



**MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM
+ MONTANA FILM OFFICE**
ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

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FROM THE DIRECTOR



Governor Bullock's Main Street Montana Project identified tourism as a key industry for economic development, and the Montana Promotions Division (Montana Office of Tourism and the Montana Film Office) at the Montana Department of Commerce have been leading the charge to leverage the Montana Brand for more than tourism and film promotion but also for business growth, investment, and recruitment.

In FY14, the Montana Office of Tourism (MTOT) focused on strengthening the Montana Brand through partnerships with groups from both the public and private sectors and sharing resources with our other Divisions and state agencies. MTOT delivered brand workshops to seven communities across the state, empowering local tourism leaders with knowledge of the programs available to them, from marketing to education and grant assistance.

MTOT built on the "Step out of Bounds" marketing campaign launched in FY13, continuing to place media in national digital and print outlets. The Office also targeted the key markets of Chicago, Salt Lake City, and Seattle with innovative out-of-home advertising, including "station dominations" at mass transit hubs. According to data from the NPD Group, Montana continues to see a return on investment of nearly \$150 for every \$1 spent on advertising.

Reports from the University of Montana's Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research show non-resident visitation and spending in 2013 were the highest on record, with 11 million visitors and \$3.6 billion added to the state's economy.

Careful research, creative execution and targeting have allowed MTOT to help maximize tourism's economic impact while preserving the Last Best Place. From 2010 – 13, visitation increased only 6% while non-resident spending grew 39%.

Thank you for your interest in the Montana Promotions Division.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Meg O'Leary". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Meg O'Leary, Director, Montana Department of Commerce

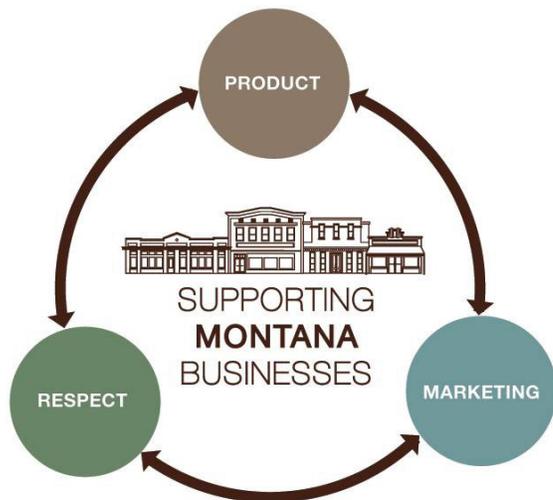
MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM

MISSION STATEMENT

The Montana Office of Tourism's mission is to strengthen Montana's economy through the promotion of the state as a vacation destination and film location. By maximizing the combined talents and abilities of its staff, and with guidance from the Governor's Tourism Advisory Council, The Montana Office of Tourism strives to promote a quality experience to visitors while encouraging preservation of Montana's environment and quality of life.

VISION STATEMENT

The Montana Vision is to increase visitation and improve the visitor experience while preserving Montana community values and protecting its unique places. The Montana Office of Tourism strives to achieve its guiding principles by focusing on the supporting pillars of Montana businesses via product, marketing, and respect.



MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM STAFF

Jeri Duran | Division Administrator
Daniel Iverson | Public Information Officer
Carmen Levick | Executive Assistant

MARKETING

Jenny Pelej | Bureau Chief
Kim Birrell | Travel Trade Coordinator
Susan Buhr | Marketing Coordinator
Riana Davidson | Consumer Marketing Manager
Norm Dwyer | Senior Web Designer & Project Manager
Thurston Elfstrom | Digital Marketing Manager
Caitlin Hassler | Social Media Coordinator
Marlee Iverson | Travel Trade Manager
Donnie Sexton | Media Relations & Staff Photographer
Don Todd | Computer Support Specialist
Jan Wirak | Web Content Specialist

SALES & CONSTITUENT SERVICES

Pam Gosink | Bureau Chief
Victor Bjornberg | Tourism Development & Education Manager
Carol Crockett | Grants Manager
Julie Walker | Graphic Designer & Outreach Associate

INDUSTRY SERVICES & OPERATIONS

Anna Marie Moe | Bureau Chief
Corrie Hahn | Digital Project Manager
Marchita Mays | Administrative Assistant
Jo Morand | Business Operations Manager
Barb Sanem | Compliance Specialist
Robert Webster | Fulfillment Specialist
Carmen Whiting | Administrative Assistant

MONTANA FILM OFFICE

Deny Staggs | Film Commissioner
John Ansotegui | Project & Location Coordinator
Rachel Gregg | Office Coordinator & Crew Liaison
Nik Griffith | Public Relations & Multimedia



INDUSTRY PARTNERS

TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Tourism Advisory Council regulates the use of Lodging Facility Tax funds by tourism regions and convention and visitor bureaus (CVBs) and advises the Montana Office of Tourism relative to tourism promotion.

Amber Wood-Jensen, Chair (2017)
Butte

Bill McGladdery, Vice Chair (2016)
Butte

Mark Anderlik (2016)
Missoula

Cyndy Andrus (2015)
Bozeman

Dan Austin (2016)
Laurel

Matt Ellis (2017)
Missoula

Rhonda Fitzgerald (2016)
Whitefish

Beverly Harbaugh (2015)
Jordan

Kim Holzer (2015)
Stanford

Glenniss Indreland (2017)
Big Sky

Stan Ozark (2016)
Glasgow

Dude Tyler (2017)
Livingston

Steve Wahrlich (2017)
Billings

REGIONS/CONVENTION & VISITOR BUREAUS

Montana is organized into six tourism regions and 15 CVBs, each of which is a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting its area.

