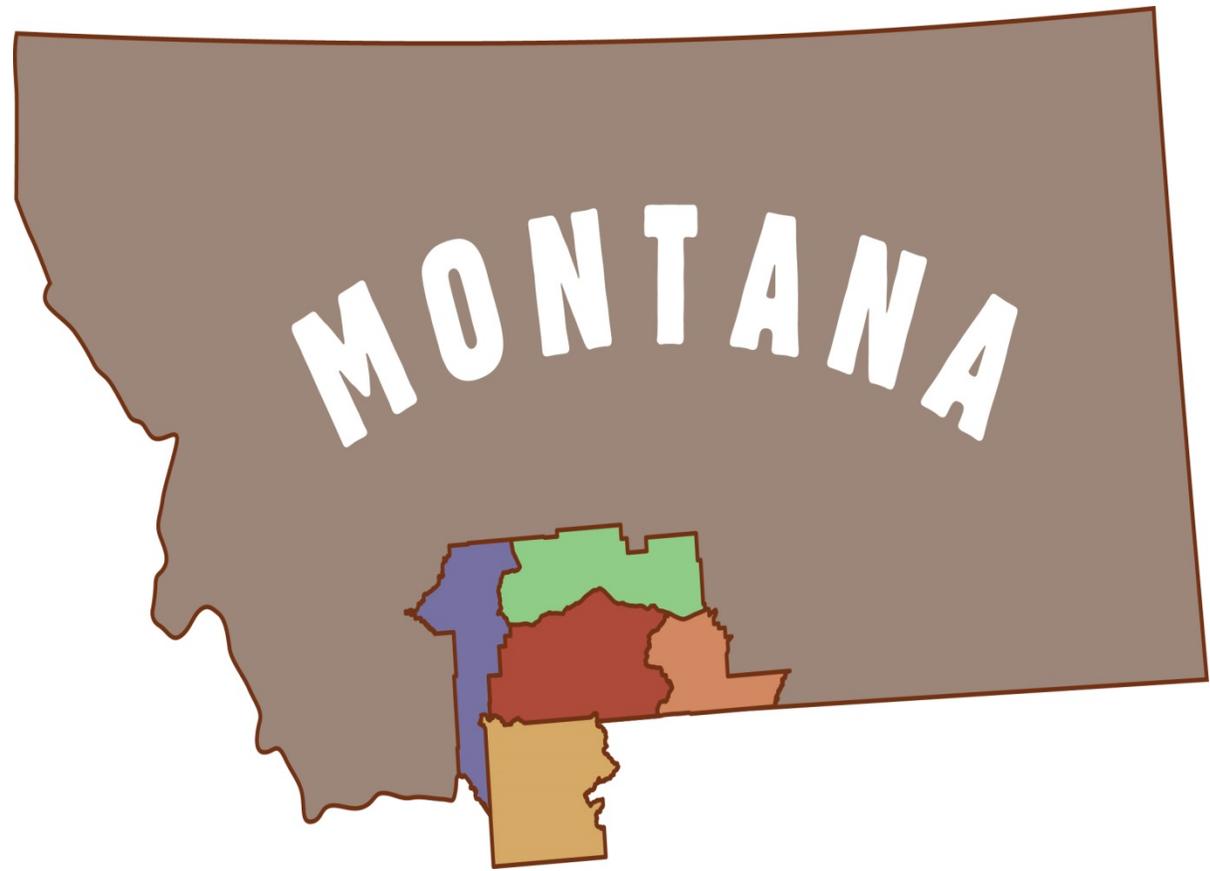


Yellowstone Country

MONTANA

MARKETING PLAN
2 0 1 3 - 2 0 1 4



1) PURPOSE

The mission of Yellowstone Country Montana is to showcase the south-central region as a preferred recreation and leisure destination for resident & non-resident visitors to the region.

Yellowstone Country's primary purpose is to market & promote the area as a year-round destination for active travelers seeking to experience the spectacular natural scenic beauty and the exhilarating outdoor recreation opportunities which abound in Montana's Greater Yellowstone National Park region.

2) IDENTITY OF THE AREA-PRODUCT DEFINITION (Community & Montana Brand Alignment)

DESTINATION DESCRIPTION (What we have to offer visitors!)

SPECTACULAR, UNSPOILED NATURE: The region is anchored by two major iconic destinations: ***Yellowstone National Park & the Beartooth All-American Road (BAAR)***. Three of the five entrances to YNP are located in Yellowstone Country, including the only year-round entrance at Gardiner and the most-accessed entrance at West Yellowstone. The northeast entrance leads to the Beartooth Highway, which a recent ITRR Beartooth Highway research study showed "that visitors perceive the Beartooth Region as more of a destination than a travel route to Yellowstone National Park." ITRR-Beartooth Highway Summer Report 2/20/13. Additionally, Montana's Yellowstone Country region is bordered in part by portions of the Lee Metcalf & Beartooth-Absaroka Wilderness Areas, Gallatin & Custer National Forests and is home to numerous mountain ranges & rivers and 4 state parks (Headwaters of the Missouri, Madison Buffalo Jump, and Greycliff Prairie Dog & Cooney Reservoir). Yellowstone Country offers what visitors are seeking in their Montana experience including the consistently ranked #1 activity (ITRR)-scenic drives. Whether driving down Gallatin Canyon, exploring the scenic back roads along Highway 78, or conquering the Beartooth Highway, we have scenic drives galore. If one prefers to experience the outdoors cavorting in warm, sunny weather or frolicking in a winter wonderland, "getting back to nature" is the name of the game in Yellowstone Country!



