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Application

Instructions

Print to PDF will convert the application plus any PDF attachments into a single PDF file. **Release for Review** will change the status of the application to Under Review and move it on to the evaluation process. **Negotiation** will allow you to unlock one or more sections of the application and route the application back to the applicant for further editing. **Annotations** allow internal staff to add notes that are visible to internal staff only and possibly also reviewers if they have a special security privilege. The applicant cannot see these notes. **Versions** will display all component versions that were created as a result of the negotiation process. **Feedback** allows staff to enter feedback about the application to the applicant. The feedback text will appear at the bottom of the application and will be visible to anyone who has access to the application. **Withdraw** changes the status of the application to Withdrawn and removes the app from the evaluation process.

Application Details

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15254 - FY15 Region/CVB Marketing Plan - Final

16746 - FY15 Great Falls CVB Marketing Plan
DOC Office of Tourism

Status: Under Review

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Organization Information

Name:* Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau

Organization Type: Non-Profit Organization

Organization Website: www.guinemontana.com

Address:* 1106 9th St. S.

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Community & Brand Support

1. Describe your destination.

Describe your destination (who you are, who you wish to attract and why would they come) addressing your strengths, opportunities, and potential challenges. How does your destination align with Montana's brand pillars?

Identity of the Great Falls Convention and Visitors Bureau

Great Falls provides a dynamic collection of venues that promote the arts, history, and culture and reflect the Authentic Montana Experience. Great Falls is nestled near the Rocky Mountain Front with the majestic and historic Missouri and Sun Rivers running through the community, and is home to the Roe River, one of the shortest rivers in the world. Great Falls has the advantage of being central to both Glacier National Park and Yellowstone National Park and with the Great Falls International Airport providing low cost air service from many major cities, Great Falls is a gateway to both national parks and to the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Who we wish to attract and why they would come

A Great Falls brand report, done in 2012 by North Star Destination Strategies, identified our target audience as "adventurers with conviction". These adventurers clearly define geotourists as they seek unique experiences that give a richer travel memory. They are usually a global citizen, leave a small footprint, and engage in green activities. These geo-travelers enjoy hiking as the number one activity according to the branding report. Since Great Falls is near many premier hiking areas like the Rocky Mountain Front, the Bob Marshall Wilderness, and the Kings Hill Scenic Byway, the

geo-traveler has many outdoor hiking options. The Geo-Traveler also visits Giant Springs State Park, canoes and kayaks the Missouri River, bikes and hikes the River's Edge Trail system, and fishes and hunts. The Geo-traveler seeks an authentic experience both in the people and the place, and want to participate in the culture and history of a destination.

Other visitors, especially our Canadian friends to the north, enjoy shopping as a main activity (pg. 84 of the brand report). These travelers come for a long weekend since Canadian 3-day weekends are abundant, and also engage in outdoor recreation and visit museums or historic sites. The 24 hour Port of Entry from Canada at Sweetgrass is an easy access point for the Canadian visitor coming down Interstate 15.

A large group of visitors come to visit family and friends which is not surprising with Malmstrom AFB located here. Many military families visit our attractions, events and enjoy our outdoor activities.

Strengths, Opportunities and Potential Challenges

Many of our strengths are consistent with other communities such as a variety of cultural attractions, historical venues, parks and trails. However, we have some unique elements as well. The C.M. Russell Museum offers the most complete collection of Charles M. Russell art and memorabilia in the world.. Charles Marion Russell's original log art studio and the Russell home built in 1900 for \$800 are open to visitors year around. For one week each March, Great Falls becomes the "Western Art Capital of the World" as art buyers converge on the 15 or more art venues sprinkled about the city. Lewis and Clark stories and exploration bring visitors up close to the Great Falls of the Missouri River and the arduous portage of the expedition at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center. Over 55 miles of River's Edge Trail provide scenic viewing and access to outdoor adventure. A prime spot on the trail is Giant Springs State Park which boasts the largest number of visitors of all state parks as well as being the largest freshwater springs in the United States and having one of the shortest rivers, the Roe River.

Our central location in the corridor between Glacier National Park and Yellowstone National Park makes Great Falls a logical gateway to the parks. Montana's landmark scenic beauty can easily be reached in one day's drive from Great Falls. We are also situated in close proximity to the Rocky Mountain Front, the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, the Bob Marshall Wilderness, Lewis & Clark National Forest, Freezout Lake, Benton Lake Wildlife Refuge and the Great Falls of the Missouri.

The Canadian Border is within a 2 hour drive at a 24 hour port of entry, which makes Great Falls a natural shopping and recreational holiday for our neighbors to the north. Great Falls enjoys an influx of Canadian visitors using our non-stop flights, low air fares, and a variety of shopping opportunities.

Potential challenges have been identified as: lacking a large event facility or center, limited signage and wayfinding in the city, lower wages that attract and keep a quality workforce, lack of understanding of our tourism product in the community, more events and activities that extend into our shoulder seasons, and we lack passenger train service.

Great Falls Aligns with Montana's Three Brand Pillars

Great Falls is fortunate to be able to boast all three of Montana's Brand Pillars. Our beautiful location nestled next to the Missouri River with 4 scenic waterfalls and 57 ½ total miles of trail, makes "spectacular unspoiled nature" within walking distance of a city visitor. Giant Springs State Park, the most visited state park last year, is one of the largest fresh water springs in the United States. Families and visitors enjoy unspoiled nature at its finest as they picnic, hike and recreate in the park adjacent to the River's Edge Trail.

