

Miles City
Area
Chamber
of
Commerce
Marketing
Plan.

FY

13/14

Miles City
Area Chamber
of Commerce
511 Pleasant
Miles City, Mt.

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this Miles City CVB FY 13/14 Marketing Plan is to strengthen the Miles City economy by promoting economic development of the area through tourism. The marketing plan will guide Miles City's promotional efforts therefore increasing awareness of and visitation to Miles City and the surrounding area. The Miles City CVB will continue to seek out consumers of and partners of our tourism product to enjoy our cultural, historical, and recreational adventures.

2. GEOGRAPHIC AREA

Miles City CVB will include Miles City and the area surrounding the city limits for approximately 50 miles.

3. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

Miles City's strengths are many, beginning with its location and varying scenic beauty and including its people, who are eager to share the Montana experience with visitors.

Specifically, our strengths are:

- 1. The Changing Landscape.** Miles City area consists of badlands, flatlands, and rolling hills. The badlands cover area to the east of Miles City including the Terry area, flatlands and rolling hills cover the remaining area surrounding Miles City. Unusual sandstone formations make for interesting subjects and backdrops for photographers, bird and wildlife observers and those that just want to more deeply appreciate the effects of nature over time on these soft ever-changing formations. The prairies of Forsyth and Terry are known for their fertile soil and ability to sustain many types of agriculture crops, from wheat and barley to hay, grasses, safflower, sugar beets and oats. In addition, these flat lands are ideal for grazing cattle, horses and sheep, as well as the antelope, deer and elks that thrive in the area.

- 2. Abundant Recreational Opportunities Nearby.** This would include hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, boating, golfing, wildlife watching, photography, and horseback riding. Close proximity to recreational bodies of water like Spotted Eagle Lake, Dean S Reservoir, 12 Mile Dam, the Yellowstone and Tongue Rivers. There are several public access fishing sites like the Kinsey Bridge, Bonfield, Matthews, Powder River Depot, Roche Juane, and Moon Creek to mention a few.
- 3. Our Rivers and Streams.** Miles City is located at the confluence of the Yellowstone and Tongue Rivers. These rivers, known worldwide for their excellent ability to support species such as paddlefish, catfish, sturgeon, walleye, small mouth bass, sauger, northern pike, are fed by countless creeks and streams that support diverse species of fish and birds, such as Canadian geese, pelicans, ducks, cranes, and aquatic mammals.
- 4. Nature Trails & Agate Hunting.** Miles City has nature trails to offer to hikers, bikers, and nature enthusiasts. Included are Big Sky Country Byway, Terry Scenic Overview, The Calypso Trail, Terry Badlands, Woodruff Park, and Pirogue Island. Agate hunters are attracted to Miles City to scout for the unique geological anomalies (Moss Agates) that can only be found in the free flowing Yellowstone River.
- 5. Interstate and State Highways.** Interstate 94 passes through Miles City and Highway 59 North toward Jordan and South toward Broadus, and highway 12 east toward Baker. A majority of our visitors use these highways to enter our area. A new paved road that runs from Brockway to Terry has also increased our hi-line traffic greatly. Miles City is conveniently located between Dickinson N.D and Billings in a 150 mile radius.
- 6. Western History and Cultural Tourism.** Our city got its name from General Nelson Miles who was famous for his military history and his achievements with the Native Americans. Miles City is home to Fort Keogh which was a military cantonment, a remount station, a fort, and finally a MSU Experiment Station .Miles City is steeped in history from the military, to the railroad, the cattle industry, the sheep industry and the location to see it all is the Range Riders Museum. There are numerous historic opportunities to visit while in Miles City such as the Waterworks Art Gallery and the Ursuline

Convent. You can also tour the Historic Districts on your own or during their many Ghost Tours.

- 7. Local Events.** Miles City is proud of its local events that draw visitors from all over the world. That statement is made true by The World Famous Miles City Bucking Horse Sale. A four day Cowboy Mardi Gras that brings people into Miles City from every state and many countries around the world. Sprinkling in local activities and Miles City has something for everyone year round.
- 8. Small Convention Opportunities.** Miles City has a motel with meeting facilities for up to 200 and can also accommodate larger groups year round at Miles Community College, and in the spring and summer at The Eastern Montana Fairgrounds.
- 9. Tourism Understanding.** The Community, based on a consistent effort to educate, has a much better understanding of tourism and its importance to the success of the community.

