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Application

Instructions

Print to PDF will convert the application plus any PDF attachments into a single PDF file. **Release for Review** will change the status of the application to Under Review and move it on to the evaluation process. **Negotiation** will allow you to unlock one or more sections of the application and route the application back to the applicant for further editing. **Annotations** allow internal staff to add notes that are visible to internal staff only and possibly also reviewers if they have a special security privilege. The applicant cannot see these notes. **Versions** will display all component versions that were created as a result of the negotiation process. **Feedback** allows staff to enter feedback about the application to the applicant. The feedback text will appear at the bottom of the application and will be visible to anyone who has access to the application. **Withdraw** changes the status of the application to Withdrawn and removes the app from the evaluation process.

Application Details

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27194 - FY16 Region/CVB Marketing Plan - Final Application

30533 - FY16 Great Falls CVB Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Status: Under Review

Submitted Date: 05/08/2015 9:30 AM

Applicant Information

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Comments:

Organization Information

Name: * Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau

Organization Type: Non-Profit Organization

Organization Website: www.genuinemontana.com

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City State/Province Postal Code/Zip

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Comments:

Community & Brand Support

1. Describe your destination.

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?

Identity of the Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau

Great Falls provides a dynamic collection of venues that promote the arts, history, and culture and reflect the Authentic Montana Experience. Great Falls is nestled near the Rocky Mountain Front with the majestic and historic Missouri and Sun Rivers running through the community, and is home to the Roe River, one of the shortest rivers in the world. Great Falls has the advantage of being central to both Glacier National Park and Yellowstone National Park and with the Great Falls International Airport providing low cost air service from many major cities; Great Falls is a gateway to both of the national parks and to the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Strengths that Distinguish Great Falls:

- Cultural attractions such as C.M. Russell Museum, Paris Gibson Square Museum of Art, The History Museum, Ursuline Centre, Galerie Trinitas, The Children's Museum of Montana, Malmstrom AFB Museum and Outdoor Air Park, Great Falls Symphony, Mansfield Center for the Performing Arts, all bring a sense of community pride and personal enrichment.
- Historical attractions such as Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center, Montana Museum of Railroad History, The Great Falls Historic Trolley, the nearby First Peoples Buffalo Jump State Park and much more.
- The award winning River's Edge Trail system is a jogging and non-motorized bike path that runs along the scenic Missouri River, past the Great Falls of the Missouri, and a series of five iconic waterfalls that give breathtaking views of the river in all four seasons. Over 55 miles of paved and dirt bike paths give Great Falls residents and visitors access to numerous recreational activities.
- The Montana ExpoPark, an historic facility and home to the Montana State Fair, has 133 acres, 18 buildings, spacious parks, a grandstand, race track and rodeo grounds, barns with horse stalls, and ample parking and RV camping.
- Military presence in Great Falls enhances our community with highly visible facilities, military professionalism, and young, energetic community members and volunteers. Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana Air National Guard, the US Department of Defense, the US Department of Homeland Security, and the Customs and Border Protection agencies all encourage community pride and involvement.
- Lodging facilities in Great Falls are diverse and continually work to upgrade and add meeting space in the community. The lodging accommodations include several high-profile chain hotels, independently owned hotels, charming bed and breakfasts, vacation homes and campgrounds. Great Falls has over 2200 hotel rooms available with approximately 127,000 square feet of meeting space at the Montana Expo Park, about 22,000 square feet at the Mansfield Center and additional meeting space at hotels and unique venues within the city.
- Medical facilities in Great Falls provide advanced healthcare services, offering every major medical specialty and providing a complete range of medical-surgical and alternative healthcare services. The Benefis Health System consists of two campuses including Peace Hospice of Montana. A new Senior Living Complex is now being offered to the community. The Great Falls Clinic Medical Center is another multi-facility, comprehensive healthcare provider. Other medical services are provided by the Sletten Cancer Institute, the Cyberknife, as well as the McLaughlin Research Institute for Biomedical Sciences, the Golden Triangle Community Mental Health Center, the Largent Center for Mental Health, and the Great Falls' Indian Family Health Clinic.
- Transportation is provided by the Great Falls Transit System bus service, and a highway system which includes Interstate 15, U.S. Highways 87 and 89 and Montana 200. Other services are provided by several local bus and charter services, the Diamond Cab, and the Great Falls International Airport. The Great Falls Airport services are expanding and finding new ways to increase daily service into and out of Great Falls. Air carriers providing excellent service to Great Falls are Delta Airlines (Delta Connections) with direct flights to Salt Lake City and Minneapolis, Allegiant Air with direct flights to Mesa/Phoenix and Las Vegas, United Airlines (United Express) with direct flights to Denver, and Horizon/Alaska airlines with direct service to Seattle.
- Our central location in the corridor between Glacier National Park and Yellowstone National Park makes Great Falls a logical gateway to the parks. Montana's landmark scenic beauty can easily be reached in one day's drive from Great Falls.
- The Canadian Border is within a two hour drive, which makes Great Falls a natural shopping and recreational holiday for our neighbors to the north. Great Falls enjoys an influx of Canadian visitors using our non-stop flights from Great Falls to Las Vegas NV, and to Mesa AZ to access warm vacation areas year around as well as our low-priced airfares on numerous other airlines.
- Shopping opportunities in Great Falls bring a mix of unique downtown stores and well-known brand stores, as well as low-cost large chain stores. Holiday Village Shopping Mall and Great Falls Marketplace Shopping complex offer a variety of stores in one convenient location. Our charming and historic downtown area presents many wonderful shopping experiences and treasures.

