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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 **Withdraw** changes the status of the application to Withdrawn and removes the app from the evaluation process.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

[Map](#) | [Print to PDF](#) | [Negotiation](#) | [Annotations\(0\)](#) | [Versions](#) | [Feedback](#) | [Withdraw](#)

15254 - FY15 Region/CVB Marketing Plan - Final

16187 - FY15 SOUTHWEST MONTANA MARKETING PLAN
DOC Office of Tourism

Status: Under Review

Original Submitted Date: 04/30/2014 8:42 AM
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Applicant Information

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Organization Information

Name:* Gold West Country of Montana

Organization Type: Non-Profit Organization

Organization Website: southwestmt.com

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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?

Southwest Montana is centrally located between Glacier and Yellowstone national parks, making it the ideal travel route between the two destinations. The region is home to more ghost towns than the surrounding regions and offers the best blue ribbon fishing statewide.

Because of the type of attractions available and the affordability of lodging options in the region, Southwest Montana attracts an active mature/boomer audience with a focus on soft adventure. The region is also a big draw for heritage and culture enthusiasts. Geotourists can be found among both of these audiences — particularly the geotourist segment known as “geo-savvy”. Another target audience that is attracted to the region is families that travel by car and are looking for affordable family vacation activities and lodging options.

Based on 2013 ITRR data, Washington state residents make up 11 percent of the region's overall visitors with Idaho a close second at nine percent. Alberta, Canada and Wyoming residents

clock in at seven percent each. California rounds out the top five with six percent. Outside of North American consumer travelers, the region also focuses some of its efforts on international visitors through Rocky Mountain International. Public relations efforts are used to reach both a national and international audience through contact with travel writers and providing assistance with FAM trips.

Consumer travelers are also increasingly moved by “moving pictures” and therefore the region also focuses secondary marketing efforts on the film community. Between 2006-2012 the total economic impact of film production in the region totaled over \$24 million according to a recent study conducted by the Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District.

The region’s primary strengths hinge heavily on its historical opportunities including ghost towns, historic sites, Lewis & Clark sites and museums. The region also provides a number of cultural opportunities rich in western heritage that is expressed through live theatre, concerts, rodeos, fairs, local celebrations, cattle drives, working ranch experiences, historical & cultural tours, authentic rail tours, pow-wows, farmers’ markets and more. Southwest Montana boasts a number of natural resources that provide a wide variety of activities to its residents and visitors alike including soaking in its varied hot springs, rockhounding for gems, fly-fishing or rafting blue ribbon rivers and streams, hiking and biking across many of the regions trails or partaking in winter activities that offer everything from downhill skiing to ski joring.

Similar to the region’s strengths, opportunities within the region focus on continued development and improvements among the region’s historical sites. Other opportunities include communities that continue to develop their individual tourism “products”. For example, Butte offers signature events such as the Montana Folk Festival and Evel Knievel Days. Helena creates vacation-making experiences with its continued success in geo-caching and its extensive trail system for biking. The region’s biggest opportunity lies in cooperative efforts between individual businesses, the communities and the region to work together on projects that are beneficial to all parties and does not waste resources by each party doing its own thing.

However, coordinating these projects continues to be a challenge. Better lines of communication need to occur within communities and throughout the region in order to optimize existing resources. Other challenges are ones that are not unique to the region, including transportation concerns, off-season closures of attractions and poor economic factors. The region has also struggled with its identity and image (recently undergoing a name change), lack of wayfinding signage to assist with travel throughout the region and within individual communities and, with the exception of a few communities, the lack of meetings & convention facilities further limits the region’s ability to supplement its heavier trafficked months with business travel in the off-season.

The offerings within Southwest Montana align closely with the Montana brand pillars.

More spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48.

From the Madison River Valley to the Pioneer Mountains Scenic Byway and from Gates of the Mountains to Lewis & Clark Caverns, Southwest Montana offers an abundance of unspoiled nature. In addition, visitors can view a variety of wildlife while visiting Red Rocks Lake National Wildlife Refuge or the Scapegoat Wilderness Area (to name just a few).

Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders.

Southwest Montana provides a direct route between Glacier and Yellowstone national parks and is chock full of vibrant and charming small towns. Visitors can explore the fishing mecca of Ennis (also known for its great art scene) or take a trip to the Sweet Palace located in Philipsburg (noted as being one of the “Prettiest Painted Places in America”). From the sophistication of the capital city, Helena, to historic Butte, America, the region offers visitors a variety of options when it comes to small town charm.

Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.

Hiking, biking, skiing, fishing, rockhounding...from soft adventure activities such as scenic driving and wildlife viewing, to more extreme activities such as mountain biking and snow kiting, Southwest Montana offers a plethora of breathtaking experiences. And with a wide range of lodging and dining options, the region also boasts a wealth of options when it comes to relaxing hospitality at night.

Southwest Montana also supports the brand pillars and utilizes the Montana Office of Tourism’s graphic standards in its marketing efforts.

[Optional: Include attachments here](#)

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

The Southwest Montana plan will address the three phases of the travel decision process as outlined below:

Inspiration

Definition: The visitor is made aware of Montana and develops a desire to visit. MTOT, Regions and CVBs inspire visitors through marketing and promotion.

Southwest Montana’s advertising, public relations and social media efforts will focus on building the inspiration aspect and the desire to visit.

Orientation

Definition: The visitor begins researching the details of their trip and planning their route – Montana’s visitors often have multiple destinations within the state. Regions & CVBs provide tools to help the visitor plan a route and encourage a longer stay.

The region’s travel guide and website will play the strongest role in assisting visitors with “orientation” and the tools needed to assist with trip planning. If the visitor is already in the state, our new regional tear-off map (see below under facilitation) will be available as well.

Facilitation

Definition: The visitor fills in their itinerary with things to see and do at the destination(s) and along the way. Regions and CVBs, communities, tribes, businesses and organizations all work together to make visitors aware of the full array of experiences available to them, encouraging them to stop and experience all that Montana has to offer.

Again the region’s website and travel guide will play an integral part for “on the ground” facilitation. In addition, in FY15, Southwest Montana plans to create a tear-off map that will be made available to its communities, area businesses and organizations for distribution.

Optional: Include attachments here.

3. Who is your market?

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

Primary—

Active Mature — This segment consists of older married couples or singles (ages 55-64), college educated, usually without children and household annual income of \$60,000+. They lead an active lifestyle and enjoy visiting historic sites, landmarks and museums as well as partaking in general sightseeing and wildlife watching. According to 2013 data from the ITRR, 39 percent of visitors to the region were between the ages of 55-64. The same data reveals that 45 percent of visitors to the region were made up of “couples”.

Heritage/Cultural Enthusiasts — This segment consists of individuals 35+ years of age, college educated, with a household annual income of \$60,000+ who enjoy learning more about western history and culture. They enjoy the experience of quaint communities and the opportunities within. They visit historic sites and landmarks and are interested in festivals and fairs about the West. Data collected in 2013 from the ITRR indicates that 20 percent of visitors to the region spent time in Virginia/Nevada cities and that 15 percent visited the areas ghost towns. Visitors to the region also enjoyed Big Hole Battlefield (eight percent).

Families/Boomers — Married couples or singles 35-54 years of age, college educated, with children usually less than 18 years of age in the household and income of \$60,000+. (This may include grandparents with young grandchildren). Data collected by the ITRR in 2013 indicates that 40 percent of visitors to the region are between the ages of 35-54.

This segment seeks a memorable family experience that involves visiting state and national parks and historic sites; participating in festivals and fairs; learning about western history and Native American culture; and participating in a number of recreational opportunities such as hiking, backpacking, wildlife watching, rock hounding and usage of lakes and rivers. Data collected by the ITRR for 2013 reveals that 17 percent of travelers to Southwest Montana were traveling with “immediate family”.

Geotourist — Geotourists make up 55.1 million American travelers. The Geotourist segment that appears to be most closely aligned with Montana’s tourism values is the “Geo-savvy” segment. This target demographic is usually more middle-income and outdoorsy in nature. More than one quarter reside in the nearby Pacific region, and 10 percent live in the Mountain region. Twenty eight percent are young adults under the age of 35. Sixty percent have a college degree while 33 percent have a graduate degree. Thirty eight percent have annual incomes over \$75,000 and another 17 percent of households earn \$100,000+.

Secondary—

Travel Writers — Freelance or travel-publication specific writers with an assignment of preparing a vacation destination article for print, broadcast or Internet distribution. The region’s public relation efforts support continued targeting of this audience. In 2013, the region’s efforts generated 54 stories garnering 16.5 million impressions.

International Visitors — Group and foreign independent travelers (FIT) predominately in markets serviced by RMI (UK, Germany, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Australia) as well as Asia. The region considers international visitors as a secondary market because while there aren’t enough funds to aggressively target these markets, through Rocky Mountain International, Southwest Montana is able to work with travel agents, tour operators and wholesalers to create regional itineraries for group travel and FITs.