Central Montana

Great Falls CVB

Glacier Country

Kalispell CVB

Missoula CVB

Whitefish CVB

Missouri River Country

Sidney CVB

Southeast Montana

Billings CVB

Glendive CVB

Miles City CVB

Southwest Montana

Butte CVB

Dillon CVB

Helena CVB

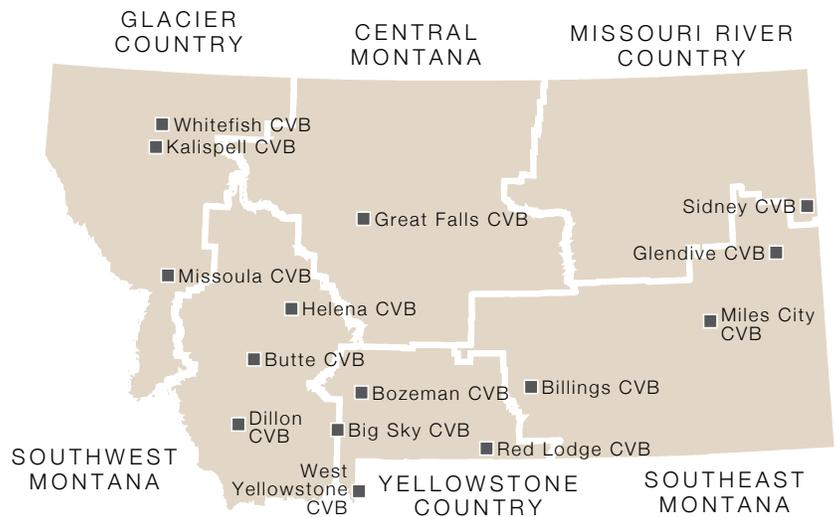
Yellowstone Country

Big Sky CVB

Bozeman CVB

Red Lodge CVB

West Yellowstone CVB



2013 ECONOMIC IMPACT

Tourism is one of Montana's leading industries. Non-resident visitors add money to the state's economy, supporting jobs and reducing state and local taxes for Montana residents. The Montana Office of Tourism markets Montana to maximize non-resident spending. From 2010-13, visitation increased 6% while spending increased 39%.

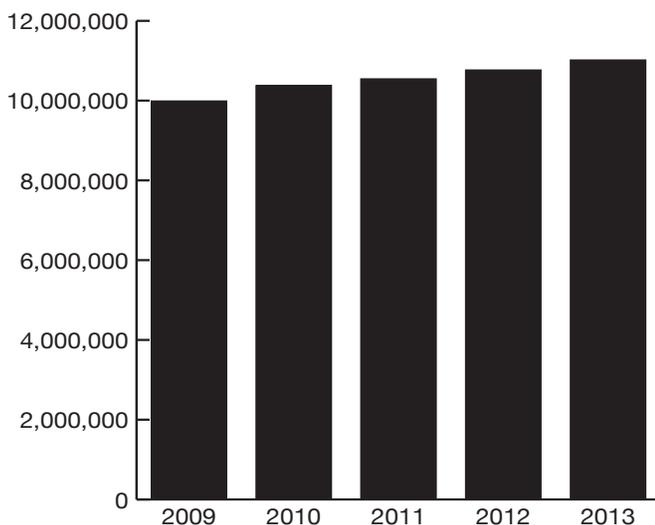
ECONOMIC IMPACT PROFILE (VS. 2012)

Non-resident Visitation: 11 Million (+2%)
Non-resident Spending: \$3.6 Billion (+9%)
Jobs Supported: 48,260 (+13%)
Salaries: \$1.3 Billion (+18%)
State & Local Taxes: \$236 Million (+10%)

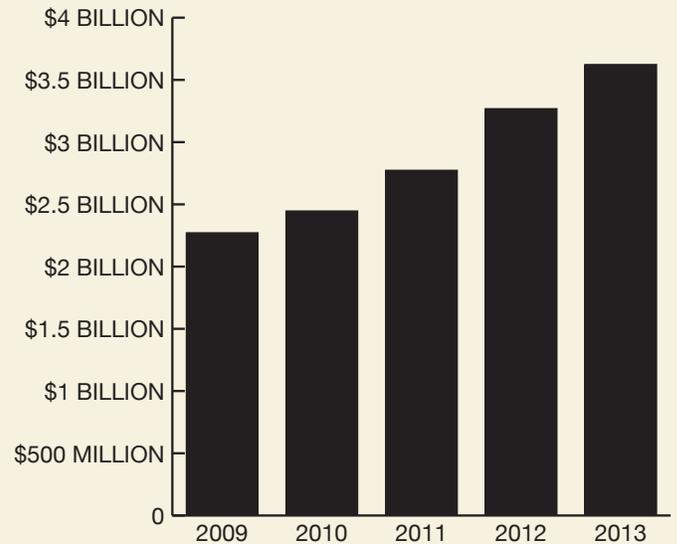


Without non-resident tax revenue, each Montana household would pay an estimated \$582 additional state/local taxes. (Total state and local tax revenue/total occupied housing units.)