BREATHTAKING EXPERIENCES BY DAY, RELAXING HOSPITALITY AT NIGHT:

The founding premise of our strategic vision is that many visitors to the Yellowstone Country region want to experience exceptional outdoor recreational activities: ATVing, nature walks, hiking, climbing, mountain biking, horseback riding, RVing, camping, golfing, fly-fishing, bird & wildlife watching, ice climbing, Nordic and alpine skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, whitewater rafting and other water sports! Before, between & after playing outside, guests can take a walk on the “quieter side” of Yellowstone Country by visiting a multitude of art galleries, nature centers, museums & historical sites which will help them learn more about the areas where they are spending time. Local attractions, festivals & events offer fun opportunities for visitors to immerse themselves in community culture, whether it's attending a rodeo, taking in a music or cultural festival, participating in and/or watching an exciting winter ski or snowmobile event or just spending time taking in the surroundings, there's something for everyone! Relaxing hospitality can be found day OR night—friendly, gracious people are the very definition of hospitality--a friendly greeting when one walks into an eating, dining, lodging or shopping establishment, an informative & knowledgeable tour guide or service provider, or a local resident that gives a favorable impression to a first-time or repeat visitor.



VIBRANT, CHARMING SMALL TOWNS THAT SERVE AS GATEWAYS

Showcasing the region's diverse, welcoming communities are an integral part of Yellowstone Country's marketing strategy. Each place has a unique “flavor” and something special to offer visitors. Take a scenic ride along Hwy 78 from Columbus to the charming town of Absarokee & on to historic Red Lodge, but be sure to take a detour over to the Rosebud Valley area to visit small, eclectic places such as

Fishtail, Dean & Nye, which all lie in the shadows of majestic mountains. The Big Timber-McLeod-Melville-Reedpoint area celebrates the Scandinavian heritage of homesteaders to the region and the history of large sheep & cattle operations. Stroll leisurely through Livingston's art galleries & boutiques while learning about the railroading history & the famous Hollywood stars who have spent time in town for work or relaxation, then head out along the Yellowstone River as it winds through glorious Paradise Valley. Less than an hour's drive will lead to Gardiner, home of the north entrance into Yellowstone National Park, where one still walks along a boardwalk on Park Street across from the famed Roosevelt Arch stone gate. Meander through Lamar Valley in the park and exit the northeast entrance into Silver Gate & Cooke City, at the beginning of the All-American Beartooth Highway. Towns along the Gallatin River corridor include Bozeman, ranked by *Powder Magazine* as the # 1 Ski Town in America, Belgrade, Gallatin Gateway, the year-round playground that is Big Sky, and the west gateway to YNP, West Yellowstone, which bustles with visitors in both summer and winter. Not to be forgotten in the Gallatin Valley area, communities such as Manhattan, Churchill & Three Forks offer small town charm while serving as host communities for travelers looking for a quiet respite or visiting Headwaters, Madison Buffalo Jump & Lewis & Clark Caverns State Parks.



STRENGTHS- The core strengths of Yellowstone Country include the main attractions such as Yellowstone National Park & the Beartooth All-American Road, but equally important in making the experience unique for visitors is the ability to immerse themselves in one/more of the outdoor recreational opportunities that are available to them when they choose this region as their destination.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yellowstone National Park/National Park Corridor (Grand Teton-YELLOWSTONE-Glacier)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Four Major Alpine Ski Resorts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ World-renowned Snowmobile Areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Beartooth All-American Road
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nordic Skiing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Culture & History
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annual Events, unique local festivals, farmer's markets, and fairs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recreational Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Destination Lodging and Meeting Facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bozeman Yellowstone International Airport

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open lands-public access to BLM lands, Forest service national parks, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Four Montana state parks-recreation and culture/history

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES—always a challenge when they occur, but also an opportunity to raise awareness, engage consumers and open dialog/discussion for each unique happenstance.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Shoulder Seasons-weather, amenities/service availability, staffing all have impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inclement Weather Conditions/Natural Disasters-fire, floods, etc.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Transportation Issues-public transportation, seasonality of service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Economic Climate –recession, budget cuts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of Viable Marketing Partnerships-lack of or limited funds & timing hinder partner projects