Film Production/Still Photography — Production companies seeking unique locations for film, commercial or television production as well as still photography for print advertising or collateral. Film production remains a secondary target market due to the budget that would be required to reach such a niche audience. However, when possible the region works with the Montana Film

Office to assist with production in the region. As previously mentioned, Consumer travelers are increasingly moved by "moving pictures" and therefore the region also focuses secondary marketing efforts on the film community. Between 2006-2012 the total economic impact of film production in the region totaled over \$24 million.

Geographic Focus—

Currently the region's top five target audiences resides in Washington, Idaho, Alberta Canada, Wyoming and California.

b. What are your emerging markets?

As the region continues to develop its outdoor recreation product (particularly its trail systems), there is potential in the future to place more marketing resources on the outdoor recreation enthusiast with a bit more focus. The region has struggled with a unified way to share this information with its in-state tourism partners and its potential visitors. However recent efforts by Butte CVB (creating a trails app) and Helena CVB's partnership with Bike Helena are allowing the region to promote well thought out, developed product.

Potential expansion geographically includes North Dakota, Minnesota, Alaska, Utah, Colorado, Arizona Wisconsin and Oregon (these audiences make up an additional 27 percent of the region's visitors). Of the markets outlined above, four of them rank within the top states in generating inquiries received at the call center. This indicates potential that should be further explored.

c. What research supports your target marketing?

See letter "3a" above for supporting research for each target market segment.

Optional: Include attachment here.

4. Overall Goals

Southwest Montana Tourism Region strives to attract high-value, low-impact visitors with the potential to increase their length of stay and dollars spent per day in the region. This task can be accomplished through the following goals:

- Educate the traveler about the affordable historical, cultural and recreational opportunities within the region throughout the year.
- Build awareness and entice the geotourist to come and experience Southwest Montana.
- Inform visitors traveling from either Yellowstone and/or Glacier National Parks of the benefits of traveling through Southwest Montana when they exit the park(s) and travel to their next destination.
- Create and maintain a consistent brand image of the region through all marketing efforts including advertising, publicity, collateral material, Internet development, social media channels and cooperative marketing programs.
- Work with the regions, CVBs, TBIDs and MTOT to utilize cooperative marketing programs as an option to offset the lack of marketing dollars.
- Encourage intrastate travel by informing residents of Montana about the abundance of cultural, recreational and historical opportunities this region has to offer.
- Increase marketing efforts to regional and statewide areas during off-peak season.
- Continue to reorganize the content in the travel guide, to address "inspiration". This is done by creating a guide that focuses less on the cities/towns as destinations and more on the types of activities that can be found in each community.
- Revise the current birding brochure with an updated look/feel to better target birding enthusiasts, thus assisting with "orientation" and "facilitation".

- Create a new tear-off map that directly addresses “facilitation” among visitors on the ground.
- Educate Southwest Montana Tourism Region members about the benefits of membership and recruit new members. Create opportunities and partnerships with members/local businesses to stretch the region’s marketing budget.

Optional: Include attachments here.

5. Cooperative Opportunities

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

Southwest Montana would consider future participation in MTOT’s spring/summer co-ops in the form of online banner advertising and magazine print ads. If the radio, TV and out-of-home co-ops became more affordable, Southwest Montana would consider these as well. Also, if either a site and/or publication wanted to do a more multi-media campaign (similar to what *Backpacker* did last year), the region would consider this as well. However, some key metrics and reporting needs to be established and communicated to the potential MTOT Region/CVB partners.

We are currently working on a co-op that is being spearheaded by MTOT with the assistance from a National Park Service grant on a Lewis & Clark brochure. The brochure will provide additional day trips/tours along the Lewis & Clark corridor. The project will include the Regions/CVBs as well as surrounding states.

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

Southwest Montana is currently exploring a co-op with the Butte and Helena CVBs in regard to its new tear-off map. The region also supports different community projects through cooperative funds. These projects are evaluated on a first come, first served basis by the board until the funds are depleted.

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

Southwest Montana has participated in a number of co-ops with regional partners. A brief description of FY14’s cooperative efforts are outlined below:

Visitor Centers— Southwest Montana supports three regional visitors centers by providing additional funds for staffing. This results in more hours of operation and thus benefits the region. In most instances, visitation has increased year over year.