NON-RESIDENT VISITATION, 2009-13



NON-RESIDENT SPENDING, 2009-13



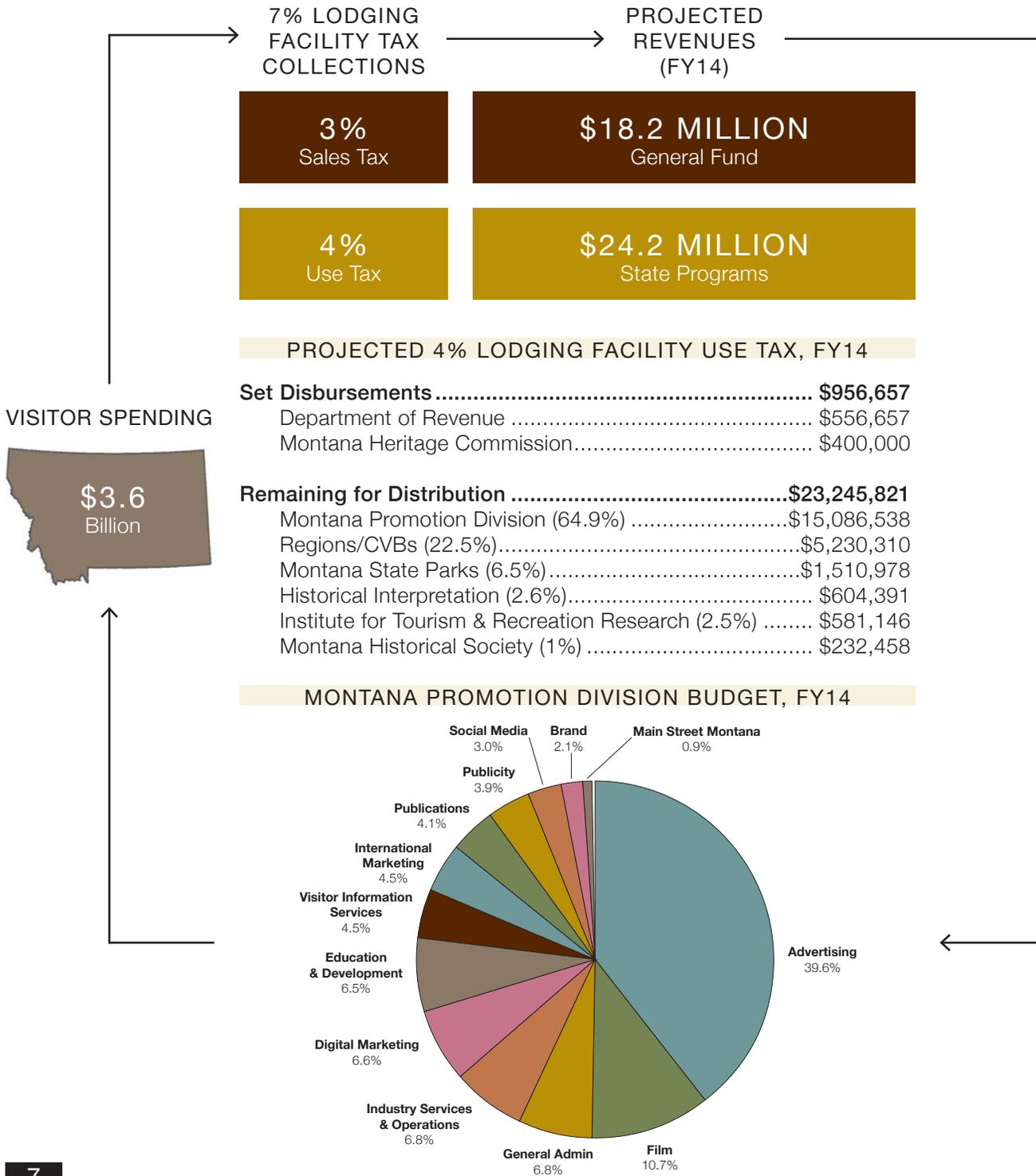
2013 Spending by Category

Gasoline, Diesel	\$1,165,560,000
Retail Sales	\$704,320,000
Restaurant, Bar	\$625,300,000
Hotel, Motel	\$354,220,000
Groceries, Snacks	\$306,580,000
Outfitter, Guide	\$143,690,000
Licenses, Entrance Fees	\$84,160,000
Auto Rental	\$68,720,000
Rental Cabin, Condo	\$51,170,000
Vehicle Repairs	\$45,970,000
Campground, RV Park	\$26,730,000
Misc. Services	\$20,780,000
Gambling	\$12,910,000
Farmers Market	\$8,460,000
Transportation Fares	\$5,930,000
Total	\$3,624,480,000

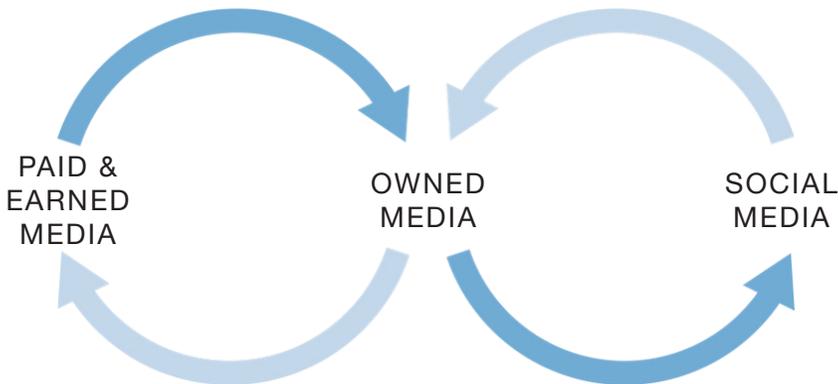
MONTANA PROMOTION FUNDING

Tourism and film promotion is funded through the 4% Lodging Facility Use Tax, commonly known as the “Bed Tax.” Enacted by the 1987 legislature, the Bed Tax is collected from guests of hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, guest ranches, resorts, and campgrounds. These funds are divided according to the chart below.

No additional funds come from Montana’s General Fund. In fact, tourism helps to support the General Fund due to the additional 3% Lodging Facility Sales Tax added to the original 4% in 2003.



MARKETING

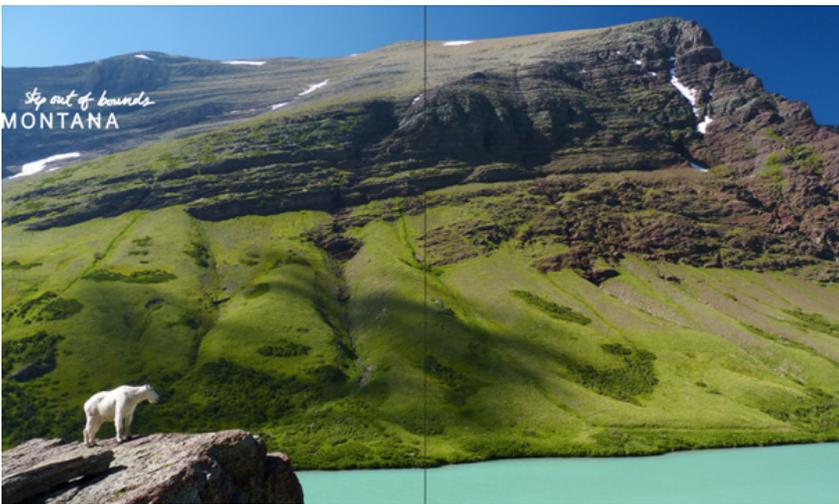


The Montana Office of Tourism's integrated marketing strategy uses its programs to promote the state through paid and earned media, owned media, and social media channels.

PAID & EARNED MEDIA

DOMESTIC MARKETING

Created advertising and promotional campaigns that positively and uniquely brand Montana while differentiating the state as a travel destination and increasing tourism from domestic travelers. Targeted national and regional audiences, including Seattle, Chicago, Salt Lake City, and Portland. Nationwide tourism trends, statistics from the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, and the results of contracted research studies help determine the overall marketing strategy.



