



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE OFFICE OF TOURISM

TOURISM MARKETING PLAN
JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012

JUNE 7, 2011

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INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

The Montana Office of Tourism has developed the July 2011 – June 2012 Tourism Marketing Plan keeping in mind its mission statement, the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* and the Montana brand platform.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Fiscal Year 2012 Tourism Marketing Plan reflects the Montana Office of Tourism's mission to strengthen Montana's economy through the promotion of the state as a vacation destination. As noted in the mission statement: by maximizing the combined talents and abilities of its staff, and with guidance from the Governor's Tourism Advisory Council, the Montana Office of Tourism strives to promote a quality experience to visitors while encouraging preservation of Montana's environment and quality of life.

MONTANA TOURISM & RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2012

It's important to note that a large portion of the Montana Office of Tourism's assigned actions fall under Goal One of the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012*. Goal One is to "increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors."

That being said, the Montana Office of Tourism has actionable responsibilities for each of the ten goals outlined in the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* and is continuing to take and track specific actions according to that plan, as noted in the individual program marketing plans in this document.

MONTANA BRAND PLATFORM

Through the brand development process, the Montana Office of Tourism is working to unite the efforts of the various entities marketing the state with a more cohesive voice based on the following brand platform:

- More spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48.
- Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders.
- Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.

OVERVIEW OF THE TOURISM MARKETING PLAN

Based on the aforementioned responsibilities with its focus on consumer-facing marketing from both an organizational and budgetary outlook, the Montana Office of Tourism has developed three division goals and corresponding objectives for July 2011 through June 2012. In addition, the Montana Office of Tourism has specified four strategic priorities that support these three division goals and objectives.

TARGET AUDIENCE: THE GEOTRAVELER

Based upon the Montana brand attributes, the target audience for visiting the state has been identified as the Geotraveler, a segment that travels more, spends more and is more influential than the average traveler. This group represents more than 45 million U.S. and western Canadian adults.

National Geographic defines geotourism as: *Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of the place being visited including its environment, culture, heritage, landmarks and the well-being of its residents.*

- Geotravelers focus on the experience of the destination – not on checking off a list of must-see attractions. You won't see Geotravelers cutting off a conversation with a local because they're late for the theme park.
- Geotravelers seek the authenticity of people and places. This is something that every corner of Montana is steeped in. These travelers want to discover experiences that can't be found anywhere else. They want to sit in the stands at a small-town rodeo and buy fresh huckleberries from a local farmer at the farmers market. That's why they came here.
- Geotravelers have multi-faceted interests and will take in a number of attractions during a vacation so long as they are authentic to the culture they are visiting. Their experiences often include signature moments – from hiking Logan Pass to the equally memorable museum and corner café in Glasgow. (And by the way, they loved that scenic drive, too.)

THE GEOTRAVELERS' CHOICE OF TRAVEL DESTINATION IS AFFECTED BY:

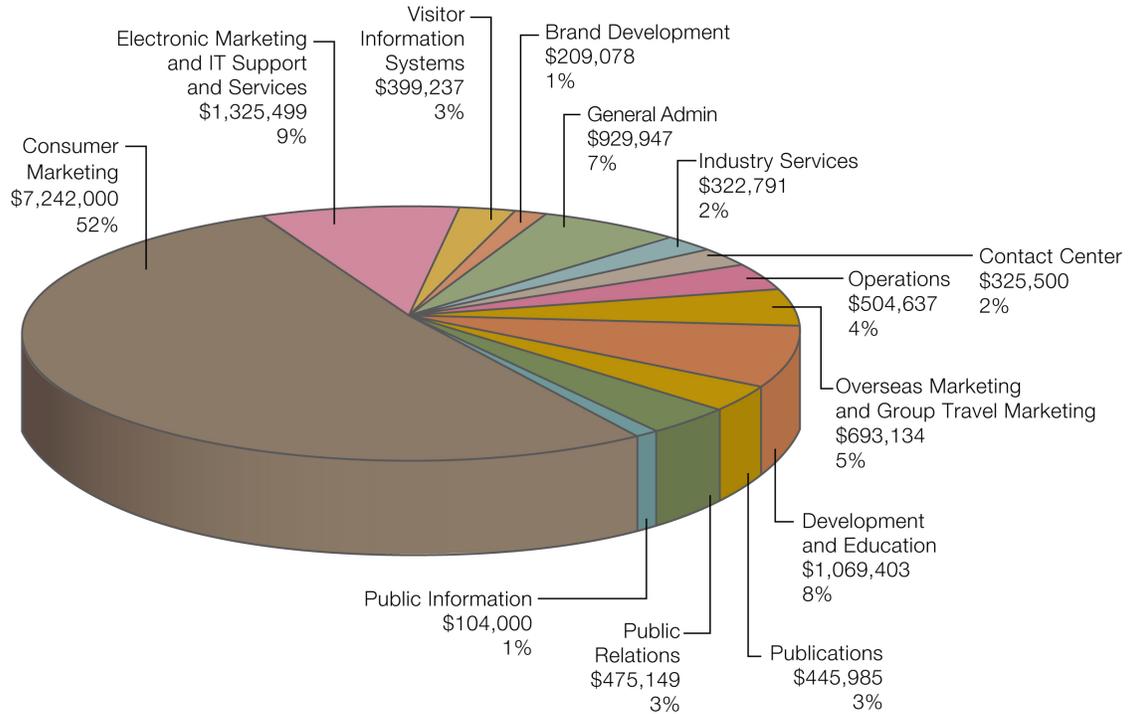
- Their desire to customize their experiences and create their own personal connections when traveling.
- An emphasis on making the most of every moment due to the lack of time in their day-to-day lives.
- The pervasive nature of technology in planning their travels and exploring their destinations before they arrive.
- An interest in immersing themselves in the culture.
- The ability to get off the beaten path.
- The capacity to get out of their comfort zone.
- Their desire to live on a healthy planet.

PSYCHOGRAPHICALLY & DEMOGRAPHICALLY, GEOTRAVELERS:

- Are well educated.
- Are environmentally aware.
- Have a strong preference for cultural and social aspects of travel.
- Are socially conscious.
- Travel frequently (minimum of three trips per year).
- Spend a disproportionate amount of their income on travel compared to other travelers.
- Come from various age groups and income ranges.

MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM FY12 BUDGET OVERVIEW

The Montana Office of Tourism FY12 budget is \$14,046,360. Funding for this office is through a statutory appropriation of a portion of the 4% lodging facilities use tax. It should be noted that no additional funding for this office comes from Montana's general fund. The dollar amount and percentage of overall budget for each of the programs are shown below.



MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

In its approach to the Fiscal Year 2012 Tourism Marketing Plan, the Montana Office of Tourism has created an organizational structure that groups the individual programs into the following four categories: business-to-consumer; business-to-travel trade; product/brand development and education; and operations and industry services.

1. BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER

TARGET AUDIENCE: The Geotraveler/vacationing consumer.

PROGRAMS INCLUDE: Consumer Marketing, Electronic Marketing, Public Relations, Publications and Visitor Information Systems.

Consumer-facing programs that focus on reaching and attracting the individual traveler to Montana.

2. BUSINESS-TO-TRAVEL TRADE

TARGET AUDIENCE: Group tour operators and international booking agencies.

PROGRAMS INCLUDE: Overseas Marketing, Group Travel Marketing.

Business-facing and niche programs that conduct outreach to businesses and individuals who plan group travel; also includes international marketing.

3. PRODUCT/BRAND DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

TARGET AUDIENCE: The tourism industry, including the Montana Office of Tourism, with its focus being product and brand development to ensure that Montana is delivering on its brand promise.

PROGRAMS INCLUDE: Brand Development, Tourism Development and Education, Visitor Information Systems (Special Events Grant Program), Public Information.

Internal programs that educate stakeholders about the brand, support stakeholder marketing and development efforts and identify product attributes, in coordination with tourism partners, that the target consumer desires.

4. OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES

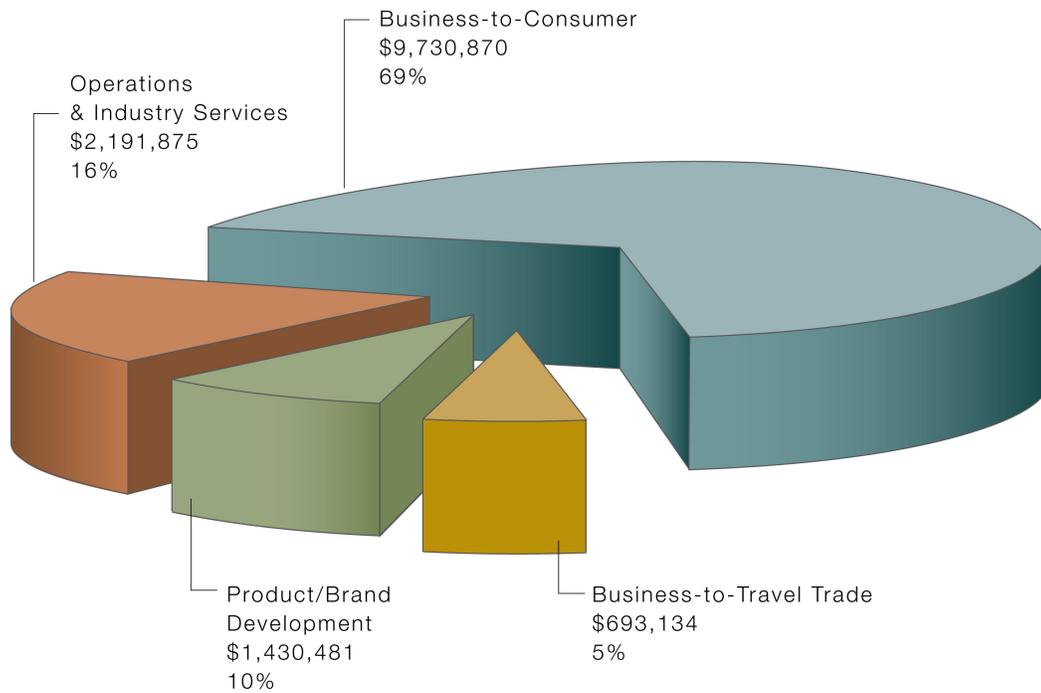
TARGET: The Montana Office of Tourism and the internal tourism constituency: the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC), the Tourism Regions, Convention and Visitors Bureaus (CVBs), private businesses and other governmental agencies.

PROGRAMS INCLUDE: Operations and Industry Services, Contact Center, IT Support and Services, Public Information, General Administration

Internal operation programs that collect and distribute operational information that keep all parties communicating and in-sync; a support function to the other three categories and tourism stakeholders.

MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM ORGANIZATIONAL FY12 BUDGET OVERVIEW

The dollar amount and percentage of overall budget for each of the organization's four categories are shown below.



MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The Montana Office of Tourism has outlined the following three division goals and corresponding objectives for July 2011 through June 2012.

DIVISION GOAL 1

INCREASE AWARENESS OF THE BRAND AMONG THE TARGET AUDIENCE

- OBJECTIVE 1: Increase the target audience's awareness of the brand by 3 percentage points by June 2012*.

DIVISION GOAL 2

MOVE MONTANA INTO THE TARGET AUDIENCE'S CONSIDERATION SET

- OBJECTIVE 2: Increase the target audience's intent to travel to Montana by 2 percentage points by June 2012**.

DIVISION GOAL 3

SUPPORT MONTANA TOURISM ENTITIES IN INCREASING THEIR REVENUES

- OBJECTIVE 3: Support the return of annual, non-resident expenditures in 2012 to the 2005 level of \$3.087 billion.

**Between May 2009 and May 2010, brand awareness was increased by 4 percentage points, from 11% to 15%.*

***Between May 2009 and May 2010, intent to travel to Montana was increased by 10 percentage points, from 13% to 23%.*

JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012 TOURISM MARKETING PLAN PRIORITIES

The Montana Office of Tourism has specified the following four strategic priorities for July 2011 through June 2012. The first three priorities support the division goals and objectives, and the fourth priority ensures that the goals and objectives can be measured and tracked. These priorities align with the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* as outlined below and are referenced throughout the program marketing plans.

DIVISION PRIORITY 1 (P1):

CONSUMER: Continue to develop and implement a comprehensive, four-season and integrated consumer-facing marketing campaign that attracts the target audience to Montana.

RATIONALE: Stay focused on the five-year Strategic Plan and the core Geotraveler target.

Supports Goal One of the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

DIVISION PRIORITY 2 (P2):

CONSUMER/INTERACTIVE: Create an integrated strategy for interactive media that incorporates social networking opportunities and resonates with the target audience.

RATIONALE: The Geotraveler relies heavily on online resources for researching travel.

Supports Goal One of the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

DIVISION PRIORITY 3 (P3):

PRODUCT IDENTIFICATION: Help identify the unique, and perhaps lesser-known, attributes of the Montana brand and promote those attributes including but not limited to: tribal communities, off-the-beaten path areas (e.g., Montana's High Plains), arts and culture and other Geotraveler-centric experiences; also help highlight shoulder-season opportunities.

RATIONALE: Geotravelers are interested in the culture and sense of place of the area that they visit.

Supports Goal Four of the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

DIVISION PRIORITY 4 (P4):

OPERATIONS/KPIs (KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS): Develop and implement necessary measurement tools and tracking system.

