

# 2012-2013 MARKETING PLAN & BUDGET





Billings Chamber of Commerce/  
Convention & Visitors Bureau  
815 South 27th St.  
Billings, MT 59101

Phone: 406.245.4111  
Fax: 406.245.7333  
Website: [www.VisitBillings.com](http://www.VisitBillings.com)  
Email: [Info@BillingsChamber.com](mailto:Info@BillingsChamber.com)

President/CEO  
John Brewer: [John@BillingsChamber.com](mailto:John@BillingsChamber.com)

Executive Director, CVB  
Alex Tyson: [Alex@BillingsChamber.com](mailto:Alex@BillingsChamber.com)

Sales Manager  
Tom Krause: [Tom@BillingsChamber.com](mailto:Tom@BillingsChamber.com)

Communications Manager  
Kelly McCandless: [Kelly@BillingsChamber.com](mailto:Kelly@BillingsChamber.com)

Visitor Services Assistant  
Caitlin Hall: [Caitlin@BillingsChamber.com](mailto:Caitlin@BillingsChamber.com)



**Purpose:** *The purpose of this comprehensive marketing plan is to provide strategic direction to success for the Billings Hospitality Community.*

*This plan will position the Billings Chamber/CVB in a leadership role for the recruitment of meetings and conventions, leisure travelers, sporting events, and film for the purpose of economic and cultural growth for Billings and the surrounding region. This plan allows us to be competitive with like-cities in tourism and convention recruitment.*

*Our identity lies not in what we say, but in what others say:*

*Beartooth Highway was ranked #1 as the best motorcycle ride in the United States – American Motorcycle Association – April 2011*

*Billings is ranked in the top 20 greatest places to live in the west – American Cowboy, May 2010*

*Billings is ranked as one of America's best get away Cities – Daily News Entertainment, March 2011*

*Billings is ranked #2 out of 10 Cities with the strongest economies – Parenting Magazine, July 2010*

*Billings is ranked as the 37th most bicycle friendly community in the US – Bicycling Magazine, 2010*

*Billings was named in the top 38 cities for unpolluted air – State of Air Report, 2010*

*Billings is named in the top 83 must see Cities in the west – Old West Destinations, April 2010*

*Billings is named as the 4th greenest small city in the US – Organic Gardening Magazine, February 2008*

*Billings is really AWESOME! Robert (age 9) – Billings VIC log book, August 2010*



## BILLINGS IS MONTANA'S CITY

Shaped by the Yellowstone River and sheltered by the Rims. Billings is the cradle of progressive regional commerce providing healthcare, transportation, diverse educational opportunities, cuisine, arts and culture. A place of forever views, forever memories and the adventure of the untamed wilderness and history right out your front door.

Billings connects you to warm, genuine, hardworking people who possess a perspective on life that is uniquely Montanan and inherently individual. People who look you in the eye and take time to welcome you home.

Montana's city connects you to the authentic historical west. A city full of growth and development leading the country in the look of future communities. Immerse yourself in modern conveniences on the edge of the genuine frontier.

Billings is Montana's Trailhead.

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# Introducing

## Billings, Montana's Trailhead

Tourism in Billings, Montana has been completely reshaped in recent years. With the creation of the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) in 2007, the community is now, more than ever, a strong and competitive destination.

Montana's Trailhead is an attractive destination as it sits in the region. Its air service, lodging and convention accommodations, proximity to natural wonders and historic sites as well as retail and corporate opportunities, attractions and amenities make it a competitive city in the western region of the United States. However, prior to the installation of the TBID, there were not enough dollars available to appropriately market the city as a competitive destination. Billings' hotel occupancy in 2007 was 62.2%. Billings' tourism was marketed with \$200,000 generated from bed taxes. This amount was well below the \$1.4 million average spent by competitive like-cities for promotion. During the 2007 session of the Montana Legislature, Billings' lodging representatives and local Chamber of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Board members and staff, proposed legislation that would allow communities to create tourism improvement districts. During that session, Montana lawmakers modified existing business district laws to allow formation of tourism districts. Billings was the first to implement a TBID.

That same year, a \$0.75 per-room per-night tourism district assessment went into effect and generated \$400,000 additional marketing dollars. That year, according to a 2010 study conducted by Randall Travel Marketing, lodging demand increased 4.3% and occupancy increased 3%. Lodging

revenue grew from \$62.2 million in 2007 to \$63.18 million in 2008. In 2009, the district assessment was increased to \$1.00 per-room per-night, to generate an estimated \$526,000 in 2009-2010. Today, the budget continues to grow as does the demand for Billings as a destination. TBID collections must be used for activities and expenditures designed to increase tourism, events, rallies and convention business. The TBID Board of Trustees, appointed by the Billings City Council, oversees revenue and expenses.

The Chamber/CVB and TBID Board members, stakeholders and staff are committed to continually positioning Billings to appropriately and strategically market the city as a destination and also as a gateway to Yellowstone National Park and historic sites that rest in southeast Montana.

Less than 20% of communities in the United States operate jointly as a Chamber of Commerce and a Convention and Visitors Bureau. In Billings, we are proud to foster the tourism industry by supporting and promoting lodging partners and businesses. From the volunteers in the Visitor Information Center to the President and CEO, the people who represent the Billings Chamber/CVB work tirelessly for the future of Montana's Trailhead. They are Billings' biggest fans working hard to promote the community, grow visitation and lodging demand and help people build memories. In Fiscal Year 2012-2013, relationships with stakeholders will continue to be fostered to build upon the solid partnership between the Chamber/CVB, the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) and tourism partners.

## The Billings Chamber of Commerce/ Convention & Visitors Bureau:

A non-profit organization which aims to help create and promote an environment where businesses can flourish; through convention and visitor recruitment, government affairs, advertising, networking and events, the Chamber/CVB provides benefits to more than 1,100 members. It is the organizations' goal to help Billings industries and businesses grow and prosper.

# Research Project

## Key Findings

### Randall Travel Marketing Recommended Strategies and Strategic Direction (January 2010)

1. Billings enjoys a special designation as the “big city” for Montana’s “Big Sky Country” and the surrounding multi-state region. It is the hub where regional residents come for dining, shopping, events, meetings, and more. Billings has the choice of strategically choosing to retain this designation or to lose it over time to others.

2. Leaders of Billings need to understand the current travel and tourism customer mix, how to meet the needs of each, and how to target segments for growth. The chart to the right displays our customer mix.

2008	Category
<b>29.2%</b>	<b>Business</b>
19.9%	Individual business travelers (white collar)
9.3%	Blue collar workers (mineral industry, commercial, construction laborers)
<b>23.6%</b>	<b>Conference/Meeting</b>
6.9%	Government
6.5%	Corporate
3.9%	SMERF
3.4%	Association
1.5%	Medical
1.4%	Motor enthusiasts (Harley-Davidson, RV, motorcycles, cars)
<b>23.1%</b>	<b>Leisure</b>
16.2%	Tourists visiting or passing through as a part of a longer trip
6.9%	Visiting local friends & relatives
<b>12.9%</b>	<b>Transient/Medical/Other</b>
6.3%	Transient: passing through as part of a longer trip
4.0%	Medical: visiting Billings for medical reasons – personal or friends/family
2.6%	Other: (specify)
<b>11.2%</b>	<b>Group</b>
5.7%	Team sports/events (team tournaments, rodeo, BMX, etc.)
3.4%	Group tour/motor coach
2.1%	Weddings/reunions/family events/social events

Source: RTM Lodging Study 2010

3. The task of the Chamber/CVB is to promote Billings as a destination to new and repeat visitors. The task of leadership is to drive continued development of the destination as well as continued diversity of the customer base.

4. RTM recommends 20-year strategic development of “core” visitor amenities:

- Conference/meeting/ event facilities
- Arts & Entertainment: “The Best Seat in the West”
- Billings/Western Heritage (includes interpreting sites such as Boothill, Yellowstone Kelly Grave, Stockyards, etc.)
- Trails: Linking visiting Billings to the region
  - o Driving trails that start in Billings
  - o Cowboy Trail: Handmade hats, boots, saddles, etc.
  - o Farm-to-Market Trails
- Sports: Facilities and development study
- Downtown: Visual appeal and “people places”

5. Gateways: It is critical to continue creating memorable and impressive gateways along all major routes into Billings, especially interstates.

6. Improve signage and wayfinding: This was the most negative issue reported by visitors to Billings – and can be a serious detriment to increasing economic impact.

7. Provide effective orientation and facilitation for all visitors:

- This means highly effective visitor guides, website, and materials found by visitors at the front line to lead them directly to cash registers.
- This includes technology such as cell phone interpretation that compels visitation to Billings attractions.
- Recruit volunteer information ambassadors for significant events, meetings, and time periods.
- Consider “Billings Visitor Hotline” for calls from visitors.

# Research Project

## Key Findings

### 8. Priority Chamber/CVB marketing initiatives:

- Get visitor guide to each and every visitor – drive them to cash registers, extend their stays.
- Provide tear-off maps (with reverse side listings) at every hotel, restaurant, etc.
- Website for advance trip planning.
- Prospecting and direct sales to recruit new leisure, SMERF, sports, meetings, and events visitors.
- Technologies (social media, database marketing, etc.) to build dynamic relationships with repeat visitors and entice new visitors.
- Develop mobile technologies including emerging technologies for information and interpretation.
- Development of database and E-marketing to frequent repeat visitors to Billings.

### 9. Initiate “pay as you play” program for additional marketing outreach:

- Waterpark Hotels - - winter regional marketing campaigns
- Great Chefs of Billings - - winter dining campaign
- Spring Birding - - spring campaign targeting birders
- Stay a Day - - campaign to extend stay of meeting attendees

### 10. Continue partnership in regional tourism (State of Montana, Southeast Montana Tourism, etc.).

### 11. Recommended Positioning:

Billings, Montana’s Trailhead  
The “Big City” in Big Sky Country

Billings is where travelers find the largest regional variety of hotels, dining, shopping and entertainment. It’s where the trail begins!