Advertising

Placed more than \$5.8 million in media, including magazine, online, radio, social, and out-of-home (transit, billboard, storefront) advertising.

Co-op Program

Negotiated and coordinated premium placement advertising opportunities for Montana tourism partners, saving partners up to 75% off national and regional print and on-line media.

Facilitated co-branded advertising opportunities, providing match

funds of \$250,000 to collaborate.

Backpacker Magazine

Produced a custom Montana ambassador program that was fully integrated with all of MTOT's marketing programs. The partnership included a robust social media strategy that allowed

Backpacker fans and readers to select Andy and John from Boulder, CO, as Montana's ambassadors. They were chosen for their youthful enthusiasm balanced by genuine appreciation of the outdoors. Fans were asked to vote again on social media for where they wanted John and Andy to backpack in Montana. Glacier National Park and Whitefish were chosen.

National Geographic: "Where the Locals Go"

An online Montana hub on National Geographic's website shares authentic Montana experiences across the state in all seasons. This partnership allows for more

than 26 million global unique visitors per month, allowing Montana to tell its story to a large audience.

Warren Miller Entertainment

WME spent several weeks filming at Montana ski resorts. The result was a lively feature segment dedicated to skiing the state's celebrated cold smoke in the film *Ticket to Ride*. The official film tour hit 80 markets with 200 shows, reaching 300,000 dedicated snow sports enthusiasts. The Montana segment featured high-profile local athletes like Keely Kelleher and Scot Schmidt; they skied at Big Sky Resort and Whitefish Mountain Resort.

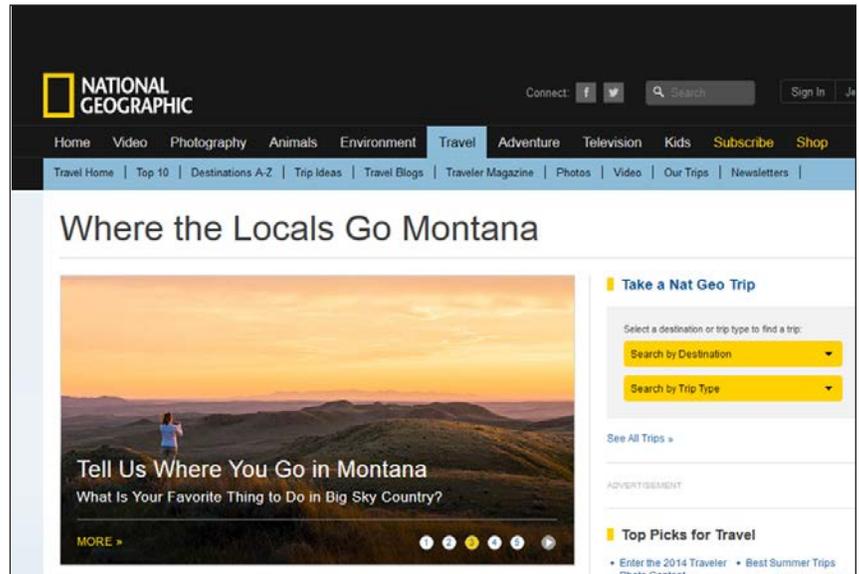
Awarded Travel Weekly Silver Magellan Award for the Travel Destinations category for an ad campaign that used location-based technology to target winter recreationists.

Winter Campaign Success

The winter campaign appeared across MTOT's markets from October–February in out-of-home, print, social media, and public relations outlets. The success of the campaign came through by surpassing all of MTOT's predetermined key performance indicators. The final click-through rate for the campaign was 0.27%, which was 285% above the industry standard and 17% above FY13's winter average.

Warm Season Success

The warm season campaign appeared across MTOT's markets from March–September in out-of-home, print, social media, and public relations outlets. The success of the campaign came through by surpassing all of MTOT's predetermined KPIs. The final CTR for the campaign was 0.30%, which was 275% above the industry standard and 30% above FY13's warm season average.



INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

International Marketing promotes Montana as a destination to the international travel trade with emphasis on the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, the Benelux region, the Scandinavian countries, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. The program involves working with key tour operators, wholesalers, travel agencies, and the media to establish Montana itineraries for international visitors.



Partnered with Brand USA to enhance Montana's presence at www.discoveramerica.com.

Montana hosted the Annual RMI Summit and Roundup in Missoula. Participating were 29 tour opera-

tors from nine different countries as well as 84 suppliers from four different states. Twenty operators participated in three different post-event familiarization tours across Montana.

MARKETING

PUBLICITY

Our public relations program enables us to tell Montana's abundant tourism stories by leveraging the editorial credibility of journalism. Working closely with journalists, editors, photographers, and videographers, our public relations team garners placement in all media channels—print, web, broadcast, and social media platforms—to increase awareness of the state's vast range of destinations and unique travel opportunities.

Delivered Montana's key messages in editorial pieces via print, online, and broadcast coverage in both North America and the international community.

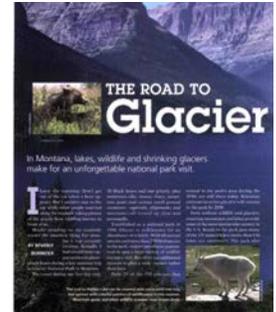
With the help of regional and local constituents, hosted journalists on individual or group press

trip visits with customized, story-specific itineraries. When appropriate, we utilized these trips to secure photography for MTOT use.

In conjunction with Consumer Marketing's National Geographic partnership on "Where the Locals Go," the public rela-

tions team developed seasonal itineraries that directed on-the-ground photographers who were gathering content for this hub. Public Relations set the stage for National Geographic to connect with private

tourism businesses including lodging properties, outfitters, restaurants, museums, and others.



MTOT's public relations program tracked stories in FY14 up 15.4% over FY13. Online impressions (unique visitors) yielded up 42.8%.

OWNED MEDIA

VISITMT.COM

Digital Marketing's goals are to support tourism industry growth by creating demand for Montana as a premier global travel destination through engaging and provocative communications that inspire, delight, and guide our audience. Through these tactics, we seek to capture more visitation and push visitors to lesser-traveled parts and lesser-traveled seasons of the state.