Great Falls Recognizes the Following Challenges:

- Residents do not recognize the economic impact that tourism has on the local economy. We are working to educate our local officials as to the benefits of tourism.
- We lack a large event facility or center.
- While our summer season does the bulk of our tourism business we need to find other events, meetings, and conventions for the shoulder and low seasons of the year.
- We need to better educate front-line service employees about tourism activities and attractions in Great Falls as well as the importance of tourism on the economy.
- Limited signage and wayfinding in the city.
- Economic challenges, such as lower wages and unemployment, in our present day environment on a state, national and world level make it hard to forecast travel.
- Meeting and convention planners habitually travel to "known" areas. We need to find ways to reach and connect with potential meeting and convention customers.
- It is difficult to bring larger groups into Great Falls by air for a convention due to limited air availability.
- There has not been regular passenger train service since 1971.

Great Falls Aligns with Montana's Three Brand Pillars

- Great Falls is fortunate to be able to boast all three of Montana's Brand Pillars. Our beautiful location nestled next to the Missouri River with 4 scenic waterfalls and 57 ½ total miles of trail, makes "spectacular unspoiled nature" within walking distance of a city visitor. Giant Springs State Park, the most visited state park last year, is one of the largest fresh water springs in the United States. Families and visitors enjoy unspoiled nature at its finest as they picnic, hike and recreate in the park adjacent to the River's Edge Trail.

Though Great Falls may be in the mid-range of small towns, our downtown is charming with its tree-lined streets, its local retail merchants, and its emerging vibrant pubs and restaurants.

Breathtaking experiences by day on our trail and river, give way to relaxing hospitality by night in one of our many lodging properties that invite a traveler to savor their stay with fine dining such as the Kobe Steak House and the urban charm of the world-famous Sip 'N Dip lounge.

Optional: [Include attachments here](#)

2. How will your marketing plan address the three phases of the travel decision process of inspiration, orientation and facilitation?

Inspiration:

Building on the strong, iconic imagery that the Montana Office of Tourism presents in major US markets, the GFCVB has chosen new creative to “inspire” the visitor to explore Great Falls. We use a strong image such as Lewis and Clark history, fishing or canoeing our river, hiking or biking our trails along the scenic Missouri River. These images with the titles of “True Montana, True To Expectations” will appear in our print magazine media, our banner ads on digital media, and our social media postings.

Orientation:

After recognizing the unique offerings in our area the traveler will often search further for information and ask for our Great Falls Visitor Guide to be mailed to them or search our website www.genuinemontana.com to plan their routing. We consistently update our Visitor Guide with current information as well as providing interesting itineraries to peak their interest.

Facilitation:

The Great Falls Visitor Guide is a pocket guide filled with current information on activities, historic sites, arts and entertainment, museums, maps, sports, day trips, lodging, dining, and shopping. The guide lives on our website www.genuinemontana.com as well. The GFCVB produces this guide yearly to facilitate trip planning for the geo-traveler, as well as those planning to shop in our charming downtown or busy mall, recreate on our river or trail, or relax in our hotels and small coffee shops and open-air cafes. Our guide contains no advertising so the full trip planner is dedicated to encourage visitors to stop and experience all we have to offer.

Optional: [Include attachments here.](#)

3. Who is your market?

a. Define your target markets (demographic, geographic and psycho-graphic)

Geo-Tourist: These would be the high-value, low-impact visitors interested in historical landmarks, the environment, culture and our western heritage. This demographic ranges in age from 30 to 65 with annual incomes of upward of \$60,000. These travelers might also be called adventure travelers as they usually also enjoy outdoor activities such as rafting, fishing, hiking, camping, water recreation and numerous winter activities.

Travelers who are visiting family and friends: This segment may be traveling with or without children and enjoy many outdoor activities as well as events, festivals, and cultural venues. These visitors often explore our state parks, museums, trails, and scenic natural areas.