CHALLENGES

- 1. Lack of Public Transportation.** Miles City is currently struggling with transportation issues, both on the ground and in the air. Miles City has been removed from the federal Essential Air Service as well as is one of the many cities in Montana that is experiencing problems with the commercial bus service through our town. This is probably the biggest weakness we are currently experiencing.
- 2. Limited Signage.** As had been mentioned for several years Miles City has a signage problem that we are currently addressing. Several issues that relate to signage are the lack of recognition of historic sites in our area. Miles City, as a community has a tendency to forget that the things we find common place are of significance to others.

- 3. Main Street Business Closures.** As is also the case in so many small towns Main Street is losing its' small mom and pop businesses that have served as a draw for years. We have seen several new business starts but they are more the box store/fast food types that do bring in business but it isn't the slow paced walking stores that draw the vacationer rather than the traveler.
- 4. New Business Education.** We have been able to prove the new customer base that exists in this area so we are hoping that the entrepreneur spirit will catch fire within the business community bringing about resurgence on Main Street
- 5. Web Presence.** We also have a rather stall web site that will be upgraded in May. We need to freshen things because we have to attract more of the new customer base that exists.

Goals

- 1.** Our goals for the future in marketing and growing Miles City are simple. It is our plan to continue harboring the business traveler as well as the vacationers that continues to migrate to the Bakken.
- 2.** Add signage that invites people off the Interstate and Highways to the historic sites and museums in our area. As well as continue to work with the Office of Tourism to bring attention to these locations.
- 3.** Grow community awareness of the importance of regional marketing for all events in Miles City. We has a new market segment that is new to area communities that aren't familiar with what Miles City has to offer and the events we historically host.
- 4.** Increase our efforts to maintain and secure commercial transportation. We will work with the current Economic Development Council and public entities to keep this a priority for the entire community.

The Marketing Plan Ties to the Strategic Plan

Miles City CVB has, does, and will always market in such a way to always follow any strategic plan the State has.

Objectives

- 1.** Miles City plans to continue to work with the Office of Tourism with the “Montana High Plains” campaign. This campaign has proven to be hugely successful and I believe we will continue to see at least a 10% increase in visitations over last year due to the fact that the campaign centers around the core group of people we see as our target market.
- 2.** We look forward to working with Southeast Montana Tourism in any venture that will be beneficial to us both whenever affordable. If our budget will allow we would like to partner with Southeast in a day trip plan for the region. We could see a marked increase (5 to 10%) in traveler day tripping through the region in the coming year.
Southeast is a vast area and by being the geographical center we are positioned as the hub for such trips. We feel this will facilitate growth in both visitor numbers and local business.
- 3.** We will continue to increase attendance at all community sponsored events realizing we have the potential to grow all events by at least 10% over last year based on newly recognized markets.
- 4.** We will break with a new web site in May that we expect to grow visits by 15% in GY13/14. This figure is based on the first month we had the site up we saw our visits at 2300 and a length of stay of 3+ minutes which shows a marked increase from previous performance.

5. Work with our local TBID to maintain smooth and effective marketing campaigns so as to not duplicate targets and approaches. We are currently seeing huge increases in attendance at events we are marketing. With such a small budget we have been able to hit targets harder and produce much better results. Seeing record crowds at Bucking Horse (At All Perfs) we can expect 15% increases at all future events we host.
6. In small market areas such as Miles City these events can be measured by judging the crowd because most promoters base success by the number of people in the crowd they don't know and we have seen larger crowds of strangers or new visitors.