RATIONALE: Relevant tools will help determine benchmarks and measure success of the July 2011 – June 2012 Tourism Marketing Plan.

Supports Goal One of the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012 TOURISM MARKETING PLAN OVERVIEW



DIVISION PRIORITY 1 (P1):

Consumer: Continue to develop and implement a comprehensive, four-season and integrated consumer-facing marketing campaign that attracts the target audience to Montana.

DIVISION PRIORITY 2 (P2):

Consumer/Interactive: Create an integrated strategy for interactive media that incorporates social networking opportunities and resonates with the target audience.

DIVISION PRIORITY 3 (P3):

Product Identification: Help identify the unique, and perhaps lesser-known, attributes of the Montana brand and promote those attributes.

DIVISION PRIORITY 4 (P4):

Operations/KPI (Key Performance Indicators): Develop and implement necessary measurement tools and tracking system.

MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM PROGRAM MARKETING PLANS

The following section provides a complete marketing plan for each of the Montana Office of Tourism programs. Each plan follows this format:

OVERVIEW

Provides an overview of the current program.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT

Outlines the goals and actions from the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* that this program supports.

FY12 BUDGET

Defines the dollar amount of the budget for each individual program as well as the percentage as it relates to the total Montana Office of Tourism FY12 budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012

Are specific and measurable with a definite purpose in mind.

STRATEGIES

Are the big-picture plan of what the program is going to do from July 2011 through June 2012 to achieve the division goals and program objectives.

ACTIONS

Are the individual actions/projects that will be put in place to support the strategies; each action also includes a timeline and what other programs support the action (as appropriate).

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Outlines the public-public and/or public-private partnership opportunities that each program is providing in the fiscal year.

CALENDAR

Highlights the major events that are relevant to the program throughout the fiscal year.

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER: CONSUMER MARKETING

OVERVIEW:

The Consumer Marketing program is responsible for promoting the state to first-time and return visitors as a travel destination to domestic travelers, ensuring that the significant economic benefit from out-of-state visitors continues to grow. The program develops marketing campaigns and promotions that clearly communicate the state's brand and the benefits of a unique travel experience in Montana. Marketing efforts are designed to increase awareness of Montana, increase travel intention from our target audience and increase the number of trips to Montana.

From July 2011 through June 2012, one of the division's top four priorities is to create a comprehensive, four-season and integrated consumer-facing marketing campaign that attracts the target audience to Montana. Consumer Marketing will work with other consumer-facing programs including Electronic Marketing, Public Relations and Publications to address this priority.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.1 – Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans and track/report results.
- Action 1.3 – Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

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

GOAL 10: Build an effective "team" to implement the Strategic Plan and report results.

- Action 10.5 – Obtain strategic research to inform tourism marketing, development and policy decisions.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Consumer Marketing is \$7,242,000, representing approximately 52% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Increase the target audience's awareness of the brand by 3 percentage points over the previous year (increase of 4 percentage points in previous year) by July 2012.
- Increase the target audience's intent to travel to Montana by 2 percentage points over the previous year (increase of 10 percentage points in previous year) by July 2012.
- Increase the impact of industry marketing efforts by providing coordinated opportunities that leverage outside dollars, extending the Montana Office of Tourism media budget by 10% by July 2012.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Implement an integrated, first-time visitor brand awareness campaign focusing on key travel planning months to increase target audience's awareness of Montana as a travel destination. Create comprehensive campaign analytics to monitor and measure the campaign. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1, P2 and P4)
- b. Implement an integrated, return-visitor campaign to attract regional out-of-state travelers to Montana and keep Montana residents traveling within the state. Create comprehensive campaign analytics to monitor and measure the campaign. **Division Goal: 2.** (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)
- c. Develop a marketing program designed to convert first-time visitors to repeat visitors, pushing shoulder season visitation and lesser-traveled corridors and regions of the state. **Division Goals: 1 and 2.** (Supports P1, P2, P3, P4)
- d. Develop an integrated, interactive strategy in conjunction with other consumer-facing programs that incorporates consumer marketing campaigns and programs with the Montana Office of Tourism's ongoing digital presence and provides the target audience with information needed to include Montana in their travel consideration set. **Division Goals: 1 and 2.** (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)
- e. Develop a program to better coordinate and leverage the consumer marketing efforts of other Montana tourism entities to increase brand awareness, reinforce brand attributes, and provide well-targeted, appropriately positioned offers to consumers. **Division Goals: 1, 2, and 3.** (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Create a comprehensive, unique and measureable 18-month first-time visitor brand marketing plan in coordination with the marketing and media agency partners. The plan will promote the brand attributes to the target audience differentiating Montana from its competitors and building brand awareness. *Also supports Strategy D.* **Timeline:** Starts in FY11; continues through August 2011. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR, PUB, INTL, GRP, VIS, ADMIN and IS. (Supports P1, P2 and P4)
- Conduct planning meeting with marketing and media partners.
- Promote all seasons in year-round national brand campaign.
- Continue to augment national brand campaign with feeder market campaigns during key travel planning months, pushing warm season travel in spring and winter travel push in fall.
- Create a measurement plan that includes conducting primary research (e.g. awareness research studies, web analytics) and utilizing secondary data (e.g. ITRR, Smith Travel, tax revenue reports) to monitor target audience trends and measure campaign results.
- Integrate a digital communications strategy for first-time visitors, including mechanisms to gather/grow contact information through campaigns and communicate via email with audience.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Create a comprehensive, unique and measureable 18-month return-visitor marketing plan in coordination with the marketing and media agency partners. The plan will promote the brand's deeper story, specifically communicating Montana experiences throughout the year, to the target audience differentiating Montana from its competitors and building intent to travel. *Also supports Strategies A through D.* **Timeline:** Starts in FY11; continues through August 2011. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR, PUB, INTL, GRP, VIS, ADMIN and IS. (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)
- Conduct planning meeting with marketing and media partners.
- Expand regional feeder markets with campaigns like Montana's High Plains and maintain in-state presence with campaigns like Get Lost (in Montana).