Montana Folk Festival— The region has been a strong supporter of the Montana Folk Festival over the last few years, providing a free ad in the travel planner as well as a monetary commitment to the event as a sponsor. While this has been a beneficial relationship in the past, the board has recently recognized that with its limited funds and the need to focus on its own marketing, this relationship will most likely change in FY15.

Montana Shakespeare Company— Southwest Montana also provided some marketing funds to the Montana Shakespeare Company. The board will reevaluate this project if the Company applies again in FY15.

E-newsletter Marketing— The region provides its members the opportunity to advertise in its monthly e-newsletter. A variety of pricing options/discounts are available based on the number of months a partner wants to participate in the program. While this program is the least expensive program for members to participate in, it doesn’t always have full participation. However, results for the partners that do participate are good and the program is inexpensive to manage, so the program will continue.

Trip Advisor Advertising— Southwest Montana sponsors nine communities on Trip Advisor. With these pages, Southwest Montana offers advertising to its members as well as providing regularly updated regional content. The page views have grown 176 percent since the inception of the program in 2011. While this program is more expensive than the e-news marketing co-op that Southwest Montana offers, the banner advertising continues to fill up each year.

Travel Guide Advertising— The region also provides its members the opportunity to advertise in the travel guide with multiple sizing/pricing options. The region has been able to increase its ad sales each year without increasing the price of the ads. This indicates that both the advertisers and the region find this co-op mutually beneficial.

Southwest Montana has participated in a number of co-ops with MTOT. A brief description of FY13's cooperative efforts are outlined below:

iExplore.com— Southwest Montana partnered with MTOT in Spring 2013 to advertise online with iExplore.com. The campaign generated a CTR of 0.11 percent and an affordable CPC. Due to the success of the campaign in FY13, Southwest Montana participated in this co-op again for Spring 2014.

TripAdvisor.com— The region also partnered with MTOT in Spring 2013 by purchasing a Trip Advisor online banner advertising package. The CTR was 0.29 percent with a low CPC. However, in FY14 Trip Advisor increased the costs of the DMO sponsorship and Southwest Montana was not able to afford additional placement on Trip Advisor in FY14 and try new cooperative opportunities with the MTOT. (The region decided to invest in Adara Media in FY14).

Audubon Magazine— Southwest Montana has always appreciated the niche co-ops that MTOT offers. In particular Audubon magazine has been a staple on the media plan for many years. In FY13, the region participated by purchasing a 1/3-page ad. This resulted in 784 inquiries that is 0.19 percent of the magazine's circulation and a decent cost per lead. However, MTOT did not offer this co-op in FY14 and Southwest Montana could not afford this publication on its own without the deeply discounted rates.

HISTORY—*HISTORY* has also been a staple on the media plan and in FY13, the region participated by purchasing a 1/3-page ad. This resulted in 484 inquiries making up 0.17 percent of the magazine's circulation and a decent cost per lead. However, *HISTORY* changed its format in FY14 (and the magazine is no longer representing the TV channel). This will definitely cause the board to reevaluate participation in FY15.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Include pie chart here.

[SWMT-1242_FY15_PieChart.pdf](#)

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 Attchmnts
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	Southwest Montana Tourism Region will also continue an online banner advertising campaign on travel and lifestyle sites that reach the target geographic and demographic markets outlined in the narrative of the marketing plan.	In FY13, the region advertised through MTOT co-ops on iExplore.com (with an average CTR of 0.11 percent) and tripadvisor.com (with an average CTR of 0.29 percent). These CTR are standard or above average for the industry with an affordable cost per click. We also advertised on YouTube with video placements that	MTOT offers online cooperative programs that have in the past provided the region an affordable option to reach certain demographic and geographic target audiences. In addition, there are other websites outside of MTOT co-ops that we can target specific travel and lifestyle sites that match	We plan to measure success through the CTR to our website from the banner and video ads. We also plan to review overall traffic to our		\$66,060.00	No	