Target Markets and Demographics

We are currently relearning our markets and the makeup of these markets. We can cut and paste the same old stuff and be perfectly happy in saying those are the people we are going after, but there is a better chance than not that these are the people that will support us in our plan. We agree that we still need to target the statistical traveler, the folks that ITRR say are our customers, but we can definitely go after the "low hanging fruit" that is the Bakken. To be more specific, the Bakken region takes in the area of Central Montana to the west to central North Dakota to the east. We are also targeting northern Wyoming and northern South Dakota. The target demographic would be those people working in the petroleum industry and the original people that lived in the region prior to the boom. The age group is indeed wide open as we are after the laborer in their early 20s all the way to the retiree that lived in the region prior to the boom. We have changed some approaches to marketing the area and have seen favorable outcomes. With our limited budget we can't afford to miss much so we plan to look at our region as our primary target because the limited knowledge we have of it shows we are getting overnight stays for shopping and vacation from a much closer distance than ever before. We have 100,000 people within a 300 mile

radius looking for a getaway location, whether it's for a night or more and we want to be their first choice.

Marketing Methods

We plan to utilize print media in several regional publications enforced with radio in most of the same markets. Both are proven media with radio being our newest market stronghold. The majority of the Bakken segment is very transient traveling sometimes hours to work locations or working in vehicles for extended periods of time. Radio is often the only form of entertainment on the rig sites.

We will continue to have a presence in the Visit Southeast Montana brochure as well as keeping our own brochures as fresh as possible.

We plan to be active in internet marketing as funds dictate. We also will utilize cooperative marketing with the local TBID to market local events as well as constant presence pieces. The World Famous Miles City Bucking Horse Sale advertising allows us with several avenues to advertise, some at no charge based on its coverage in so many national magazines and television documentaries. We market as well as we possibly can within the confines of our budget so it is always necessary to stay in touch with our partners and piggy backing on one another's marketing.

Miles City CVB – FY 2013/2014 Budget Overview

Marketing Support

Administrative	\$7,000.00 - (20%)
Opportunity Marketing	\$1,000.00 –(.03%)
Cooperative Marketing	\$5,000.00 – (12%)
Joint Ventures	\$5,000.00 – (12%)
TAC/Gov. Conf.	\$3,000.00 – (7%)
TOTAL 50%	\$21,000.00

Consumer Advertising

Radio	
Bucking Horse Sale (Thur. & Sun.)	\$2,000.00
Western Art Roundup	\$2,000.00
Eastern Montana Fair	\$1,000.00
Bluegrass Festival	\$1,000.00
Wine & Food Festival	\$1,000.00
Live with Jim Thompson Show	\$7,200.00
Miles City Spring Expo	\$2,000.00
Mosquito Festival	\$1,000.00
TOTAL 41%	\$17,200.00

Print

Motel Wrap	\$1,500.00	
Miles City Spring Expo	\$2,000.00	
Wine & Food Festival	\$1,000.00	
TOTAL 11%		\$4,500.00

PROJECTED BUDGET

\$42,700.00

The projected budget was arrived at by using the following figures:

Projected Revenue: \$35,130.00

Rollover from FY2013: \$8,000.00

TOTAL: \$43,130.00

(If a 10% reduction is necessary it can be made up with by lessening Cooperative and Joint Venture Funds)

Application for projects over \$500

Organization Name Miles City CVB

Project Name Radio Event Advertising

Application Completed by John Laney

Approval Requested

Final

Preliminary

Please explain the need for this project as well as a clear overview of the concept of the project. Narrative must provide enough details that those reviewing the application can comprehend or visualize the full scope of the project. Narrative should be a full overview, yet explicit and to the point.

I would like to use \$17,200.00 on radio advertising for the following listed events held in Miles City during the FY13/14 marketing period. These events bring in business and overnight stays to Miles City strengthening our economy and bolstering our bed tax collections. We plan to utilize regional radio stations that have a coverage area of over 300 miles in all directions. This coverage puts our message into a 4 state region. We will run 30 sec. ads from 6am until 7pm for the best coverage possible. We hope to make buys that will assure us the best rate possible. Not all stations offer 30 sec ads at the same rate, but each buy will reflect the best possible buy per event. As mentioned in the narrative, we have a huge market segment within the Bakken looking for get away events that we can reach with this type of advertising. We feel this is probably the most effective media to reach the most active market for us at this time. We have had success with a daily show, "Live with Jim Thompson" were we do a calendar of events show with a 10 minute call in weekly. This airs in 7 states. The others: Bucking Horse Sale, Western Art Roundup, Bluegrass Festival, Eastern Montana Fair Concert, Wine and Food Festival all will have regional coverage. We have seen great results and feel strongly that this is the best direction to go to assure the greatest possible success if we in fact can expect the projected 15% increase in attendance at the advertised events. We have utilized radio for several years because we have seen success marketing this way. We are increasing our radio because our target market group lives by the radio. We are marketing to people in trucks all day, or on a rig were it is necessary to keep current on the weather. It also is their only connection to current happenings in the region. We are marketing people that have no fear of windshield time based on their work location. This means they don't have a problem driving 2 hours for something to do.