3) GOALS

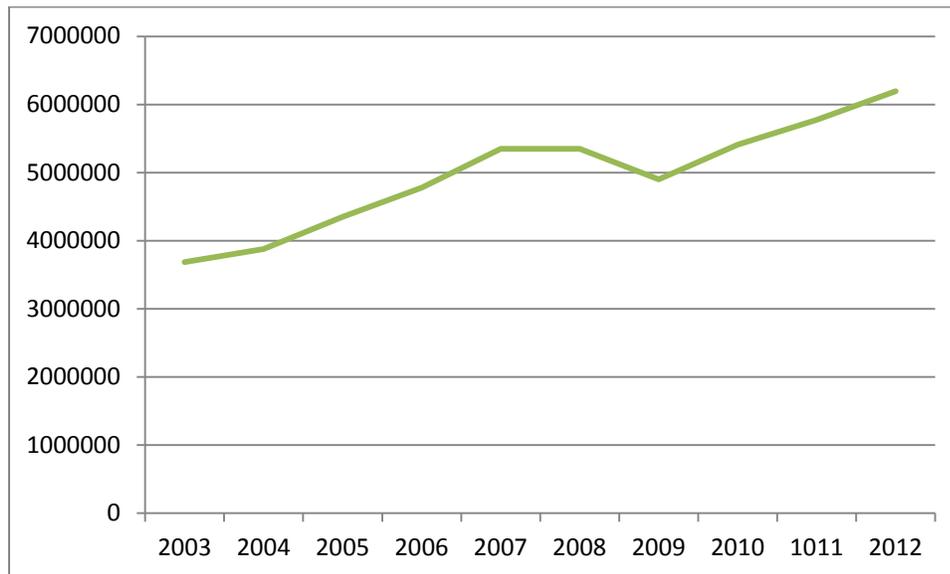
1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana *year-round* outdoor destination.
2. Seek & implement partnerships with public/private sector to better inform visitors of important historical, cultural and natural resources assets and to help leverage limited marketing budgets.
3. Continue to build & update inventory of regional images & videos for all seasons for use in branding & marketing efforts, as well as for awareness/motivational use in printed materials (travel guide) and on the website.
4. Continue to seek & implement viable research opportunities to obtain relevant statistical information; independently or in conjunction with ITRR and/or other partners, while continuing to mine & monitor research data we currently have available.
5. Build the "pull" aspect of the YC website and social media offerings through robust, rich, and timely content providing a reliable source for information about events, activities, festivals, etc. throughout Yellowstone Country, especially targeting small communities and less populated areas.

4) SUPPORT FOR STATE 5-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Yellowstone Country’s FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

5) MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES-SUCCESS METRICS

1. Work to increase the region's 2013 accommodations tax revenues by a minimum of 4% through effective marketing campaigns. The chart below shows that with the exception of the 2009/2010 recession, YC's bed tax revenue collections over the past ten-year period show a steady increase. The quarterly figures for 2012 show an increase for all 4 quarters over 2011, with Winter & Fall quarters having the smallest increases. These are the quarters YC feels has the most growth potential.



2. Increase unique website visitors by 2% over 2012 figures. The new website has only been in existence 6 months, but analysis to-date indicates this is a realistic objective based on the strong SEO measures and increasing awareness of the website as a planning tool. In the short timeframe of 6-months, the website had 33,729 more new/unique visitors than the old site had over the same timeframe the previous year.
3. Increase the number of cumulative responses (CTR) for subsequent/repeat advertising campaigns in the same publication by 2% over the previous year. For example, we would compare year-over-year response to placement in Faster Skier web-based ads along with all other repeat publications. The goal is to increase from 2012 to 2013.
4. Increase Social Media followers by 5% & Social Media Interactions by 3%. Comparing the timeframe of July 2011-March 2012 against July 2012-March 2013, our Facebook interactions grew from 2,542 to 12,136. Additionally, in the earlier timeframe, the FB interactions previously averaged 389 p/month and now average 1,517 p/month, providing a good foundation to use for this projected growth rate for the same timeframe in 2013/14.

5. Provide marketing and/or monetary support for a minimum of 2 cultural events/festivals/attractions in the region, with the focus being on the smaller rural areas to help increase visitation & length of stay.
6. Continue involvement in and support of tourism industry-related education & information efforts such as Montana's Voices of Tourism Initiative. Although not a specifically measurable objective based on attending/participating in any set number of outreach sessions, round tables & one-on-one meetings, our intent is to continue working to keep residents, business owners, community leaders, and local/city/state government representatives well-informed and knowledgeable about the value of tourism.

6 & 7) TARGET GEOGRAPHIC and DEMOGRAPHIC MARKETS

Key Geographic Markets for Yellowstone Country: According to ITRR Nonresident reports for Quarters 1-4 of 2012, the top geographic markets for all visitors to Yellowstone Country were: MN and WA (each at 8%) CA (7 %), ND (6 %), WY (5%), CO (5 %) ID, UT, and AZ (all at 4 %), OR and FL (3 % each) IL, WI, MI, SD, ALB-CAN (all at 2 %).

Key Demographic Markets for Yellowstone Country: According to ITRR data for non-resident visitors in 2012:

- ❖ **Group travel types to the Yellowstone Country region:** 45% couples, 23% immediate family, 19% self, and 5% family & friends and 5% friends
- ❖ **Group Size:** 2 travelers (51%), 1 traveler (19%), 4 travelers (11%), 3 travelers (10%)
- ❖ **Age groups:** 55-64 years (42%), 45-54 years (29%), 65-74 years (29%) 35-44 years (17%), and 25-34 years (13%)
- ❖ **Household Income:** \$50,000<\$75,000 (21%), \$75,000<\$100,000 (22%), \$100,000<\$150,000 (21%)

This data shows the average visitor to the region to be age 55 years old, travelling in groups of 2 or more people, having an annual income of at least \$50,000, and travelling primarily from western or Midwestern states. YCMI's primary marketing strategy focus is promoting outdoor recreation to active people in all age ranges seeking outdoor experiences & adventure: families, inter-generational family groups, singles, couples, & groups. We continue to see growth opportunity in the 25-34 and 45-54 age brackets. Yellowstone Country primarily targets major geographic metro areas where consumers have the option of driving and/or flying into the region in one day of travel time, including areas with seasonal direct flights to the region. We further drill these down to the specific target audiences based on season and/or activity, with winter being the season where we see the most growth potential. For example, the 2012

cooperative marketing partnership for the NY direct flight focused on messaging for experiencing Alpine & Nordic skiing, snowmobiling & winter in Yellowstone National Park experiences.