In this study RTM asked respondents to answer the question “What makes Billings distinct/different from other destinations?” The significant majority of responses fell into the following categories (these are presented in rank order):

- |                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Big City/Size/Selection | • Mountains                |
| • Rimrock                 | • Variety of activities    |
| • Shopping/dining         | • Western flair            |
| • Friendly people         | • Oil & Industry           |
| • Scenery                 | • Old feel                 |
| • Small town feel         | • Proximity to Yellowstone |
| • Center of Montana/hub   |                            |

RTM interprets this data to reflect the perception of Billings as a “big city” in Montana, where one finds a rich variety of shopping, dining, and amenities. It is also noteworthy that numerous comments were made about “scenery,” “Rimrock,” “mountains,” “western flair,” etc. This is good evidence for the positioning of Billings as Montana’s Trailhead. It is where one finds the trail, and it is where one finds the supplies and material goods for the adventure. RTM also feels the wording of Montana’s Trailhead reflects accurately the western/mountain flavor that colors the perception of Billings.

# Identity

## Key Strengths

- Availability of quality guest rooms – 4,029
- Large, multi-purpose venues – 10,000 seat arena, over 265,000 sq. feet of technically sound meeting and event space in addition to unique venues such as ZooMontana, the Billings Depot or one of many faith based venues for an impressive total of nearly 325,000 square feet of flexible meeting space.
- Quality air service - year round direct flights to eight major cities by 6 carriers; and additional seasonal flights.
- As one of the geographically largest trade areas in the country, Billings is a regional hub for the agriculture, energy, education, and healthcare industries.
- The city's proximity to well-known national attractions and events puts Billings in a great marketing position. Yellowstone National Park, Glacier National Park, the Black Hills, Mount Rushmore, Little Bighorn Battlefield and Pompey's Pillar National Monument are all assets to a quality visitor experience and are all easily accessible from Billings.
- Billings' vibrant downtown and Historic Montana Avenue boasts unique boutiques, restaurants, coffee houses, sidewalk cafés, galleries, loft apartments and more.
- Native American history and western flair of the region makes Billings attractive to a diverse group of visitors. Unique dining, entertainment, events and a variety of cultural assets.
- Billings is home to Mustangs baseball, (the Cincinnati Reds farm club), and the Billings Bulls Hockey team. Club sports and organized youth sports are also abundant.
- The partnerships we have forged with local and regional tourism partners and surrounding states have made the Billings CVB a credible tourism promoter with valuable connections throughout the region.
- Billings has good brand recognition – beginning with new Scenic Drive signage and welcome signage at Billings Logan Airport to promote our brand pillars throughout the community, the Trailhead brand is becoming recognized.
- Billings has quickly become the hub for servicing the oil and coal boom in North Dakota and Montana.

Billings offers true, small town charm with a Big City feel. It embraces historic adventure, western flair, and cosmopolitan touches that make a visitor feel right at home.

# Identity

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## Key Challenges facing the region

- Per capita we offer superior air service, in some cases flight times can be inconvenient and priced higher than airports in other metropolitan areas.
- Public transportation to and within the community can be expensive, inconvenient and in some cases a lower standard than in our competitive cities.
- Convention facilities are spread throughout the city and based on research have found them to be dated or not in convenient locations.
- Billings also offers no structured convention center on a campus setting. We are aware of the fact that if any regional competitor builds a center, our market share would be affected drastically.
- The city of Billings lacks an offering of walking activities near a hotel or convention space – something that would encourage guests to get out, explore and spend!
- There is a general perception that there is nothing to do in Billings.



# Strategic Goals

All actions taken by Billings, Montana's Trailhead will support the following Strategic Goals

Billings CVB energies will focus on strategic goals that utilize the city and state's assets of scenic beauty, geography, developed attractions, quality air service, convention and roomnight capacity and historical importance to grow local tourism and the area economy.

## Leisure Travel

CVB staff will build upon previous marketing efforts positioning Billings as a top leisure visitor destination in the west. Current consumer trends remind us travelers are looking for fulfilling destinations that provide distinctive experiences and lasting memories. Montana is a destination to help make these memories and Billings is the trailhead to begin and shape such life experiences. You've never heard anyone build a list of their top 100 websites to visit before they die. However, Montana is a bucket list destination. And, Billings, is where dream excursions on that list can begin, be experienced and crossed off.

## Meetings and Convention Recruitment

Billings is Montana's City offering affordable rooms, ample meeting space, quality air service as well as the scenic beauty of the west and the friendliness of Montanans. The Billings CVB will work to increase travel to the community by attracting meetings and conventions. The goal is to Bring It To Billings. Montana's Trailhead is a premiere destination for meetings and conventions. Staff will continue to build relationships with key event planners and participate in industry tradeshow that will cultivate and foster new and return business. Staff will also cultivate relationships with players in the energy industry to let them know they are welcome here and that we appreciate the impact of their industry on the region. Staff will work to build relationships so they understand how Billings can accommodate their meeting and convention needs.

## Position Billings as a Sports Event Hub

Billings is an ideal location for youth, collegiate and semi-pro sporting events in the region because the city boasts the largest inventory of venues for events, large and small. Billings also offers affordable amenities for athletes and their support base to enjoy.

The Billings CVB staff will develop and maintain a sports contact database to build future and recurring business in this travel segment. Together with our sports recruitment liaison, staff will research sports related recruitment opportunities and travel possibilities for Billings. Billings needs to bubble to the top of this segment of the tourism industry. Staff will form and maintain an inventory of sporting event facilities and potential venues across the city so staff can begin correlating and nurturing relationships and opportunities.

## Increase Value Season Visitation

In Billings, the pressures of supply and demand boost the price of travel and lower hotel availability during the summer months when, traditionally, more people are traveling. However, prices deflate during the shoulder or value season, which typically falls during the city's worst weather months (October – April). The value season offers the visitor a combination of desirable prices and other travel opportunities. The value season will become a primary focus this fiscal year, with efforts to increase leisure visitation as well as to book meeting and convention business and sporting events that fall in this time of year.

# State of Montana Tourism Strategic Plan

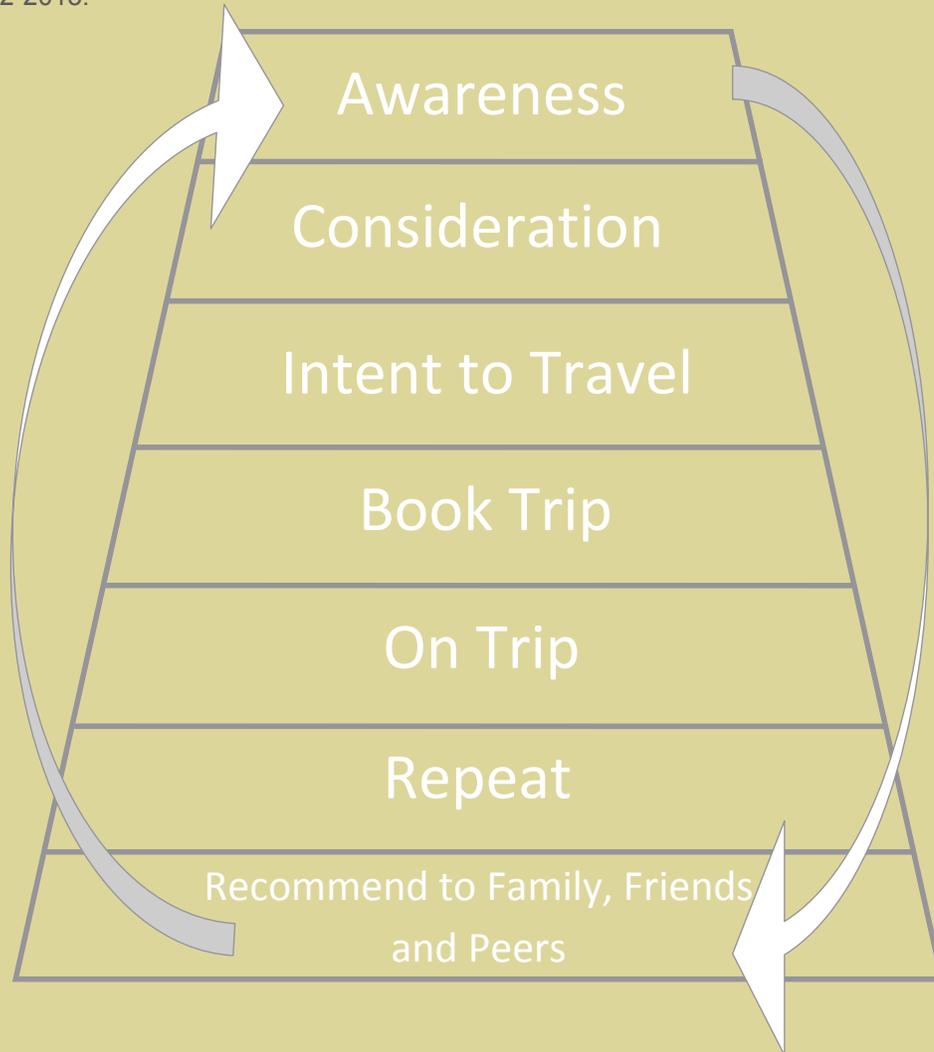
This Marketing Plan supports the following objectives laid out in the State of Montana's Tourism Strategic Plan 2008-2012.

- Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors
- 1.1: Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.
  - 1.2: Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.
  - 1.3: Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts
  - 1.4: Improve Montana's VIC system to extend visitor stays and expenditures.
- Goal 4:** Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history (historic sites, museums, art, music, etc.)
- 4.1: Promote Montana's existing historic and cultural assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.
- Goal 5:** Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services for target customer markets.
- 5.1: Cultivate opportunities to leverage private/public funds to create tourism products.
  - 5.2: Provide information about technical/financial assistance available to tourism businesses.
- Goal 9:** Increase funding to maintain sustainable tourism and recreation.
- 9.2: Foster opportunities to pool public and private marketing dollars
  - 9.3: Enhance funding for region and CVB marketing efforts



## The Social Purchase Funnel (from DMAI CEO Summit)

General market analysis shows that 78% of consumers trust their peers. This trend infiltrates most every level of consumerism, not the least of which is travel. To illustrate, statistics show that 25% of Brits booked a trip or holiday after seeing a friends' Facebook post(s) while on vacation. What's more, every demographic suffers from "time poverty," meaning our society is chronically lacking free time. 41% of Americans say they do not have enough time to travel or take vacations, let alone plan them. Thus, social communication is of even more importance - it can plant the seed, potentially streamline the planning process, and encourage peer sharing. These trends illustrated in the Social Purchase Funnel will be applied to the Billings CVB's marketing in FY 2012-2013.



## The Travel Decision Process

The typical traveler makes travel decisions in a three-phase process: Inspiration, Orientation, and Facilitation.

The **Inspiration phase** is the one in which the traveler is made aware of the general product and develops a desire to visit the destination. This phase is masterfully executed by the Montana Office of Tourism, which uses Montana's key tourism draws to bring over 10 million visitors to the state each year.

The **Orientation phase** is where the traveler begins researching the details of his or her trip. This phase focuses on the route the traveler will take to arrive at the chosen destination and the mode of transportation used to get there.

The **Facilitation phase** is where the traveler seeks things to see and do at the destination and on the way to the destination. This may include planning alternate routes and overnight stays to break the travel in to manageable daily distances.

The Billings CVB can maximize on the efforts of the Montana Office of Tourism and Southeast Montana by focusing largely on the Orientation and Facilitation stages. In this way we can target the 'low hanging fruit' already traveling through our region on the way to Yellowstone National Park and other Montana destinations.

Inspiration



Orientation



Facilitation

# Target Markets

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The Billings CVB will market the city as a premiere year round destination for conventions, meetings, sporting events, leisure travel, and film opportunities. By contemplating the Social Purchase Funnel and the Travel Decision Process, staff will strategically focus marketing efforts toward target audiences that will maximize positive economic impact for stakeholders:

## Leisure Recruitment

**Regional Drive Market:** We will target communities that are at least 150 miles from Billings and are between Billings and the next larger regional markets such as Rapid City, Bismarck, Sheridan, Denver, Calgary and Fargo. Our target geographic area for the regional market will be the surrounding states, including Wyoming, Washington, Idaho, North Dakota, South Dakota, Colorado and Canada. These visitors view Billings as a metropolitan area and are interested in shopping, special events, culture, history, nature and entertainment opportunities they cannot find in their hometowns.

**National Market:** We've known that Billings' geographic location between Glacier, Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and the Black Hills has always made Billings an ideal stopping point for travelers, but this year the Gateway to Yellowstone positioning will be the focus of marketing efforts. Billings will be touted as the trailhead to the national park journey. Billings is an obvious overnight stop for the motor coach industry for those tours to the area National Parks and regional attractions.

Campaigns for both regional and national targets will have year-round elements. However, emphasis will be placed on travel activities that occur during Billings' value season (back to school shopping, shoulder season events, etc).

## Meetings and conventions recruitment

The target will be planners concentrated in Washington, D.C., the Rocky Mountain Region and other national cities where association headquarters are located. To discover these planners and build relationships with them, we will continue to utilize local residents and local contacts who participate in meetings, conventions and hobby groups that have contacts and are in leadership roles within the community. We will also target meeting planners headquartered in Helena and other key Montana cities. The target markets will include groups, associations and/or clubs that will utilize 400 guest rooms (peak) for at least two nights at a minimum of three properties and utilize a minimum of 8,000 square feet of exhibit or meeting space. Additional emphasis will be placed on national corporate decision makers in the energy field. Emphasis will be placed on groups that meet during Billings' value season.

## Sporting Event Recruitment

Sporting events will be targeted on state, regional and national levels. Billings currently hosts a limited number of regional events featuring participants from the Western U.S. and Southern Canada. We will expand this mostly summer event season to year round, capitalizing on our extended mild climate (Billings' value season). Demographic target markets include: Team leaders, team parents, coaches, tournament managers who are interested in hosting their sporting events in Billings.

# Marketing Methods

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Utilizing the Randall Research, industry trends, the Social Purchase Funnel and the results of the Southeast Montana Tourism study, the Billings CVB determined the following marketing methods:

## Leisure Recruitment

As our leisure promotion efforts grow our target markets and diversity of mediums continues to evolve as well. We will continue to produce comprehensive advertising campaigns, informational and promotional e-Newsletters, and a comprehensive Billings Visitor Guide. We will pursue appropriate cooperative partnerships and familiarization tours. Additionally, promotion of VisitBillings.com as well as our Scenic Drive App will enhance the visitor experience. Finally, we will seek a variety of ways to develop relationships with leisure travelers and leisure travel promoters, namely by developing relationships with regional AAA offices.

**Advertising Campaigns:** The basis of our existing ad program will continue, but emphasis on the value season will increase dramatically. The Billings CVB will reach further into our target markets and saturate them even more with our message. Leisure messaging will reach more potential visitors through the placements of strategic billboards along I-90 and other gateways to Billings. Use of events and giveaways as visitor lures will continue, which allows the Billings CVB to build our e-Marketing database as well. In keeping with the Social Purchase Funnel, social media efforts will continue to evolve and our reach across mediums will increase. The Billings CVB will maximize on the efforts of the Montana Office of Tourism's efforts nationally by making strategic out of home placements in cities like Minneapolis, Salt Lake City, Chicago, and Seattle. These national placements, as well as others deemed appropriate, will position Billings as the Gateway to Yellowstone National Park.

**e-Newsletter:** The Billings CVB will continue to distribute a leisure e-newsletter to our database of opt-in subscribers. This newsletter will primarily push last minute deals due to the following industry trends:

- 44% of vacations taken by the affluent traveler are weekend trips. Average lengths of stays are shorter.
- 38% of HHI > \$125K took last minute trips within six days of booking.
- 30% of leisure travelers booked less than seven days from departure.

Additionally, the Billings CVB will produce an e-Newsletter for our tourism partners, allowing additional opportunities for information sharing, education, and tools for finding, winning and keeping our leisure travelers.

**Visitor Guide:** The Billings Guidebook will continue to be produced as a shorter, advertising-free piece that directs visitors to the VisitBillings.com website. The Guidebook is key to orienting the visitor to the Billings community and facilitating their visit. Increased distribution of this piece will also be implemented to reach our markets in the Rapid City, SD area as well as in southern Canada.

**Cooperative Partnerships:** The Billings CVB will continue to partner with Southeast Montana Tourism on consumer travel shows deemed relevant to our market. Shows include but are not limited to: Rocky Mountain International Roundup, National Tour Association, Tourism Alliance Partners, etc. Productive partnerships with other Regions/CVB's will be pursued when appropriate as well.

**Familiarization Tours:** The Billings CVB will seek more familiarization tour opportunities with the ultimate goal of getting Billings on more travel itineraries and as the topic of more editorial features locally, regionally, nationally and internationally.

**VisitBillings.com Website:** The VisitBillings.com website will continue to serve as a tool to orient and facilitate our visitors from start to finish as well as a booking tool to directly serve our lodging partners through the listing of each individual property and the availability of deals and savings listings. As our website has become an increasingly valuable visitor tool, search engine optimization will double.

**Scenic Drive App:** The Scenic Drive Walking Tour App, which highlights many of Billings' best attractions, will be promoted

# Marketing Methods

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## Meetings and Conventions Recruitment.

One of the primary goals of the Billings CVB is to increase travel to the state by attracting groups, meetings and conventions. With more than 4,000 affordable rooms, quality meeting and convention space, superior air service and Montana's mystique, staff will work to increase travel to the community by attracting meetings and conventions. Sales will target travelers through third-party meeting planners and other contacts. Tapping into the association and organizational connections of residents, particularly in the energy industry, we will work to book new business. Staff will target planners in the State, as well as the Rocky Mountain Region and national cities where associations are headquartered and located. Additionally, CVB staff will target energy sector decision makers to encourage them to bring their employee trainings, tradeshow, etc. to Billings. We will encourage the energy sector to "work, live and play in Billings." It is the goal to discover these planners, build relationships with them and continue to utilize local representatives who participate in meetings, annual conventions and hobby groups. The overarching goal is to find business that is a good fit for Billings, win the booking, and keep the event and/or planner coming back.

Bring it to Billings was originally developed as an internal marketing program that encouraged staff to seek out local groups and build relationships with them resulting in the recruitment of the local groups' regional, state or national meeting to Billings. Through experience and evolution, this program will expand this fiscal year to envelop relationship building in general. Recognizing the value of a genuine relationship and that people tend to do business with people they know, sales staff will develop relationships with group representatives on all levels: local, state, regional, national, and international. These contacts will be pursued to bring business to Billings.

**Familiarization Tours:** The Billings CVB will facilitate familiarization tours for both national meeting planners as well as Montana meeting planners. These tours will further our efforts to develop genuine relationships as well as shed positive light on our destination and educate planners on all Billings has to offer.

**Incentives and Services:** When appropriate, the Billings CVB offers incentives to bring meeting and convention business to Billings. Additionally, the Billings CVB is committed to providing superior convention services to all business we are involved with, leaving a lasting and positive impression on both planners and delegates and thus encouraging repeat visitors.

