>These trips are largely vacations in which the visitor stays in a hotel</li> <li>70.4% of these visitors characterize their trip as a vacation and 68.8 stay in a hotel.</li> <li>One in five visitor guide users had not yet made their destination decision when they requested the guide.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Of those that are subject to influence by the guide, nearly 90% ultimately decide to visit the destination because of the DMO's visitor guide.</li> <li>27.8% of those that had already made the destination decision when they requested the DMO visitor guide said the guide ultimately influenced the number of days they spent in the destination. Of this group, 70.8% reported having increased their intended length of stay in the city by 1.9 days on average.                 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>80.1% said they used the visitor guide as a trip planning resource before arriving in the destination and said 74.9% they used it in-market                     <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The guides are largely used to select attractions and restaurants in the destination, as well as review maps.</li> <li>21.1% use these guides to select a hotel.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>travel guide in our target areas including: Montana visitor centers, Montana airports, Wyoming visitor centers, South Dakota visitor centers, Idaho visitor centers, and several outdoor recreation locations in Utah.</p> <p>This will be measured using a spreadsheet that will track number of copies distributed and to which locations.</p>	<p>surrounding areas. We do not carry rack cards that specifically compete with our local businesses, rather rack cards that promote a place, tourism area, museum or activity that cannot be found here; along with state and city guidebooks. The feedback we receive from travelers is very positive and appreciative and these materials move quickly.</p> <p>We have now created our own rack card and visitor guide that we would like to display in Chambers/CVBs that we help promote.</p> <p><b>UPDATE</b></p>	\$5,000.00	
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	<p>We would like to continue to pursue our partnership with Cooke City to promote year round travel in the Yellowstone Northern Range. We would also like to continue our support of Voices of Montana Tourism. We are also pursuing options to partner with local nonprofits on different marketing campaigns for the shoulder and winter season.</p>	<p>We have seen success in our joint marketing efforts with the promotion of the Yellowstone Northern Range. The Yellowstone Northern Range video reached 79,000 people in its first posting to <a href="http://www.YellowstoneNorthernRange.com">www.YellowstoneNorthernRange.com</a>, has had 4.8K views on Facebook, and continues to be a marketing asset for both our communities. We have found that these cooperative marketing efforts allow us to reach a larger audience and tell a more complete story of what visitors to our area can expect to experience when they come to our communities.</p>	<p>Success will be measured by maintaining the Yellowstone Northern Range website, posting regularly on the Northern Range social media page, and by utilizing the majority of the budget towards the Northern Range cooperative</p>	<p>We have a small operating budget and partnering with other tourism agents allows us the ability to enter bigger markets and leverage a team of experts that would otherwise be unavailable to us. Our collaboration with Cooke City gives us the ability to focus on year round promotion and a comprehensive visitor experience to our area. We have created a website, <a href="http://www.yellowstonenorthernrange.com">www.yellowstonenorthernrange.com</a>, a video, and are now operating social media pages. This cooperative allows us to upkeep our website as well as create print advertising for the region.</p> <p>The mission of Voices of Montana Tourism states "serves as a united voice for Montana's tourism stakeholders. Since its creation in 2011, Voices has led the effort with education and outreach to communicate the immense value a sustainably-grown tourism industry provides for all Montanans." We would like to continue to support this organization that reflects our purpose as a DMO.</p>	\$1,100.00	
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	<p>This year we would like to have money on reserve for emerging opportunities. In order for the Gardiner CVB to be competitive in today's market we need to be prepared for projects that can arise after the budgeting session has concluded. We would be open to print media, social media boosting, online digital advertising, SEO optimization, co-op or joint efforts.</p>	<p>Being prepared for future endeavors that we are not currently aware of is forward thinking and alleviates being stuck in a rut doing the same projects every year. Keeping marketing fresh has significant positive impacts on success.</p> <p>In FY20 we were able to purchase 2 door counters through opportunity marketing funds. These door counters have allowed us to track overnight visitation in our 24 hour informational and restroom vestibule as well as provided us with more accurate visitor numbers over our previous hand tally system.</p>	<p>Measurements of success will depend upon the opportunity we pursue and will be evaluated on an individual basis.</p>	<p>Previous years have indicated that when new opportunities arise we cannot participate because we have not budgeted for them. We would like to be able to take advantage of new methods and opportunities as they arise.</p>	\$100.00	
				<p>COVID19 Stemming from the COVID19 pandemic we saw a dramatic increase in camping. Due to this increase we</p>			