				generated a CTR of 1.46 percent. Therefore we plan to continue these programs if affordable and research new media options.	our demographic/geographic target audiences.	website.				
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	Southwest Montana will continue advertising in key regional/national publications as well as explore niche publications that reach the region's target audience. These publications will be consumer travel-oriented publications with relevant editorial about traveling in the West. We will look for publications featuring historic travel, national park travel and birding as well as specific information on Montana and/or Southwest Montana attractions.	In FY13, the call center received 784 inquiries from <i>Audubon</i> and 467 inquiries from <i>History</i> . (These publications were both part of the MTOT co-ops). Each of these leads had an affordable cost per lead and therefore we feel these numbers support the project. We also participated in a special Montana section of <i>Better Homes & Gardens</i> . We received 3,737 inquiries with a very low cost per inquiry.	MTOT offers magazine cooperative programs that have in the past focused on at least two of Southwest Montana's niche markets (usually birding and history). Without the co-op, we would not be able to afford these publications. In addition, there are other publications outside of MTOT co-ops that offer Montana special sections such as <i>Better Homes & Gardens</i> . We've had good success with this publication and would consider it again (see supporting research/statistics).	We plan to measure success through the call center and the number of inquiries received. We also plan to review visitation to our website on our birding and historical pages.		\$24,433.00	No	
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Yes	Southwest Montana has been participating in RMI for eight years and would like to continue to support this venture. RMI provides Southwest Montana a unique, affordable opportunity to meet with tour operators interested in bringing international visitors to the region. In FY13 there were 44 operators at the Roundup.	In FY14 there will be 42 operators at the Roundup. While it is difficult to track results for this program, we hear from our members that international travel continues to be a key component regarding overall visitation and is very important to our	Southwest Montana doesn't have the funding to launch a comprehensive campaign to the international market. However, a partnership with RMI provides some exposure to this market.	We plan to measure success based on the number of operators we meet with in FY15 as well as any international requests we receive at the call center and/or through		\$1,785.00	No	

				<p>guest/working ranch members.</p>		<p>the website.</p>				
Consumer	Social Media	Yes	<p>Social media and peer reviews are increasingly becoming an integral part of the travel planning process. Southwest Montana currently manages a number of social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube. In order to maintain a fan base, we need to continually be updating content on these social sites and interacting with our followers.</p>	<p>Currently 75 percent of travelers use social networks to find shopping-related opportunities and of that group, 30 percent seek out travel-related deals.</p> <p>In addition, 52 percent of Facebook users said their travel plans were affected after seeing pictures of friends' trips. Of people that had already made travel plans, 33 percent changed hotel reservations and seven percent altered their destination entirely.</p>	<p>Based on the supporting research/statistics listed above, social media as a travel-planning tool cannot be ignored. This form of "word-of-mouth" advertising is crucial to travelers as they rely on peer reviews from not only third-party websites (such as Trip Advisor) but directly from their social set on their individual networks.</p>	<p>We plan to measure success through the increased number of fans and interactions on Facebook (and the quality of the interaction). We will also track the increased number of followers and interaction on Twitter (and the quality of the interaction), increased views and subscribers on YouTube and subscribers on Pinterest.</p>		\$11,320.00	No	
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Yes	<p>We will continue to update our video library in order to provide new content on our YouTube channel as well as utilize this footage in our advertising campaigns.</p>	<p>While YouTube is not a traditional "search engine" since it only searches within its site (versus across the entire Internet), it is the second largest site used in online searches with over three billion searches a month. In 2013, 30 percent of leisure travelers watched a travel video. For those that are skeptical, in July 2012, YouTube drove 32,000 visit-based conversions. In other words users went from viewing a video to actually booking a trip.</p>	<p>It used to be said that the Internet leveled the playing field when it came to competition — large and small businesses alike could compete equally. However, the reality is that money talks (especially as Google and Facebook continue to change their algorithms that force advertisers to spend more to be seen). Therefore, in order for smaller entities to compete, a solid SEO program is a must to offset lacking of media dollars.</p>	<p>We plan to measure success through our organic placement on search engine sites as well as the number of visits we receive from search engines. We will also measure overall usage on the site including number of visits, time spent on the site and the number of pages visited.</p>		\$12,368.00	No	