**Tradeshows/Sales Missions:** Billings CVB staff has narrowed our tradeshow attendance to those that demonstrate results. These shows primarily consist of a one-on-one meeting format; however, the traditional tradeshow booth format will still be used for two shows. The goal of these shows is to foster relationships with planners expressing an interest in our destination. Additionally, sales missions will take place in cities with a collection of qualified leads; special emphasis will be placed on energy recruitment efforts. Specific sales missions to destinations like Houston, Denver and Calgary will be made to reach out to potential energy sector leads. Relevant and qualified energy related tradeshow will be attended as well.

**Advertising/Joint Venture:** The Billings CVB will implement highly targeted advertisements and sponsorships to position our destination as a premier meeting and convention destination. The CVB will work with the Montana Office of Tourism and other Montana regions and CVB's to advertise the state in general as a "can't miss" meeting and convention destination.

**VisitBillings.com Website:** The VisitBillings.com website, with its sub-domain BringItToBillings.com, will continue to serve as a planning tool and resource for meeting and event planners. Features available include Request for Proposal forms, available service listings, meeting space information, etc.

**e-Newsletter:** The Billings CVB will communicate news, updates, and general information with our database of meeting and event planners through the Bring it to Billings e-Newsletter. The database consists of qualified meeting and event planners and the e-newsletter serves to keep Billings top of mind as well as to foster our relationships.

## Meetings and Conventions Recruitment (continued).

**Recognition Celebration:** A recognition celebration is planned to thank all of the local, state and national representatives who assist the Billings CVB in booking business. The celebration serves as a means of fostering important relationships as well as to encourage these contacts to continue working with us to bring business to Billings.

**Promotional and Presentation Materials:** Specialty tools will be produced to keep Billings top of mind among our general sales leads. Promotional pieces could include Billings, Montana's Trailhead chapstick, chocolates, notebooks, water bottles, etc. Presentation materials will be specifically tailored to qualified leads and will be used when making a sales pitch to a decision making group.

## Sporting Event Recruitment.

Sports tourism presents a plethora of opportunities for Billings. While Billings has always been a major player in the sports realm, particularly for the Rocky Mountain Region, the goal is to better position the community as a sporting event destination to expand this segment of business for Billings' tourism. With the contract assistance of Chris Frye, Ph.D., more opportunities for booking events will become available to the area. Mr. Frye is a sports marketing and research expert specializing in scouting and facilitating sporting events. He will help CVB staff direct strategy, research, and sales efforts in order to attract and develop sports events and activities that generate an economic impact for Montana's Trailhead. Booked events can bring new dollars into the economy and showcase Billings as an asset and top destination in the world of sports. Our combined efforts will include:

- Work with local sports groups and clubs to attract state, regional and national sports competitions.
- Leverage existing sports and recreational facilities to create new economic and community value by hosting sporting events at area venues.
- Attend industry trade shows and continue to provide hospitality and group assistance to sporting events.
- Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotional campaigns.

## Value Season Recruitment

The Billings CVB will increase Value Season visitation through increased emphasis across our other three markets specifically during the shoulder season of October through April. Leisure promotions will specifically target value season visitors and meetings, conventions and sporting events that fall within these identified months will be of special emphasis by Billings CVB staff.

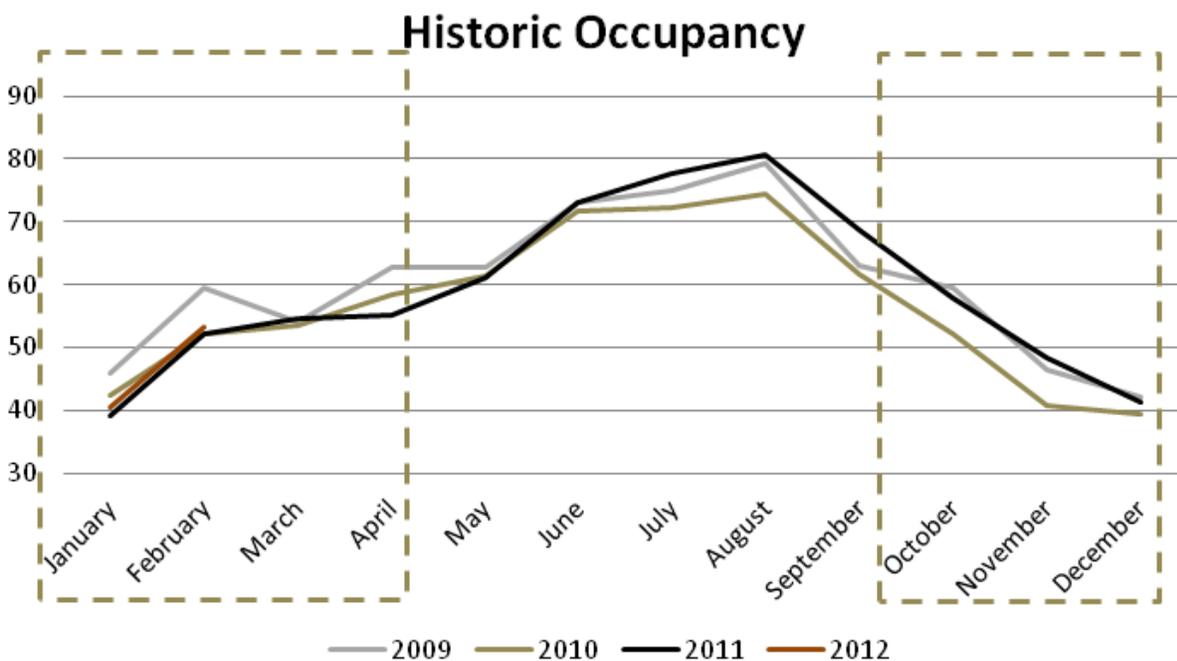


Billings is rich in natural and historic treasures, but offers modern conveniences.

# Measurable Objectives

## Results and Goals

	FY 2011-2012 Goal	FY 2011-2012 Actual *As of April 1, 2012	FY 2012-2013 Goal
<b>Citywide Meetings &amp; Conventions</b>	8 Bookings 11,000 Room Nights	2 Bookings 4,800 Room Nights	8 Bookings 11,000 Room Nights
<b>Small Bookings</b>	11 Bookings 7,000 Room Nights	15 Bookings 2,685 Room Nights	15 Bookings 4,000 Room Nights
<b>Sports Bookings</b>	1 Booking 2,000 Room Nights	2 Bookings 900 Room Nights	4 Bookings 6,000 Room Nights
<b>Total Bookings</b>	20 Bookings 20,000 Room Nights	19 Bookings 8,385 Room Nights	27 Bookings 21,000 Room Nights
<b>Unique Web Visits</b>	175,000	208,887	90,000*
<b>Stakeholder Survey</b>	80% N/A	83% 10 Respondents	85% 20 Respondents
<b>Room Demand</b>	0%	9.9%	3%
<b>Value Season Occupancy</b>	Track Only (See Below)		



	<b>FY 2010-2011 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2009-2010 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2008-2009 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2007-2008 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2006-2007 Actual</b>
<b>Citywide Meetings &amp; Conventions</b>	4 Bookings 7,950 Room Nights	7 Bookings 9,950 Room Nights	9 Bookings 16,250 Room Nights	6 Bookings 9,600 Room Nights	3 Bookings 61,200 Delegate Days*
<b>Small Bookings</b>	21 Bookings 5,278 Room Nights	9 Bookings 2,850 Room Nights	10 Bookings 4,205 Room Nights	N/A	N/A
<b>Sports Bookings</b>	1 Booking 100 Room Nights	4 Booking 3,300 Room Nights	1 Booking 1,120 Room Nights	N/A	N/A
<b>Total Bookings</b>	26 Bookings 13,328 Room Nights	20 Bookings 16,100 Room Nights	20 Bookings 21,575 Room Nights	6 Bookings 9,600 Room Nights	3 Bookings 61,200 Delegate Days*
<b>Web Sessions</b>	250,519	N/A	N/A	168,800 state hosted website	146,400 state hosted website
<b>Stakeholder Survey</b>	66% 16 Respondents	79% 19 Respondents	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>Room Demand</b>	3.7%	-2.7%	0.8%	4.27%	6.98%

**Citywide Meetings/Conventions:** A group utilizing three or more hotels with approximately 400 peak room nights and approximately 8,000 square feet of meeting space.

**Small Group Booking:** Anything smaller than a citywide as defined above will be considered a small group booking.

**Sports Booking:** A sport booking is any athletic event such as basketball, soccer, baseball, hockey, football, wrestling, dance, figure skating, and cheerleading for example. The event must utilize our community's hotel rooms and a sports venue in the immediate area. Sporting events include amateur, k-12, collegiate, semi-pro and pro. Sports meetings and conventions will be accounted for just as any other group segment would under small or citywide meetings and conventions as defined above.

**Total Bookings:** The grand total of all three segments mentioned above.

**Unique Web Visits:** Prior to July 2012, many different methods were used to determine the success of the CVB's website. Some tracking mechanisms grossly inflate the number of website visits due to the fact that they are unable to filter out automated web programs called 'bots' which visit websites to collect information. We will now analyze web effectiveness using "Visits" as our primary metric using Google Analytics as our measuring software. Google Analytics is capable of filtering out bots as well as web traffic generated from the Billings Chamber/CVB office giving a much more accurate picture of our website's performance. The data reported for previous years used old measurement tools, thus resulting in a very different picture than the one we will see in the future. Staff will monitor other Google Analytic data for the day to day management and effectiveness of the site.