8) MARKETING TOOLS TO BE USED

Yellowstone Country Montana will work to maintain the consistency and effectiveness of our message through the following means:

- **Consumer Advertising—(Awareness, Interest & Purchase)** Advertising campaigns will primarily promote outdoor recreation with a focus on sense of place. EX: Messaging may show wildlife watching in Yellowstone National Park via snowcoach, skiing or snowmobile access. Or it may be a family recreating at Cooney Reservoir State Park. The media mix will have one/more of the following advertising components: broadcast (TV, radio), digital, print and/or digital advertising. Print ads may be display only or a mix of advertorial/display.
- **Travel Planner—(Awareness & Interest)** The Yellowstone Country Travel Planner is a comprehensive, full color, informational guide to our region highlighting recreational activities, day trips and scenic loops, available in both electronic download & print form.
- **Website—(Awareness & Interest)** YC will continue working to increase SEO for the website, and will implement new technology and perform site upgrades as necessary in order to keep the YC website as a “go-to” site for consumers looking for information.
- **Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness—(Awareness & Loyalty)** YC will host individual & group press trips, engage with consumers and work with the regional communities to raise awareness of regional attractions, events, amenities, etc. through use of social media venues, blogs, press releases, and e-blasts/newsletters.
- **Tourism Development—(Experience)** In FY 14, YC will again facilitate a VIC grant funding program and will implement a new Cultural Tourism project with the goal of supporting & promoting both existing festivals/events and identifying & implementing new events.
- **Telemarketing/Fulfillment—(Awareness, Interest, Purchase, Experience)** The travel planner, YC’s primary fulfillment piece, will be distributed in key out-of-state metro areas (Salt Lake City, Seattle/Tacoma, Pocatello/Idaho Falls & Denver (intent is to drive Awareness, Interest), as well as at state/regional VICs, in state rest areas and in Certified Folder’s in-state Yellowstone route (intent is to Purchase (increase length of stay), Experience (on the ground—info for way-finding, festivals, events))

ANNUAL BUDGET OVERVIEW

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA

FISCAL YEAR 14

FY 14 Projected Revenue (95%) \$ 917,000.00

PROJECT DESCRIPTION/CATEGORY	PROJECT BUDGET	TOTAL
MARKETING SUPPORT		\$150,000.00
Administration (up to 20%)	\$ 129,000	
Opportunity (up to 10%)	\$ 20,000	
Crisis Management	\$ 1,000	
JOINT VENTURES		\$ 70,000.00
MTOT Co-ops TBD		
Region/CVB Co-ops TBD		
CONSUMER ADVERTISING		\$400,000.00
Winter Multi-media		
Warm Multi-media		
Ski Club Outreach		
Keyword campaign (FB & Google ad words)		
Branding		
Direct Mail		
PUBLICATIONS		\$113,000.00
Travel Planner		
WEB DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE		\$20,000.00
SEO		
Site maintenance		
Technology upgrades		
SOCIAL MEDIA, PUBLICITY & PUBLIC RELATIONS		\$20,000.00
Blogs		
E-newsletters		
Individual & Group Press Trips		
COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT		\$114,000.00
VIC Staffing Program		
Cultural Tourism Promotion		
TELEMARKETING/FULFILLMENT		\$30,000.00
Toll-Free		
Postage		
Shipping/Freight		
Contractor Fulfillment		
<hr/>		
TOTAL BUDGET FY 14		\$917,000.00

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

SPECS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

PRINTED MATERIALS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

DISTRIBUTION PLAN (Area & Method): TBD

AREA –METHOD –TBD

Detail pages attached **YES/No**

BUDGET PAGE

OPPORTUNITY FUNDS 2014

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	TOTAL
PROJECT TOTAL	\$20,000		\$20,000

- Create and distribute notices to local and area businesses to better assist with their guests.
- Distribute appropriate information to key tourism contacts including MTOT, Wyoming Travel, Idaho Tourism, , other appropriate countries, appropriate Chambers and CVB's including organizations in neighboring states of Idaho and Wyoming, and the Salt Lake Utah area.
- Coordination with media including radio and television, news services. Coordination of radio Public Service Announcements if needed (PSA's).

Objectives

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

- Maintain public awareness for visitors to the region during times/circumstances that may impact their decision to plan a trip or cause necessary changes to their itinerary when they have already arrived.