Marketing Support	Crisis Management	<p>In response to the COVID19 pandemic and a historic fire that occurred in Gardiner on July 14, 2020, we feel that there must be signage added in strategic locations to help mitigate the negative effects we have experienced from these crises.</p>	<p>Signs will provide continuous advertising for our message, working 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</p> <p>Supporting research for Camping related signage</p> <p>*An experimental study conducted by Reigner and Lawson (2009) examining the effects of messaging (indirect management) on visitor behavior at Haleakala National Park in Hawaii revealed that the type of messaging provided in visitor education materials can positively influence visitor behavior (in this case, the decision of whether or not to explore pools) which may result in resource degradation. This study suggests that in some situations, indirect management practices may be effective in changing visitor behavior so as to minimize resource degradation." (Source)</p> <p>Supporting research for signage related to the fire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 38% OF LARGE COMPANIES WITH MULTIPLE LOCATIONS IDENTIFIED BRANDING/IMAGE AS THE MOST IMPORTANT PURPOSE OF EFFECTIVE SIGNAGE.</li> <li>• 75% OF AMERICANS HAVE TOLD SOMEONE ELSE ABOUT A BUSINESS AS A REACTION TO YOUR SIGNAGE.</li> <li>• 68% OF AMERICAN CONSUMERS HAVE MADE A PURCHASE BECAUSE A SIGN CAUGHT THEIR INTEREST.</li> <li>• ON AVERAGE, ONE ADDITIONAL ON PREMISE SIGN RESULTS IN AN INCREASE IN ANNUAL SALES REVENUE OF 4.75%.</li> </ul> <p>(Source)</p>	<p>experienced an alarming amount of negligent camping behavior including but not limited to: improper disposal of human waste, camping in non-permitted areas, trespassing, and dispersed camping in dangerous high traffic areas/roadways. With this overall lack of knowledge for how to responsibly camp we believe educating visitors with signage explaining how to camp, where to camp, and why you should abide by these regulations will help sustain the areas receiving heightened abuse. We will work in tandem with the Forest Service on location placement and appropriate language for these signs.</p>	<p>Success will be measured by the completion and placement of: at least two signs with camping education in appropriate areas, at least one sign explaining the historic fire on the fencing surrounding the corners, and at least one sign indicating that businesses are open on the fencing surrounding the corners.</p>	\$3,700.00	Park Street Fire Aftermath Photos_Reduced.pdf
Publicity	Fam Trips	<p>We will seek out an individual(s) or organization that aligns with our brand story to visit Gardiner during the fall, winter, or spring. We will create a detailed and organized itinerary for the individual or organization and ask for deliverables including but not</p>	<p>Ogilvy   <a href="https://www.adweek.com/performance-marketing/study-earned-media-still-matters-a-lot/">https://www.adweek.com/performance-marketing/study-earned-media-still-matters-a-lot/</a></p> <p>In fact, the survey reveals that earned media is still, by leaps and bounds, the most powerful resource for influencing purchasing decisions and business outcomes. According to the study, traditional media outlets are still the most trusted sources of news, followed by influencer-driven news. News generated by companies themselves, however, ranked as the least influential. Further, The majority of journalists surveyed (65%) agree that the more the (traditional) media covers a brand, the more credible the brand appears (with in reason, of course; they also cautioned that too much coverage looks suspicious).</p> <p>Some other key takeaways from the study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 44% of respondents feel that today's campaigns require a combination of traditional, social and paid media.</li> <li>• Almost half of respondents (47%) consider earned media the most influential medium of all when it comes to view earned media as most influential medium for driving purchasing decisions and business outcomes.</li> </ul> <p>In FY20 Gardiner hosted the influencer travel influencer 'Mel' from which we recieved multiple methods of valuable media exposure including:</p> <p>Instagram: 2 posts and a highlight reel</p>	<p>Success will be measured by participating in at least 1 Fam Trip. We will then measure the Fam Trip's success by evaluating whether or not deliverables were met, contract exceptions were</p>	<p>We would like to continue to inspire visitors to travel to the Gardiner area in the winter and shoulder seasons and feel that bringing an outside entity with a large online audience will help us with this goal. When potential visitors are exposed to a hands-on experience reported on by a fam tour, they can visualize themselves having the experience themselves and therefore may be</p>	\$1,500.00	



***Reg/CVB Required Documents***

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Description	File Name	File Size
Gardiner Chamber of Commerce & CVB Required Documents	FY21 Required Documents.pdf	136 KB