- Create measurement plan that includes conducting primary research (e.g. contracted research, web analytics) and utilizing secondary data (e.g. ITRR) to monitor visitor interests, planning and trip behavior, identifying priority areas and emerging opportunities for campaigns as well as measuring campaign results.
- Communicate specific experiences travelers could have that take place throughout the year, including shoulder seasons.
- Communicate specific places travelers could go throughout the state, including lesser-traveled corridors and areas of the state.
- Integrate a digital communications strategy for return visitors, including mechanisms to gather/grow contact information through campaigns and communicate via email with audience.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Develop a marketing program designed to convert first-time visitors to repeat visitors, pushing shoulder season visitation and lesser-traveled corridors and regions of the state. **Timeline:** Start July 2011. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR, PUB, INTL, GRP, VIS, ADMIN and IS. (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)
- Identify and develop existing and new CRM technologies to segment, target and customize marketing efforts.
- Develop content on non-park regions and lesser-traveled corridors.
- Identify on-the-ground partnerships to cross-sell seasons and other parts of the state.
- Develop a measurement plan that tracks effectiveness of strategy in converting repeat visitors to other parts of the state.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY D:

- Collaborate with E-Marketing, Publications and Public Relations to develop, launch and track an integrated interactive marketing program. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR and PUB. (Supports P1, P2 and P4)
- Integrate year-round, all-season messaging into MTOT support and planning resources/materials (i.e. websites, publications, social communities) in order to generate interest in shoulder seasons.
- Communicate with target audience through online and social media tactics.
- Leverage word-of-mouth opportunities presented by return visitors.
- Grow and segment consumer email marketing program, eNews, to allow targeted content and trip ideas to first-time visitors, return visitors, and ability to partner with Montana destinations and private tourism industry businesses. *Also supports Strategies A and B.* **Timeline:** July 2011 – December 2011. **Support Program:** WEB. (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY E:

- Develop a co-operative incentive/matching fund program to encourage adaptation of the brand and to facilitate Montana's public-private tourism and industry partnership development. **Timeline:** July 2011 – August 2011. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Develop an annual guidebook that will outline incentives and co-operative marketing opportunities. **Timeline:** March 2012 – June 2012. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- Late July/early August 2011: FY12 Co-op Marketing Opportunities will be posted to <http://www.travelmontana.mt.gov/consumermarketing/index.asp>
- Additional opportunities will be posted to intranet site at <http://www.travelmontana.mt.gov/consumermarketing/index.asp> as they develop. To be added to co-op marketing notification list, please contact Susan Buhr at sbuhr@mt.gov

CALENDAR:

- To be finalized based on strategy development.

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER & OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES: ELECTRONIC MARKETING & IT SUPPORT AND SERVICES

OVERVIEW:

Electronic Marketing utilizes traditional interactive and emerging technologies to develop innovative systems for disseminating Montana travel information and to help define and reinforce the Montana brand. These technologies include interactive websites, mobile applications and social media. The foundation of the Montana Office of Tourism's Electronic Marketing program is our tourism database. This is an extensive database of tourism-related information, from resorts to rodeos. We work closely with our communities and business partners to gather this information. This cost-effective method of disseminating travel information gives consumers the ability to obtain comprehensive Montana travel information instantly from anywhere in the world.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.1 – Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans, and track/report results.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

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

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Electronic Marketing and IT Support and Services is \$1,325,499 representing approximately 9% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Have 25 packages and coupons on visitmt.com and m.visitmt.com. We will link to existing specials and coupons on individual sites.
- Establish a baseline for mobile app usage. During this fiscal year we plan to develop an application (compiled, executable application) for the mobile device. This application will provide a framework for us to develop applications for breweries, golf courses, ghost towns, motorcycle routes, State Parks and the Dinosaur Trail. The apps will be submitted to the Apple App Store. Once done we will establish a baseline of usage and evaluate the ROI.
- Develop a mobile base of at least 10,000 users on m.visitmt.com.
- Increase social networking numbers by 25%. Current number of Twitter followers is at 3,100; Facebook baseline is at 100,000 users.
- Increase the time spent by users on visitmt.com by 30 seconds. Current average time on visitmt.com is 00:06:58.

STRATEGIES:

- a. In order to increase winter visitation and mobile site traffic, we will convert winter content for use on the mobile site m.visitmt.com. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P2)
- b. Mobile applications are very useful to the visitor while in the state. We will try to increase the length of stay and number of sites visited by developing mobile applications and a marketing strategy for those applications to encourage use by the visitor on the ground. This will help increase our mobile base. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P2)
- c. Our strategy is to convert the visitmt.com user to an actual visit. To this end we will complete the .NET project to enhance the usability of visitmt.com and encourage users to spend more time on the site. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P2)
- d. In an effort to make businesses, attractions and events more appealing by enhancing our listings, we will rewrite our survey tool. Enhancements will allow businesses to update content on the site and feature more deals and coupons. This effort will help increase time spent on the site and our conversion rate. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.**
- e. GetLostMT.com was designed to increase awareness of everything the state has to offer by collecting new user-generated content through an incentive-driven forum. It was also created to inspire and encourage consumers to “hit the road” and then share their experiences on the site. The site incorporates many web 2.0 functions, including an interactive, online gallery of user submitted stories related to locations within Montana on a Google Map. To encourage more users we will develop a mobile friendly version of GetLostMT. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P2)
- f. Social networking sites are a great channel for getting the word out about Montana. The Montana Office of Tourism took over the “Montana” fan page on Facebook in late January 2010, inheriting 20,000 fans. During the remaining year, the fan base was grown to over 80,000 enthusiastic supporters and admirers of Montana. MTOT uses this social network to deliver messages about upcoming events, unique travel and recreation opportunities. Additionally, MTOT encourages and fosters community interaction and discussion among the fans. We will continue to provide stimulating content to increase friends and followers. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.**

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Develop a mobile application to view current ski conditions and update the mobile site m.visitmt.com with winter content. **Timeline:** October 2011. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Provide our target audience with online mobile sites and applications to assist in planning their travels prior to visiting and while they are in the state. **Timeline:** May 2012. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P1 and P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Update search functionality and results pages on visitmt.com. **Timeline:** December 2011. **Support Programs:** CM, PUB. (Supports P1 and P2)
- Convert remaining components (Guestbook, Feedback, Postcards, Snow Report) to .NET. **Timeline:** December 2011. **Support Programs:** CM and PUB. (Supports P1 and P2)
- Add opt-in lodging facilities reviews on visitmt.com. **Timeline:** December 2011. **Support Programs:** CM and PUB. (Supports P1 and P2)
- Conduct regular, ongoing analysis and hold monthly KPI meetings with appropriate staff to evaluate design features and guide future decisions. **Timeline:** Monthly, with additional

- meetings to analyze major campaigns. **Support Programs:** CM and PIO. (Supports P1, P2 and P4)
- Develop a loyalty program integrated with an email campaign. **Timeline:** June 2012. **Support Programs:** CM and PIO. (Supports P4)
 - Implement new hosting platform at State of Montana data center. **Timeline:** January 2012. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY D:

- Rewrite survey tool to allow businesses to update their own records. **Timeline:** June 2012. (Supports P2)
- Convert survey tool to an online application and add an online coupon and packaging component. **Timeline:** June 2012. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P4)
- Replace current Customer Relationship Management system with cloud based hosted solution. **Timeline:** June 2012. **Support Program:** CM and ADMIN. (Supports P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY E:

- Convert GetLostMT into a mobile-enabled application. **Timeline:** June 2012. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY F:

- We will continue to search for social networking metrics to assess the value of our presence. **Timeline:** June 2012. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)
- Continue to work with our marketing partners to post relevant content and increase our friends and followers. **Timeline:** June 2012. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

VISITMT.COM

- Offer new opportunities for businesses to offer packages and coupons.