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana ***year-round*** outdoor destination.
2. Continue to use Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness venues to help increase visitor awareness of people, places, festivals, events & attractions, thereby encouraging them to stay longer & do more while in the region.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

SPECS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

PRINTED MATERIALS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

DISTRIBUTION PLAN (Area & Method): TBD

AREA –METHOD –TBD

Detail pages attached **YES/No**

BUDGET PAGE

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	TOTAL
PROJECT TOTAL	\$1,000		\$1,000

Requested Approval

Final

Preliminary

ORGANIZATION NAME **YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA**
PROJECT NAME **JOINT VENTURES**
APPLICATION COMPLETED BY **ROBIN HOOVER**

PROJECT NARRATIVE

JOINT VENTURE marketing projects will be identified & implemented for specific target geographic & demographic markets and may include any/all of the following: television, video, print, Internet, radio and display advertising. This would include cooperative advertising programs with MTOT primarily for winter marketing campaigns, and other seasons as applicable or with available funds.

*****Project details, budgets & measurable objectives to be submitted for individual projects as they are developed.**

OBJECTIVES

*****Specific ROI objectives will be included for each project application when submitted.***

FY 12 Co-op Campaign Assessments:

YCMC participated in both digital & print winter campaigns with MTOT in FY 12. The digital campaigns performed very well, and YC would definitely participate in those buys again. Although the cost for the print co-ops was high (due in part to the fact that YC negotiated additional space/presence in addition to the co-op costs), both these print publications fit our target audience, and the advertorial was tailored specifically to that audience.

In summary:

DIGITAL

MADDEN MEDIA

- We were guaranteed 2,500,00 impressions on the Madden Media Network and received 2,541,627 (\$1.97 CPM & CPI was \$2.92)

I-EXPLORE

- We were guaranteed 600,000 banner ad impressions, actually received 1,175,000 impressions with an \$8.51 CPM, so the cost per impression is miniscule.

PRINT

National Geographic Traveler: 2059 leads, CPI was \$8.89

Outside Magazine: 802 leads CPI was \$11.42

Although the Cost p/Inquiry for the print ads appears to be somewhat high, when we evaluate it based on parameters such as the fact that both placements were highly targeted toward specific niche activities (alpine skiing, snowmobiling & Nordic skiing), and that we received value-added match space for advertorial & their high consumer index #'s against the cost of the ads, we feel we actually had very strong ROI for both digital & print investments. We would participate in each of these again, especially given the opportunity MTOT co-op buys provides for us to leverage our limited funds into big, better coverage for our region.

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana **year-round** outdoor destination.
2. Continue to use Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness venues to help increase visitor awareness of people, places, festivals, events & attractions, thereby encouraging them to stay longer & do more while in the region.
3. Seek & implement partnerships with public/private sector to better inform visitors of important historical, cultural and natural resources assets and to help leverage limited marketing budgets.
4. Continue to build & update inventory of regional images & videos for all seasons for use in branding & marketing efforts, as well as for awareness/motivational use in printed materials (travel guide) and on the website.
5. Continue supporting regional communities' marketing & promotion efforts by investing time & funds to assist with cooperative projects that have the potential to increase visitation to the area.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

SPECS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

PRINTED MATERIALS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

DISTRIBUTION PLAN (Area & Method): TBD

AREA –METHOD –TBD

Detail pages attached **YES/No**

BUDGET PAGE

JOINT VENTURE FUNDS 2014
YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	TOTAL
PROJECT TOTAL	\$70,000		\$70,000

FY 12 Winter Multi-media Campaign Assessment

Advertorials in both digital & print venues performed better overall than the banner and display ads that were stand-alone advertisements with no story content. The niche market websites and publications (Free Skier, Powder, On the Snow, Silent Sports, SnoWest) garnered more results on average than those with a broader audience (Outside Magazine, Horizon/Alaskan Air magazines, Snowgoer.com).

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana *year-round* outdoor destination.
2. Continue to use Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness venues to help increase visitor awareness of people, places, festivals, events & attractions, thereby encouraging them to stay longer & do more while in the region.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country’s FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

SPECS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

PRINTED MATERIALS: To be submitted with project application if applicable

DISTRIBUTION PLAN (Area & Method): TBD

AREA –METHOD –TBD

Detail pages attached **YES/No**

BUDGET PAGE

CONSUMER ADVERTISING FY 2014

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	TOTAL
PROJECT TOTAL	\$400,000		\$400,000

Requested Approval __Final __X_Preliminary

PUBLICATIONS — TRAVEL PLANNER

ORGANIZATION NAME	YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA
PROJECT NAME	PUBLICATIONS — TRAVEL PLANNER
APPLICATION COMPLETED BY	ROBIN HOOVER

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The *Yellowstone Country Travel Planner* is the primary printed fulfillment piece for direct inquires, consumer advertising & publicity campaigns and the website guestbook inquiries. The 2013 planner (distribution in March 2013) will be evaluated prior to determining the project details for the 2014 planner. An electronic version of the planner is available for download on the Yellowstone Country website.

*****Project details, budget breakdown & objectives TBD and submitted for final approval.**

OBJECTIVES

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana year-round outdoor destination.