Though Great Falls may be in the mid-range of small towns, our downtown is charming with its tree-lined streets, its local retail merchants, and its emerging vibrant pubs and restaurants. We are a gateway to natural wonders found in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, the Rocky Mountain Front, the Missouri River Breaks and the Kings Hill Scenic Byway.

Breathtaking experiences by day on our trail and river, give way to relaxing hospitality by night in one of our many lodging properties that invite a traveler to savor their stay with fine dining such as the Kobe Steak House and the urban charm of the world-famous Sip 'N Dip lounge.

Optional: [Include attachments here](#)

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

Inspiration:

Building on the strong, iconic imagery that the Montana Office of Tourism presents in major US markets, the GFCVB has chosen new creative to "inspire" the visitor to explore Great Falls. We use a strong image such as Lewis and Clark history, fishing or canoeing our river, hiking or biking our trails along the scenic Missouri River. These images with the titles of "True Montana, True To Expectations" will appear in our print magazine media, our banner ads on digital media, and our social media postings.

Orientation:

After recognizing the unique offerings in our area the traveler will often search further for information and ask for our Great Falls Visitor Guide to be mailed to them or search our website www.genuinemontana.com to plan their routing. We consistently update our Visitor Guide with current information as well as providing interesting itineraries to peak their interest. Our Falls Map Guides give the visitor detailed information on the 5 waterfalls of the Missouri River as well as dam placement and viewing areas.

Facilitation:

The Great Falls Visitor Guide is a pocket guide filled with current information on activities, historic sites, arts and entertainment, museums, maps, sports, day trips, lodging, dining, and shopping. The guide lives on our website www.genuinemontana.com as well. The GFCVB produces this guide yearly to facilitate trip planning for the geo-traveler, as well as those planning to shop in our charming downtown or busy mall, recreate on our river or trail, or relax in our hotels and small coffee shops and open-air cafes. Our guide contains no advertising so the full trip planner is dedicated to encourage visitors to stop and experience all we have to offer. The Visitor Information Center serves as a complete one-stop shop for all maps and brochures as well as personal friendly service to encourage the traveler to stay in Great Falls longer and also to plan additional trips to our area. The GFCVB supports the staffing of the VIC each year.

Optional: Include attachments here.

3. Who is your market?

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

The Identity of the Great Falls Visitor, the demographic of our target market is that of the geotraveler. These travelers "come from a range of age and income groups, and they have a variety of interests when traveling, including sightseeing, nature tourism, indigenous and other cultural tourism, heritage tourism, agritourism and enjoying local cuisine." (taken from the MONTANA Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan 2013-2017 page 9). These geotravelers generally spend more to get the experiences that they value most. Another important market for the Great Falls area is our near neighbor, Canada. These travelers tend to come to Great Falls primarily for shopping or to pass through according to a brand study done by North Star Destination Strategies in 2012 (page 84). Though many of these visitors pass through our city we acknowledge that most will spend at least one night here.

One geographic component of our target markets is certainly Canada, mainly Southern Alberta. The geotraveler element of our marketing efforts seeks authenticity of place and the people that they encounter. We find many of these travelers come from larger cities that can easily access Montana through air or ground travel. Our target markets from these areas as indicated by our visitors that come through our VIC, consumer show responses, and success in online campaigns, are from California, Washington, Colorado, Minnesota, Arizona, Texas, Florida, Pennsylvania, Oregon, and Wisconsin.

The psychographic element in our marketing endeavor brings us to perhaps the most important piece of the marketing puzzle. Why does our targeted geotraveler want to visit our region? Great Falls enjoys a dramatic river landscape of unspoiled nature where mountains meet the plains. This landscape is perhaps the inspiration for the geotraveler to further investigate the stories that we have to tell about our history, culture, and recreation.

b. What are your emerging markets?

Our emerging markets are identified in several areas. We are currently expanding our marketing campaigns to reach into the Calgary area in Canada. Word of mouth, airport assessments of those travelers coming from Canada and successful campaigns of the last year have proven that visitors from this geographic area of Canada will travel further to access better airfare, and shopping alternatives. An extremely successful consumer show in Dallas Forth Worth and in Los Angeles this past year have shown these markets to be especially interested in our area as well as in visiting the national and state parks.

Another emerging market that we will consider this year in our marketing is Atlanta. The Great Falls Airport Authority is working to bring in a direct flight to Atlanta in 2015. We think this could be an opportunity to bring in a larger market from that area.

c. What research supports your target marketing?

According to the Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017, page 9, "the most likely visitor to travel to Montana is the 'geotraveler'." These travelers, as opposed to most tourists, seek out experiences that are memorable and unique to their trip. They are motivated by what makes one destination distinct from another, are global citizens and exhibit green behaviors. (According to a 2010 paper titled "Geo-Travelers And Travel Planning")

Canada, our close neighbor to the north, has been a large market for Great Falls. These visitors come for shopping (almost 40% of their travel to Great Falls is for this activity according to the Great Falls Brand study done by North Star Destination Strategies in 2012, page 84). Many of these Canadians are passing through to other destinations using our air service to other parts of the United States (pg 84, 31.03% for this purpose). We believe these travelers stay at least one night on each end of their travels. A visual assessment at our airport of Canadian license plates, as well as parking lots of shopping areas prove that many Canadians come to Great Falls for one or other of the above reasons.