Business Travelers/Meeting Convention Planners: Business travelers often retrain with family members to engage in leisure activities such as shopping, golfing, water activities, and visiting local attractions and events. Meeting and convention planners are interested in Montana’s warm western hospitality and scenic wonders, as well as unique historical cultural venues.

Leisure Travelers: These visitors are mostly adults over 35, have an income over \$60,000 and like to travel in the summer months. They like to shop and enjoy participating in local events, festivals, and sightseeing. The leisure traveler visits the museums, historic monuments, and looks for cultural activities. The Canadian leisure traveler often takes advantage of a non-stop air flight from Great Falls to Phoenix/Mesa or Las Vegas. Outdoor recreation usually is high on their list of “what to do on vacation”.

The psychographic element in our marketing endeavor brings us to a very important piece of the marketing puzzle. Why does our targeted geotraveler want to visit our region? Great Falls enjoys a dramatic river landscape of unspoiled nature where mountains meet the plains. This landscape is perhaps the inspiration for the geotraveler to further investigate the stories that we have to tell about our history, culture, and recreation.

b. What are your emerging markets?

The GFCVB target markets as identified by ITRR, as well as Visitor Center information and inquiries from our marketing efforts include Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Arizona, Oregon, Colorado, Minnesota, Texas, North Dakota, California and Illinois. Perhaps the largest target market for our area is the Canadian provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Since many more Montana residents are vacationing closer to home, we will target other areas of Montana where visitors would likely spend at least one night when visiting Great Falls.

c. What research supports your target marketing?

A Great Falls brand report done in 2012 identified our target audience as “adventurers with conviction”. These adventurers clearly define geotravelers as they seek unique experiences that give a richer travel memory. They are usually a global citizen, leave a small footprint, and engage in green activities. These geotravelers enjoy hiking as the number one activity according to the branding report. Since Great Falls is near many premier hiking areas like the Rocky Mountain Front, the Bob Marshall Wilderness, and the Kings Hill Scenic Byway, the geotraveler has many outdoor hiking options. The geotraveler also visits Giant Springs State Park, canoes and kayaks the Missouri River, bikes and hikes the River’s Edge Trail system, and fishes and hunts. The geotraveler seeks an authentic experience both in the people and the place, and wants to participate in the culture and history of a destination.

Other visitors, especially our Canadian friends to the north, enjoy shopping as a main activity (pg. 84 of the brand report). These travelers come for a long weekend since Canadian 3-day weekends are abundant, and also engage in outdoor recreation and visit museums or historic sites. The 24- hour Port of Entry from Canada at Sweetgrass is an easy access point for the Canadian visitor coming down Interstate 15.

A large group of visitors come to visit family and friends which is not surprising with Malmstrom AFB located here. Many military families visit our attractions, events and enjoy our outdoor activities.

Optional: [Include attachment here.](#)

4. Overall Goals

Increase four-season tourism revenues through effective marketing and promotions and online presence. This will increase the level of awareness of the attractions and activities that Great Falls has to offer its visitors. The greatest opportunities for increasing revenue are in the first, second and fourth quarters, so we will be looking for ways to bring tourism and meetings and conventions here during the off-peak season.

Look for appropriate partnerships with other organizations such as Central Montana, the GF International Airport Authority, the L&C Interpretive Center, Chamber of Commerce, C.M. Russell Museum, Great Falls Development Authority, the GFTBID, and Montana Office of Tourism in order to:

Continue service of the new low cost air carrier into Great Falls and to seek ways to increase service frequency, lower fares and create more direct flight destinations.

Continue to actively maintain and improve a “portal” website for the community and to enhance our site with new technology.

Work to "brand" Great Falls as the "gateway" to both National Parks.

The GFCVB will continue to update the website www.genuinemontana.com using better marketing tools and partnerships. We will increase our use of social networking, such as Facebook and other social media.

The GFCVB will arrange or partner on a minimum of one FAM trip highlighting a unique aspect of Great Falls, and/or of the surrounding area.

The GFCVB will actively seek ways to reach out to convention and meeting planners to increase their awareness of us as a meeting venue by creating a larger online presence using third party websites such as Cvent. We will seek memberships in those groups that work to promote conventions.

The GFCVB will continue to expand and enhance our photo library of area attractions, events, and activities by implementing photo calls to area photographers and reaching out to area schools to engage students in learning projects to make them aware of the impact tourism has in our community.

We will develop collateral print and online material to provide visitors with the most up-to-date information on Great Falls and the surrounding area.

The GFCVB will continue to improve and update our new Great Falls Visitor Guide.

Optional: Include attachments here.

5. Joint Venture Opportunities

a. In what types of Joint Ventures with MTOT would you like to participate?