Objectives

Include the objectives from the narrative portion of your marketing plan that support this project.

The object is always to capture the most customers for the money. There is a tremendous market of customers in our own back yard that have no idea who and what we are. It is necessary that we create events to bring them here to see that we can be an easy solution to

their desires to leave the area for short “Get Aways”. It is a win win because we will increase stays and bring customers to the retail stores at the same time. As stated in the objectives portion of this plan we anticipate growth of 15% using this marketing direction.

Refer to the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project.

We market Miles City Events as destinations for travelers. The thing that is unique is that we have travelers that live just a few hundred miles away. We have to market to this transient population as often as possible because they are our new customer base as well as the best overnight or longer customers we have ever seen.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Building a solid customer base for the community as well as increasing overnight stays will be a stronghold for any strategic plan the state will adopt and it is going to always be our main focus in marketing.

**REGION/CVB PROJECT BUDGET
PROJECT NAME**

	State Tourism Funds		Other Funds		Total
PROFESSIONALSERVICES:					
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

MARKETING/ADVERTISING: Radio					\$17,200.
	\$0		+	\$0	=
			\$0	+	\$0
			\$0	+	\$0
TOTAL					\$0

TRAVEL:					
Personal Car	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Commercial Transportation	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Meals	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Lodging	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Vehicle Rental	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

OTHER:					
		+	\$0		
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
TOTAL					

REGION/CVB	PROJECT TOTAL	\$17,200.00	+	\$0	17,200.
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Application for projects over \$500

Organization Name Miles City CVB

Project Name Print Event Advertising

Application Completed by John Laney

Approval Requested

Final

Preliminary

Please explain the need for this project as well as a clear overview of the concept of the project. Narrative must provide enough details that those reviewing the application can comprehend or visualize the full scope of the project. Narrative should be a full overview, yet explicit and to the point.

I would like to use \$4500.00 for print advertising from the FY13/14 Marketing plan. As was mentioned several times in the narrative and in the radio advertising application is the fact that marketing in regional publications is proving to pay great dividends. We plan to use our local daily as well as newspapers in Bismarck, Dickinson, Williston, as well as a group of local area papers that run weekly. We will also use a Farmer/ Rancher publication that is regional. This marketing approach is affordable and proves to be a great reinforcement for our radio presence. As with radio everyone has a different per inch price but we will be mindful of our small budget and utilize our funds wisely.

Objectives

Include the objectives from the narrative portion of your marketing plan that support this project.

The object is always to capture the most customers for the money. There is a tremendous market of customers in our own back yard that have no idea who and what we are. It is necessary that we create events to bring them here to see that we can be an easy solution to their desires to leave the area for short "Get Aways". It is a win win because we will increase stays and bring customers to the retail stores at the same time. The measurable result of newsprint is difficult due to the internet but utilizing it as a secondary piece seems to be paying off.

Refer to the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project.

We market Miles City Events as destinations for travelers. The thing that is unique is that we have travelers that live just a few hundred miles away. We have to market to this transient population as often as possible because they are our new customer base as well as the best overnight or longer customers we have ever seen.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Building a solid customer base for the community as well as increasing overnight stays will be a stronghold for any strategic plan the state will adopt and it is going to always be our main focus in marketing.

REGION/CVB PROJECT BUDGET
PROJECT NAME

	State Tourism Funds		Other Funds		Total
PROFESSIONALSERVICES:					
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

MARKETING/ADVERTISING:					
newspaper/print					\$4,500.00.
	\$0	+	\$0	=	.
		+	\$0	=	\$0
		+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL			\$0		

TRAVEL:					
Personal Car	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Commercial Transportation	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Meals	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Lodging	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
Vehicle Rental	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

OTHER:					
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
		+	\$0	=	
	\$0	+	\$0	=	
TOTAL					