Our Visitor Information Center Statistics for 2012-13 are as follows:

1. California	220
2. Washington	170
3. Colorado	105
4. Minnesota	99
5. Arizona	82
6. Texas	67
7. Florida	60
8. Pennsylvania	52
9. Oregon	46
10. Wisconsin	19

With this information, we targeted two Adventure in Travel Shows this year. One in Los Angeles, CA and one in Dallas, TX.

Optional: Include attachment here.

4. Overall Goals

Increase four-season tourism revenues through effective marketing and promotions and online presence. This will increase the level of awareness of the attractions and activities that Great Falls has to offer its visitors. The greatest opportunities for increasing revenue are in the first, second and fourth quarters, so we will be looking for ways to bring tourism and meetings and conventions here during the off-peak season.

Look for appropriate partnerships to continue to maximize our marketing dollars in order to: a. Continue the service of Frontier Airlines into Great Falls and seek to develop agreements with other air carriers for non-stop air service to Atlanta.

- b. Work to "brand" Great Falls as a gateway to both National Parks.
- c. Partner with the GFTBID to bring new meetings and conventions to Great Falls.

The GFCVB will continue to update our website www.genuinemontana.com using better marketing tools and partnerships. We will increase our use of social networking, such as Facebook, blogging, twitter, and other social media. We will work to make our site "responsive" to all mobile devices.

The GFCVB will arrange or partner on a minimum of one FAM trip highlighting a unique aspect of Great Falls.

Since images are increasingly important to our marketing endeavors, we will continue to expand and enhance our photo library of attractions, events, and activities.

We will continue to provide visitors with the most up-to-date information and material either online or in print at our Visitor Information Center.

Optional: Include attachments here.

5. Cooperative Opportunities

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

The GFCVB greatly appreciates the opportunity to partner with MTOT on a variety of projects. We are not able to participate in the more expensive marketing buys, but print media in a Montana sponsored article with additional copy is always a way to gain more top-of-mind awareness when our marketing dollars are limited. Digital buys that support the Montana Brand and offer us the additional impressions of our area as well as www.genuinemontana.com are another great way for the GFCVB to partner on projects.

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

We do partner with our region, Central Montana, on a one-page ad in the Central Montana Travel Planner which bring added interest to our region as a whole and to Great Falls in particular. We are also open to any partnership with our region on marketing buys, FAM trips, consumer shows, or other marketing opportunities.

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

In 2013 we participated in a TripAdvisor.com Online Co-op with MTOT that ran banner ads in Key feeder state with Montana content. We also partnered with a Wendt Digital Partnership in select geo-targeted areas of WA, ID, Portland, Minneapolis, Chicago, SLC, Denver, Phoenix and Alberta. Our banner ad placement has done well.

In the TripAdvisor.com MTOT Co-op we did one unit: Kayaker, 300 x 600, performed the best with .17% CTR. The overall CTR for all units and MTOT page units performed at .10%.

In the Wendt Digital Partnership-Geo-targeted, we did four ads, a biker, a city version, a kayaker, and family banner ads. Our 300x250 City performed the best with a .08% CTR which is at industry standard for tourism/travel banner placement. Denver and Washington State delivered the most clicks through the partnership placement.

In FY14 we are co-oping with MTOT on AdaraMedia, March-June, with banner ads targeted to travel related content. We are also doing TripAdvisor.com again, March -June. We have no data as of yet.

In years past we have been able to do some print co-op marketing with MTOT in National Geographic Traveler, which we feel is a good fit for us, but it is also an expensive market.

We definitely appreciate the ability to co-op with MTOT to expand and spread our marketing impact. MTOT has done an excellent job of promoting the spectacular unspoiled nature of our state and

anytime we can be a part of that larger message, we know our marketing is more targeted and produces more impact. We most often rely on our agency of record, Wendt, to advise us in our marketing expenditures. However, with the early publication of opportunities to partner with MTOT we would like to direct more of our dollars in supporting our co-op marketing when affordable.

Optional: Include attachments here.

Include pie chart here.

[Pie Chart budget FY15.xlsx](#)