FY 12 Distribution:

The *Yellowstone Country Travel Planner* is the premier fulfillment print piece for visitors who are planning to vacation in Yellowstone Country or have already arrived. 240,000 guides were produced and distributed through various channels: Chambers, Certified Folders Distribution Service, private businesses in the tourism industry and direct inquiries made to the Yellowstone Country office through advertising such as print campaigns and publicity efforts. YC will continue to produce a travel planner if demand supports doing so; however, it will be evaluated & revised based upon the objectives each year. In FY13, we conducted an extensive review of the planner's distribution placement compared to our target geographical areas. From this analysis and based on the changes in distribution of the MTOT planner, we changed our distribution slightly. We dropped Rapid City/Black Hills, Cody, WY, and Anacortes San Juan but added the greater Denver, CO metro area and primary drive corridor along Interstate 15 in Utah and Idaho.

YC Travel Planner Distribution-2012

Direct Inquiry

- | | |
|----------------------|--------------|
| • Phone- | 1,112 |
| • Email- | 31 |
| • Website Guestbook- | <u>7,402</u> |
| TOTAL | 8,545 |

Campaign Response/Fulfillment

- Winter Multi-Media, MT Co-ops- **TOTAL: 10,000**

Bulk Mail Requests (both in-state & out-of-state requests for quantities of greater than 100--from individual properties/businesses such as travel agencies, hotel/motels, tour companies, etc.) **TOTAL: 9,000**

Certified Folder Distribution

- **State Rest Areas** **3000**
- **In-state Routes/ Chambers, VICs** **60,545**
- **Out-of-state Routes**
 - **Salt Lake Area** **65,000**
 - **Rapid City/Black Hills** **30,000**
 - **Cody, WY area** **9,000**
 - **Seattle/Bremerton WA area** **25,000**
 - **Anacortes/San Juan Islands area** **20,000**
- TOTAL** **212,545**

*** All quantities have been distributed as of January 15, 2013.

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana ***year-round*** outdoor destination.
2. Continue supporting regional communities' marketing & promotion efforts by investing time & funds to assist with cooperative projects that have the potential to increase visitation to the area.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018.

Detail pages attached **YES/No**

PRINTED MATERIALS

SPECS FOR YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY TRAVEL Planner 2013
TBD
DISTRIBUTION PLAN
Area — TBD
Method — TBD

BUDGET PAGE

PUBLICATIONS: TRAVEL PLANNER FY 2014
YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	<u>TOTAL</u>
PROJECT TOTAL	\$113,000		<u>\$113,000</u>

Approval Requested

Final

Preliminary

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

ORGANIZATION NAME **YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA**

PROJECT NAME **WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE**

APPLICATION COMPLETED BY **ROBIN HOOVER**

PROJECT NARRATIVE

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE

This project encompasses three different components of website development. With a recently launched website, SEO is a critical component in FY14. We will continue our SEO work on keywords, key phrases, linking and Internet presence assessments and updates.

Technology upgrades are also critical for SEO and will allow for addition of new pages, graphic design enhancement, database development, project management, consulting, site analysis, and new hardware, software or network enhancement purchases as required, photos, video, & text, testing & implementation, social media website development and integration with existing website.

The third component, site maintenance, would include electronic database creation and maintenance, regular content/photo/video updating, website performance tools & reports, adding to media & content libraries, link review & changes, test & troubleshoot, training & technology assistance as needed, interface with MTOT and other tourism related organizations.

OBJECTIVES

. *Project details, budget breakdown & objectives TBD and submitted for final approval.**

FY 12 Project Assessments

YC launched a new website in September 2012, so there is only six months of analytics for evaluation purposes. However, early data shows that the new website will meet our objectives of significantly increasing unique visitors & length of time on the site/pages and our goal of having an informative, but inspirational website that provides consumers a great tool for trip planning and taking the next step of purchase/booking.

- Unique Visitors: 33,721
- 2.58 page views per visit
- 1:34 average duration on the site
- 58.74 bounce rate

Referral pages

1. Visitmt.com
2. iExplore.com (ads)
3. Outsideonline.com (ads)
4. Powdermag.com (ads)
5. Nordicskiracer.com (ads)
6. Skinet.com (ads)
7. Tripadvisor.com (ads)
8. Metnet.mt.gov
9. Facebook.com
10. Fasterskiier.com (ads)

Most Visited pages (aside from home page)

1. Winter Activities
2. Yellowstone Park
3. Get Started
4. Skiing/Snowboarding
5. Nordic Skiing
6. Snowmobiling
7. Travel Planner
8. Destinations
9. Events
10. Winter Landing Page

SEO Comparison for Sept-Dec 2012 against the same timeframe in 2011 showed the following increases:

- Organic Search Visits +25%
 - URL's receiving entrance via search + 3%
 - Non-paid search terms +19%
- *Over 200K backlinks

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana **year-round** outdoor destination.
2. Seek & implement partnerships with public/private sector to better inform visitors of important historical, cultural and natural resources assets and to help leverage limited marketing budgets.
3. Continue to build & update inventory of regional images & videos for all seasons for use in branding & marketing efforts, as well as for awareness/motivational use in printed materials (travel guide) and on the website.
4. Continue supporting regional communities' marketing & promotion efforts by investing time & funds to assist with cooperative projects that have the potential to increase visitation to the area.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

BUDGET PAGE

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT & MAINTENANCE
YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA FY 2014

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	TOTAL
SEO	\$6,000		\$6,000
DEVELOP & MAINTENANCE	\$9,000		\$9,000
TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES	\$5,000		\$5,000
PROJECT TOTAL	\$20,000		\$20,000