Continued integration between Publications, Consumer Marketing, Social Media, and Digital Marketing channels to achieve consistent and leveraged content.

Hired a consulting digital agency to assist with web strategy to enhance user experience and increase the rate of travel inspiration to action.

Kicked off a multi-year initiative to re-design and expand VisitMT.com.

Developed business resource tool, which launched in early FY15, to allow constituents to maintain their listings on VisitMT.com.

Responded to an Institute for Tourism and Recreation research report on bicycle tourism to maximize the economic opportunity it

provides. Reached out to other organizations and state agencies to build out more robust support for bicycle tourism on VisitMT.com.

Updated the Cities and Towns landing page to be more inspirational to prospective travelers.



Page views are up by a third, and pages per session are up a quarter year-over-year on a small decline of sessions and users year-over-year. This suggests that our content is becoming more engaging to our target audience.

The Montana Office of Tourism's social media program aims to build awareness of Montana as a global travel destination. The program rallies and engages with social media followings on current channels (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Tumblr) with visual content such as photos and videos. The program explores new platforms and social media possibilities to engage and expand MTOT's reach.



Partnerships

Assisted partnerships with high-profile publishers Backpacker magazine, National Geographic: "Where the Locals Go," and Warren Miller Entertainment. For each of these partnerships, the MTOT social media channels shared and promoted the content generated by these publishers.

Assisted the station domination out-of-home program in both Seattle and Chicago by sharing user-generated content to create out-of-home ads that would resonate with Geotravelers.

Measurement

Created base metrics of key performance indicators such as

engagement and impressions. This will allow for better year-over-year measurement and comparison of success. The program continues to optimize and improve the measurement methods for both paid and organic content across all social media channels.

The Montana social media objectives are:

- Build awareness of Montana as a global travel destination
- Rally and engage with social media following on current channels
- Track consideration of booking a trip to Montana

Winter Campaign Success

The winter campaign surpassed all the KPIs. The campaign was especially successful with helping drive the adoption of the #MontanaMoment hashtag with mentions up 115% to the goal.

Warm Season Campaign Success

The warm season campaign surpassed all predetermined KPIs. The campaign saw continued success with the adoption of the #MontanaMoment hashtag with a result of 110% to the goal.

TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The Sales and Constituent Services bureau offers outreach and assistance by conducting statewide community workshops to educate our partners about the Montana Brand and how they can capture our visitors to their areas and businesses. The bureau also offers three grant programs to provide financial assistance with brick and mortar projects, special events, and digital projects; tourism development and education outreach; visitor information center assistance; and a graphic design program.

THE MONTANA BRAND DEVELOPMENT



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



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



Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.

Main Street Montana Project

MTOT and Commerce were involved from the ground up with Governor Bullock's Main Street Montana Project. Marketing Montana is a key pillar of the project, which seeks to strengthen and expand efforts to promote Montana as a tourist destination to support economic growth. By designing the business plan document to accompany the project, MTOT was able to incorporate the Montana Brand.

"Welcome to Montana" Highway Sign Redesign

In coordination with the Governor's Office, Department of Transportation, and Department of Commerce, MTOT led the redesign of 34 "Welcome to Montana" signs at highway entrances around the state.

Community Workshops

Conducted seven community workshops, entitled "Coming Together to Expand Montana's Tourism Story," in Helena, Belgrade, Missoula, Billings, Sanders/Mineral County, Miles City, and Deer Lodge.



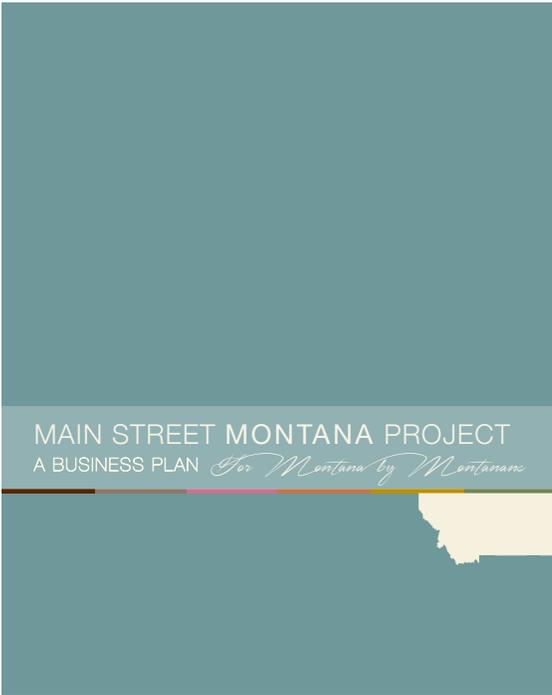
We explored the communities near and on location at the workshop. We approached this as a Geotraveler, our target audience, would by visiting museums, attractions, and restaurants and

by taking part in activities, etc. Our experiences were documented with images to share with our followers on Facebook and Twitter. The posts and tweets were used as examples in the workshop deck.

As of June 30, 2014, we have presented 26 workshops with a total of 618 attendees.

Incorporated the Department of Commerce's Made in Montana program into the commu-

TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



nity workshops to demonstrate the connection between a vital main street and tourism.

Other Business Development Presentations

Attended and presented at the Montana Outfitters and Guides Association convention, the Montana Lodging and Hospitality Association convention, the Butte, Billings, and Hamilton TBID meetings, the Bitterroot Library, and a Central Montana board

meeting.

Arranged two seminars for tourism constituents, entitled "Welcoming the Chinese Visitor to Montana," to be held in January 2015.

Future Goals

Develop a separate workshop that assists our constituents in applying the Montana Brand to their main street businesses. Several workshop evaluations have included comments requesting further

instruction.

Conduct workshops for every Indian reservation within the next 18 months. A recent Blackfeet Reservation workshop was successful in prompting businesses to get to know one another and work together to improve visitor experiences.

MONTANA MAIN STREET

The Montana Main Street program is a collaborative effort between the Community Development Division and the Montana Office of Tourism at the Department of Commerce. The program helps communities strengthen and preserve their historic downtown commercial districts by focusing on economic development, downtown revitalization, historic preservation, and tourism through proactive long-range planning, organization, design, and promotion.

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



MONTANA
MAIN STREET

Montana Main Street invested \$50,200 in FY14 into five community projects in Glasgow, Great Falls, Lewistown, Miles City, and Shelby.