Marketing Segment, Strategy & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Does research support this method?	Describe your method.	Supporting research/statistics	Provide a brief rationale.	Plan to measure success?	Marketing Method Evaluation	Estimated budget for each method.	Non bed tax funds?	Add'l Attchmnts
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	Yes	Our online/digital advertising will concentrate on several components. Display ads in a Yahoo Ad Network or on Google will target the geotraveler who will appreciate our outdoor activities. We have also consistently used tripadvisor.com (a MTOT co-op) for banner ads. Other digital ads will target areas in Canada that bring a large amount of visitors to our community for shopping, activities, and air travel. These ads are typically placed on Calgaryherald.com, canada.com, and goggle adnetwork. We will also use HTML eblasts targeting outdoor interests, fishing, hiking, and history/culture. Another component of our digital marketing are Facebook contests and content with sponsored newsfeed ads. These contests increase our social media visibility especially to our Canadian neighbors who keep abreast of activities in several areas of Montana. All online/digital advertising is recommended	We believe our digital media projects for FY13 were successful. We covered markets that were new to us, such as Atlanta and Chicago. We used google display ads in the geo-targeted markets of Denver, Minneapolis, Chicago, Kansas City, Dallas and Atlanta. From our Digital Reporting Analysis provided by Wendt Advertising, the CTR was between .09% and .10%. These rates in our Chicago and Atlanta market gave us indication that these were emerging markets for our continued marketing efforts. An eblast deployed to 77,717 travel enthusiasts with an outdoor interest profile gave an overall open rate of 22.14% which is excellent. Our online/digital marketing to Canada, specifically Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Calgary, gave the best CTRs on shopping banner ads. Wendt does market analysis each season when recommending our online/digital advertising and we rely heavily on their	Our rationale is taken from the increased use of online advertising and social media. Each year our spending for digital marketing is growing and we realize how important it is to keep up with digital technology and the way new generations find information.			\$22,500.00	No	

			and developed by our advertising agency of record, Wendt Advertising.	expertise and research in our target markets to guide our marketing decisions.						
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Yes	The GFCVB would like to develop a regularly scheduled e-news letter. We will highlight activities in the community, new events at local attractions, images that represent our unspoiled nature and charming downtown, as well as tourism information that would benefit the recipient of the newsletter.	In the white paper entitled "Geo-Travelers And Travel Planning", (an exploration of travel planning phrases and Montana Vacation Planner and Map from 2010), the road map for the geo-traveler has changed. The old way was manual, multiple steps, required assistance and the new way is digital, direct, and personal. A targeted enewsletter, direct to a personal email, will keep a top-of-mind awareness of our community.	The rationale for any electronic marketing is cost-effectiveness, direct contact and targeted marketing. We have been working to build a data base of emails from individuals asking to receive further information such as e-newsletters.			\$100.00	No	
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	Yes	Our strategy is to continually enhance our photo/video library with images that capture the unspoiled nature of our River's Edge Trail and the Missouri River, our charming and vibrant downtown, and the activities that bring the breathtaking experiences of the day into a relaxing and inviting end with memories that last. We realize the importance of stunning photographic images that tell our story. We have been actively collecting photos for our Visitor Guide to refresh and update it annually. We have had many complements on our Visitor Guide, the images in the guide, and the lack of advertising which provides room for detailed information for the visitor. In FY14 we refreshed our creative concept to better exemplify the Montana Brand. Our images take center stage with simple wording of "True Montana, True to Expectations". Using this refreshed	In the Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 on page 25 the plan encourages the partners to "identify specific locations throughout the state that epitomize the diverse array of spectacular unspoiled nature found in Montana". Then we are charged to "Iconify these selected locations-using their images in tourism marketing materials consistently and in a manner that evokes an emotional response"... Taking the lead of the MTOT with their stunning examples of photographic images in Montana, we will continue to seek these images out for our individual locations as well.	The rational is that these images speak for themselves. They are used across our marketing materials to represent our regions and towns evoking an emotional response, if we have marketed the image correctly. We simplify our message with meaningful photography because we can. We can offer the visitor these vistas of spectacular unspoiled nature, the charming towns, and relaxing hospitality.			\$1,000.00	No	

			concept, we will need iconic images to reflect the natural beauty we find in Great Falls. We will do at least one professional photography shoot to collect those images.							
Consumer	Print Advertising	Yes	<p>Our strategy for print advertising for FY15 will consist of the following projects:</p> <p>We will again do a full-color 1-page ad (inside front cover)of the Central Montana Travel Planner. We often get inquiries in our office that come from visitors who saw our ad in the CM Travel Planner. A presence in our regional guides gives a greater impact to our tourism product since visitors may plan longer stays or return visits by finding many interests in the Central Montana region.</p> <p>An early spring media magazine buy has worked well for us each year as we have consistently mailed out fulfillment information to over 7,000 inquiries. Most of the magazines we place in have a reader's service where we can track our inquiries per magazine. Wendt Advertising advises us each year of a print media plan that will work with our budget and works well with our targeted markets. We do appreciate MTOT co-ops each year for print advertising. When we can get a Montana presence with copy points and advertorial, our marketing dollars increase in value. The GFCVB will take advantage of as many of these co-ops with MTOT as possible within our budget.</p>	<p>Print advertising has long been a staple of tourism advertising. The baby-boomer generation, those born from 1946 to 1964, are still a vibrant, healthy, and maybe retired segment of the population. This group of people may be better equipped to travel at this point in their lives than the next segment of the population, the millennials who are roughly defined as people born from 1980 to 2004. The baby-boomers are embracing new technology at a slower pace than the millennials who can operate the gamut of emerging technology with ease. The baby boomers still rely on printed material for much of the inspiration phase of trip planning. To make sure we don't miss a large portion of the traveling public we use several methods of print promotions that we explained above.</p> <p>In this advertising we will "Target market segments with specific experiences that are particularly appealing to them." (Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan,</p>	<p>We are working with new creative in FY15 that will continue to support the Montana brand pillars and the Strategic Plan, 2013-2017. We will use images "that reflect not only the scenic beauty of the state or region, " such as the natural beauty of Giant Springs State Park, and the River's Edge Trail along the Great Falls of the Missouri, "but the experiences and activities that visitors will enjoy in that setting". We will also include images of outdoor activities like fishing, kayaking, and hiking.</p> <p>The text we will be using is "True Montana, True to Expectations". This text is simple, yet draws the reader into a personal relationship with the destination by having "expectations". We believe that this creative will reinforce the spectacular scenic beauty of Montana's iconic images that MTOT promotes in larger markets.</p>	<p>We will measure success with the number of inquiries generated from our marketing ads, and from calls that come into our office asking for more information. Our Canadian print campaign generates feedback within our community. The director of the Paris Gibson Square Museum stated that they can always tell when we have placed ads in Canada because the numbers of visitors to the museum spike.</p>	\$23,700.00	No		