CALENDAR:

- Ongoing; refer to actions listed above.

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER: PUBLIC RELATIONS

OVERVIEW:

Public Relations is one of the most believable and effective types of exposure a travel destination can get. Coverage in key travel and news media markets can result in stories and programs that generate interest in Montana. The publicity/photography program works with various media outlets to facilitate this coverage and to help spread the word about the latest and greatest reasons for visiting.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.1 – Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans, and track/report results.
- Action 1.2.d – Target travel media to increase visibility of Montana as a leisure travel destination.
- Action 1.3 – Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

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

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Public Relations is \$475,149, representing approximately 3% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Generate at least \$18 (or more) million in ad equivalency as measured by PR Trak.
- Grow our media database, currently at 1,686, by 3%, approximately 50 new contacts/outlets using both proactive (researching and developing relationships with appropriate media) and reactive (responding to media requests, thereby establishing relationships) approaches.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Generate continuous positive editorial placement within all travel media outlets (domestic and international) through proactive and reactive media outreach, including newspapers, consumer publications, travel trade media, broadcast outlets and the web. **Division Goals: 1 and 2.** (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- b. Strengthen and utilize the relationships with the state's six tourism Regions, twelve CVBs and tourism industry suppliers/partners to support and maintain fresh, cost-effective public relations strategies. **Division Goals: 1 and 3.** (Supports P1)
- c. Continue to build a digital image library that supports the needs of the media and our regional/statewide partners that represents our branding platforms. **Division Goals: 1 and 2.** (Supports P1, P2 and P3)

- d. Through the PR Trak software, continue to track media coverage that results in a timelier, and more complete, accurate assessment of the dollar value of Montana's travel and tourism editorial exposure. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A, B &/OR C:

- Develop and present outreach programs for the Regions/CVBs and their members to educate the audience on the value and importance of editorial placement and solicit their support for media efforts. **Strategy: b. Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** PIO. (Supports P1)
- Continue to build the image library, utilizing the support of the Regions/CVBs, as well as businesses involved in providing tourism-related services. **Strategies: a, b and c. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1, P3)
- Grow the content of the pressroom, to provide creative, current subject matter to the media, as well as provide an outlet for those involved in state tourism to get the word out on new offerings (events, activities, lodging, etc.) for the visitor. **Strategies: a, b and c. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- Continue to develop creative and enticing direct email campaigns to appropriate markets. **Strategies: a and b. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1, P2, and P3)
- Utilize one or more social networking sites as a form of engagement and communication with media outlets. **Strategies: a and b. Timeline:** Ongoing (Supports P2)
- Work with the Regions/CVBs to develop and implement group (minimum of one trip per Region per year) and individual media tours, with the goal being to generate positive editorial placement. **Strategies: a and b. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)
- With the support of the contracted PR agency – MercuryCSC – conduct media missions or themed media events in key national markets (New York, Los Angeles, etc.) to increase awareness of Montana's diverse travel product and to pitch targeted story placement. **Strategies: a and b. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Participate in trade/travel shows and markets with a record of strong media attendance to develop new media connections, such as the Society for American Travel Writers (SATW) and Outdoor Retailer Markets. **Strategy: a. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Support photo workshops (through logistical support and itinerary development) as a means of reaching the visitor interested in this niche market. Continue to build the online photo gallery to visually enhance our website and to help showcase Montana's photography talents. **Strategy: b. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Develop public relations strategies that integrate into consumer marketing/branding campaigns, to help support and generate greater results from Montana's advertising efforts. **Strategy: a. Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM, BRAND, WEB. (Supports P1 and P2)
- Work in tandem with the various trail programs and geotourism efforts (Dinosaur Trail, Crown of the Continent MapGuide and Greater Yellowstone MapGuide) to facilitate positive coverage for these newsworthy entities. **Strategies: a, b and c. Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** TD&E, PIO. (Supports P1 and P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY D:

- Through PR Trak, monitor and report publicity values annually; distribute the PR exposure highlights yearly to the Tourism Advisory Council. **Strategy: d. Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P4)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Partner not only with Regions/CVBs on hosted media visits, but also with individual businesses providing Montana products and guest services. Collaborate on itineraries and securing reduced or comped lodging, meals and guided activities for media visits. Further educate these businesses on the value that the positive press coverage adds to their business, as a result of partnering with state efforts.

CALENDAR:

JULY 2011

- Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Salt Lake City, UT.

FALL 2011

- Location Photography and Lighting, Santa Fe, NM.

JANUARY 2012

- TBD: Outdoor Retailer Winter Market in Salt Lake City, UT.

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER: PUBLICATIONS

OVERVIEW:

The Montana Office of Tourism publications provide flavorful and factual coverage of Montana's year-round recreation and attractions to visitors of all ages. These free guides are packed full of gorgeous photos and easy-to-read information helping our visitor further their sense of discovery while in Montana. They give the local story with depth and perspective portraying Montana at its best. The guides have been designed to be used in conjunction with the Montana Office of Tourism's website, visitmt.com. Consumers can use the printed guides, supplemented by visitmt.com and wintermt.com to create fun-filled itineraries on where to go, how to get there, where to stay and what to do for a very personal experience.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.1 – Implement highly targeted consumer advertising and promotion campaigns, based on strategic marketing plans, and track/report results.
- Action 1.3 – Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

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

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Publications is \$445,985, representing approximately 3% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Design Montana Guidebook following research recommendations of no advertising, no business listings, personal stories from locals, more itinerary suggestions. Change Guidebook distribution so majority of guides go to out-of-state key markets and regional guides fulfill in-state needs.
- Create 12-month, digital tablet magazine with local stories written by freelance writers, monthly events, videos. Track usage.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Provide high-quality fulfillment pieces to consumer inquiries to convert interest into sale. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1)
- b. Provide information in an easy-to-use format to encourage travel throughout all areas of the state and throughout all seasons. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1 and P3)
- c. Provide the Winter Guide and Montana Guidebook online. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- d. Create 12-month, digital tablet magazine. **Division Goals: 1 and 2.** (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)

- e. Merge Winter Guide content into Guidebook in January 2012. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- f. Work closely with other Montana Office of Tourism marketing campaigns to coordinate branding efforts. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1, P2)
- g. Continue to offer Montana businesses no- or low-cost advertising opportunities in the 2011-2012 Winter Guide to promote their tourism product and services. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)
- h. Continue communication with all State and Federal agencies, publishing consistent messages on public lands, regulations and permits. **Division Goal: 2.** (Supports P1)
- i. Develop more story/video/audio content on Indian Nations site. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A THROUGH H:

- Continue to work closely with contracted ad agency, print vendors and freelance photographers and writers to maintain high-quality printed and mobile materials. **Strategies:** a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM, PR. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- Implement the new publications strategic plan based on the research study results that gives direction to the content and design of the guides and what planning tools to create on our website to meet the needs of the target audience. **Strategies:** a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM, PR. (Supports P1, P2, and P3)
- Coordinate the purchasing of photos through Montana Office of Tourism contracted vendors for multi-use in guides, consumer marketing campaigns and on the website. Continue coordination of printed materials with current marketing campaigns and website design/content. **Strategies:** a, b, c, d, e, f. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM, PR, FILM, CM and contracted agency. (Supports P1, P2, and P3)
- Work closely with Consumer Marketing, Public Relations, Electronic Marketing and contracted agency to create more personal components to the Indian Nations website such as: short videos (influencers) and audio stories. **Strategies:** a and h. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** TD&E, CM, PR, WEB. (Supports P3)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

Opportunities for affordable advertising in the 2011-2012 Montana Winter Guide for Montana winter businesses with a 55,000 copy distribution.

MONTANA WINTER GUIDE

The Montana Office of Tourism's winter response piece provides comprehensive information on Montana's downhill ski areas, cross-country resorts and trail systems, snowmobile reference charts, snowcoach tours and winter accommodations. Advertorial placements require the purchase of the space. Space reservation deadline is generally the end of April. Updated yearly. Distributed through direct mail, consumer shows, chamber offices, visitor information centers and local businesses. About 55,000 printed each year. Also available online.

CALENDAR:

EARLY AUGUST 2011

- Winter Guide ready for distribution

JANUARY 2012

- Montana Guidebook ready for distribution

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER & PRODUCT/BRAND DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION: VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS

OVERVIEW:

The Visitor Information Systems (VIS) Program is a component of an integrated and comprehensive tourism marketing strategy. Upon arriving in and traveling through Montana via highway, air, or rail, travelers need an integrated, strategic system of information from a variety of sources for a successful vacation experience.

The purpose of the Special Events Grant Program (SEGP) is to diversify and enrich Montana's tourism product by developing and enhancing community-based tourism festivals and events. The goal of SEGP is to create and sustain economic development through the advertising and promotion of "hallmark events."

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.4 – Improve Montana's Visitor Information System to extend visitor stays and spending.

GOAL 3: Address management and access issues for sustainable recreation on private, state and federal lands.

- Action 3.1 – Educate Montana visitors, suppliers, and residents about ethics and responsibilities on public and private lands, and use technology to encourage recreation in appropriate areas.

GOAL 5: Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services, for targeted customer markets.

- Action 5.1 – Cultivate opportunities to leverage private and public dollars for the creation of tourism products and attract new tourist markets.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Visitor Information Systems is \$399,237, representing approximately 3% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Increase visitation to the Montana Office of Tourism supported visitor information centers (VICs) by 3% in FY12 from 189,000 visitors in 2010.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Promote and advertise Montana events. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)
- b. Support MTOT's visitor information centers (VICs). **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P4)
- c. Cultivate opportunities to leverage private and public dollars. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Work with SEGP recipients to ensure events support the Montana Brand, foster community partnerships and strengthen the local/regional economy. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** Brand, TD&E, CM.
- Collaborate with MTOT programs to increase promotion of SEGP events. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, PIO, PUB.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Conduct research regarding travelers' use of visitor information centers. **Timeline:** Start Spring 2011, conclude Winter 2011. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM, PUB.
- Conduct MTOT VIC staff training and familiarization tours that will provide the tools necessary to influence visitor travel and spending patterns. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** PUB, WEB.
- Make Montana more visitor-friendly and easily accessible by providing interpretive travel information and quality service at MTOT's VICs and MDT rest areas. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** Brand, CM, PUB.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Seek new opportunities to move Montana into the target audience's consideration set. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM, WEB, PR.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- Private/public sector partners to assist in financing and promoting SEGP projects.
- Private/public sector partners to assist in training VIC staff.
- Private/public sector partners to provide travel-related brochures to MTOT's VICs for distribution to the traveling public.

CALENDAR:

JUNE 2011

- Mid-June: Release SEGP application to the public.

SEPTEMBER 2011

- Mid-September: SEGP grant deadline.

NOVEMBER 2011

- November 30: VICs close for the season.

MAY 2012

- May 1: VICs open for the season.

BUSINESS-TO-TRAVEL TRADE: OVERSEAS MARKETING

OVERVIEW:

The Montana Office of Tourism aggressively promotes Montana as a vacation destination to the international travel trade – including tour operators, tour wholesalers (receptive tour operators), travel agents and media, with a particular focus on Germany, the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Japan, Taiwan, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Australia. The goal of this program is to increase the number of overseas visitors and overnights, as well as to increase the inclusion of the Montana tourism product in tour operators' brochures.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.1 – Implement highly targeted consumer advertising/promotion campaigns.
- Action 1.1.d – Continue marketing to international travelers.
- Action 1.2 – Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak activities.
- Action 1.2.e – Continue to target tour operators to bring tours/packaged vacations to Montana.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

- Action 4.1 – Promote existing historic/cultural assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

GOAL 5: Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services.

- Action 5.2 – Provide information about technical/financial assistance available to tourism businesses.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Overseas Marketing and Group Travel is \$693,134, representing approximately 5% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Grow overseas visitation to Montana by 2%. For FY10 in the overseas markets ITRR reports group visitation at 50,000 and individual visitation at 239,000.
- Grow the number of Montana overnights offered ("product on the shelf") by 7%. Rocky Mountain International (RMI) reports 704,826 overnights offered for FY10.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Increase the number of international visitors to Montana from current markets by further developing and fostering positive relationships with overseas tour operators and USA-based receptive tour operators. **Division Goal: 2.** (Supports P1)
- b. Provide technical assistance to Montana partners on international marketing. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1)
- c. Enhance, increase and maintain product knowledge of Montana facilities, attractions and events. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)

- d. Research methods of tracking actual overnights of international visitors per year. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Support trade shows and sales missions for RMI or Montana industry representative to meet with tour operators and media to promote Montana as a vacation destination and encourage the inclusion of more tourism product in tour company brochures; follow up with the latest information on Montana such as Montana Guidebook, etc. **Timeline:** July 2011-June 2012. **Support Programs:** PUB. (Supports P1)
- Conduct a direct mail campaign for tour operators by sending an in-house quarterly newsletter that highlights new Montana product and offers suggested itineraries or new/unique attractions and destinations. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** GRP, PUB, PR, PIO. (Supports P1 and P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Include an international marketing session at annual Governor's Conference. **Timeline:** April 2012. **Support Program:** TD&E. (Supports P1)
- Investigate cooperative opportunities with partners such as CVBs, Regions or Montana tourism suppliers to supplement the costs of international marketing projects. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Present information and updates on international marketing at TAC meetings and to Regions/CVBs as needed. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- In April 2012, prepare list of lodging facilities, attractions, etc., for site visits by fall of 2012; report findings back to tour operators, etc., for their consideration for inclusion in their Montana tour products. Also report to Montana Office of Tourism staff, Regions and CVBs as appropriate. *Also supports Strategy C.* **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A, B & C:

