



Grant Details

68892 - FY19 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

72781 - FY19 Missouri River Country Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY19 Missouri River Country Marketing Plan
Grant Number: 19-51-006
Grant Status: Underway
Comments:
Applicant Organization: Montana's Missouri River Country
Grantee Contact: Carla Hunsley
Award Year: 2018
Program Area: DOC Office of Tourism

Amounts:
Contract Dates: Contract Sent: 06/20/2018, Contract Received: 07/01/2018, Contract Executed: 06/30/2019
Project Dates: Proposal Date: 06/20/2018, Project Start: 07/01/2018, Project End: 06/30/2019
Grant Administrator: Barb Sanem
Contract Number: 19-51-006
Award Year: 2018

Contract Dates

Contract Sent	Contract Received	Contract Executed	Contract Legal
---------------	-------------------	-------------------	----------------

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

Project Start Project End

Comments
Amendment Comments

Community & Brand Support

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

INTRODUCTION

https://www.dropbox.com/s/8rn3id09c00s1ji/MRC18_MarketingPlan_042718.pdf?dl=0

Montana's Missouri River Country is a destination for the outdoor adventurer, geotourist, history buffs, Native American Culturists, Dinosaur Trail followers, hunters, fishermen and women and the overall recreationists. Here visitors find spectacular nature, charming small towns, exceptional wildlife watching and breathtaking experiences. Missouri River Country is home to Fort Peck Lake, four National Wildlife Refuges, two Montana State Parks and 27 charming communities. Here visitors also find perfect solitude with nature, opportunities to spend genuine, uninterrupted time with their loved ones, and more room to roam. We believe that in the 21st century, when people are constantly engulfed into the hustle and bustle of daily life, what visitors now crave from their vacations are a chance to unplug and really connect. Less people and less traffic means more time to focus on real experiences, so we have chosen to take advantage of our amazing open spaces in our new marketing campaign: More Room to Roam.

Less people and less traffic means more time to focus on real experiences.

More Room to Roam holds many meanings to us. It means that there are more opportunities to have an authentic, meaningful experience in Montana. It means there is more room to connect and more space to explore. We are proud of our campaign because it allows our target audiences to reflect: What would more room mean to me? Maybe that means time with family or friends. Maybe it means more time to sit still and observe the incredible biological diversity on our prairies and waters. Maybe it means getting lost - on purpose. We know that it means something different to everyone, but the message is clear: You can find whatever you are looking for in Missouri River Country, and we want to help you along the way.

IDENTITY

Montana is an incredibly diverse state that is synonymous with the West. Our history is vast and so is our landscape. Wide open spaces surround our friendly, small communities. This is a side of Montana that few see, but all who see it fall in love with Montana all over again.

We understand that many visitors who come to Montana come to experience the two national parks in our state, and for that reason much of our visitation comes from drive-through travel. However, Missouri River Country has many attractions that bring in visitors directly to our towns, waterways and wide open spaces. Missouri River Country is a hub for outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, boating and ATVing and ice fishing, cross country skiing and snowmobiling in the winter. The Missouri River, which was an integral part of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, runs through our district and attracts history and culture buffs.

A distinct region unto itself, this place of the Great Plains harbors unique landforms. Grand scenes intermingle with smaller bits of geologic wonder. Space, much of it undisturbed, is its greatest commodity and an unending sky delivers a feeling of no borders or confinement, where a human can stretch and breathe. Missouri River Country is truly the land of wide open spaces - of opportunity and spectacular nature. You can see for miles, stretch your arms, breathe the fresh air and sleep under the big starry sky. It's not the destination but rather the experiences had in Missouri River Country that are truly breathtaking.

This is a side of Montana that few see, but all who see it fall in love with Montana all over again.

STRENGTHS

[Hunting](#)

Visitors here spend less time hunting for open space and more time hunting! No matter where you go in Northeast Montana, you are surrounded by wildlife. The skies above Northeastern Montana are filled with upland gamebirds and waterfowl. Our wide open spaces are filled with elk, bighorn sheep, pronghorn, mule deer and whitetails. Our corner of Montana is not only an exciting place for hunting adventures but a land of unrivaled beauty and wonder.

[Fort Peck Lake](#)

In the summer, marinas are filled with fishermen and women looking to cast a line and pass the day on the water. Defined by sandstone formations, fields of grain and fertile river bottoms, Missouri River Country is a place where shorelines go on for more than a thousand miles and fish grow to more than 100 pounds. This is the land where men built a dam across the mighty Missouri River and created the largest body of water in Montana. This is the land of Fort Peck Reservoir, which boasts over 1,600 miles of shoreline (more than the California coast!) and a great variety of fish.

[Dinosaurs](#)

Millions of years before the formation of the Missouri River in Montana, dinosaurs made this once lush wetland their home. Northeastern Montana has provided a wealth of world class fossil discoveries. Visitors can experience dinosaur digs and learn about the prehistoric nature of dramatic landscape. The Fort Peck Powerhouse Museum in Fort Peck has a Triceratops skull on display. At the Fort Peck Interpretive Center you will be greeted by a life size fleshed out replica of Peck's Rex a T-Rex found in the area. Numerous fossils were discovered during the building of the Fort Peck Dam. The Phillips County Museum features fossil discoveries from the nearby Judith River Formation including a Brachylophosaus, one of the best articulated dinosaur skeleton ever found. The Great Plains Dinosaur Museum offers the public an intimate look into a working paleontological institution and displays "Leonardo" the "best preserved dinosaur" according to the Guinness Book of World Records. GPDM is also known for the best growth series of this dinosaur anywhere. The Garfield County Museum displays a full-scale model of a Triceratops, which was found near Jordan in 1964.