			Another way that we will use print advertising is in the Canadian market. Newspaper advertising in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, and even Calgary has been an opportunity for us to market our shopping, activities, and outdoor recreation.	2013-2017)						
Consumer	Social Media	Yes	Social media is an effective marketing tool that the GFCVB is working to embrace more fully as we learn new techniques to help us survive in a hyperconnected, social media-powered world. We also realize that done correctly we have the power to influence large groups of travelers with a minimum of expense compared to other forms of advertising. This influence can take many forms and we have focused on Facebook contests to increase our number of "friends" and activity on our Facebook page. We also strive to push traffic to our website where more information is stored and shared. Our contests have a prize associated with the contest that promotes our community. Many "friends" on our site are Canadian	Tom Martin, a content management presenter at the 2014 Governor's Conference on Tourism, in his book <u>The Invisible Sale</u> , tells how to build a digitally powered marketing and sales system to better prospect, qualify and close leads. He presents some interesting insight into the science of social media. His premise is that we are still limited human beings with a limited amount of time, a limited amount of resources and a limited amount of capabilities. Within this framework we are expected, as productive sales and marketing people, to perform the impossible. He explains the science of the Dunbar Number (page 76). A psychologist named Robin Dunbar established this theory in 2013 in an article in Business Week magazine that in short says there is only a limited number of individuals with whom a stable inter-personal relationship can be maintained at one time, and that number is just under 150 people. We might think that social media gives us the ability to go far beyond that number, but a 2011 study says "although both Facebook and Twitter allow you to develop a network far in excess of Dunbar's Number, the average Twitter	Our rationale is to become more knowledgeable in the process of social media, all the while continuing to build relationships on the various social media platforms. Constant education and keeping abreast of new forums, new ideas, and new ways of marketing will enhance how we purpose to do social media. We appreciate the efforts of the MTOT in providing new information and education with respect to all social media. We may be able to keep up with the baby boomers at their level of	We will measure the success at this point in time by increasing friends on Facebook or increasing the number of visits to a dedicated landing page on our website. We will also follow the numbers of "engaged" Facebook friends who regularly interact with posts on		\$2,000.00	No	

		<p>and they look for activities and shopping that they can experience once they get to Great Falls. We geo-target Alberta and some southwest Saskatchewan Facebook users who are 25 years and older. We also use slide and copy ads placed within the targeted area on a cost per click basis.</p>	<p>user only interacts with between 100 and 200 people on a regular basis. And on Facebook, which allows up to 5,000 friends, the average person maintains contact with 190." This is where we need to build our social sales force. We need to learn to leverage our networks. Dunbar's Number gives us 150 social relationships, but each one of our relationships can also have 150 relationships, and so on and so forth. Our challenge is to build that social sales force. Even if only 1/2 of our 150, shares with only 1/2 half of their 150, the numbers can still be tremendous. This important aspect of social media research gives us a new way of envisioning our social media methods.</p>	<p>technology, but it will be increasingly difficult to keep ahead of the millennials.</p>	<p>Great Falls.</p>				
		<p>We have successfully produced our second Great Falls Visitor Guide in FY14. The pocket-sized Guide is 72 pages plus cover and a center gatefold map of the city. It is full-color printed on 70# gloss text with an 80# gloss cover. We will again publish this guide in FY15</p>	<p>Word of mouth has shown how effective this guide is. I have received several calls into the office from around the United States telling us how much they appreciate this guide, the information that it presents, and the photos that show much more of the personality of our city. Before we produced this comprehensive guide, we had a small 8 panel brochure. We sent that brochure out as a fulfillment piece for one year and received so many complaints about the lack of information and maps that we knew we needed to provide a piece that not only showcased our local scenic beauty, but also gave snippets of history, local stories, information on attractions, and listings on lodging, restaurants and</p>	<p>Our rationale is simple. To provide a visitor, or potential visitor, with the best possible information on recreation, attractions, and activities in a comprehensive brochure filled with colorful images of</p>	<p>Our success with this project comes from the many thanks we get for producing the guide. We produced 75,000 guides in our first issue, and we expected them to last for 2 years. We ran out of that printing with several months yet in our 2 year period. We now intend to publish the guide yearly producing 50,000 copies.</p>				