Welcomed Hamilton, Thompson Falls, and Cut Bank into the state program to advance total membership to 24 communities; 2 designated and 22 affiliate.

Provided 22 communities with on-site training and technical assistance, and assisted 24 member communities and 23 non-member communities via phone and e-mail.

Contributed to several statewide forums, including the Gover-

nor's Conference on Tourism, Montana Association of Planners Conference, Museums Association of Montana Annual Conference, Montana Historical Society Lecture Series, and the Montana History Roadshow.

Headed planning efforts for the 2014 Montana Downtown Conference in Helena and achieved record attendance, sponsorships, and total sessions in the eight-year history of the

annual conference.

Participated in reinstating the Montana Tourism Assessment & Planning Program in partnership with

the Tourism Development & Education program and the Montana State University Community Development program.



TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

The Tourism Development & Education program focuses on providing technical, financial, and marketing assistance for tourism-related projects. Assistance is provided through a facility grant program; facilitated project planning, design, implementation, and liaison services; and education through an annual conference and a customer service training program.



The 2014 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation provided tourism education and training for attendees from across the state.

Montana Superhost program provided customer service training through community and high school sessions and online training at www.montanasuperhost.com.

Assisted community leaders in Ennis conduct a tourism assessment and planning process that identified projects to pursue to strengthen tourism's benefits to the local economy and community well-being.

Provided staff funding assistance and/or training to 24 partners:

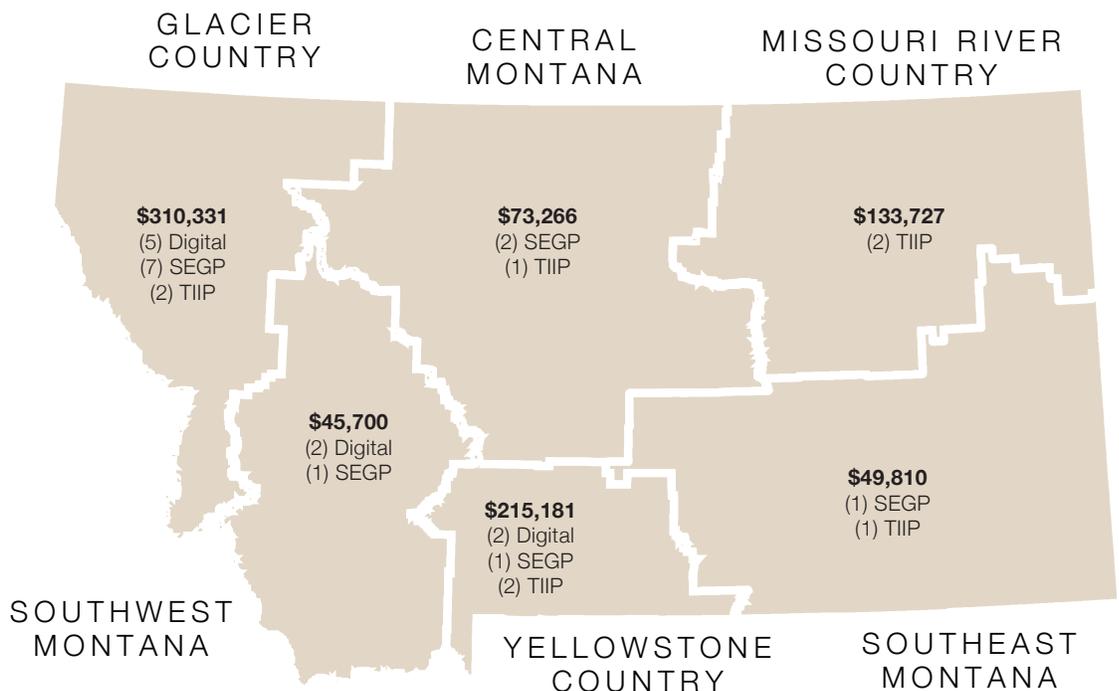
- Big Horn County Historical Museum
- Big Sky Chamber
- Bozeman Area

- Chamber Butte-Silver Bow Chamber
- Colter Pass, Cooke City, Silver Gate Chamber
- Columbia Falls Area Chamber
- Cut Bank Area Chamber
- Destination Missoula
- Gardiner Chamber
- Glasgow Area Chamber
- Great Falls CVB
- Helena Area Chamber
- Kalispell CVB
- Laurel Chamber

- Lewis & Clark Caverns State Park
- Livingston Area Chamber
- Powder River Chamber
- Red Lodge Area Chamber
- Shelby Area Chamber
- Stillwater County Chamber
- Sweet Grass County Chamber
- Three Forks Chamber
- West Yellowstone VIC
- Whitehall Chamber

GRANT PROGRAMS

In FY14, the Department of Commerce provided **\$828,015** in grant funds through the Montana Office of Tourism. These funds supported 29 tourism projects related to digital marketing, special events, and infrastructure investment.



TOURISM BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT



2014 TOURISM DIGITAL MARKETING GRANT

The purpose of the Tourism Digital Marketing Grant is to assist Montana businesses improve their competitive digital marketing position within the tourism industry.

The grant provided \$200,000 for nine projects in eight Montana communities:

- Bozeman** - Retargeting e-Marketing Campaign (\$5,095)
- Butte** - Virtual Tour Website & Mobile App (\$9,000)
- Charlo** - Lively Times: Web Enhancement & Data Sharing Project (\$43,415)
- Hamilton** - Connecting Visitors to Arts & Culture in the Bitterroot (\$26,225)
- Helena** - Abundant Montana Agritourism e-Marketing Project (\$26,700)
- Missoula** - Promotional Video, Online Registration, Social Media (\$23,205)
- Missoula** - Montana Bicycle Tours Online Marketing Campaign (\$16,860)
- West Yellowstone** - Amazing Digital & Discovery Event (\$9,500)
- Whitefish** - Montana Roadside History & Geology Markers App (\$40,000)



2014 SPECIAL EVENT GRANT PROGRAM (SEGP)

The purpose of the Special Events Grant Program is to diversify and enrich Montana's tourism product by developing and enhancing community-based tourism festivals and events.