Consumer	Printed Material	Yes	<p>SWMT is printing a tear-off map of the region. It will have attractions and a map of SWMT on one side and call out maps of Helena and Butte on the other side. These will be distributed to VIC's, motels and attractions to help orient tourists in SWMT. We intend to partner with Butte, Helena and state parks on this project.</p> <p>In FY15 Southwest Montana will continue the production of its travel guide. The travel guide is distributed to individuals interested in traveling to and within the region. In FY14 the guide went through a complete overhaul regarding the layout. The new layout is much more focused on visitor experiences rather than just the communities. In FY15 we will tweak this formula based on the feedback we've received.</p> <p>Southwest Montana Tourism Region has in recent years produced a birding brochure. However, the look and feel of this piece is not in line with the MTOT's brand messaging pillars and graphic standards. We are in the process of redesigning the brochure with FY14 funds and will need funds in FY15 to finalize and print the brochure.</p> <p>In FY14, MTOT decided to print a list of lodging throughout the</p>	<p>According to 21013 ITRR data, three of the top five resources used while visitors are traveling in our region include motels, restaurants, gas station employees; visitor information centers; and brochure information racks. This map will be a great use for these employees to move travelers around the area.</p> <p>The travel guide is the primary response piece for inquiries made as a result of ads placed or publicity generated. It is also used as a fulfillment piece for our website, at consumer travel shows and is distributed through Certified Folder Display. According to ITRR, information sources that influenced Montana driving routes included travel guides at 9 percent and printed brochures at 12 percent. Thirty-two percent of visitors to the region used a brochure information rack during their trip.</p> <p>Information regarding wildlife watching consistently ranks second among all call center requests for the region. Thirty-five percent of visitors to the region list it as an activity they participated in during their trip with seven percent focused specifically on birding.</p>	<p>This map is a quick reference and provides confidence to the consumer as he/she travels in unfamiliar territory. It highlights attractions, and many of our unique niches. This also is a quick way for the travel advisor to provide directions to an inquiring traveler.</p> <p>As previously noted in supporting research/statistics, there is a real need for providing travelers printed material. We recognize that not all visitors use these materials, but there still is a significant amount of travelers that appreciate the option.</p> <p>Based on the statistics provided by the ITRR and requests to the call center, we believe that updating this brochure allows us to focus on a niche market that we've seen continued growth.</p> <p>While ITRR data indicates that 48 percent of the region's visitors used wireless technology to review lodging availability during their trip, there are a number of other</p>	<p>By the increase in bed tax, the number of maps given out, and by the response from the people who gave the maps out.</p> <p>We plan to measure success through the overall distribution of the guide (we've run out of guides over the last several years) as well as increased visitation throughout the region.</p> <p>We plan to measure success based on the number of brochures that are distributed via the call center, Certified Folder Display and our other community partners. We will also continue to monitor data from the ITRR, overall requests from the call center and online website visits.</p>	\$76,495.00	Yes
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			<p>state with cooperation from the individual regions. This project is anticipated to continue in FY15 with each region responsible for a portion of the listings based on the properties in the region. Southwest Montana plans to participate again in FY15.</p>	<p>In addition, the region has advertised in bird specific publications with great success.</p> <p>While MTOT no longer provides these listings in writing, there has been much discussion for years regarding the importance of these listings among visitors that prefer guidebooks. In addition, ITRR data reports that only 23 percent of the region's visitors stay with family or friends. Therefore, a portion of the region's visitors is looking for this type of information in a printed format.</p>	<p>resources including staff at visitor information centers that were also utilized. A printed list of lodging would be well-received by this group based on the region's experience working with the visitor center staff.</p>	<p>We plan to measure the success of the lodging listings based on the distribution of the list through our community partners and the call center as well as feedback from our visitors and MTOT.</p>				
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Yes	<p>Southwest Montana currently has an average number of 3,768 subscribers on its e-newsletter list. We will continue to design and distribute a monthly e-newsletter to highlight attractions and activities through the region. Careful attention will be paid to ensure that all areas of region are represented over the course of the year. Southwest Montana communities will be encouraged to submit events and story ideas to be featured in the e-newsletter.</p>	<p>The average open rate for the region's e-newsletter is 20.5 percent with a click-through rate of 9.5 percent.</p> <p>In addition, research from mid-2013 shows that acquiring customers via email has quadrupled in the last four years. The study showed that customers acquired through email are 11 percent more valuable than the average customer.</p>	<p>The e-newsletter continues to be a successful program due to the fact that it is affordable based on the open and click-through rates that are currently being generated. The region also sells advertising within the e-newsletter that helps offset the cost of the production.</p>	<p>We plan to measure success through the total number of subscribers on the list, the open rate of the e-newsletter, the click-through rate to the southwestmt.com website and the share rate among current subscribers.</p>	\$4,728.00	No		
			<p>Continue to optimize southwestmt.com in order for search engines to easily</p>		<p>It used to be said that the Internet leveled the playing field when it came to competition — large and small businesses alike could compete equally. However, the</p>	<p>We plan to measure success through our organic placement on search engine sites as well as</p>				