[History & Culture](#)

History is as vast as our rolling landscape in Missouri River Country. Lewis and Clark may have been early visitors to Missouri River Country, but when they arrived the region was already home to the Assiniboine people. Members of the Sioux nation also call our corner of Montana home. Their cultural heritage continues to be celebrated today through such events as pow wow and dancing ceremonies. Annual pow wows are held on the Fort Peck Reservation, where traditional dance, song, and tribal ceremonies can be experienced. Lewis and Clark buffs come here to experience the landscape that has remained virtually unchanged since the days of westward expansion. Missouri River Country has many museums, cultural centers, visitor centers and historic downtown regions that attract history and culture buffs to our corner of Montana.

[Outdoor Recreation & Wildlife](#)

While we are most known for our hunting and fishing, there is a plethora of outdoor recreation opportunities in Missouri River Country. Hikers can enjoy total trail solitude in the Little Rocky Mountains; birders will be amazed by uninterrupted views of Big Sky Country; wildlife viewing opportunities are plentiful; and boating and ATVing opportunities abound. RV and tent campers both make their way to Northeast Montana, too, to take part in a Montana adventure found only here. Slippery Ann Elk Viewing Area is one of the best places to view elk in the fall, and visitors are consistently enamored with the raw nature found in Missouri River Country. Bikers can now stop in Glasgow at the Bike Bin at Smith Park, featuring a bicycle repair stand and bike wash station conveniently located near camping and showers at the adjacent Shady Rest RV Park.

Charming Communities

Twenty-seven small communities dot Missouri River Country, offering visitors authentic Montana character. Museums, outfitters and shops offer a taste of our history and culture. Visitors can pan for gold or go on a dinosaur dig based out of our communities, and then they can return to spend the night in our hotels and cabins. We have four microbrews in the region and many wonderful dining options serving up delicious burgers, steaks and so much more. Visitors have the chance to experience local farmers markets in the summer and festivals throughout the year, too. One of the best parts of Missouri River Country is the people who call this place home and get to share our beloved landscape with visitors.

Affordability

Compared to other vacation destinations, Missouri River Country offers affordable options for travelers. Hotels rooms, food and drink, and entertainment are less expensive in Missouri River Country. Activities such as wildlife watching, hiking and some museums offer cost-free entertainment, and activities like fishing, dinosaur digs and more are affordable activities compared to others in the state. We know that our affordability is a great resource for our travelers and plays a role in our attractions to visitors as they choose where to spend their hard-earned vacation dollars.

CHALLENGES

Drive-Through Status

Missouri River Country has historically been and continues to be a drive-through region, meaning that visitors are "just passing through" to destinations with more widely recognized icons. 58% of visitors to Missouri River Country come in a truck or car; and 13% of visitors are only passing through. We must continue to educate travelers that there are activities and points of interest in the region.

Accessibility

While being located in "the middle of nowhere" is a strength of ours in terms of providing visitors with uninterrupted solitude with nature, this continues to be a challenging factor for Missouri River Country. Some of our towns are 4 1/2 hours driving distance from any major city and accessing our region by air service is difficult. We are fortunate to have Essential Air Service in Sidney, Wolf Point and Glasgow. While these flights are beneficial, our challenge is getting connections with other flights. They are small planes that can only accommodate 9 passengers and fly solely into Billings.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is one of Missouri River Country's biggest challenges. In certain months, roads to attractions like U.L. Bend National Wildlife Refuge are impassable or closed, and ruts in roads can deter tourists from visiting certain areas. Maintaining hotels, city infrastructure and roads will continue to be an issue in our region so long as state funding continues to service other regions first.

Access to Information

We know that once people are in Missouri River Country, they fall in love with our wide open spaces, friendly communities and access to outdoor recreation. Compared to other parts of Montana, information about Missouri River Country is harder for potential visitors to find. Our website is not currently responsive to mobile, and in the age of technology it is ever-important for information to be easy, accessible and to the point.

OPPORTUNITIES

Amtrak

Missouri River Country is fortunate to have Amtrak stops in Wolf Point, Glasgow and Malta. We believe that a unique opportunity lies in attracting visitors to stop over in Missouri River Country on their way from Chicago and Minneapolis area on route to Glacier National Park. We also believe that there is untapped potential for families from cities to the east who can stop and get off the train and visit our charming communities and have authentic Montana experience. This would be less train-time than riding all the way towards Glacier National Park.

Dark Skies

Missouri River Country has some of the darkest skies in the continental United States. With our distance from major cities, most of our region is considered "dark sky" country, and we believe that this is an untapped marketing opportunity for us. We believe there is huge potential in marketing Missouri River Country as a place for astrotourism and eventually designating an International Dark Sky Park in Missouri River Country. The Northern Lights and amazing views of the Milky Way, when marketed as dark sky opportunities, presents a unique opportunity to draw visitors to our region.

Missouri River Country has some of the darkest skies in the continental United States.

Repeat Visitation

ITRR research indicates that over half of the visitation to Missouri River Country is the repeat visitor. This leads us to believe that awareness of our activities and attractions is lacking. When visitors experience our hunting, fishing, history, openness, nature and culture, they will want to come back. We strive to attract first-time visitors, and once they experience our region, we believe they will spread the word to their home communities and come back again and again.