SEGP provided \$128,015 to 12 annual events in nine Montana communities:

- Bigfork** - Chalk 'n Rock Festival 2014 (\$5,000)
- Billings** - Symphony in the Park (\$4,500)
- Bozeman** - Sweet Pea, a Festival of the Arts (\$14,000)
- Great Falls** - Lewis & Clark Festival (\$19,000)
- Great Falls** - The Russell: Sale to Benefit the CM Russell Museum (\$20,000)
- Hamilton** - Bitterroot Scottish Irish Festival (\$4,500)
- Hamilton** - Daly Days & Bitterroot Microbrew Fest (\$6,000)
- Helena** - Running Amuck for Scholarship Bucks (\$10,000)
- Missoula** - Big Sky Documentary Film Festival (\$19,590)
- Missoula** - Celtic Festival Missoula (\$15,425)
- Polson** - Flathead Lake International Cinemafest (\$7,500)
- Seeley Lake** - Winterfest (\$2,500)



2013 INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PROGRAM (TIIP)

The Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program invests a portion of MTOT's Bed Tax funding into new tourism-related facilities, the enhancement of existing tourism facilities, and the preservation of Montana's historical and cultural treasures.

TIIP grants invested \$500,000 into eight projects involving \$1.3 million in tourism facility improvements (\$2.54/\$1 leverage).

- Bozeman** - Bridger Bowl, Inc. Alpine Cabin (\$132,586)
- Fork Belknap Reservation** - Recreation Facility Improvements (\$34,266)
- Hamilton** - Hamilton Players, Inc. Theater (\$20,111)
- Malta** - Great Plains Dinosaur Museum (\$20,000)
- Poplar** - Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes Building Restoration (\$113,727)
- Red Lodge** - Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary (\$54,000)
- St. Mary** - Blackfeet Tribe's Chewing Blackbones Campground (\$80,000)
- Terry** - Prairie County Museum (\$45,310)

MONTANA FILM OFFICE



The Montana Film Office promotes Montana as a location for new business in film, TV, commercial, new media, and technology sectors and connects Montana businesses with opportunities and assets for support and workforce development.

MFO also interfaces with in-state media businesses, initiating growth by providing workforce training, constituency building, and grant funding for production of media products. MFO also administers and promotes Montana's production business incentives, including the Big Sky Film Grant and the Big Sky on the Big Screen Act.

As the media and technology industries continue to grow, MFO is dedicated to keeping Montana competitive by increasing the number and quality of top-tier resources available to both resident businesses and out-of-state companies utilizing Montana as a location to build media production products.



Oracle Film Group production *Timber the Treasure Dog* saw production go underground on the Blacktail Ranch near Wolf Creek this year.

SELECTED PROJECTS

Marketing

During FY14, the MFO reached new partners, established solid relationships with its marketing efforts, and received 3rd place from the Association of Film Commissioners International's Marketing Awards for both logo design and digital video work.

Sundance Film Festival

In a partnership with the AFCI, the MFO sponsors a media center at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah, where industry leaders, talent, and advocates gather to engage and discuss current and future business in Montana. In the coming year, Montana State Uni-

versity will join MFO in its partnership and bring students, faculty, and alumni together to present opportunities in Montana to the industry.

Los Angeles Film Festival

As an annual sponsor of the Los Angeles Film Festival, the MFO partners with Film Independent (one of the largest independent film resources in the U.S.) to engage with high-level independent filmmakers who are key decision makers for bringing new business into Montana. Last year, the MFO connected the Cut Bank Chamber of Commerce with the film *Cut Bank*, which premiered at the festival, to align the project

with the actual location and provide media opportunities for the town.

Professional Development

The Montana Film Office has created programs and leveraged partnerships with industry leaders to assist Montana businesses in increasing their professional skill sets and

taking advantage of new employment opportunities. This fiscal year, MFO increased its professional production database with the addition of 65 residents with professional production-related skill sets.

Big Sky Documentary Film Festival/SAG Audition Workshop

During the Big Sky Documentary Film Festival in Missoula, the Montana Film Office joined with the Screen Actors Guild to provide classes on audition for film and on video. Casting Director Rene Hanes and SAG representative Ellen Huang instructed the class and provided mock auditions at the University of Montana. The MFO also brought in SAG-Indie Director Darrien Gibson for the BSDFF "Doc Shop" to discuss properly running a film set, distributing documentary films, and the ins and outs of independent filmmaking.



Festivalgoers stand in line for screenings at Big Sky Documentary Film Festival in Missoula. (Credit: Dan Doran Photography)

MONTANA FILM OFFICE

Writing/Script Workshops

Each year the Montana Repertory Theatre hosts "The Colony," a week-long workshop that focuses on giving script and screen writers space to connect and develop their craft with top-tier professionals. As partners in this effort, the MFO provides support to the effort and attends the event, assisting writers in connecting their scripts to Montana for future production.

Production Asst. Bootcamp

PA Bootcamp is a program the MFO brings to the Montana University System that provides hands-on, real-time training for film students and interested parties as production assistants to increase Montana's crew base and keep already trained crew members up to date on the latest practices.

Big Sky Film Grant (BSFG)

In FY14, the MFO's Big Sky Film Grant put \$679,573 into the hands of Montana businesses creating media products for worldwide export.



Actress Maggie Gyllenhaal and fellow Sundance goers do interviews with AFCI's Beyond Cinema in the Montana media center at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

These dollars go into Montana communities, creating new businesses and expanding existing ones with job creation and increased growth potential, furthering development of Montana-centric media content for distribution. The grant has seen three businesses relocate to the state for the purposes of production and influenced increases in tourism and visitation through the leveraged Montana-centric videos and commercials.

Orphan Girl Transmedia Project

Produced by Bozeman-based CHISEL Industries for Butte's own Headframe Spirits, Orphan Girl received grant funds from the MFO to employ over 50 Montana residents and 10 businesses on 10-day production at the World Museum of Mining in Butte. A transmedia project that will span commercial, film, and online promotion, Orphan Girl is the first step toward expanding the new "#ButteInnovates" campaign focused



The Big Sky Documentary Film Festival packed the Wilma Theatre in Missoula this past February.

on revitalizing the economic region around Butte.