Consumer	Search Engine Optimization	Yes	catalog the contents of the site and for potential visitors to the region to find the information they are seeking in an efficient manner. Key target areas will be focused on in order to improve rankings and build traffic to the site.	According to the ITRR, 32 percent of visitors to the region in 2013 used a search engine to research their trips.	reality is that money talks (especially as Google and Facebook continue to change their algorithms that force advertisers to spend more to be seen). Therefore, in order for smaller entities to compete, a solid SEO program is a must to offset lacking of media dollars.	the number of visits we receive from search engines. We will also measure overall usage on the site including number of visits, time spent on the site and the number of pages visited.		\$5,560.00	No	
Consumer	Webpage Marketing/SEO/SEM	Yes	Southwest Montana plans to spend some funds with Google AdWords and/or advertising on Facebook.	Both Google and Facebook are constantly updating their algorithms regarding search (Google) and how information is displayed in users' news feeds (Facebook). Therefore, businesses are not necessarily found as "organically" as they once were on these two sites. Paid advertising can help boost placement. According to ITRR data, 32 percent of visitors to the region used a search engine to research some portion of their trip. In addition, 52 percent of Facebook users modified their travel plans after seeing pictures of friends' trips.	It used to be said that the Internet leveled the playing field when it came to competition — large and small businesses alike could compete equally. However, the reality is that money talks (especially as Google and Facebook continue to change their algorithms that force advertisers to spend more to be seen). Therefore, in order for smaller entities to compete, a portion of their advertising budgets must go to advertising to help increase their SEO presence.	We plan to measure success through our paid and organic placement on search engine sites as well as the number of visits we receive from search engines. We will also measure overall usage on the southwestmt.com site including number of visits, time spent on the site and the number of pages visited.		\$5,560.00	No	
				Currently 87 percent of travelers use the Internet to plan. Social media and increased access to mobile devices continues to play a vital role in this planning process. Of those 87 percent						

Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	Yes	<p>Southwest Montana must constantly update content on our website in order to stay relevant. This year we have budgeted for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site redesign — to better align with the Montana brand messaging pillars and graphic standards. • Website enhancements & new content • General website maintenance/upgrades 	<p>that use the Internet to plan,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 45% sourced their initial trip idea online • 31% watched a travel video • 52% changed their travel plans after reading peer reviews • 85% use their smart phone while traveling • 30% used mobile apps to find hotel deals <p>In addition, smartphones have reached a penetration of 75 percent and tablet adoption is almost at 50 percent. Google Insights statistics show that the Internet is a source of inspiration to 61 percent of those planning trips.</p>	<p>Based on the supporting research/statistics, it is vital to the region to keep the website up-to-date in order to help potential visitors with the orientation and facilitation portion of their travel planning.</p>	<p>We plan to measure the success of our website through increased traffic to the site, overall number of pages visited, how much time a visitor spends on the site and what are the most popular/least popular pages.</p>	\$16,564.00	No		
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	Yes	<p>SWMT uses Certified Folder to distribute our travel guides in brochure racks and in certain rest areas around the state as well as to Eastern Washington and Salt Lake City. They also do instate delivery of our birding brochures. SWMT uses MARS Stout to talk to our travelers and answer any questions they have through</p>	<p>According to ITRR, information sources that influenced Montana driving route choices: included travel guides at 9 percent and printed brochures at 12 percent. This was some of the major ways people were influenced next to getting advice from locals and friends</p>	<p>The traveler is not as familiar with our region and doesn't know what specifically to ask for. With our travel guides out and available as much as possible and the call center influencing travelers, we are able to make it easier for them to obtain this information as they travel in the region or to encourage them to</p>	<p>We will measure our success by the number of travel guides that are given out and by the increase of bed tax collections to our region. We also do an unofficial discussion with people from around the</p>	\$44,631.00	No		