**Stakeholder Survey:** This is an annual survey we send to our TBID Stakeholders asking them several questions to evaluate our work. We use their feedback to situate our goals and efforts for the upcoming fiscal year. Goals include a pre-determined number of responses to the survey and a reaching pre-determined grade. The bottom line question and will remain consistent from year to year:

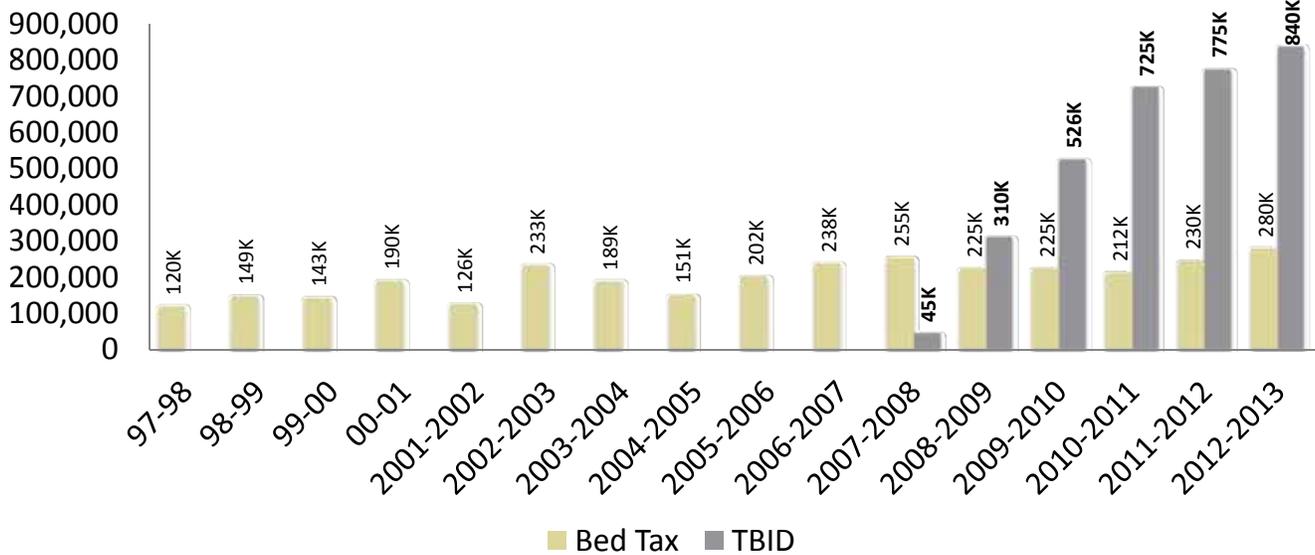
"If you were to numerically grade (92%, 75%, etc) the Convention & Visitors Bureau for its sales and marketing efforts and results over the past year what grade would you give? (Using a standard school grading system: 100%=perfect score; 97%=A+; 80%=B-, 75%=C, etc)"

**Room Demand:** Growth in citywide room demand based on Smith Travel Research report. Demand reflects accurately increased visitation. Where occupancy is impacted by the number of rooms in inventory (new hotels, etc), demand is a true picture of the number of total rooms sold.

**Value Season Occupancy:** Emphasis will be placed on increasing occupancy during the value season, or shoulder season, period from October to April. These periods have historically not been a busy time.

# Collections Growth

1997 to Present



# Lodging Tax

## Billings, Montana's Trailhead Budget

### Administrative

<b>Administrative Expense Total</b>	<b>\$88,500</b>
Administrative Expense	\$56,000
TAC	\$2,000
Governor's Conference/Partner's Meetings	\$1,000
Fulfillment by Contractor	\$18,500
Postage	\$4,500
Professional Training	\$4,000
Marketing Plan Development	\$2,500

### Advertising

<b>Advertising Total</b>	<b>\$165,000</b>
Leisure Advertising	\$35,500
Meeting & Convention Advertising	\$40,000
Co-Op Leisure Advertising	\$25,000
Agency Retainer	\$36,000
Meeting/Convention Joint Venture	\$28,500

### Opportunity

<b>Opportunity Total</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>
Opportunity	\$10,000

### Printed Materials

<b>Printed Materials Total</b>	<b>11,000</b>
2/4 Wheel Maps/Brochures	\$5,000
Press Video	\$6,000

### Sales Expense

<b>Sales Expense Total</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
Attendance Building	\$5,000
Site Visits	\$5,000
Incentives - Conventions	\$10,000

### Publicity

<b>Publicity Total</b>	<b>\$19,000</b>
Photos	\$5,000
FAM: Motorcoach/Inat'l Operators	\$5,000
FAM: Journalists	\$3,000
FAM: National Meeting Planners	\$6,000

### Film

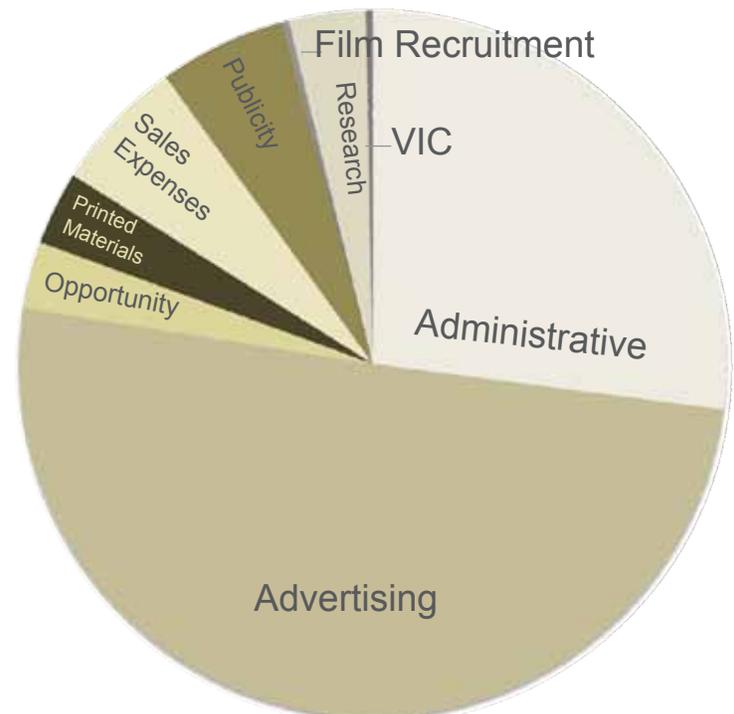
<b>Film Recruitment Total</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
Film Incentives	\$1,000

### Research

<b>Research Total</b>	<b>\$11,500</b>
EmpowerMINT	\$5,000
Smith Travel Research	\$6,500

### Visitor Information Center

<b>VIC Total</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
VIC Toll Free Line	\$1,000



Lodging Tax Income: \$280,000

Projected Carryover: \$47,000

Total Lodging Tax Budget: \$327,000

\* Should lodging tax revenues decrease, the following categories would be reduced by 10%: Administrative Expenses, Advertising, Opportunity, Printed Materials, and Publicity

# Tourism Business Improvement District Funds

## Billings, Montana's Trailhead Budget

### Reserves

<b>Reserves Total</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
Reserves	\$25,000

### Staff

<b>Staff Expenses Total</b>	<b>\$225,450</b>
Wages/Benefits	\$225,450

### Administrative

<b>Administrative Expenses Total</b>	<b>\$41,600</b>
Computers & Software	\$3,000
Equipment – Repairs/Supplies	\$2,500
Legal & Accounting	\$7,000
Liability/D & O Insurance	\$2,100
Meeting Expenses	\$7,275
Office Supplies	\$2,225
Postage	\$2,500
Professional Training	\$12,000
Telephone/Wireless Equipment	\$3,000

### Advertising

<b>Advertising Total</b>	<b>\$229,840</b>
E-Publication Marketing	\$840
Leisure Advertising	\$215,000
Meeting & Convention Advertising	\$1,000
Sports Advertising	\$1,000
Search Engine Optimization	\$12,000

### Opportunity

<b>Opportunity Total</b>	<b>\$50,000</b>
Opportunity	\$20,000
Grants	\$30,000

### Printed Materials

<b>Printed Materials Total</b>	<b>77,115</b>
Promotional Materials	\$5,000
Welcome Recruitment Banners	\$1,500
Visitor Guide	\$50,000
Presentation Materials	\$1,500
Trailhead Folder/Sales Kit	\$2,500
Meeting Planner Incentive Program	\$2,000
Scenic Drive Program	\$5,000
BITB Printing/Supplies	\$9,365
TH Envelopes for Mailings	\$250

### Sales Expense

<b>Sales Expense Total</b>	<b>\$98,600</b>
Instate	\$5,000
International/National/Regional	\$10,000
Attendance Building	\$2,500
Site Visits	\$2,500
Incentives - Convention	\$10,000
Incentives - Sports	\$30,000
Sports Hospitality	\$10,000
Sports Consultant	\$28,600

### Tradeshows

<b>Tradeshow Total</b>	<b>\$41,895</b>
Meetings Industry Council	\$2,500
Destination Showcase DC	\$5,500
Connect	\$6,000
Rejuvenate	\$6,000
Collaborate	\$4,500
Conference Direct	\$5,000
Connect Leadership Conference	\$4,500
NASC Membership	\$895
MT Society of Association Executives	\$2,000
National Tour Association	\$1,000
Tourism Alliance Partners	\$1,000
Rocky Mountain International	\$1,000
Tradeshow Partnerships (coops)	\$2,000

### Publicity

<b>Publicity Total</b>	<b>\$23,500</b>
Photos	\$1,000
FAM: Motorcoach/Inat'l Operators	\$500
FAM: Journalists	\$500
FAM: National Meeting Planners	\$500
FAM: Montana Meeting Planners	\$2,000
BITB Recognition Celebration	\$2,500
National Tourism Week	\$2,500
MLHA PR Campaign	\$10,000
Trailhead Tourism Ambassadors Program	\$4,000