We will continue to market in cooperation with the Montana Office of Tourism, Central Montana, the Great Falls Tourism Business Improvement District, The Great Falls International Airport Authority, and other tourism organizations to promote Great Falls to leisure and group travelers. We will participate in co-op marketing programs where our marketing dollars are leveraged for more tourism marketing impact.

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

Partner with the Great Falls Tourism Business Improvement District to bring new meetings and conventions to Great Falls.

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

In the past the Great Falls CVB has participated in joint ventures with MTOT, the Great Falls International Airport, TBID and Central Montana. Seemingly these are successful partnerships and we are able to see the benefits from these efforts by receiving increased hits to the CVB's website along with increased traffic through the airport and hotel nights.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Include pie chart here.

[wg_PieChartbudgetFY16.xlsx](#)

Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	Provide a brief rationale.	Plan to measure success?	Marketing Method Evaluation	Estimated budget for each method.	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Atchmnts
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	Our online/digital advertising will concentrate on several components. Display ads in a Yahoo Ad Network or on Google will target the geotraveler who will appreciate our outdoor activities. We have also consistently used tripadvisor.com (a MTOT co-op) for banner ads. Other digital ads will target areas in Canada that bring a large amount of visitors to our community for shopping, activities, and air travel. These ads are typically placed on Calgaryherald.com, canada.com, and goggle adnetwork. We will also use HTML eblasts targeting outdoor interests, fishing, hiking, and history/culture. Another component of our digital marketing are Facebook contests and content with sponsored	We believe our digital media projects during the last two prior years were successful. We covered markets that were new to us, such as Atlanta and Chicago. We used google display ads in the geo-targeted markets of Denver, Minneapolis, Chicago, Kansas City, Dallas and Atlanta. From our Digital Reporting Analysis provided by Wendt Advertising, the CTR was between .09% and .10%. These rates in our Chicago and Atlanta market gave us indication that these were emerging markets for our continued marketing efforts. Our online/digital marketing to Canada, specifically Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Calgary, gave the best CTRs on shopping banner ads. Wendt does market analysis each season when recommending	Our rationale is taken from the increased use of online advertising and social media. Each year our spending for digital marketing is growing and we realize how important it is to keep up with digital technology and the way new generations find information.	Our success is measured in standard terms for the type of online/digital marketing that we are engaging in. Many of our digital campaigns point to a landing page on our website where we can track those clicking on our links. Each year Wendt provides a complete digital reporting analysis of our digital media campaigns.	\$28,000.00	No		