			the call center.	and family. Source: ITRR, Dec. 2013, Research Report 2013-2016	come back to Montana. We distribute 100% of our travel guides.	area asking how well the guides moved out of the racks.				
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	No	This money is used for attending TAC and Governor's Conference meetings and any marketing meetings we attend as a group with MTOT or TAC.		This is required and necessary to properly run the tourism region.			\$1,500.00	No	
Marketing Support	Marketing Plan Development	No	The Marketing Plan defines the goals and objectives of Southwest Montana in the next fiscal year. In FY15 the plan went to a new online format that will allow the region to also file completion reports and reconcile budget. This format will make it easier to present this information to the board.	NA	A marketing plan allows an organization to take a strategic look at its marketing dollars and how best to distribute those funds over the course of the year. It helps to see where the organization is regarding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. It identifies the target audiences and can create partnership opportunities with other entities. It also helps the organization stay on time and on budget with its projects.	We plan to measure the individual projects we implement throughout the fiscal year and the success of those projects.		\$2,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	Administration	No	Administration includes personnel, rent, office supplies and basic needs to run an office. The employee keeps communication among the membership, the board, Montana Office of Tourism, and the Tourism Advisory Council flowing. The necessary transactions, correspondence, and bookwork is done through this office.	NA	Someone needs to be responsible for the daily activities as well as the annual cycle of the business. This person is a necessary liason for all the components needed to operate the tourism entity.	NA		\$72,325.00	No	
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	No	Southwest Montana offers cooperative marketing to qualifying nonprofit organizations in the region. These funds are used to help stretch the marketing dollar of these entities which are usually strapped for funding.		When our cities and attractions can market their businesses it helps to bring in tourists. This is a benefit to the whole state.	This will be done specifically to each project.		\$9,100.00	Yes	

Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	No	SWMT puts funds in Opportunity Marketing for options that might become available at a later date.	NA	Not all options for marketing are available at our annual budgeting time. These funds will be used for any unforeseen projects or will be applied to an existing project if a need should arise.	Will be determined at the time of the projects.		\$4,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	Superhost	No	Superhost educates frontline staff as well as others in customer service.		Our frontline people have the best opportunity to influence the traveler to see the attractions, visit restaurants, and stay longer. The better educated they are the more they are willing to do this.	By the number of people that attend these sessions offered in our region.		\$1,000.00	No	
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	Yes	Visitor information centers, located throughout Montana, need additional funding to staff the facilities throughout the summer. Funding provided by a cooperative effort from Southwest Montana, Glacier Country and Sandpoint, ID allows the Lost Trail Visitor Center to stay open longer hours during the peak tourism season thus allowing visitors to receive additional information about the region and potentially extend their stay.	ITRR reports that 7 percent of the regions visitors used either a chamber or visitor center to gather travel information prior to traveling. In addition 23 percent consulted visitor information center staff during their trip. In 2013 the Lost Trail Visitor Center had 11,432 visitors, which is an increase of 59 percent over 2012. The center was staffed for 726 hours and the most visits came from residents of Montana, Idaho, Washington, California, Oregon, Utah, Iowa, Texas, Nevada and Arizona.	As previously mentioned, funding provided by Southwest Montana allows the Lost Trail Visitor Center to stay open longer hours during the peak tourism season. A 58 percent increase in visitation at the center is a significant increase indicating the importance of this facility.	We plan to measure success by the number of additional hours the Lost Trail Visitor Center is able to stay open and the number of visitors through the facility.		\$1,200.00	No	
				Public Relations is an affordable way for the region to stretch its dollars. In 2013 our efforts generated 54 stories about the	Earned media represents	We plan to				

In addition to the PR efforts by

Public Relations is an affordable way for the region to stretch its dollars. In 2013 our efforts generated 54 stories about the

Earned media represents

We plan to

Publicity	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	Yes	the Montana Office of Tourism, Southwest Montana also solicits targeted editors and journalists to write about the region. As well as respond to reactive requests through our press room website and MTOT. Southwest Montana plans to work with MTOT and others as requested for press trip assistance in our region	region with 16.5 million impressions. Stories about the region reinforce MTOT's strategic plan and the "inspiration" aspect of the plan. ITRR data shows other travel websites (where our articles are placed) magazine/newspaper articles influence travel planning decisions (14 percent)	one of our best efforts to create "word of mouth" advertising. Editorial articles prepared by third parties hold more authentic representation of the region than straight advertising. These articles help supplement our minimal advertising budget.	measure success through the number of stories published, number of impressions and activity on our press room website (via reactive requests).		\$17,000.00	No
								\$377,629.00	

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$66,060.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$24,433.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$16,564.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Social Media	\$11,320.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Search Engine Optimization	\$5,560.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$12,368.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$4,728.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Webpage Marketing/SEO/SEM	\$5,560.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$76,495.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$1,785.00	\$0.00
		\$224,873.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	\$44,631.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Marketing Plan Development	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$72,325.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$9,100.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Superhost	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
		\$135,756.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Press Promotions/Media Outreach	\$17,000.00	\$0.00

		\$17,000.00	\$0.00
		\$377,629.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Region/CVB Required Documents

File Name	Description	File Size
SWMT-1242_RequiredDocs (4).doc (56 KB)	Required Documents	56 KB

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