Consumer	Travel Guide	Yes	<p>with updates and refreshed text and photos. We have found that this pocket-size guided (4 x 9) works well for us. It contains detailed information about venues, attractions, recreation, activities, and places of interest in our city. We have elected to not include advertising in our guide which has enhanced its appeal to the traveler.</p>	<p>retail.</p> <p>I personally delivered boxes of our FY14 guides locally to museums, attractions, and local lodging properties and the response from the front line people was overwhelmingly positive. They may not have known who actually published the guide but I heard reactions like "this is my favorite guide", "this is all I use", "wow, I love this guide", "this is the one that visitors love". Our VIC uses these guides extensively to point visitors to local attractions complete with a map for directions.</p> <p>We have followed the recommendations in the Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 for printed materials and we also believe that advertising takes up valuable space in the guide that can better serve our visitors with local information.</p>	<p>our unspoiled nature, our charming town, and relaxing hospitality. We definitely believe that this brochure entices the traveler to stay longer or to revisit our area in the future once they discover the unique experiences that we offer.</p>	<p>We will refresh the guide each year with new photography and up to date information. This has been a very successful marketing project for our city and draws the appreciation of locals since they love to send our guides to friends and family who might visit. Benefis Health System loves to send this guide to prospective medical personnel who may relocate in our community.</p>	\$32,900.00	No	
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	Yes	<p>The GFCVB has had several years of successful travel/trade shows. We have exhibited in shows in Chicago, Denver, Washington, California and Texas. We have found that partnering with Central Montana on these shows gives us an expanded audience and we are better able to take our product to more areas than if we were to finance these shows alone.</p> <p>We will again plan to do two shows this year. We have not yet determined where those travel shows will be. Several markets have shown great success, especially in California, Denver and Texas. We will explore other market</p>	<p>The Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 (page 56) states that "Montana's brand research has shown that visitors are attracted by the adventurous aspects of travel in Montana, yet this can be outweighed by the perception of remoteness and the perceived lack of 'comfort', which can make Montana seem like a risky destination choice." What better way to dispell this erroneous perception than to have personal contact with our potential visitors, give them positive mental pictures of our state and local communitites, and assure them that we have such things as fine dining,</p>	<p>We have worked consistently as a community to increase our air travel options as well as lower airfare prices. We built a community funding program to entice Frontier Airlines to bring a non-stop flight from Denver to Great Falls. We are working to bring a non-stop flight from Atlanta in a year or two. Each of these new direct flight options bring emerging markets to Great Falls and Montana. We look to these markets when planning our travel shows to increase the awareness of our state and city to potential visitors. This</p>	<p>We will measure success at our travel/trade shows by the level of activity that the show produces and also the quality of leads that are generated at the show. It is usually very easy to tell if an attendee is truely interested in our destination or if they are just wandering by. We work diligently to</p>	\$5,500.00	No	

			<p>opportunities if we see emerging markets that show great potential.</p> <p>We distribute our Great Falls Visitor Guide, as well as a Falls of the Missouri brochure that shows the portage of Lewis and Clark around the 5 falls of the Missouri. We also distribute Montana maps, Get Lost stickers, and Montana inspiration pieces if available.</p>	<p>fine arts, cultural events, and a multitude of educational options, as well as a colorful and vibrant history that gives way to unexcelled travel experiences. We are the ambassadors to a traveling public when we attend these travel/trade shows and as such we can reinforce the brand pillars of Montana as well as our hospitality.</p>	<p>is one reason that Denver has become a good travel show destination for us. California has always been a great source for vacationers as it is usually first or second on our list of visitors at our VIC.</p>	<p>engage attendees in conversation about our state and local attractions to increase awareness of what Montana has to offer a visitor.</p>				
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	Yes	<p>Up until FY15 our website, www.guinemontana.com has been updated as a community portal through the staff at the airport. We had our site designed 2 years ago by a graduate student at the University of Great Falls. He did our updates, landing pages, and any changes that needed to be made for a small fee. This student has since graduated and moved on. The staff at the airport was able to make simple changes with our customer management system. However, we have found recently that we will need to hire a web firm to take our website to the next level. We are currently talking with some prospects but our major concern is making our website "responsive". This will make it user friendly on mobile devices, tablets, and notebooks. We will continue to search for a professional who is well versed in tourism to bring more marketing ideas to the table and enhance our current site.</p>	<p>The necessity of a strong, well-planned, informative website is evident in any discussion on today's travel needs. A study presented by MTOT, updated 2011, entitled "The usage of Social Media and Mobile Technology" gave some important insight as to how important technology was to the geotraveler. Among other uses "70% have smartphones", "Internet has the highest media usage among the geotraveler-averaging 4.2 hours daily", "nearly 65% have accessed a social network site and Social networking is booming-and is a great place for geotravelers to exchange and share".</p> <p>ITRR reported (Q4, 2009 Nonresident Traveler Satisfaction & Information Sources Used, October 2010) "More than 50% of nonresident travelers said that internet search engines were their most useful source of information prior to visiting Montana." And we can be fairly sure that these numbers grow daily.</p>	<p>Our rationale will be to continue to build content on our website, www.guinemontana.com, that will encourage visits to our site, and draw visitors to our destination. We will build an image library on the site as well as itineraries for the traveler who could easily build them into his visit. We would like to integrate a blog into our site and increase our use of blogging and social media to drive traffic to our website. Our challenge is to provide excellent information and service to our web traffic in an ever-changing technological environment at a cost that is affordable and practical.</p>	<p>Success will be measured in Google analytics as to traffic on the site. We will also need to monitor published findings from other resources to keep abreast of new opportunities and insights to better manage our site and its relevancy to the geotraveler.</p>		\$9,941.00	No	
				Rapid City, S.D. has actively						