Oracle Film Group

A Los Angeles- and New York-based visual effects animation company, Oracle

Film Group leveraged funds from the BSFG to relocate and build an animation studio in Bozeman and initiate production on two media projects generating over \$750,000 in eco-

MONTANA FILM OFFICE



MFO staff and supports including Creative Collation President Tim Daly hang out at the Montana Film Office Media Center at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City, Utah.

conomic activity and sold for worldwide distribution. Oracle hired a workforce comprising 95% Montana residents, training 10 new, full-time employees to complete visual effects and animation needs for projects and clients in FY15 and forward.

Montana YouTube
The MFO initiated a division-wide YouTube strategy in an effort to leverage Montana-centric, professionally produced video content. Grant funds were awarded to two businesses to establish curated YouTube channels, The Montana Experience and Epic Montana. These

companies seek out other Montana-based businesses to create engaging content, employ residents across the state, and promote these projects worldwide. Focusing on Montana stories including artist bios, outdoor adventures, documentaries, histories, hunting, fishing, and hiking expeditions, the channels have garnered tens of thousands of viewers and are being leveraged by the MFO as content providers for promotional efforts with the Montana Office of Tourism.

Montana Film Economic Impact Study

Completed in the beginning of 2014, the MFO commissioned the Northern Rocky Mountain Economic Development District to study the impact of production in Montana from 2006–12. A comprehensive study that assessed the impact of direct spending in the state of Montana by production companies over six years, it also investigated the impact of film production on visitation and tourism.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Production Inquiries and Conversion

Using the Reel-Scout production services database, the MFO serviced 261 projects in FY14 including 27 commercials, 34 documentaries, 64 independent features, and 31 new/transmedia projects. One hundred and six of those projects serviced are currently in production or have already wrapped, meaning that the MFO saw a 41% conversion rate from inquiry to in-Montana production.

Social Media

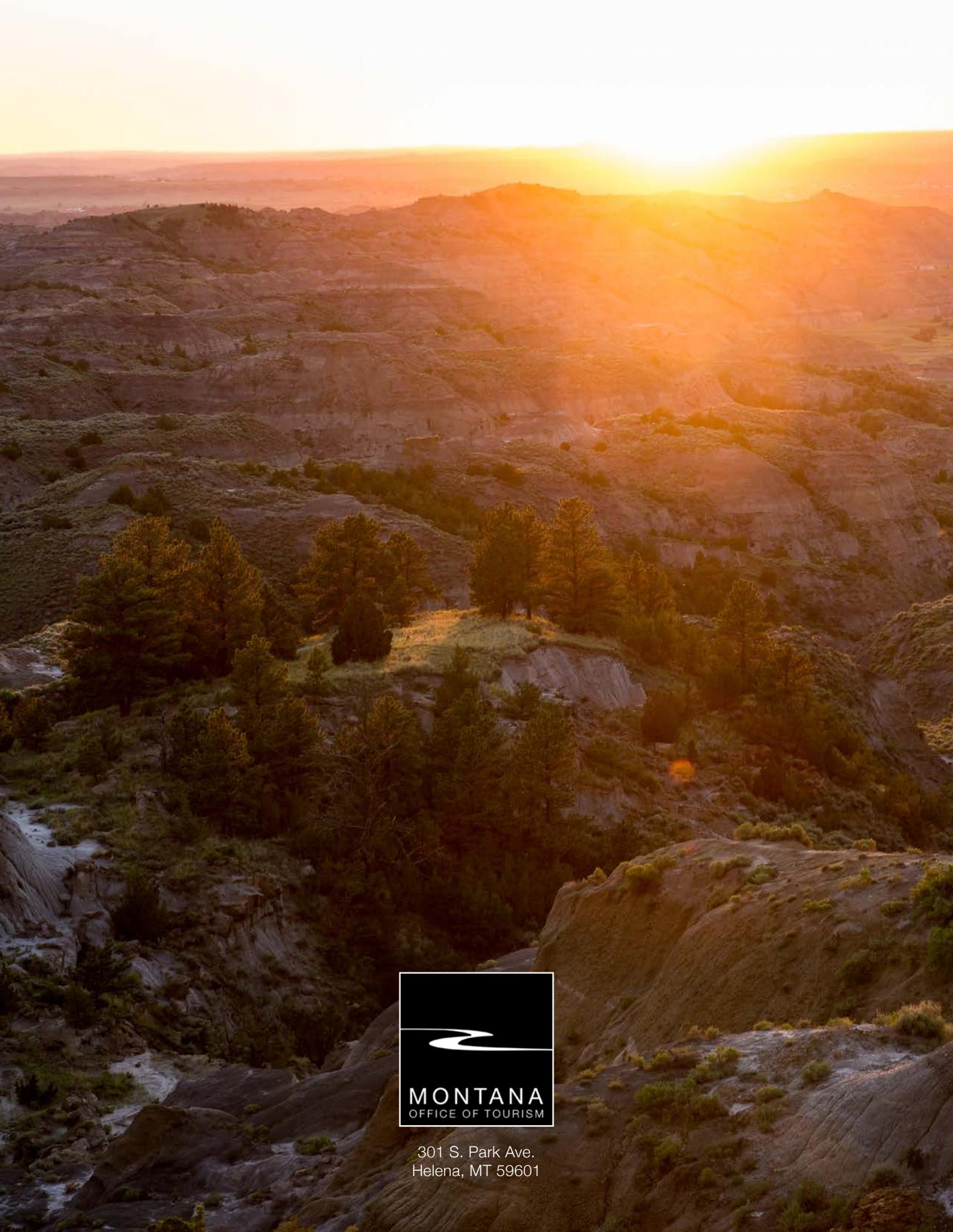
The Montana Film Office's social media outreach saw steady increases during FY14. With Facebook and Twitter being the simplest ways to connect with Montana's film constituency and on-the-move industry partners, the MFO consistently leverages engaging and relevant content to both audiences.

Reaching 2908 likes on Facebook and 4,221 followers on Twitter this year meant that MFO casting posts, industry announcements, and events reached world-wide and provided connections for Montana film fans in communities across the state.

YouTube

February of 2014 marked the launch of three Montana-supported YouTube channels that have seen incredible growth in only a year. The Montana Experience, Epic Montana, and MFO's film-centric content total more than 170,000 minutes of exclusively Montana-centric content viewed with more than 700 subscribers continually engaging and sharing Montana YouTube content.





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