Approval Requested <u>Final</u> <u>X</u> Preliminary

SOCIAL MEDIA, PUBLICITY & PUBLIC AWARENESS

ORGANIZATION NAME **YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA**

PROJECT NAME **SOCIAL MEDIA, PUBLICITY & PUBLIC AWARENESS**

APPLICATION COMPLETED BY **ROBIN HOOVER**

PROJECT NARRATIVE

The Yellowstone Country Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness projects are coordinated to tell a story about the vast recreational, cultural and historical opportunities in Yellowstone Country. The overall goal is to supplement our advertising efforts by going a step further to reach potential visitors. Facebook & Twitter users, as well as travel journalists, press releases, e-newsletters, blogging, posts, etc. tell our story in a much more personal fashion than just traditional advertising media alone. This venue creates the extra “bang for the buck,” to highlight key vertical markets, such as culture, community festivals & events and outdoor recreation.

*****Project details, budget breakdown & objectives TBD and submitted for final approval.**

OBJECTIVES

- Host a minimum of 3 individual and/or region press trips through partnerships with MTOT, and other tourism region/CVB(s), & private sector partners.
- Generate 1-3 articles per journalist and/or photographer
- Pursue travel media with vertical market penetration (print, internet and broadcast television) that support YC’s nature-based recreation marketing strategy.
- Increase # of followers on YC Facebook & Twitter social media sites by 5% over 2012.
- Develop, maintain, and grow social media websites and tools including Facebook (both for Yellowstone Country and “greater-than” campaigns), Twitter, and others as appropriate.
- Focus public relations efforts on promotion of our smaller communities and rural areas attraction, events, and activities.
- Continue to build the on-line “Media Kit” offering housed on our website.

FY 12 Objectives Assessment:

This project has been successful in that the majority of publicity generated through our press trips, social media & public awareness has helped increase awareness of the region as a destination, focused attention on the experiences, attractions & events found in our charming small towns.

FY 12 Publicity Articles to-date:

- TheWashingtonTimes.com 10/12/12 ***Ski, Shop, and Sip Local Brews in Red Lodge, Montana*** Matt Payne
- Frommers.com 3/15/12 ***Frommers Checks in: Chico Hot Springs*** Jennifer Polland
- BusinessInsider.com 1/24/13 ***Welcome to Red Lodge, Montana - The Coolest Ski Town You've Never Heard Of*** Jennifer Polland
- BusinessInsider.com 1/15/13 ***10 Reasons You Should Visit Montana This Winter*** Jennifer Polland
- BusinessInsider.com 1/17/13 ***Take a Dog Sled Ride Through The Montana Wilderness*** Jennifer Polland
- Vagabondish.com 4/1/12 ***36 Hours in Big Sky, Montana: Experience the "Biggest Skiing in America" at Moonlight Basin*** Mike Richard

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana **year-round** outdoor destination.
2. Continue to use Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness venues to help increase visitor awareness of people, places, festivals, events & attractions, thereby encouraging them to stay longer & do more while in the region.
3. Seek & implement partnerships with public/private sector to better inform visitors of important historical, cultural and natural resources assets and to help leverage limited marketing budgets.
4. Continue to build & update inventory of regional images & videos for all seasons for use in branding & marketing efforts, as well as for awareness/motivational use in printed materials (travel guide) and on the website.
5. Continue supporting regional communities' marketing & promotion efforts by investing time & funds to assist with cooperative projects that have the potential to increase visitation to the area.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

BUDGET PAGE

PUBLICITY & PUBLIC AWARENESS

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA FY 2014

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	TOTAL
BLOGS	\$10,000		\$10,000
E-NEWSLETTERS	\$5,000		\$5,000
INDIVIDUAL & GROUP PRESS TRIPS	\$ 5,000		\$ 5,000
PROJECT TOTAL	\$20,000		\$20,000

Approval Requested <input type="checkbox"/> Final <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary
--

COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

ORGANIZATION NAME	YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA
PROJECT NAME	COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT
APPLICATION COMPLETED BY	ROBIN HOOVER

PROJECT NARRATIVE

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER FUNDING

The goal of this program is to provide funding to eligible Chambers and Visitor Information Centers (VICs) for additional staff to extend hours during the warm season.

The regional VICs are a vital component of YC's efforts to entice travelers to visit, stay longer and do more while in Montana. The number of travelers stopping at regional VICs is significant; many people are stopping at community VICs as they move through the state, not just at the main entry points. VIC travel counselors cite that visitors often indicate they find the first-hand information they receive at the centers to be the most valuable travel resource once they are in the area. This program allows chambers the opportunity to operate more hours, employ travel counselors who are trained & knowledgeable about the region, and to provide information assistance. More and more visitors use the Internet for trip planning; however, once on the ground, they want to have local knowledge and interaction to help them have the best experience possible. Although not a conventional use of promotion & marketing dollars, this project is a good use of our funds since it allows us to provide a tangible benefit for visitors, as well as giving YCMI an opportunity to leverage partnerships with the local chambers/communities. Having on-site, trained travel counselors is a vital support service, working in conjunction with our marketing campaigns to help showcase the multitude of unique attractions, scenery, events and properties in the regional communities. Yellowstone Country requires an annual completion report from each chamber so demographic information regarding potential market areas and travel trends can be assimilated and analyzed for use in future marketing efforts.