### Web Site

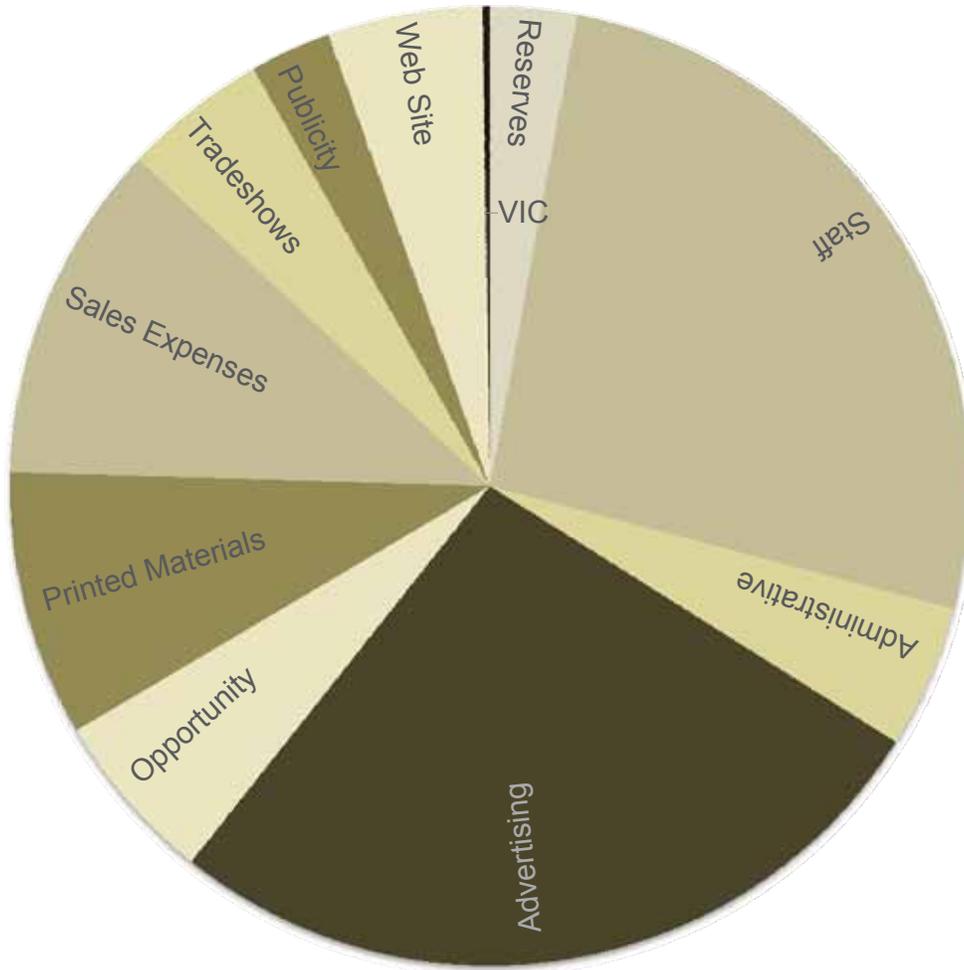
<b>Web Site Total</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>
Web Maintenance & Enhancement	\$30,000
Event E-Calendars	\$10,600
Domain Names Registration	\$400
Niche Activity Info Pages	\$4,000

### Visitor Information Center

<b>VIC Total</b>	<b>\$2,000</b>
Signage/Brochure Rack	\$500
VIC/Volunteer Expenses	\$1,500

# Tourism Business Improvement District Funds

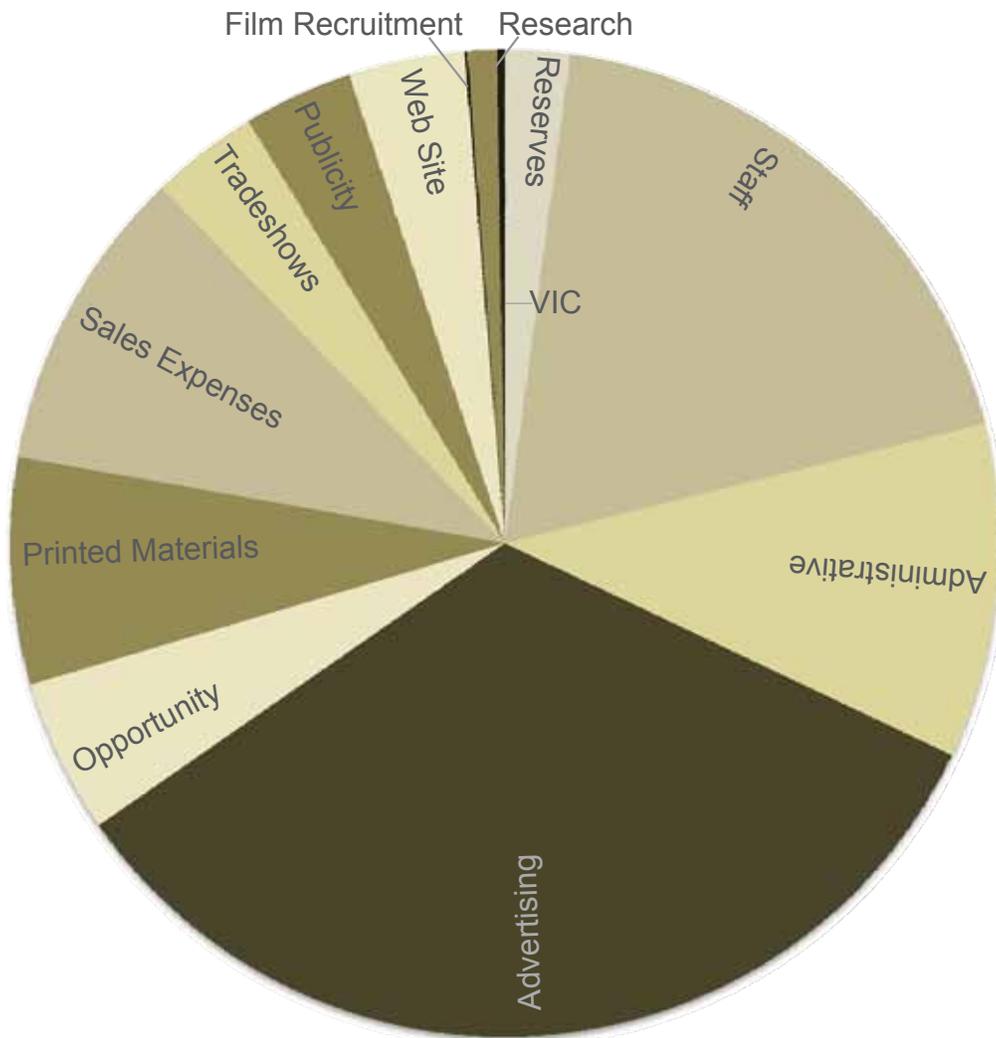
## Billings, Montana's Trailhead Budget



Projected TBID Income:	\$840,000
Projected TBID Carryover:	\$20,000
Total TBID Expense:	<u>\$860,000</u>

# Total CVB Funds

## Billings, Montana's Trailhead Budget



Lodging Tax Budget:	\$327,000
TBID Budget:	\$860,000
Total Billings CVB Budget:	<u>\$1,187,000</u>

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
 Project Name: Fulfillment; Contractor, Postage (FY 12-13)  
 Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary

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

The Billings Chamber/CVB Board and staff have identified the regional travel audience as the number one target to increase visitation. In order to better reach potential visitors, the CVB will continue to contract with Certified Folder to distribute Billings' visitor guides at key market venues along the Yellowstone Park Corridor as well as throughout Eastern Montana, Northern Montana, Western North and South Dakota and Northern Wyoming.

The Billings CVB is requesting \$18,500 for contract fulfillment with Certified Folder. In addition to contract fulfillment, the Billings CVB requests \$4,500 for general postage (an additional \$2,500 in private funds will be utilized) to fulfill a commitment for meeting and event planners in and also for general tourism responses.

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

1. Increase room demand by 3% over FY 11/12.
2. Develop a benchmark industry report card receiving an 85% satisfaction rating.
3. Increase unique visits to [www.VisitBillings.com](http://www.VisitBillings.com) over FY 11/12.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

This project supports goals in the marketing plan noted as Leisure Recruitment and Meeting and Convention Recruitment as well as the effort to increase value season visitation.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

**Goal 9:** Increase funding to maintain sustainable tourism and recreation.

- **9.2:** Foster opportunities to pool public and private marketing dollars

**Detail page attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Fulfillment

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
Certified Folder Display	\$18,500	\$0	\$18,500
General Postage	\$4,500	\$2,500	\$7,000
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$23,000</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>\$25,500</b>

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Project Name: Professional Training: DMAI and DMAP Accreditation (FY 12-13)  
Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval  
Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary

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

The Billings Chamber/CVB will begin work toward becoming a Certified Destination – through DMAI’s Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP). The Billings CVB’s Executive Director will also attend DMAI’s National Convention to attend training and seminars regarding the tourism industry. Such professional development/training and accreditation will help better position Billings as an ideal destination in the west for group and leisure travel. The combination of DMAI exposure and the DMAP accreditation will also allow the community to be marketed to groups who only consider accredited DMO’s when planning conferences and group meetings. This in turn will keep the Billings CVB in line with tourism marketing trends keeping the destination competitive.

Since we must register for this event well in advance, registration will be taken out of 2011-2012 budget (approved last year), but expenses will be paid for by the 2012-2013 budget.

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

1. Book eight citywide conventions/meetings in Billings.
2. Generate 11,000 room nights for the lodging facilities of Billings.
3. Book a total of 27 groups (including citywide and sports) resulting in 21,000 room nights.
4. Increase room demand by 3% over FY 11/12.
5. Develop a benchmark industry report card receiving an 85% satisfaction rating.
6. Increase unique visitors to [www.visitbillings.com](http://www.visitbillings.com)

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

These projects enhance all four priorities in the marketing plan. Education and certification are tools that will assist us with recruitment efforts.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high - value, low-impact visitors.