- Attend the RMI RoundUp in partnership with RMI, Montana Regions, CVBs and suppliers to showcase Montana as an international destination. **Timeline:** May 2012. **Support Programs:** PUB, PR, PIO. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Educate tour operators from Montana's target market on Montana tourism product by conducting familiarization tours as needed or on an as-requested basis. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY D:

- Distribute the trade show leads to Montana suppliers for follow-up, and have all leads available on the intranet site. **Goals:** c and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB and PUB. (Supports P1 and P2)
- Track results via RMI Annual Marketing and TRIP report and via information/samplings through ITRR. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P4)
- Develop a measurement tool to calculate the actual number of overnights booked in Montana per overseas market. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P4)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- Work with the CVBs, Regions and private sector to conduct international marketing training sessions (goal is three sessions for FY12) throughout the year.
- Partner with Montana tourism suppliers on the promotion of their product through attendance at domestic trade shows.
- Partner with Montana tourism suppliers on the promotion of their product through participation in FAM tours.

CALENDAR:

SEPTEMBER 2011

- RMI Mega Fam in Montana and Idaho – September 16-24.

OCTOBER 2011

- TTG Incontri – Rimini, Italy – October 6-9.
- Scandinavia Mission – October 19-26.

NOVEMBER 2011

- WTM, London, England – November 7-10.
- Sales Mission to Japan and Taiwan (Pam) – TBD.

FEBRUARY 2012

- Australia Mission – dates TBD.
- Go West Summit in Green River, NV – February 6-9.

MARCH 2012

- ITB, Berlin, Germany – March 7-9.

TBD 2012

- French Mission.

APRIL 2012

- USTA's International Pow Wow in Los Angeles, CA – April 21-25.

MAY 2012

- Summit Meeting and Roundup in WY, date and location TBD.

BUSINESS-TO-TRAVEL TRADE: GROUP TRAVEL MARKETING

OVERVIEW:

The Group Travel Marketing program is responsible for promoting Montana as a vacation destination to tour operators, travel agents and travel journalists in the U.S. and Canada.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.2 – Promote Montana to target groups/events, emphasizing off-peak activities.
- Action 1.2.e – Continue to target tour operators to bring tours/package vacations to Montana.
- Action 1.3 – Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

- Action 4.1 – Promote existing historic/cultural assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.

GOAL 5: Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services.

- Action 5.2 – Provide information about technical/financial assistance available to tourism businesses.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Overseas Marketing and Group Travel is \$693,134, representing approximately 5% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011-JUNE 2012:

- Increase visits to montanagroups.com, which was 8,351 for calendar year 2010, by 10%.
- Grow the number of Montana group overnights offered ("product on the shelf") by 5%. TourTrackerPro (a subscription reporting tool) reports 2,208 group overnights offered for 2009 and 1,809 group overnights offered for 2010.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Build and maintain a positive image with prospective group tour planners through ongoing outreach. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1)
- b. Create top-of-mind awareness of Montana as a group tour destination through ongoing outreach. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1, P2)
- c. Convert inquiries into group tour bookings. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1)
- d. Provide tour operators with the tools to build a successful Montana tour itinerary. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1, P2, P3)
- e. Generate more awareness of statewide group tour product including Lewis and Clark Trail attractions, Glacier National Park and events of interest to the group tour market. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1, P2)
- f. Establish research to track group visitation and its economic impact on Montana. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P4)
- g. Create an integrated digital strategy, with short- and long-term goals with Electronic Marketing. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A THROUGH E:

- Advertising placement in key trade publications. **Strategies:** a, b and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Attending industry events, National Tour Association Convention (NTA), American Bus Association Convention (ABA) and Tour Associated Partners (TAP) annual meeting. **Strategies:** a, b, c, d and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Sponsor Dinner with very select group of tour operator's at the NTA Convention to gain Montana exposure and enhance awareness. **Strategies:** a, b, c, d and e. **Timeline:** December 2011. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Provide Group Tour Planning manual and continually update montanagroups.com. **Strategies:** a, d and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P2)
- Conduct Familiarization tour opportunities to Montana to increase awareness of tour itinerary opportunities. **Strategies:** a, b, d, and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Distribute quarterly electronic newsletters that highlight new Montana product as well as offer suggested itineraries or new/unique attractions and destinations. **Strategies:** a, b, d and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB and INTL. (Supports P2)
- Provide yearly the Montana Calendar to key Tour Operators. **Strategies:** a, c and e. **Timeline:** December 2011. (Supports P1)
- Assist media in writing about the group travel opportunities in Montana. **Strategies:** a, b, d and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** PR. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- Explore additional opportunities for co-op projects with Regions, CVBs and Montana tourism suppliers. **Strategies:** d and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY F:

- Using data from montanagroups.com and other sources, measure economic impact of Group Travel to Montana. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB. (Supports P2, P3)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- Familiarization tour opportunities with Regions/CVBs and Montana's industry partners.
- The opportunity to sponsor and participate in the group dinner during NTA Convention.
- Partner with Montana tourism suppliers on the promotion of their product through attendance at domestic trade shows.

CALENDAR:

SUMMER 2011

- Tour Operator Winner of the NTA Trip Giveaway – August.

DECEMBER 2011

- NTA, Las Vegas, NV – December 5-9.

JANUARY 2012

- ABA, Grapevine, TX – January 6-10.

JUNE 2012

- Travel Alliance Partners – TBD.

ONGOING

- Media buy for trade publications such as Courier, Destination, Group Tour, and Leisure Group Travel.

PRODUCT/BRAND DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION: BRAND DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW:

The Brand Development program is responsible for implementing and promoting a consistent positive brand image for Montana as a vacation destination. The program works to not only ensure consistency with the brand platform and principles, but also to develop and administer brand outreach and services to encourage cooperation and support of the Montana Office of Tourism brand strategy.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.3 – Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

GOAL 2: Attain public policy and citizen support for sustainable tourism and recreation

- Action 2.1 – Build awareness about new Montana Tourism Charter, geotourism and tourism benefits.

GOAL 5: Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services.