ARTS & CULTURAL TOURISM PROMOTION

This project is in the infancy/research stages of development, so there are no specific details for the scope of the project. However, YC has determined the need to more actively support cultural tourism events/happenings/venues that already exist throughout the region and to work with communities to market existing product or implement new product that would help meet our strategic long-range goal of increasing brand awareness of the region as a multi-faceted destination. The Cultural Tourism Team will compile a list across the region of existing cultural tourism events and future possibilities.

*****Project details, budget breakdown & specific objectives TBD and submitted for final approval.**

OBJECTIVES

- Build awareness of Yellowstone Country region communities through partnerships with VICs, Chambers of Commerce and private businesses.
- Increase visitors' utilization of VICs for planning purposes once "on the ground"; provide local information that may serve to increase length of stay in the community.

FY 12 VIC STAFFING Project Summary (May 25-Sept 30, 2012)

VIC Location	# Visitors assisted 2012	Total staff hours Funded by YCMI & Chamber Funds 2012	# of staff * 2012	Avg. Pay \$ / Hour 2012
Big Sky	5179	755	6	\$14.00
Bozeman	2370	564.5	3	\$10.50
Cooke City	20642	1023	6	\$8.85
Gardiner	4467	820.75	4	\$10.75
Livingston	3494	991	2	\$8.85
Red Lodge	7709	967.25	5	\$8.75
Stillwater	1734	492	4	\$10.00
Sweet Grass	2270	778.5	4	\$9.25
Three Forks	1909	630	4	\$8.25
West Yellowstone	88686	1943	7	\$9.25
Totals	138,460	8965	45	\$9.85

2012 SUMMARY:

- Total # of VIC / Chambers assisted:**10** Total funds distributed:**\$95,000** Total visitors assisted:**138,460** # of jobs provided:**45**

TOP 15 STATES REQUESTING INFORMATION

Staffing / Visitor Center walk-ins

- | | | |
|-------|--------|----------------------------|
| 1. CA | 8. OR | 15. CANADA (ALB, SASK, BC) |
| 2. MT | 9. IL | |
| 3. WA | 10. CO | |
| 4. TX | 11. MN | |
| 5. UT | 12. WY | |
| 6. ID | 13. WI | |
| 7. FL | 14. MI | |

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana **year-round** outdoor destination.
2. Continue to use Social Media, Publicity & Public Awareness venues to help increase visitor awareness of people, places, festivals, events & attractions, thereby encouraging them to stay longer & do more while in the region.
3. Seek & implement partnerships with public/private sector to better inform visitors of important historical, cultural and natural resources assets and to help leverage limited marketing budgets.
4. Continue supporting regional communities' marketing & promotion efforts by investing time & funds to assist with cooperative projects that have the potential to increase visitation to the area.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

BUDGET PAGE

COMMUNITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA FY 2014

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	STATE TOURISM FUNDS	OTHER ORGANIZATION FUNDS	TOTAL
VISITOR INFORMATION CENTERS			
CULTURAL TOURISM PROMOTION			
PROJECT TOTAL	\$114,000		\$114,000

Approval Requested <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final <input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary

TELEMARKETING/FULFILLMENT

ORGANIZATION NAME	YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA
PROJECT NAME	TELEMARKETING/FULFILLMENT
APPLICATION COMPLETED BY	ROBIN HOOVER

PROJECT NARRATIVE

This budget supports distribution of YC's printed materials to non-resident and resident visitors, toll-free phone service, shipping and postage. As the primary means of distribution to both regional outlets and identified out-of-state hubs, YC contracts with Certified Folder Services to distribute the travel planners. CFS stocks the planners in eligible MT state rest areas, and CFS brochure racks located along the Yellowstone route. The travel planner is also placed in the Bozeman & Billings airports in the baggage claim areas.

OBJECTIVES

- Build awareness of Yellowstone Country through the distribution of printed materials using contracted services targeting markets both in and out-of-state, direct mail from the YC office, VICs, Chambers of Commerce and private businesses regionally and across the state.
- Respond to all direct inquiries within 5 working days.

FY 12 Project Assessment

***See Travel Planner application for FY 12 distribution details.**

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

1. Continue to raise awareness & brand Yellowstone Country region as a premier Montana *year-round* outdoor destination.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

Yellowstone Country's FY 14 Marketing Plan supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013 – 2017.

BUDGET PAGE

TELEMARKETING/FULFILLMENT

YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY MONTANA FY 2014

<u>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</u>	<u>OTHER STATE TOURISM FUNDS</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION FUNDS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
TOLL FREE LINE	\$ 250		\$250
POSTAGE	\$ 700		\$700
SHIPPING/FREIGHT *UPS, Fed Ex, etc.	\$ 6,500		\$6,500
FULFILLMENT BY CONTRACTOR (Certified Folder Distribution)	\$22,500		\$22,500
ENVELOPES/LABELS/ SUPPLIES	\$50		\$50
<u>PROJECT TOTAL</u>	<u>\$30,000</u>		<u>\$30,000</u>