**Goal 5:** Support appropriate tourism growth, including new tourism products and services for target customer markets.

**Detail page attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Professional Training

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
DMAI Convention	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
DMAP Accreditation Fee	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$4,000</b>

**Destination Marketing Association International**

Membership	\$1,100
Training	\$250
Convention Registration	\$800
Air Transportation	\$300
Ground Transportation	\$100
Lodging	\$350
Meals	\$100
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$3000</b>

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
 Project Name: Marketing Plan Development (FY 12-13)  
 Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary

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

The Billings CVB annually revisits its marketing position and works to develop a strong, focused road map for the organization and local tourism community. CVB staff will work with AD Creative, the advertising agency of record, to foster the process of planning, preparation for, the facilitation of and implementation of a clear and concise plan for tourism success at Montana’s Trailhead. AD Creative will assist in the writing of the marketing plan for FY 2012-2013.

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

Overall objective to reach or exceed all objectives outlined in Annual Marketing Plan and Budget presented to TAC.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

All areas of the marketing plan support this project.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

- **1.1:** Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.
- **1.2:** Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.

**Detail page attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Marketing Plan Development

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
Marketing Plan Development/Strategic Planning	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500
Project Total	\$2,500	\$0	\$2,500

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau

Project Name: Advertising; Leisure, Meeting and Convention, Co-Op Leisure, Meeting and Convention Joint Venture (FY 12-13)

Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval Requested:

Final (Agency Retainer, Print and Online ad placement)

Preliminary (Leisure, M & C, Co-Op Advertising, & Joint Venture)

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

The Billings Chamber/CVB Board and staff have identified advertising as a key component to the success of Billings as a destination. Advertising efforts will revolve around campaigns that focus on leisure travel and Co-Op leisure advertising opportunities. Other target markets for FY 2012-2013 will include meeting/ convention recruitment and meeting/convention joint venture prospects.

**Leisure Advertising:** The Billings CVB is allocating approximately 25% of the total budget toward leisure promotion this fiscal year. This category encompasses our plans to advertise in the Southeast Montana guide, our 2/4 Wheel promotional efforts as well as our plans to make national out of home advertising placements that integrate with MTOT's strategy in the geographic markets of Seattle, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis and Chicago. Our advertisement in the Southeast Montana guide will highlight Billings to Southeast Montana visitors. The advertisement will align with our national and regional advertising campaigns. Due to the success of the 2/4 Wheel marketing campaign in FY 2011-2012, the Billings CVB plans to continue this project in FY 2012-2013. As stated in the 2012-2013 Billings CVB Marketing Plan, the 2/4 wheel market is important to the overall success of the local tourism industry. The campaign that focuses on the riding and driving in the region that was developed in 2011-2012 will be expanded and refreshed to make it relevant to 2012-2013 tourism trends within this market. The campaign will focus on both leisure recruitment and group/event recruitment. To best leverage Montana's national presence, the Billings CVB will work with MTOT and other regions/CVB's to further the effort being made in the target cities noted above.

**Meeting and Convention Advertising:** As stated in the 2012-2013 Billings CVB Marketing Plan, meeting and convention recruitment is a primary objective. Opportunities for advertising and sponsorship will be secured that coincide with our tradeshow attendance. If print advertisements are used, they will be placed in industry publications or specific tradeshow newsletters and magazines.

**MTOT, Southeast Montana Tourism, Regions/CVB Co-op Advertising:** It is important to leverage marketing/advertising dollars with MTOT and other lodging tax entities. The Billings CVB will support entities with common interests in promoting tourism within Montana and/or southeast Montana.

**Agency Retainer:** The Billings CVB will utilize its agency of record, AD Creative Group, for professional services related to advertising and marketing. The services procured under the monthly retainer include ad production, creative development, copy writing, media buying/coordination, advertisement report compilation, social media content generation and miscellaneous agency services.

**Meetings and Conventions Joint Venture Advertising:** During the 2012 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation Statewide TBID Meeting, several tourism representatives from throughout the state expressed interest in combining efforts to promote the state of Montana as a destination for meetings and conventions. While this campaign is still in the discussion phase, the Billings CVB is prepared, through this line item, to support joint venture meeting and convention advertising that results from this discussion.

2012-2013 advertising will consist of components that include, but are not limited to print, radio, online, television, e-publications, social media and billboards.

Advertising developed will be provided by the Billings Chamber/CVB advertising agency of record: AD Creative Group.

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

1. Book eight citywide conventions/meetings in Billings.
2. Generate 11,000 room nights for the lodging facilities of Billings.
3. Book a total of 27 groups (including citywide and sports) resulting in 21,000 room nights.
4. Increase room demand by 3% over FY 11-12.
5. Increase unique visits to [www.VisitBillings.com](http://www.VisitBillings.com) over FY 11-12
6. Brand building and identity recognition for Billings, Montana's Trailhead

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

Billings CVB energies will focus on strategic goals that utilize the city and the state's assets of scenic beauty, geography, developed attractions, quality air services, convention and room night capacity and historical importance to grow local tourism and the area economy. These efforts support all aspects of the marketing plan.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

- **1.1:** Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.
- **1.2:** Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.
- **1.3:** Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

**Goal 4:** Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history (historic sites, museums, art, music, etc.)

- **4.1:** Promote Montana's existing historic and cultural assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

**Goal 9:** Increase funding to maintain sustainable tourism and recreation.

- **9.2:** Foster opportunities to pool public and private marketing dollars
- **9.3:** Enhance funding for region and CVB marketing efforts

**Detail pages attached:** Yes

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
Leisure Advertising	\$35,500	\$215,000	\$250,500
Meeting and Convention Advertising	\$40,000	\$1,000	\$41,000
Co-Op Leisure Advertising	\$25,000	\$0	\$25,000
Agency Retainer	\$36,000	\$0	\$36,000
Meetings and Conventions Joint Venture	\$28,500	\$0	\$28,500
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$165,000</b>	<b>\$216,000</b>	<b>\$381,000</b>

## **Print Advertising**

Travel Planners/Guidebooks: MTOT, ND, SD, WY, Rapid City, Red Lodge, Southeast Montana

Thunder Press

Quick Throttle

Soundrider

American Motorcycle Association

Discover America

American Cowboy

TrueWest

USA Today Season Travel Guides

Sports Leisure

Sports Event Magazine

AAA Magazine

VIA

PNW Sports

SmartMeetings

National Geographic Traveler

Meetings Focus West

Conference Direct Meetings Mentor

Northern Rockies Rider

## **Southeast Montana Tourism Ad**

Billings CVB will place a full page full color ad in the Southeast Montana Tourism Guidebook.

Publication: Southeast Montana Tourism Guidebook

Issue: Annual

Size of Ad: Full Page

Color: Full

For online advertising and e-marketing, the Billings CVB will be posting creative within the online presence of the publications mentioned above as well as placing Google advertisements and Facebook advertisements.

Billboard locations in the target markets of Seattle, Salt Lake City, Minneapolis and Chicago will be selected and placed to coincide directly with placements made by MTOT as well as other regions and CVB's.

Meeting and Conventions advertisements and sponsorships may include but are not limited to: sponsorship of convention lanyards, advertisements in tradeshow newsletters and e-publications such as Conference Direct Meetings Mentor, publications by Collinson Publishing, as well as meeting planner publications such as SmartMeetings Magazine/e-newsletters.

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Project Name: Printed Material; 2/4 Wheel Brochure/Map Reprint, Press Video  
(FY 12-13)  
Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval  
Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary

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

**2/4 Wheel Brochure/Map Reprint:** This is a multi-use piece that focuses on the riding and driving experiences that can be found in and around Billings and the surrounding areas. The project consists of a reprint of the colorful and informative brochure featuring maps, stories, laws, pictures and website references for the motorcycle and driving markets that was produced in FY 11-12. An online component is planned, but with the success of the distribution of the hard copy version, a reprint is requested.

**Press Video:** More travel writers and journalists are requesting information about Billings on a monthly basis. CVB staff is continually being asked for story ideas and snippets of history regarding the region. A press video featuring Billings, its people, region, history, mystery and some of the more notable former residents would complement other items being distributed to this demographic. The press video will be placed on [www.visitbillings.com](http://www.visitbillings.com) under a Press Room tab. The video will utilize still shots and video currently owned by the Billings CVB.

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

1. Increase room demand by 3% over FY 11/12.
2. Increase unique visits to [VisitBillings.com](http://VisitBillings.com).
3. Book a total of 27 groups (including citywide and sports) resulting in 21,000 room nights.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

These projects enhance all four priorities in the marketing plan. Each project is a tool that will assist us with recruitment efforts.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

- **1.1:** Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.
- **1.2:** Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.
- **1.3:** Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts

**Detail pages attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Printed Material

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
<b>2/4 Wheel Brochure/Map Reprint</b>	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

**PRINTED MATERIALS**

Project Name: 2/4 Wheel Brochure/Map

Coordination and Design: \$0 (reprint)

Printing: \$5,000

Publication: 2/4 Wheel Brochure/Map Quantity: 10,000

Color: Full Paper Stock: 70# Glossy Text

# of Pages or Folds: 14" w x 8.5" h final size when unfolded. It will fold 3 times to create 6 panels with the final size being: 4.6875" w x 4.25" h

Ad Sales (Yes or No): No Percentage: N/A

Distribution Plan (areas & method): Mail fulfillment, Certified Folder Display, VIC, Trade Shows, Online and e-mail.