Sleeping Buffalo Hot Springs

A very exciting opportunity lies in the newly developed Sleeping Buffalo Hot Springs and Resort. ITRR research indicates that 12% of state visitors ranked "Hot Springs" as a reason for visitation to Montana, and we believe that by spreading awareness of this remote hot springs, visitation to our region has the potential to increase.

Describe your destination.

THREE PHASES OF TRAVEL

It is easy to fall in love with Missouri River Country. Our rolling sea of prairie stretches for miles below big blue skies that come to life with stars at night. Missouri River Country will follow the State's three-phase travel strategy of inspiration, orientation and facilitation to provide world-class experiences and unforgettable memories.

Stunning photography of our landscape **inspires** people through advertising and social media. It is hard to see bright green landscapes and giant blue skies and not want to learn more (or see it for yourself!). Our open spaces and abundance of wildlife and recreation activities will draw in interested visitors and make people want to learn more about Missouri River Country.

Once we have hooked people into wanting to learn more, we will **orient** them to our region with information about activities, lodging, events and opportunities in our region. Using print marketing, trade show opportunities, social media outlets (ie: Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) and informational

blog posts, we will provide information to our interested visitors. We also received recent funding to build a state-of-art website which will be responsive to mobile devices and serve as an immeasurable tool in delivering the message and opportunities in Missouri River Country to the public.

We will **facilitate** visitors through continued hospitality. From the moment of interest to their last day of vacation, Missouri River Country staff and marketing teams will provide nothing but excellent information, service and resources. The new website will be a huge asset in ensuring that visitors have an encore experience in our region, and our informational print materials such as travel guides, hunting and fishing guides, brochures and maps will help visitors experience all that Missouri River Country has to offer. In addition, promoting visitation to the VIC's will enable us to have a hands-on approach to facilitating the experience of our visitors.

Optional: Include attachments here

Spectacular Nature.jpg

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

TARGET MARKETS

Geographic

Strategically targeting certain geographic markets will enable Missouri River Country to stretch the impact of our marketing dollars. Missouri River Country will target the following geographical markets, which provide our current base of visitors and potential for increased visits by high-value, low-impact tourist:

- Minnesota
- Washington
- California
- Pennsylvania
- Wisconsin
- Wyoming
- Idaho
- Colorado
- South Dakota
- North Dakota
- Oregon
- Michigan
- Texas
- Ohio
- Illinois
- Missouri
- Ontario, Canada
- Manitoba, Canada
- Calgary, Alberta

- Alberta, Canada
- Saskatchewan, Canada

We also know that many Montanans visit Missouri River Country as a close-to-home, quick trip in our state. We market to Montana residents to give them the chance to fall in love with Montana all over again in a fresh, new part of the state.

Demographics

In addition to geographic targeted marketing, Missouri River Country strategically targets to prime demographic groups who have inclination and reason to visit our region. Strategic marketing includes social media posts, ad placements and trade shows.

Hunters & Anglers

This group includes hunters and anglers from Montana and other states who would travel into Missouri River Country for specific recreational opportunities. This demographic is heavily skewed as an affluent male audience. Census statistics suggest that 15% of the general US population 16 years of age or older fishes and 10% hunts from that same demographic. These people most likely come into the region to recreate and do not travel elsewhere in the state once they are here. 23% of visitors to our region listed hunting as an attraction while 4% listed lakes.

History & Culture Buffs

This group includes adults 30+ years of age who are traveling with or without children with a household income of \$60,000+. These travelers are interested in a variety of history, arts and culture and are likely to visit at least one historical site during their vacation. They will most likely pair their trip to include other historical regions of Montana. 9% of visitors to our region listed Lewis and Clark as an attractant to Montana.

Couples

This group includes adults 30+ years of age without children who have a household income of \$50,000+. These people are interested in history, culture, arts, museums, soft adventure, wildlife viewing and birding, dinosaurs and scenic attractions.

Traditional Family Travelers

This group includes adults 35+ years of age with or without children whose household income is \$60,000+. These travelers participate in scenic driving, nature photography, camping/hiking, photography, museums, wildlife viewing, birding and dinosaur activities. They are interested in creating a relaxing and memorable experience together.

RV & Camping Travelers

This group consists of adults 35-65 years of age with children or adults 55-64 years of age without children. They usually have a household income of \$75,000+. These travelers participate in camping, hiking, visiting historic sites, sightseeing, photography, wildlife viewing, and birding and dinosaur activities.

Outdoor Enthusiasts

This group consists of adults 35-65 years of age who are traveling with or without children. They have a household income of \$60,000+. They enjoy participating in outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, birding, wildlife watching, dinosaurs activities, ATVing, motorcycle riding and water recreation.

Sports Travelers

This group consists of adults 25+ years of age traveling with children to sporting events such as basketball, baseball, hockey, football and track and field. They have a household income of \$50,000+.

Psycho-graphic

Missouri River Country will target the visitors that present a high impact such as the history and culture buffs, hunters and anglers, the families and couples that are interested in the many things that Missouri River Country has to offer. Various visitors like the hunting and fishing opportunities here and they bring their families to visit the museums and/or recreate around our lakes, rivers and streams. Many families follow the Montana Dinosaur Trail through our region. The 50+ permanent RVer's are becoming popular in our area as well. These people like to visit our wide open spaces and stay in our campgrounds. When the state "Montana" is mentioned, people get excited. We see this at our trade shows and in reactions online on social media. The beauty of Missouri River Country is the quiet, peace and solitude.