Group Marketing	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	Yes	The GFCVB would like to develop a base of contact information for groups, meetings and convention planners, that would come to Montana for small market meetings. We believe that we can better target a marketing campaign to these groups by beginning a successful newsletter or e-blast that would bring awareness of our meeting opportunities to these planners.	sought new meetings and convention business by updating its venues and widely advertising new facilities and community parks. We believe that we can attract similar groups and meetings if we begin to do targeted advertising. A recent report in Small Market Meetings magazine, (pg 4, Hospitality Company Surveys Meetings Industry) stated that 43.4 % of meeting planners rated location as the top priority in determining a meeting instead of rates. "In addition, planners will also seek unique locations where there is an opportunity to link corporate social responsibility with team-building activities to benefit not only the meeting group but also the community in which the meeting takes place." This is an opportunity for us to reach beyond the obvious needs of meeting planners to the creative ways that we can market our area.	Our rationale is to build upon successes and not to move forward more quickly than we can handle with a limited staff. If we can manage to increase top-of-mind awareness in small market meetings with strategically targeted enews letters and eblasts, then we can begin to build relationships with planners.	Success will be measured in building a one-on-one relationship with planners that use the Western United States and plan small market meetings that would fit our venue size. We will then be able to encourage planners to locate meetings and conventions in our community.	\$700.00	No		
Marketing Support	Administration	Yes	Our strategy in administration is to keep our costs to a minimum in order to allocate more funding to market our community. However, administration is tasked with the oversight of the promotion and tourism development in our communities to generate an increasing level of bed tax collections as well as keeping all projects and funding compliant with MTOT Regulations and Procedures. Our 20% allotment to administration is appreciated and used well.	Research to support this segment might suggest that the GFCVB has not had a fine or audit abnormality for the last five years.	The rationale is to continue to improve upon our current administration load to streamline our operations to free more time for current social application demands.	Our success would be shown by enabling more social media to be taken on by our existing staff.	\$28,500.00	No		
			The method for this marketing segment in great							

Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	Yes	<p>part is accomplished by our bulk contractor, Printing Center, located in Great Falls MT. We have used this contractor since 2013 to tab and address our pocket-sized Great Falls Visitor Guide for \$0.09 each. Most of the year we are able to utilize bulk mailings for our guides.</p> <p>Other shipping consists of boxes of our Visitor Guides that are requested by Visitor Information Centers where our Certified Folder Distribution is not scheduled. We try as much as possible to deliver these guides with members or others who are traveling in proximity to those requesting boxes of our Great Falls Visitor Guide.</p> <p>We have also needed to send boxes of guides to Consumer Shows where we display them at our travel booth. We try to have a close estimate of the number of guides that we might need at these shows, and as of yet we have not had to dispose of any unused guides at the shows.</p>	<p>In FY14 Printing Center mailed out 7,218 guides in the United States in response to our print media buys most of which had a reader's service available to readers of the magazines. Other inquiries for our Visitor Guides come into our office through our website and through phone calls direct to our GFCVB office. These fulfillment pieces are also mailed out by Printing Center to garner a better bulk mailing rate for our inquiries.</p> <p>In FY14 we also mailed out 56 Great Falls Visitor Guides to Foreign countries, mostly Canada. However, we try as much as possible to encourage those possible visitors to access our website, www.guinemontana.com where our Visitor Guide is also available and may be downloaded if necessary. This is a savings on postal fees and encourages those interested to use our website.</p>	<p>Our rationale is to create a savings on the price of mailings by using bulk mail as much as possible and to encourage international inquiries to find their information and a downloadable version of our Visitor Guide on our website. We do believe that our Visitor Guide is an invaluable resource to travelers in the Orientation and Facilitation portion of their travel planning and is an important tool to have in hand for a potential visitor.</p>	<p>Our success is measured in the number of Visitor Guides that are mailed out without guides being returned or damaged. In FY14 only a handful of guides came back to us. After a mailing has gone out we receive calls into our office thanking us for sending the guide and also telling us how profitable it is with helpful images and detailed information.</p>	\$3,850.00	No
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	Yes	<p>Our Opportunity Marketing method is to maintain a small amount of funds that would be available for an unknown opportunity in the community for convention or event subsidies or to implement marketing methods that are unplanned at the time of the marketing plan for FY15.</p>	<p>Up to 10% of our total budget may be used for Opportunity Marketing, however, we historically have only needed up to \$1000 for this line item.</p>	<p>Our rational would be to stay within the mission statement and goals of our organization's marketing plan.</p>	<p>Our success would be measured on the individual project.</p>	\$1,000.00	No
				The GFCVB has had a	The rationale behind supporting the attendance at the meetings is to enhance	The measure of the success of these meetings is found in the reporting of		

Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	Yes	The method in this case is an invaluable education of the participants.	member in attendance at all TAC meetings, Governor's Conference, and Region/CVB meetings on a continual basis.	the ability of any region or CVB to stay compliant with the regulations and to have a greater understanding of what MTOT is undertaking on behalf of the tourism segments in Montana.	each individual attendee to their boards and staff and with the follow-through and implementation of plans and ideas presented at the meetings.		\$1,200.00	No	
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	Yes	The method for a Joint Venture remains open depending on the type of opportunity that arises to partner with another nonprofit tourism-related organization.	All supporting research will be used to keep the project within the scope of work and mission of the GFCVB.	Partnering with other nonprofit tourism-related organizations will help to spread our tourism dollars further and continue to produce good-will and sharing between organizations.	A plan to measure success will be identified once a project is developed.		\$500.00	No	
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	Yes	The GFCVB has for several years invested \$16,000 in staffing support for the Great Falls Visitor Information Center. The City of Great Falls has been the other part of the support network, providing a modern building in a scenic park location overlooking the city of Great Falls. The GFCVB feels that the VIC is an integral part of a thriving tourism community. Our VIC is operational year-round and is only closed on Christmas and Thanksgiving. It is staffed by one or two part-time employees and a bevy of select volunteers that are seldom absent when scheduled. At the time of this marketing plan changes are taking place for our	I will turn to the Vision of a Strong Tourism Industry as reported in the Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan 2013-2017, on page 12. In this section "The TAC's goal for strengthening Montanan's tourism marketing is effectively pooling resources and helping communities work together as part of the overall Montana Brand" The partners want to make the best "product" possible to bring increased awareness to visitors and community members of the Montana Brand. We will strive to make our VIC a strong marketing tool for local attractions and activities to	Our rationale for committing to the staffing of the VIC is to continue to support the Center, and educate leaders of the community about the importance of tourism in the survival and success of our small businesses and our community. We plan to bring a better understanding of the importance of the lodging facility use tax and the necessity of preserving it for	Success will be measured by an increase in activity at the VIC both with increased visitation from out-of-state visitors, and from local friends and families who will expand our tourism message. We will further measure our success by attending state funded VIC training to ensure that we are partnering with MTOT to image the Montana brand, bring technology used at the center up-to-date, and give visitors a consistent Montana message. We will institute a training program		\$16,000.00	No	

			<p>VIC. A group of tourism partners, to include the GFCVB, have pledged funding for the Center since the City of Great Falls would like those who have tourism expertise to carry on the operation of the VIC. We are excited for the opportunity to produce a vibrant tourism product for the community. Other methods of operation are yet to be determined.</p>	<p>entice travelers who are already here to stay and enjoy our area and Montana for a longer period of time or to return for further travel experiences. We also plan to bring respect to the Montana Tourism Brand and educate our community to the benefits of tourism in our community and the state.</p>	<p>the continued success of our community.</p>	<p>for the volunteers that will show them our appreciation for a job well done, and encourage them to become ambassadors for our 3 brand pillars. The Montana Strategic Plan is a tremendous guide book for increasing tourism awareness, planning for marketing success, and developing a vibrant tourism community.</p>				
Publicity	Fam Trips	Yes	<p>The GFCVB would like to initiate 1-2 FAM trips in FY15. These FAM trips would be to Great Falls and the immediate area. We have participated in FAM trips with MTOT and Central Montana, however, we would like to do at least one that is dedicated to a particular interest area in our city. Many writers want a hook, or niche market idea that will be of interest to travelers and we believe that Great Falls has many of those. We will develop a rapport with writers known to be interested in western history, unique travel experiences, outdoor recreation, or special products in our community. We will try build interest in a 2-3 night FAM that will explore a creative theme.</p>	<p>FAM trips have been a successful way for the MTOT to increase awareness of our state and all it has to offer. Several years ago we hosted several motorcycle riders from Italy for a day and night in partnership with MTOT and we felt it was a successful PR project since a multi-page article appeared in an Italian Motorcycle Magazine. We have also partnered with Central Montana on portions of FAM trips that pertained to Great Falls. If we are able to interest writers, bloggers, or travel influencers in one or more of our events or activities, and they submit one or more articles, our effort will be worth while.</p>	<p>The Montana Tourism & Recreation Strategic Plan, 2013-2017 (page 60) reports "Niche activities are strong motivators for their audiences and, while these audiences may be individually small, they can contribute significantly to overall tourism numbers." We believe that some of our strengths, such as agriculture and pulse crops, location along a river that contributed in great part to Western exploration and history, Giant Springs State Park with its largest freshwater spring and shortest river, and numerous recognized entertainment venues, would attract writers, bloggers, and internet influencers.</p>	<p>Success will be measured in the amount of PR that would be published either in magazines, e newsletters, niche market writings, or other means of widely used communication.</p>		\$1,000.00	No	
									\$150,391.00	

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Professional Development	\$0.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$100.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$22,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$23,700.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Social Media	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel Guide	\$32,900.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$5,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$9,941.00	\$0.00
		\$97,641.00	\$0.00
Group Marketing	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$700.00	\$0.00
		\$700.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,200.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	VIC Funding/Staffing/Signage	\$16,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$28,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing	\$3,850.00	\$0.00
		\$51,050.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Fam Trips	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
		\$1,000.00	\$0.00
		\$150,391.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Region/CVB Required Documents

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