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
<b>Press Video</b>	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

**Press Video Budget**

Planning, Creative Direction	\$500
Script Writing, Copy Writing	\$1,300
Editing	\$1,200
Video Production	\$500
Licensing (music, copywriting)	\$200
Image processing	\$500
Page development	\$550
Navigation/ Rollover Programming	\$600
Uploading/Beta Testing	\$500
DVD Production	\$150
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$11,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$11,000</b>
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Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Project Name: Sales Expenses; Attendance Building, Site Visits, Convention Incentives (FY 12-13)  
Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary  
(Convention Incentives)

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

**Attendance Building:** Conventions, meetings, seminars, and conferences are a major part of the Billings tourism industry. Many of the meetings held here are of a regional, national, and international nature. Convention delegates spend considerably more money per day than the leisure traveler does and typically meet in the shoulder season when occupancy is low. Because of air service, variety of rooms and prices, attractions and exhibit space, Billings offers an environment conducive to the requirements of this market. Once a convention is awarded to Billings, we are many times required to attend the convention the year before it is held in Billings to build attendance. We will travel to the conference and promote Billings by staffing an information booth, producing save the date materials, and placing ads in convention programs.

**Site Visits:** In advance of Billings being chosen as a site for a convention, often times it is necessary to host a site selection team to further showcase our region. We are requesting funds for lodging, airfare, baggage fees, car rental, meals, parking and admission fees to museums or venues.

**Convention Incentives:** The Billings CVB offers incentives to assist conventions and meetings in offsetting costs, which often times is the deciding factor in a planner awarding a booking to Billings. Incentives are offered in the form of loop transportation during the conference, hospitality room hosting, facility rental, speaker gifts, and sponsorships.

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

1. Book eight citywide conventions/meetings in Billings.
2. Generate 11,000 room nights for the lodging facilities of Billings.
3. Book a total of 27 groups (including citywide and sports) resulting in 21,000 room nights.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

The goals defined in the marketing plan provide clear and concise direction. The number one goal is to target general and specialized meeting planners who have the ability to bring citywide meetings, conventions or sporting events to Billings, particularly during the value season.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

- **1.2:** Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.
- **1.3:** Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts

**Goal 9:** Increase funding to maintain sustainable tourism and recreation.

- **9.2:** Foster opportunities to pool public and private marketing dollars
- **9.3:** Enhance funding for region and CVB marketing efforts

**Detail pages attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Sales Expenses

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
<b>Attendance Building</b>	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$7,500
<b>Site Visits</b>	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$7,500
<b>Convention Incentives</b>	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$20,000
<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$10,000</b>	<b>\$30,000</b>

**Attendance Building**

Airfare: \$1500  
 Baggage Fees: \$100  
 Lodging: \$1500  
 Transportation (car or other means): \$500  
 Presentation material: \$300  
 Meals individual and group: \$1000  
 Miscellaneous Expenses: \$100  
 Private funds: \$2500  
**Total: \$7500**

**Site Visits**

Airfare: \$2,000  
 Baggage Fees: \$100  
 Lodging: \$1000  
 Transportation (car or other means): \$500  
 Presentation material: \$300  
 Meals individual and group: \$1000  
 Miscellaneous Expenses: \$100  
 Private funds: \$2500  
**Total: \$7500**

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Project Name: Publicity; Motor Coach/International FAM, Journalist FAM,  
National Meeting Planner FAM, Photography (FY 12-13)  
Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval  
Requested:  
 Final (Photography)  
 Preliminary (FAMs)

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

**Familiarization Tours:** Billings CVB will work with MTOT and other tourism regions or entities to host fam tours. This project is important to our mission because it is the combining of budgets and resources to promote our region and state. Should the opportunity arise to partner with other businesses, all rules and regulations will be adhered to.

**Photo Library:** Billings CVB will continue to build a photo library that will be used for advertising of all types, promotion, tourism partners' websites, display in the VIC, CVB website and journalist requests. We will research local/regional/national photographers that feature Billings and regional photos. The photos will be available to tourism organizations and tourism partners at no charge.

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

1. Book eight citywide conventions/meetings in Billings.
2. Generate 11,000 room nights for the lodging facilities of Billings.
3. Book a total of 27 groups (including citywide and sports) resulting in 21,000 room nights.
4. Increase room demand by 3% over FY 11-12.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

These projects enhance all four priorities in the marketing plan.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

- **1.1:** Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.
- **1.2:** Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.
- **1.3:** Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts

**Goal 4:** Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history (historic sites, museums, art, music, etc.)

- **4.1:** Promote Montana's existing historic and cultural assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

**Goal 9:** Increase funding to maintain sustainable tourism and recreation.

- **9.2:** Foster opportunities to pool public and private marketing dollars.

**Detail pages attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Publicity

Familiarization Tours	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
Motor Coach/International	\$5,000	\$500	\$5,500
Journalist	\$3,000	\$500	\$3,500
National Meeting Planner	\$6,000	\$500	\$6,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$15,500</b>

**Motor Coach/International FAM Tour**

Participants: Whether a FAM tour is in conjunction with or independent of MTOT, a list of participants, budget and itinerary will be submitted in advance of the project.

Expenses to be determined per FAM opportunity – Budget pages will be submitted

**Journalist FAM Tour**

Participants: Whether a FAM tour is in conjunction with or independent of MTOT, a list of participants, budget and itinerary will be submitted in advance of the project.

Expenses to be determined per FAM opportunity – Budget pages will be submitted

**National Meeting Planner FAM Tour**

Participants: Whether a FAM tour is in conjunction with or independent of MTOT, a list of participants, budget and itinerary will be submitted in advance of the project.

Expenses to be determined per FAM opportunity – Budget Pages will be submitted

Photography	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
Photo Library	\$5,000	\$1,000	\$6,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$6,000</b>

<b>Project Total</b>	<b>\$19,000</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>	<b>\$21,500</b>
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Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
 Project Name: Film Recruitment/Incentives (FY 12-13)  
 Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary

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

**Film Recruitment:** Within this budget we are requesting \$1,000 to partner with the Montana Film Office or independent organizations to offer incentives or services to companies, writers, directors, and photographers who may be interested in filming/shooting in Montana.

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

1. This project will fulfill all goals/objectives within the marketing plan – if a project comes to fruition, images from our region will be in the forefront resulting in increased leisure, group, event, international, etc visitors.
2. Improve Billings’ position with the film industry by offering incentives in conjunction with the Montana Film Office.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

Recruitment and support of the film industry will be a secondary focus of the Billings CVB. Billings continues to receive small film projects as well as photo shoot opportunities. These opportunities will be cultivated and fostered. This regular effort supports all aspects of the marketing plan.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- **1.3:** Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts

**Detail pages attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Film

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
Film Incentives	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
Project Total	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Project Name: Research: Smith Travel Research (STR Report), empowerMINT  
Annual Subscription (FY 12-13)  
Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval  
Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary

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

**Smith Travel Research (STR Report):** Smith Travel Research produces a monthly STR Report. This is the hotel industry standard of benchmarking and provides useful data such as occupancy, demand, RevPar and supply. Billings would benchmark Yellowstone County with other competing destinations across the country of our choosing. This research will not only provide us with a benchmark for success in our sales efforts, but will be a destination management tool as we look at the quantity of rooms, etc. The CVB shares this monthly report with tourism partners, Big Sky Economic Development, media and other public entities monthly.

**empowerMINT Annual Subscription:** The Billings CVB plans to subscribe to empowerMINT – formerly known as the MINT Database. empowerMINT is a portal for meeting planners to search and compare multiple destinations – therefore keeping the Billings CVB competitive with other destinations (possibly larger and/or better known). A planner, in the initial stages of decision making, can be educated on the value of working with a DMO, find destinations quickly, be influenced by enticing offerings, and connect directly with the local CVB.

In today's meetings/convention business environment, this collaboratively powered initiative ensures that the overall planner experience of working with a CVB will be simple and direct. The service also allows us to query organizations to seek convention history and search available RFP's. Also, we will work with our local venues to post immediate specials that may entice meeting and event planners to choose Billings. empowerMINT will be a valuable tool to the Billings CVB's mission of booking meetings and conventions.

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

1. Book eight citywide conventions/meetings in Billings.
2. Generate 11,000 room nights for the lodging facilities of Billings.
3. Book a total of 27 groups (including citywide and sports) resulting in 21,000 room nights.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

This project supports the all aspects of the marketing plan: meetings and conventions, leisure, and sports recruitment. These tools also allow us to focus on value season figures, supporting our fourth objective.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1:** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

- **1.1:** Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.
- **1.2:** Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak season activities.
- **1.3:** Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts

**Detail page attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
Research

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
Smith Travel Research	\$6,500	\$0	\$6,500
empowerMINT	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
Project Total	\$11,500	\$0	\$11,500

Organization Name: Billings Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau  
 Project Name: Research: VIC; Toll Free Line (FY 12-13)  
 Application Completed By: Alex Tyson

Approval Requested:  
 Final  
 Preliminary

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

**VIC Toll Free Telephone Line:** Advertisements and our Vacation Guide contain a toll free phone number that rings into the Visitor Information Center. The number is intended only for visitor questions – not administration or convention recruitment. When dealing with large groups or rallies, the toll free VIC number is printed for general tourism information. Our VIC volunteers are trained to answer myriad tourism questions involving transportation, lodging, attractions and general information. The toll free number is a necessary and integral part of the operation of the VIC and provides a key visitor service.

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

1. This project reflects all the objectives set forth in the annual plan. We encourage leisure, groups, events, motor coach, and sports participants to utilize all the Billings Visitor Information Center has to offer.

**Identify the portions of your marketing plan, which support this project:**

All portions of the marketing plan support this project.

**How does this project support the Strategic Plan?**

**Goal 1;** Increase four-season tourism revenues state-wide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors

- **1.4:** Improve Montana's VIC system to extend visitor stays and expenditures.

**Detail pages attached:** Yes

Billings CVB  
VIC

	State Tourism Funds	Other Funds	Total
<b>Toll Free Line</b>	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
<b>Project Total</b>	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000