METHODS

Missouri River Country will reach target demographics and target markets through various advertisement placements to promote the region as a travel destination. Using branding and strong ad copy, we believe that we can successfully attract visitors to the region.

Rebranding

Missouri River Country has recently rebranded our image with carefully selected color palates to represent the aesthetic appeal of our region. Blues and greens evoke the colors of the prairie. Rolling green hills match bright blue skies, and the light blues represent the flowing Missouri and Yellowstone rivers that crisscross our region. The dark orange evokes memories of swaying grasses in the fall, and the deep red evokes the boldness of sunsets in the summertime. We felt that this strong color palette is a powerful marketing tool to successfully brand Missouri River Country as a destination for potential travelers.

b. What are your emerging markets?

EMERGING MARKETS

Missouri River Country has isolated the following emerging markets that we believe are a perfect fit for our attractions. We plan to market directly to their travel desires and needs.

Young Outdoor Enthusiasts

This market includes young travelers between the ages of 18-30 who are interested in traveling around outdoor adventure. These travelers are more likely to camp at least one night of their trip, and they are looking for access to hiking, climbing, water sports, wildlife viewing, photography and camping experiences. These users are also highly active in social media, so we believe that targeting these audiences within our drive markets through social media channels will be an impactful way to reach this group.

Retirees

According to the 2017 ITRR report, a high number of couples ages 65-75 are traveling through Missouri River Country. We believe that retirees are a great group to market as they are traditionally financially stable, traveling without children and are looking to engage in soft adventure and historical and cultural experiences.

Amtrak Riders

Missouri River Country has three Amtrak stops in Wolf Point, Glasgow and Malta. We believe that a unique opportunity lies in attracting visitors to stop over in Missouri River Country on their way from the Chicago and Minneapolis area on route to Glacier National Park. We also believe that there is untapped potential for families from cities to the east who can easily access our charming communities and have authentic Montana experiences with less train-time than riding all the way toward Glacier National Park.

Astrotourists

Astrotourism is on the rise worldwide. Since Missouri River Country has some of the darkest night skies in the country, we should be directly promoting our region as a destination for dark sky enthusiasts and photographers alike. We have long-term aspirations to create an International Dark Park in our region, but first we plan to use target campaigns to show off our dark skies and grow awareness around the astrotourism options in our region.

Agritourists

Agritourism centers around tourists who come from cities and want to get a taste of the rural farming and ranching communities. Agritourism activities that can be found in Missouri River Country include: farmers markets, horseback riding, and shopping for local honeys, breads, cheese and other handcrafted items. We believe with our small, charming rural communities that agritourists are a great market for us.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Milk River Observation people.jpg

c. What research supports your target marketing?

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Institute for Tourism & Recreation, University of Montana 2017

"Stairway to the heavens: astro-tourism on the rise worldwide", LonelyPlanet.com 2015

Amtrak Train Routes, Amtrak.com 2018

Agritourism is growing in America, SustainableAmerica.org 2013

FY 19 GOALS

Our primary marketing goals are to increase visitation and communicate a cohesive and effective marketing identity. We will follow the MOTBD's 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, incorporating the plan into Montana's Missouri River Country's FY19 Marketing Plan. We support the Montana brand with our charming and unique towns, spectacular nature and breathtaking experiences. In addition, we will continue taking advantage of partnerships with MOTBD,

other tourism regions/CVB's and tribal entities, working together to more effectively promote our area as a tourist destination. The following are the goals for Missouri River Country in FY19.

- **Increase arrivals and encourage extended stays and increased expenditures** by our frequent repeat visitors by focusing promotions and advertising in the warm season.
- **Increase visitor's overall awareness** of Missouri River Country's attractions and activities.
- **Promote and support Missouri River Country's newer attractions** including: Sleeping Buffalo Hot Springs & Resort, Fort Peck Interpretive Center & Museum, the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum, the Children's Museum of Northeast Montana and World Wildlife Exhibit, the Montana Dinosaur Trail and the Northeast Montana Birding Trail.
- **Promote new microbrews in the region:** Busted Knuckle Brewing in Glasgow, Missouri River Breaks Brewing in Wolf Point, Meadowlark Brewing Company in Sidney and the Blue Ridge Brewery in Malta.
- **Seek joint venture and coop marketing opportunities** with the State of Montana and other appropriate entities.
- **Increase awareness of Missouri River Country** and the organization's role in regional tourism development.
- **Promote our unique outdoor recreation activities** including: hunting, fishing, Brush Lake State Park and Hell Creek State Park & Campground, while promoting more access and additional public amenities and camping.
- **Promote** regional conventions, events, sporting events and shopping.
- **Gain feature stories in regional and national consumer publications** about events and attractions that expose our region's unique attractions, with particular emphasis on expanding dinosaur attractions.
- **Develop both online marketing and online resources** to increase visitor interest in the region and to make it easy for visitors to find and use information that will inspire planning decisions.
- **Gain increased exposure** of Missouri River Country online through web-based public relations, keyword placements on search engines, online packages, social media, apps and related tactics.
- **Implement the state's brand of three pillars:**
 - More spectacular, unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48;
 - Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders;
 - breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.
- **Seek opportunities to promote** the Fort Peck Reservation and work with tribal leaders to promote cultures of the tribes and tourism activities.