			<p>newsfeed ads. These contests increase our social media visibility especially to our Canadian neighbors who keep abreast of activities in several areas of Montana. All online/digital advertising is recommended and developed by our advertising agency of record, Wendt Advertising.</p>	<p>our online/digital advertising and we rely heavily on their expertise and research in our target markets to guide our marketing decisions.</p>						
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Yes	<p>The GFCVB would like to develop a regularly scheduled e-newsletter. We will highlight activities in the community, new events at local attractions, images that represent our unspoiled nature and charming downtown, as well as tourism information that would benefit the recipient of the newsletter.</p>	<p>In the white paper entitled "Geo-Travelers And Travel Planning", (an exploration of travel planning phrases and Montana Vacation Planner and Map from 2010), the road map for the geo-traveler has changed. The old way was manual, multiple steps, required assistance and the new way is digital, direct, and personal. A targeted e-newsletter, direct to a personal email, will keep a top-of-mind awareness of our community.</p>	<p>The rationale for any electronic marketing is cost-effectiveness, direct contact and targeted marketing. We have been working to build a data base of emails from individuals asking to receive further information such as e-newsletters.</p>	<p>Our success will be measured by direct responses to our e-newsletter, an increase in those interested in receiving the information, and counting the clicks on links in our e-newsletter to pages on our website.</p>		\$100.00	No	
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Yes	<p>Our strategy is to continually enhance our photo/video library with images that capture the unspoiled nature of our River's Edge Trail and the Missouri River, our charming and vibrant downtown, and the activities that bring the breathtaking experiences of the day into a relaxing and inviting end with memories that last. We realize the importance of stunning photographic images that tell our story. We have been actively collecting photos for our Visitor Guide to refresh and update it annually. We have had many complements on our Visitor Guide, the images in the guide, and the lack of advertising which provides room for detailed information for the visitor. In FY14 we refreshed our creative concept to better exemplify the Montana Brand. Our images take center stage with simple wording of "True Montana, True to Expectations". Using this refreshed concept, we will need iconic images to reflect the natural beauty we find in Great Falls. We will do at least one professional photography shoot to collect those images.</p>	<p>In the Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 on page 25 the plan encourages the partners to "identify specific locations throughout the state that epitomize the diverse array of spectacular unspoiled nature found in Montana". Then we are charged to "iconify these selected locations-using their images in tourism marketing materials consistently and in a manner that evokes an emotional response"...</p> <p>Taking the lead of the MTOT with their stunning examples of photographic images in Montana, we will continue to seek these images out for our individual locations as well.</p>	<p>The rationale is that these images speak for themselves. They are used across our marketing materials to represent our regions and towns evoking an emotional response, if we have marketed the image correctly. We simplify our message with meaningful photography because we can. We can offer the visitor these vistas of spectacular unspoiled nature, the charming towns, and relaxing hospitality.</p>	<p>Our success is found in an ever growing photo library with images that have multi-purposes. We need to have a variety of images to speak to whatever target market we engage.</p>		\$1,000.00	No	
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	<p>Our strategy for print advertising for FY16 will consist of several different projects, such as:</p> <p>We will again do a full-color 1-page ad (inside front cover)of the Central Montana Travel Planner. We often get inquiries in our office that come from visitors who saw our ad in the CM Travel Planner. A presence in our regional guides gives a greater impact to our tourism product since visitors may plan longer stays or return visits by finding many interests in the Central Montana region.</p> <p>An early spring media magazine buy has worked well for us each year as we have consistently mailed out fulfillment information to over 7,000 inquiries. Most of the magazines we place in have a reader's service where we can track our inquiries per magazine. Wendt Advertising advises us each year of a print media plan that will work with our budget and works well with our targeted markets. We do appreciate MTOT co-ops each year for print advertising. When we can get a Montana presence with copy points and advertorial, our marketing</p>	<p>Print advertising has long been a staple of tourism advertising. The baby-boomer generation, those born from 1946 to 1964, are still a vibrant, healthy, and maybe retired segment of the population. This group of people may be better equipped to travel at this point in their lives than the next segment of the population, the millennials who are roughly defined as people born from 1980 to 2004. The baby-boomers are embracing new technology at a slower pace than the millennials who can operate the gamut of emerging technology with ease. The baby boomers still rely on printed material for much of the inspiration phase of trip planning. To make sure we don't miss a large portion of the traveling public we use several methods of print promotions that we explained above.</p> <p>In this advertising we will "Target market segments with specific experiences that are particularly appealing to them." (Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017)</p>	<p>We are working with new creative in FY16 that will continue to support the Montana brand pillars and the Strategic Plan, 2013-2017. We will use images "that reflect not only the scenic beauty of the state or region, " such as the natural beauty of Giant Springs State Park, and the River's Edge Trail along the Great Falls of the Missouri, "but the experiences and activities that visitors will enjoy in that setting". We will also include images of outdoor activities like fishing, kayaking, and hiking.</p> <p>We will be using simple, yet enticing text in our ads that draws the reader into a personal relationship with the destination by having "expectations". We believe that this creative will reinforce the spectacular scenic beauty of Montana's iconic images that MTOT promotes in larger markets.</p>	<p>We will measure success with the number of inquiries generated from our marketing ads, and from calls that come into our office asking for more information. Our Canadian print campaign generates feedback within our community to let us know how we are doing. From airport staff to museum directors, we hear a lot of positive responses about the additional visitors they see once we run an ad.</p>		\$23,200.00	No	

			<p>dollars increase in value. The GFCVB will take advantage of as many of these co-ops with MTOT as possible within our budget.</p> <p>Another way that we will use print advertising is in the Canadian market. Newspaper advertising in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, and even Calgary has been an opportunity for us to market our shopping, activities, and outdoor recreation.</p>						
Consumer	Travel Guide	Yes	<p>Our Great Falls Visitor's Guide has been a huge success. The pocket-sized Guide is 72 pages plus cover and a center gatefold map of the city. It is full-color printed on 70# gloss text with an 80# gloss cover. We will again publish this guide in FY16 with updates and refreshed text and photos. We have found that this pocket-size guided (4 x 9) works well for us. It contains detailed information about venues, attractions, recreation, activities, and places of interest in our city. We have elected to not include advertising in our guide which has enhanced its appeal to the traveler. We also keep the events very generalized so that the guide does not become outdated too quickly.</p>	<p>Word of mouth has shown how effective this guide is. I have received several calls into the office from around the United States telling us how much they appreciate this guide, the information that it presents, and the photos that show much more of the personality of our city. Before we produced this comprehensive guide, we had a small 8 panel brochure. We sent that brochure out as a fulfillment piece for one year and received so many complaints about the lack of information and maps that we knew we needed to provide a piece that not only showcased our local scenic beauty, but also gave snippets of history, local stories, information on attractions, and listings on lodging, restaurants and retail.</p> <p>Several boxes of guides are delivered locally to museums, attractions, and local lodging properties and the response from the front line people was overwhelmingly positive. Our VIC uses these guides extensively to point visitors to local attractions complete with a map for directions. The Airport also distributes these guides and is continually restocking their information booth as they fly off the shelves, especially during the spring/summer travel seasons.</p> <p>We have followed the recommendations in the Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 for printed materials and we also believe that advertising takes up valuable space in the guide that can better serve our visitors with local information.</p>	<p>Our rationale is simple. To provide a visitor, or potential visitor, with the best possible information on recreation, attractions, and activities in a comprehensive brochure filled with colorful images of our unspoiled nature, our charming town, and relaxing hospitality. We definitely believe that this brochure entices the traveler to stay longer or to revisit our area in the future once they discover the unique experiences that we offer.</p>	<p>Our success with this project comes from the many thanks we get for producing the guide. We produced 75,000 guides in our first issue, and we expected them to last for 2 years. We ran out of that printing with several months yet in our 2 year period. We now intend to publish the guide yearly producing 50,000 copies. We will refresh the guide each year with new photography and up to date information. This has been a very successful marketing project for our city and draws the appreciation of locals since they love to send our guides to friends and family who might visit. Benefis Health System loves to send this guide to prospective medical personnel who may relocate in our community.</p>	\$33,200.00	No	

Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Yes	<p>The GFCVB has had several years of successful travel/trade shows. We have exhibited in shows in Chicago, Denver, Washington, California and Texas. We have found that partnering with Central Montana on these shows gives us an expanded audience and we are better able to take our product to more areas than if we were to finance these shows alone.</p> <p>We will again plan to do two shows this year. We have not yet determined where those travel shows will be. Several markets have shown great success, especially in California, Denver and Texas. We will explore other market opportunities if we see emerging markets that show great potential.</p> <p>We distribute our Great Falls Visitor Guide, as well as a Falls of the Missouri brochure that shows the portage of Lewis and Clark around the 5 falls of the Missouri. We also distribute Montana maps, Get Lost stickers, and Montana inspiration pieces if available.</p>	<p>The Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 (page 56) states that "Montana's brand research has shown that visitors are attracted by the adventurous aspects of travel in Montana, yet this can be outweighed by the perception of remoteness and the perceived lack of 'comfort', which can make Montana seem like a risky destination choice." What better way to dispell this erroneous perception than to have personal contact with our potential visitors, give them positive mental pictures of our state and local communities, and assure them that we have such things as fine dining, fine arts, cultural events, and a multitude of educational options, as well as a colorful and vibrant history that gives way to unexcelled travel experiences. We are the ambassadors to a traveling public when we attend these travel/trade shows and as such we can reinforce the brand pillars of Montana as well as our hospitality.</p>	<p>We have worked consistently as a community to increase our air travel options as well as lower airfare prices. We built a community funding program to entice Frontier Airlines to bring a non-stop flight from Denver to Great Falls. We are working to bring a non-stop flight from Atlanta in a year or two. Each of these new direct flight options bring emerging markets to Great Falls and Montana. We look to these markets when planning our travel shows to increase the awareness of our state and city to potential visitors. This is one reason that Denver has become a good travel show destination for us. California has always been a great source for vacationers as it is usually first or second on our list of visitors at our VIC.</p>	<p>We will measure success at our travel/trade shows by the level of activity that the show produces and also the quality of leads that are generated at the show. It is usually very easy to tell if an attendee is truly interested in our destination or if they are just wandering by. We work diligently to engage attendees in conversation about our state and local attractions to increase awareness of what Montana has to offer a visitor.</p>	\$5,500.00	No	
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	Yes	<p>Up until FY15 our website, www.guinemontana.com had been updated as a community portal through the staff at the airport. But with the changes in technology and the need to be more mobile-friendly, we knew we needed to find an actual webmaster to complete these desired changes. We searched for several months and was able to find a great local firm to take over the maintenance of our website. So, during FY15 we did a huge overhaul on our current website. The new firm was able to set us up to run more efficiently, as well as set up a mobile site so that GenuineMontana.com runs beautifully from any mobile device. We will continue to work on updates to our site, including building a special page dedicated to discounts and specials to visitors coming in to Great Falls. It's just one more thing we can do to encourage the savvy traveler!</p>	<p>The necessity of a strong, well-planned, informative website is evident in any discussion on today's travel needs. A study presented by MTOT, updated 2011, entitled "The usage of Social Media and Mobile Technology" gave some important insight as to how important technology was to the geotraveler. Among other uses "70% have smartphones", "Internet has the highest media usage among the geotraveler-averaging 4.2 hours daily", "nearly 65% have accessed a social network site and Social networking is booming-and is a great place for geotravelers to exchange and share".</p> <p>ITRR reported (Q4, 2009 Nonresident Traveler Satisfaction & Information Sources Used, October 2010) "More than 50% of nonresident travelers said that internet search engines were their most useful source of information prior to visiting Montana." And we can be fairly sure that these numbers grow daily.</p>	<p>Our rationale will be to continue to build content on our website, www.guinemontana.com, that will encourage visits to our site, and draw visitors to our destination. We will build an image library on the site as well as itineraries for the traveler who could easily build them into his visit. We would like to integrate a blog into our site and increase our use of blogging and social media to drive traffic to our website. Our challenge is to provide excellent information and service to our web traffic in an ever-changing technological environment at a cost that is affordable and practical.</p>	<p>Success will be measured in Google analytics as to traffic on the site. We will also need to monitor published findings from other resources to keep abreast of new opportunities and insights to better manage our site and its relevancy to the geotraveler.</p>	\$5,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	Administration	Yes	<p>Our strategy in administration is to keep our costs to a minimum in order to allocate more funding to market our community. However, administration is tasked with the oversight of the promotion and tourism development in our communities to generate an increasing level of bed tax collections as well as keeping all projects and funding compliant with MTOT Regulations and Procedures. Our 20% allotment to administration is appreciated and used well.</p>	<p>Research to support this segment might suggest that the GFCVB has not had a fine or audit abnormality for the last five years.</p>	<p>The rationale is to continue to improve upon our current administration load to streamline our operations to free more time for current social application demands.</p>	<p>Our success would be shown by enabling more social media to be taken on by our existing staff.</p>	\$31,300.00	No	

Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	Yes	<p>The method for this marketing segment in great part is accomplished by our bulk contractor, Printing Center, located in Great Falls MT. We have used this contractor since 2013 to tab and address our pocket-sized Great Falls Visitor Guide for \$0.09 each. Most of the year we are able to utilize bulk mailings for our guides.</p> <p>Other shipping consists of boxes of our Visitor Guides that are requested by Visitor Information Centers where our Certified Folder Distribution is not scheduled. We try as much as possible to deliver these guides with members or others who are traveling in proximity to those requesting boxes of our Great Falls Visitor Guide.</p> <p>We have also needed to send boxes of guides to Consumer Shows where we display them at our travel booth. We try to have a close estimate of the number of guides that we might need at these shows, and as of yet we have not had to dispose of any unused guides at the shows.</p>	<p>In the last two years the Printing Center mailed out over 10,000 of our Great Falls Visitor's Guides in response to our print media buys most of which had a reader's service available to readers of the magazines. Other inquiries for our Visitor Guides come into our office through our website and through phone calls direct to our GFCVB office. These fulfillment pieces are also mailed out by Printing Center to garner a better bulk mailing rate for our inquiries.</p> <p>However, we try as much as possible to encourage those possible visitors to access our website, www.genuinemontana.com where our Visitor Guide is also available and may be downloaded if necessary. This is a savings on postal fees and encourages those interested to use our website.</p>	<p>Our rationale is to create a savings on the price of mailings by using bulk mail as much as possible and to encourage international inquiries to find their information and a downloadable version of our Visitor Guide on our website. We do believe that our Visitor Guide is an invaluable resource to travelers in the Orientation and Facilitation portion of their travel planning and is an important tool to have in hand for a potential visitor.</p>	<p>Our success is measured in the number of Visitor Guides that are mailed out without guides being returned or damaged. In the past only a handful of guides came back to us. After a mailing has gone out we receive calls into our office thanking us for sending the guide and also telling us how profitable it is with helpful images and detailed information.</p>		\$3,850.00	No	
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	Yes	<p>Our Opportunity Marketing method is to maintain a small amount of funds that would be available for an unknown opportunity in the community for convention or event subsidies or to implement marketing methods that are unplanned at the time of the marketing plan for FY16.</p>	<p>Up to 10% of our total budget may be used for Opportunity Marketing, however, we historically have only needed less than 3% for this line item.</p>	<p>Our rationale would be to stay within the mission statement and goals of our organization's marketing plan.</p>	<p>Our success would be measured on the individual project.</p>		\$3,355.00	No	
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	Yes	<p>The method in this case is an invaluable education of the participants.</p>	<p>The GFCVB has had a member in attendance at all TAC meetings, Governor's Conference, and Region/CVB meetings on a continual basis.</p>	<p>The rationale behind supporting the attendance at the meetings is to enhance the ability of any region or CVB to stay compliant with the regulations and to have a greater understanding of what MTOT is undertaking on behalf of the tourism segments in Montana.</p>	<p>The measure of the success of these meetings is found in the reporting of each individual attendee to their boards and staff and with the follow-through and implementation of plans and ideas presented at the meetings.</p>		\$1,200.00	No	
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	Yes	<p>The method for a Joint Venture remains open depending on the type of opportunity that arises to partner with another nonprofit tourism-related organization.</p>	<p>All supporting research will be used to keep the project within the scope of work and mission of the GFCVB.</p>	<p>Partnering with other nonprofit tourism-related organizations will help to spread our tourism dollars further and continue to produce good-will and sharing between organizations.</p>	<p>A plan to measure success will be identified once a project is developed.</p>		\$500.00	No	
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing /Signage	Yes	<p>The GFCVB has for several years invested \$16,000 in staffing support for the Great Falls Visitor Information Center. The City of Great Falls has been the other part of the support network, providing a modern building in a scenic park location overlooking the city of Great Falls. The GFCVB feels that the VIC is an integral part of a thriving tourism community. Our VIC is operational year-round and is only closed on Christmas and Thanksgiving. It is staffed by one or two part-time employees and a bevy of select volunteers that are seldom absent when scheduled. At the time of this marketing plan changes are taking place for our VIC. A group of tourism partners, to include the GFCVB, have pledged funding for the Center since the City of Great Falls would like those who have tourism expertise to carry on the operation of the VIC. We are excited for the opportunity to produce a vibrant tourism product for the community. Other methods of operation are yet to be</p>	<p>I will turn to the Vision of a Strong Tourism Industry as reported in the Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan 2013-2017, on page 12. In this section "The TAC's goal for strengthening Montanan's tourism marketing is effectively pooling resources and helping communities work together as part of the overall Montana Brand" The partners want to make the best "product" possible to bring increased awareness to visitors and community members of the Montana Brand. We will strive to make our VIC a strong marketing tool for local attractions and activities to entice travelers who are already here to stay and enjoy our area and Montana for a longer period of time or to return for further travel experiences. We also plan to bring respect to the Montana Tourism Brand and educate our community to the benefits of tourism in our community and the state.</p>	<p>Our rationale for committing to the staffing of the VIC is to continue to support the Center, and educate leaders of the community about the importance of tourism in the survival and success of our small businesses and our community. We plan to bring a better understanding of the importance of the lodging facility use tax and the necessity of preserving it for the continued success of our community.</p>	<p>Success will be measured by an increase in activity at the VIC both with increased visitation from out-of-state visitors, and from local friends and families who will expand our tourism message. We will further measure our success by attending state funded VIC training to ensure that we are partnering with MTOT to image the Montana brand, bring technology used at the center up-to-date, and give visitors a consistent Montana message. We will institute a training program for the</p>		\$16,000.00	No	

			determined.			volunteers that will show them our appreciation for a job well done, and encourage them to become ambassadors for our 3 brand pillars. The Montana Strategic Plan is a tremendous guide book for increasing tourism awareness, planning for marketing success, and developing a vibrant tourism community.			
Publicity	Fam Trips	Yes	The GFCVB would like to initiate 1-2 FAM trips in FY16. These FAM trips would be to Great Falls and the immediate area. We have participated in FAM trips with MTOT and Central Montana, however, we would like to do at least one that is dedicated to a particular interest area in our city. Many writers want a hook, or niche market idea that will be of interest to travelers and we believe that Great Falls has many of those. We will develop a rapport with writers known to be interested in western history, unique travel experiences, outdoor recreation, or special products in our community. We will try build interest in a 2-3 night FAM that will explore a creative theme.	FAM trips have been a successful way for the MTOT to increase awareness of our state and all it has to offer. Several years ago we hosted several motorcycle riders from Italy for a day and night in partnership with MTOT and we felt it was a successful PR project since a multi-page article appeared in an Italian Motorcycle Magazine. We have also partnered with Central Montana on portions of FAM trips that pertained to Great Falls. If we are able to interest writers, bloggers, or travel influencers in one or more of our events or activities, and they submit one or more articles, our effort will be worth while.	The Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 (page 60) reports "Niche activities are strong motivators for their audiences and, while these audiences may be individually small, they can contribute significantly to overall tourism numbers." We believe that some of our strengths, such as agriculture and pulse crops, location along a river that contributed in great part to Western exploration and history, Giant Springs State Park with its largest freshwater spring and shortest river, and numerous recognized entertainment venues, would attract writers, bloggers, and internet influencers.	Success will be measured in the amount of PR that would be published either in magazines, e newsletters, niche market writings, or other means of widely used communication.		\$1,000.00	No
								\$153,205.00	

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Professional Development	\$0.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$100.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$28,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$18,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Joint Ventures	\$5,700.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel Guide	\$33,200.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$5,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
		\$96,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$16,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$30,600.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$3,355.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$700.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	\$3,850.00	\$0.00
		\$55,705.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Fam Trips	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
		\$1,000.00	\$0.00
		\$153,205.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Reg/CVB Required Documents

File Name	Description	File Size
FY16_RequiredDocuments.pdf (60 KB)	FY16 Marketing Plan Required Documents	60 KB



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