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

JOINT VENTURES

Missouri River Country recognizes that budgeting is a limitation on our marketing expenses. For this reason, seeking joint venture opportunities to work with other Montana tourism partners in the industry is a vital part of our marketing strategy:

- Taking advantage of ventures where funds are matched to maximize our impact.
- Seeking out opportunities to work with other Montana tourism regions, like the multi-region press trip with photographer Andy Austin.
- Working with photo influencers and social media influencers to spread our reach.

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	Plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale.	Estimated budget for each method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Are you using private funds to support this method? If so, please explain	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Atchmnts
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Yes	MRC will attend trade shows that target our geographic, demographic and psychographic markets to the high-value, low-impact visitors and provide them with information about our region. We will purchase giveaway items for an additional attraction to our booth, such as agates, and novelty items. At our sports shows we have interest from people seeking outfitters and guides. We supply the information to them and will bring home any leads and distribute them to the appropriate businesses.	In a Consumer Show survey done by ITRR it was noted that two regions that exhibited at a show were able to highlight the entire state and help in visitation. When we do shows people are interested in MT and we provide them with the information to plan their trip. Our recent shows that we attended in FY18 have showed a great response rate. A couple years ago we marketed in ND and in the 2017 ITRR report ND was our top state where visitors came from.	MRC will track the attendance at the shows and the information handed out. A report will be given after the show to see if it was successful or not and whether we should continue to do shows at that destination. We will plan to hand out at least 400 MRC travel planners at each show, along with other misc. brochures and information.	MRC will exhibit at target market trade shows and promote our spectacular nature, charming small towns, and breathtaking experiences and provide them with information. We will market our winter, ice fishing and warm season attractions and events. We will attract them to our booth with giveaways, trinkets, and give them our MRC bags to collect information. In FY15 we purchased dino replicas and put them on our table for an added attraction and the response is overwhelming from adults and youth.	\$10,000.00		No	Trade Show 2018.jpg	
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	Yes	MRC will continue to place billboards designed to reach out-of-state tourists traveling through our region, increasing awareness of the MT Dinosaur Trail. We will also explore other ideas on the billboards to drive visitation to towns and attractions in our region.	According to TAB (Traffic Audit Bureau) 2015, our three signs had a weekly total of 11,012 impressions. Dodson-1,813, Oswego-2,852, Wolf Point-5,347 According to ITRR billboards are up to 11% compared to last year of 9% of sources used during visitors' trips.	Drive traffic to Missouri River Country attractions and the Dinosaur Trail, ultimately contributing to 2% or more increased visitation to those facilities. We will continue to track visitation at the museums in our region.	These billboards will drive traffic to the four facilities in MRC and increase visitation to the MT Dinosaur Trail. ITRR's report showed an increase in sources of use of billboards for visitor's. The billboards are attractive and maintained and designate the MT Dinosaur Trail through MRC. We will consider redesigning the billboards in the future to keep them	\$5,500.00		No	Billboards.pdf	

						fresh and attractive to the passer by.					
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Yes	MRC has an ongoing need for photos and videos for our marketing projects. We will utilize the MOTBD photos and arial footage in some of our video production and where applicable. Photography and video are critical in inspiring potential visitors to plan a trip to MRC. It is vital that we are able to maximize our budget while still obtaining high quality photos and videos of our region.	MRC purchased photos and developed a video in our marketing efforts. The photos have been used in print and online advertising and our Travel Planner. Photos play an important role in the attractiveness of advertising our charming and breathtaking wonders. Research shows that pictures tell the story.	We will increase our photo library with wildlife, nature, and people photos to use in our travel guide, creative and website. We will also work on promoting MRC with video footage to show at trade shows and promote MRC's spectacular nature, contributing to a 10% increase in website visits and a 2% increase in our bed tax collections.	MRC realizes the importance of having our spectacular nature captured through photos and videos. We will continue to maintain and update photos and videos as needed. We have been working on building relationships with photographers based in the area as well as using photo influencers through cooperative opportunities to increase the items in our photo library and then, in turn, use these photos on social media, and in developing our new website.	\$1,000.00			No	
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	MRC will place print advertisements on sites and publications where we feel that we can mazimize our reach to our target and demographic markets. Our advertisements will focus on the pillars of MRC's attractions: dinosaurs, history and culture, outdoor recreation, and charming small towns.	MRC's CPI for FY17 was \$3.05, with 6550 inquires. We also realize more internet and mobile use compared to print and we are budgeting accordingly. We are also working on a new and updated website.	MRC will continue to track CPI with a goal of under \$5.00 and receive at least 7000 inquiries per year.	Print advertising is still effective in MRC. We will continue to advertise, creating attractive ads and reach our target markets to attract the potential visitor that plans a trip to MRC. While internet is becoming more popular MRC feels that print advertising is still useful, but we will spend less funds for print and more for internet. We will participate in MOTBD joint ventures and partnerships when available and fit within our budget.	\$600.00			No	

Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Yes	MRC will continue to do quarterly E-Newsletters promoting our area events and attractions. These newsletters provide information to entice a potential visitor to MRC. We will also do customized E-mails with different target audiences and niche markets. Large format E-blasts are more engaging to the reader with more links and useful information. We will participate in MOTBD joint ventures and partnerships when available.	MRC sends out our E-Newsletters to a growing data base of 1500+ recipients with an average of 27% opens. We have increased our data base by 500 recipients in FY18.	MRC will measure the success of our e-mail efforts by increasing our data base by 500 and continue to receive at least an open rate of 25%.	MRC realizes the importance of e-mails in this technology age whether by computer or mobile. The past E-Newsletters and E-Blasts have proven effective. We will continue to promote MRC through E-mails since we have seen success in the past and has drove visitors to our website. The Marketing Personnel director sends out these newsletters once a month with the program Constant Contact. This is a cost saving way of doing it. This was new in FY18 and will continue doing it that way.	\$500.00			No	
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	MRC will continue to do online advertising. We will continue to do banner ads and Facebook and Social Media venues to get the attention of the internet user due to the growing use of technology. These marketing efforts will drive more traffic to our website where they can receive more information on MRC. We will do joint ventures with MOTBD and other Regions when it fits into our budget.	Website visits decreased by 43% from FY16 to FY17. We are in need of a new website design and we are currently working on it with the help of an awarded grant. MRC realizes websites are one of the most important ways to promote our area.	MRC will continue to track our website visits with a goal of a 10% increase.	MRC will place digital advertisements on sites and publications where we feel that we can maximize our reach to our target and demographic markets. Our advertisements will focus on the pillars of MRC's attractions: dinosaurs, history and culture, outdoor recreation, and charming small towns.	\$3,435.00			No	
Consumer	Printed Material	Yes	MRC will print and update as needed, our promotional pocket maps, and brochures such as Canoe/Kayaking, L &C, hunting & fishing, calendar of events, rock hounding, birding and dinosaurs. We will also print and design a	These specialty brochures are handed out at trade shows and requested through our website. They are delivered to area brochure racks. We usually hand out around 200 each at our trade shows. We were running low on several of these brochures so	MRC will measure success by the interest shown in these brochures contributing to a 2% increase in bed tax collections. We will have communities	MRC continues to see a benefit in putting print pieces in the hands of visitors to plan their trips and when they are here in MRC to pick up and plan to spend another night due to an event that is seen in these specialty brochures. While the internet is becoming	\$2,500.00			No	IMG_1416.JPG

			useful resource map of MRC showing attractions, roads, trails and points of interest. We will continue to do Co-op Marketing projects with communities that want to print a brochure/rack card or do signage for their communities. We will distribute an allocated amount of these brochures throughout MRC, at trade shows, and send out upon request. We will also purchase a few brochure racks where brochures are needed to be distributed. MRC doesn't have a paid distribution service, therefore paid staff will deliver the brochures and travel planners within and on the outskirts of MRC.	the demand has been high.	track their visitation and the economic impact to their area.	more popular there are still people who like to have a print piece in their hands. We will only print and reprint those that are the most popular.					
Consumer	Travel Guide	Yes	MRC will design our primary and informational travel planner. We will mail to inquiries and distribute throughout our region, trade shows, and events. Travel planners are an important marketing piece that provides information, pictures, maps and tools needed by the visitor to plan their trips and spend more time in MRC. FY18 was our print year and we will design again in FY19.	In FY17 MRC sent out 25,606 travel planners through the mail which was recorded by our fulfillment services. Approx. 2000 were distributed in the Region and another 1000 distributed at trade shows. First time visitor groups according to ITRR were 2% and repeat visitors 86%.	We will continue to keep track of how many planners are sent out each year and track our bed tax collections with a goal of 2% increase, and track how many are handed out at trade shows, and track our website visits with a goal of a 10% increase.	MRC prints and designs our travel planner in a 2-year cycle. This informational piece is a necessity to attracting visitors to MRC and providing them a print piece to help plan their trip and to extend their stay. We will continue to distribute them at trade shows and mail to inquiry requests and distribute them for visitors to pick up along their way.	\$25,000.00			No	Travel Planner.jpg
Consumer	Joint Ventures	Yes	MRC sees the value of Joint Ventures and partnering with MOTBD and other Regions and	A Joint Ventures line item will help with more accurate tracking. When partnering with MOTBD and other Regions our	MRC will measure success by our bed tax revenue,	Joint ventures and partnerships are an important part in marketing Montana and MRC. We gain	\$9,657.00			No	Family Fun.jpg

			communities to reach the best market and leverage our marketing dollars. We will take advantage of match funding opportunities when available and within our budget.	marketing efforts go further according to past research and MRC leads. To date we have received 93 leads from Family Fun Magazine and we expect more to come as MOTBD uses this print magazine as their informational piece.	website visits and overall inquiries including the MT dinosaur trail and Lewis and Clark projects.	more exposure and our marketing dollars go further, especially with our limited budget. We will join in partnerships whenever it meets our target markets and budget. For FY19 we will consider Family Fun and Sojern.					
Consumer	Ad Agency Services	Yes	MRC has contracted with Windfall, Inc. as their Agency of Record. Windfall is a professional agency that excels in Marketing Strategies. The MRC board of directors are confident that Windfall will market MRC as a destination that will result in more visitation to our Region. They will provide a full media plan, marketing plan, market research, social media support, digital leadership, search engine marketing and optimization, and website support. Windfall is also contracted by other tourism partners so they are knowledgeable to follow the MT brand.	Windfall, Inc. has contracted with 4 other tourism regions and 1 CVB. Research has shown that the previous regions and CVB have been successful with Windfall's marketing efforts. This is our second year contracting with them. We have confidence that they will provide the marketing strategies necessary to increase our bed tax revenue with a new and aggressive marketing, media and social plan. They have created new ads that are attractive and eye catching. We will measure the success from FY18 at the end of the year, but what we have seen so far we like their creative marketing for MRC.	MRC needs the assistance of an ad agency to help market our region as a destination. They will provide us with the marketing necessary to bring more visitors and recognition to MRC. We will measure our success by tracking our website visits, bed tax revenue, social media, and collect leads with a goal of a 2% bed tax increase, 10% website increase, more likes on social media channels and a 1000 leads.	Windfall will provide a year long strategic media plan that will focus on media placements, strategic partnerships, and digital and social resource management. They will research and develop new and expanded strategies to grow the website and develop content. We will measure the success of these projects by tracking our website visits and our visitation at our events, attractions and the whole region.	\$24,000.00		No		
Events	Radio & Television Advertising	Yes	MRC will do radio and tv advertising for special events throughout the year. Some of these could be co-ops with our area communities promoting an event or attraction. We will partner with the MT Outdoor Radio Show to run ads for our events and outdoor activities.	Outdoor recreation supports and contributes to a high quality of life and attracts visitors from outside our immediate area. Outdoor recreation is the economy of the future. In MT, outdoor recreation generates \$7.1 Billion in annual consumer spending.	MRC will track the attendance at events and motel room stays during the hunting and fishing season with an increase of 2%.		\$2,780.00	MRC continues to see a benefit in advertising on the radio and tv. These special events need to be advertised in order for people to know they are happening. All advertising	No		

							is done outside the area to attract people coming a distance in order to increase the nights' stay in MRC. The Outdoor Radio Show airs every Saturday morning from 6:00 - 8:00 am and targets the outdoor enthusiasts over the entire state of Montana.			
Marketing Support	Administration	Yes	MRC supports the Montana Brand through our Administration efforts. We will continue to communicate a cohesive and effective marketing identity using the Montana Brand and operate the Missouri River Country office with the help of the Executive Director and purchase supplies, insurance and fees associated with maintaining a professional office.	ITRR is a research tool that is useful for tracking success. According to ITRR reseach, repeat visitors were up by 5% and ND was our top state where visitors came from after marketing to them in FY14 & FY15. We will continue to track our bed tax collections, website and overall visitation to our attractions and events.	We will measure success by increasing our bed tax by 2%, and website visits by 10%.	MRC will continue to maintain an office with an Executive Director to oversee daily operations of the business and maintain a professional office. MRC will stay within a 20% budget for administration and will follow the Regulations and Procedures when using Lodging Facility Use Tax Revenue.	\$33,785.00			No
Marketing Support	Outreach	Yes	MRC will contribute funds for educational use and Voices of Montana to help promote the tourism industry. Education is needed in our general area. Some people and businesses don't realize the value of tourists to their communities.	By educating the public on tourism it will benefit our bed tax collections with a goal to increase by 2%. Our repeat visitation has increased by 5% according to ITRR.	We will measure success by tracking our bed tax collections with a goal of a 2% increase.	Voices of Montana is a valuable resource for reaching more tourism success. Education is important for the business person to realize that tourism does support them and to give great customer service for return visits.	\$250.00			No
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	Yes	MRC will continue to provide visitors with	MRC responded to 6555 inquiries in FY17. With	MRC will continue to	MRC continues to use a fulfillment	\$12,000.00			No

			a variety of information they request, including our Travel Planner, a current Calendar of Events and targeted brochures all supporting the Montana Brand. These efforts include our toll-free phone number, internet services, postage, fulfillment by the contractor, mailing supplies and storage to store our fulfillment pieces.	the assistance of a Group Home located in MRC we mail out all information within a 72 hour time frame and accurate records are kept to track mailings.	track the number of inquiries and travel planners that are sent out each year with the help of our fulfillment services. We will plan to maintain the number of inquiries received in FY17.	service to fulfill requests and provide potential visitors with our travel planner and information used to plan a trip to MRC. The Group Home is very efficient and allows the Executive Director more time to work on marketing projects.					
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	Yes	Throughout the year MRC may take advantage of opportune projects to promote MRC that we weren't aware of at the time of creating our annual marketing plan. Some of these projects that we have done in the past are publications, print, online, social media, signage, insertions, motorcycle ad books, and videos. We would like to continue to take advantage of opportunities if they fall within the scope of MRC's marketing efforts.	The opportunity projects that MRC has done in the past have resulted in increased revenue, website visits, more interest in an event, by receiving calls into the office and increased inquiries above the usual consumer advertising.	MRC would continue to track our bed tax revenue and set a goal of a 2% increase, website visits a 10% increase. We will also track inquiries, and general interest to attend or needing more information on a project.	While opportunity projects are unknown at this time MRC would make sure they fall within the scope of our overall promoting efforts and follow the Rules and Regulations.	\$200.00			No	
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	Yes	TAC and Governor's Conference meetings are important for the Region Director to attend to stay informed on tourism trends, updates, rules and regulations, and useful marketing tools.	These meetings are informative and a necessity in operating a cohesive organization and staying informed of the rules and regulations in tourism. MRC has not had any issues of misuse of bed tax funds brought before the TAC within the last 10 years.	Success will be measured by the tracking of accomplishing MRC's goals and objectives and continuing to operate according to the Rules and Regulations for Lodging Facility Use Tax Revenue.	These meetings play an important role for the director to attend, to accomplish MRC's goals in the tourism industry. More travel time and mileage is allowed for this budget due to distances to travel to meetings.	\$3,000.00			No	

Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	Yes	MRC's ED will commit to marketing obligations outside the normal scope of responsibilities outlined in the current job description. No overtime will be received between the two positions and hours will be tracked and recorded for this position. Duties will be directed at marketing MRC as a destination.	In FY17 MRC's website visits were down by 43%. Our consumer advertising CPI was \$3.05 and internet CPC was \$1.97. These all contribute to the efforts of the marketing personnel position. Our website is currently being updated, so we are expecting an increase in FY19 for website visits to our site. We realize the importance of having an updated website.	We will continually track our website visits with a goal of a 10% increase, bed tax collections with a goal of 2% increase, consumer advertising, print and online with a CPI of less than \$5.00 and CPC less than \$5.00, PR values of at least \$15,000, social media efforts to show an increase in likes by 1000, and use ITRR services.	The duties of MP will include but not limited to plan and host FAM tours for qualified journalists, plan and attend trade shows, implement educational workshops, prepare press releases, prepare the annual Marketing Plan, prepare tourism marketing presentations, attend marketing meetings, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and social media opportunities, photography, website, creating calendar of events, promotional brochures, design ads, newsletters, trade shows and FAM tours and to visit the communities in Missouri River Country and talk about the options that are available to market their businesses as a destination.	\$28,000.00			No
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	Yes	MRC will continue to work with communities to help them promote their area or an event in their town. In the past we have done a 50/50 match with a community to print brochures, posters, signage and advertise an event on the radio, newspaper or TV.	In previous years MRC advertised in cooperation with the Glasgow Chamber the MT Gov. Cup Walleye Tournament. Last year the attendance and entries increased. A result of more advertising. Brochures from various communities have shown an increase in visitation to MRC and the community and their events.	MRC will measure the success of the co-op projects by tracking the visitation to an event or attraction in the community where a co-op project was held.	By partnering with communities we leverage more dollars and increase the advertising of a community or an event. Therefore, increasing more nights spent in MRC.	\$4,000.00			No
Marketing Support	Equipment	Yes	Office equipment is needed to maintain a professional office. With the increase in technology the most up to date	We will continue to track our bed tax collections, website and overall visitation to our attractions and events. ITRR is also another research tool that is	MRC will stay within a 20% budget for administration and will follow the Regulations and	MRC needs to maintain a professional office. New equipment is necessary to keep up with the new technology and advancing society.	\$500.00			No

			equipment is needed.	useful for tracking success	Procedures when using Lodging Facility Use Tax Revenue.	We will only get new equipment when and as needed.					
Publicity	PressTrips	Yes	MRC will host Press/FAM Trips, allowing us to reach more writers and ultimately generate more publicity. In the past we have coordinated FAM's with MOTBD and other regions. We would plan to continue this joint venture to increase awareness of our region of nature, hunting, fishing, dinosaurs, history, birding, Native American Culture, recreation/outdoors, and outlaws. boating, canoeing, ice fishing and anything thing that would make MRC a memorable place to a visitor.	Our past FAM's have received over \$75,000 in Publicity Value. Our recent ones with Jason Mitchell Outdoor Television on mule deer hunting, ice fishing, walleye fishing, and lake trout fishing have produced several articles in publications such as Midwest Outdoors, In-Fisherman and MN Sporting Journal. They are still producing inquiries because he runs the TV shows several times throughout the year. In FY15 we partnered with MOTBD and had a productive trip with 4 journalists that created blogs and articles on RV campgrounds.	We will measure the success of our FAM's by increasing awareness of MRC through publications, videos, and television and maintain our \$75,000 in Publicity Value.	Press/FAM Trips are an important way of getting exposure to MRC. When working with the MOTBD they help us get the best journalists to produce the best coverage of our area. We will continue to work with Jason Mitchell because of past successes. He has produced videos and You Tube videos that we will continue to utilize and keep updating as needed. We will take advantage of opportunities to use photographers and hunting outfitters to achieve our publicity goals.	\$3,000.00			No	
Publicity	Social Media	Yes	MRC's social media efforts will include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube, and Pinterest and any social media venues that fit our market. We will continue to do contests and giveaways to increase our "Likes", and recognition of MRC.	Since July of 2011 we have gained over 13,000 likes on Face Book. We have gained over 1000 in the past year and we continue to grow our likes. We have 785 followers on Instagram, which also continues to grow compared to 575 last year at this time.	MRC will measure success by tracking our "Likes" and "Followers" with a goal of a 50% increase.	Social Media is growing and becoming a popular way of advertising. MRC will continue with the social media venues to capture the social media audiences to inspire visitors to plan a trip to MRC. While much effort is put into the Social Media, MRC struggles with likes and followers. We continually increase and will increase with our continued efforts and contests and giveaways.	\$2,000.00			No	
							\$171,707.00				

Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments

Attachment 1

Attachment 2

Attachment 3

Attachment 4

Attachment 5

Attachment 6

Attachment 7

Attachment 8

Attachment 9

Attachment 10

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Printed Material	\$3,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$1,700.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$18,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$7,600.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$12,435.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	\$5,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel Guide	\$25,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Joint Ventures	\$16,157.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Ad Agency Services	\$24,000.00	\$0.00
		\$114,392.00	\$0.00
Events	Radio & Television Advertising	\$2,780.00	\$0.00
		\$2,780.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$11,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$33,944.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	\$19,496.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Equipment	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$200.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Superhost	\$0.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$3,559.00	\$0.00

Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	\$28,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$250.00	\$0.00
		\$97,949.00	\$0.00
Publicity	PressTrips	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Social Media	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
		\$7,000.00	\$0.00
		\$222,121.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
FY 19 Marketing Plan Narrative and Budget	FY19 Marketing Plan Narrative & Budget.pdf	16.9 MB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
Required documents for MRC FY19 Marketing Plan	FY19 required documents.pdf	1.0 MB