- Action 5.2 – Provide information about technical/financial assistance available to tourism businesses.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Brand Development is \$209,078, representing approximately 1% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Conduct up to 12 seminars throughout the state to inform constituents about the brand and how they can utilize the brand in their marketing efforts, by November 2011.
- Develop an Intranet Brand Toolbox by December 2011.
- Develop a brand planning scope of work by January 2012.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Develop a comprehensive brand strategic plan to guide and promote statewide branding initiative development and measurable success. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1)
- b. Increase the awareness and implementation of the branding initiative to ensure and encourage marketing consistency across various private and public platforms through the comprehensive strategic branding initiative plan (as noted above). **Division Goals: 1 and 3.** (Supports P1)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A & B:

- Organize and conduct statewide brand road shows to educate our tourism partners on how to use and leverage the brand. Providing valuable, immediately actionable

- takeaways to numerous tourism industry folks with varying levels of marketing expertise. **Timeline:** November 2011. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Continue outreach and development of partnerships that allow the Montana Office of Tourism and public-private entities to leverage resources, and align missions to best be able to connect with receptive audiences. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** PIO and CM. (Supports P1)
 - Encourage outreach and development of partnerships with tribal communities, off-the-beaten path areas, niche and arts and culture markets. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** TD&E, PIO and CM. (Supports P3)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- See Actions noted above for details.

CALENDAR:

ONGOING

- Brand awareness presentations, seminars and efforts to unify the Montana Office of Tourism and statewide tourism industry under the brand platform and target audience.

PRODUCT/BRAND DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION

OVERVIEW:

The Tourism Development and Education program provides financial, technical and marketing assistance for Montana tourism and recreation projects, programs, initiatives, products and services. The program's activities include financial grants for nonprofit sponsors involved in developing or enhancing tourism-related facilities and Montana's cultural, heritage and nature tourism products. Technical assistance is provided to both public and private sector entities through education services, including community, regional and statewide workshops, an annual Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation, a recurring statewide strategic planning process and the Montana Superhost customer service training program.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.3 – Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.

GOAL 2: Attain public policy and citizen support for sustainable tourism and recreation.

- Action 2.1 – Build awareness about new Montana Tourism Charter, geotourism and tourism benefits.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

- Action 4.1 – Promote Montana's existing historic and cultural assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.
- Action 4.2 – Improve and maintain infrastructure, facilities and services to support heritage and cultural tourism in Montana.

GOAL 5: Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services.

- Action 5.2 – Provide information about technical/financial assistance available to tourism businesses.

GOAL 6: Address tourism and recreation professional development, workforce availability, training and affordable housing issues.

- Action 6.1 – Enhance professional development opportunities/requirements for tourism organizations.

GOAL 8: Enhance the "curb appeal" of Montana communities to attract visitors.

- Action 8.1 – Increase the capacity of Montana communities to be more competitive in tourism.

GOAL 9: Increase funding to maintain sustainable tourism and recreation.

- Action 9.2 – Foster opportunities to pool public and private marketing dollars.
- Action 9.3 – Enhance funding for Region and CVB marketing efforts.

GOAL 10: Build an effective "team" to implement the Strategic Plan, and report results.

- Action 10.2 – Create public/private/tribal partnerships for cooperative project implementation.
- Action 10.3 – Implement Strategic Plan discussion/reporting to align activities with goals and actions.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Tourism Development and Education is \$1,069,403, representing approximately 8% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Leverage more than \$2 million in public and/or private sector funds in the projects awarded for 2011 TIIP Grants.
- Complete a survey of all TIIP grant recipients in 2011 and develop method to continue survey on an annual basis.
- 75% of Montana Strategic Plan Stakeholders use online reporting system to keep their activities updated.
- Provide a calendar 2011 report on stakeholder progress on Montana's Strategic Plan for Tourism and Recreation goals and actions to the February 2012 TAC and share the results with executive and legislative branch leaders.
- Montana Superhost training services reach 1,500 participants annually through community seminars, on-line customer service training and supervisor training webinars.
- Provide technical and financial assistance for one to three cultural and heritage tourism projects.
- Provide tourism development outreach and education services on one to two of Montana's Indian Reservations and/or to the membership of an officially recognized statewide tribal tourism organization.
- Implement or participate in one to two statewide and/or regional workshops on tourism-related topics.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Use Montana's tourism "bed tax" to leverage public and private sector investments into the creation, enhancement and protection of tourism-related facilities that demonstrate the ability to move Montana into the consideration set by increasing Montana's attraction as a visitor destination and/or keep current visitors in Montana longer and encourage them to spend more money, providing more revenue for Montana tourism entities. Place special focus on preserving, enhancing and protecting Montana's unique cultural and heritage resources for the use and enjoyment of Montanans and our visitors. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)
- b. Assist communities, Regions, tribal and nonprofit organizations and other public entities in the development of Montana's unique cultural, heritage and nature tourism products, services and networks – including digital and tourism promotion networks – that will move them into the consideration set. Assistance includes technical and financial support as well as facilitation and education services. **Division Goals: 2 and 3.** (Supports P1 and P3 in part)
- c. Provide Montanans information and training opportunities regarding tourism as an economic and community development tool, target markets and the Montana Brand strategy, low- and no-cost marketing services, success tracking and measurement tools, and other pertinent topics. The information and training opportunities will be offered through workshops, seminars, assessments, strategic planning, digital communications (webinars) and networking. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Award Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP) Grants to projects that create, enhance or protect tourism-related facilities that increase Montana's attraction as a visitor destination, keep visitors here longer and help them to spend more money. *Also supports Strategy B.* **Timeline:** October 2011. **Support Programs:** WEB and PIO. (Supports P1)
- Survey TIIP Grant Recipients 1995-2010 regarding visitation, visitor spending, benefits from TIIP grant project. *Also supports Strategy C.* **Timeline:** September-November 2011. **Support Program:** IS. (Supports P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Help finance the production of at least 100,000 copies of the Montana Cultural Treasures booklet and pay for its statewide distribution. **Timeline:** March 2012 for production, Ongoing for statewide distribution through Certified Folder Display Services. **Support Program:** ADMIN. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Help promote, distribute and further develop the Greater Yellowstone Geotourism Project products (currently MapGuide and Website) with project partners including National Geographic's Center for Sustainable Destinations and the Greater Yellowstone Geotourism Council. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- Help promote, distribute and further develop the Crown of the Continent Geotourism Project products (currently MapGuide and Website) with project partners that include National Geographic's Center for Sustainable Destinations. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- Offer tourism development assistance to Montana's tribal governments and tribal tourism-related organizations and respond to invitations. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES B & C:

- Provide technical and financial assistance for one to two new or ongoing cultural and heritage tourism projects including: (Supports P1, P2)
 - Update, reprint and distribute the Montana Dinosaur Trail brochure and website, and assist with trail promotion and development. **Timeline:** Brochure and Website: Summer 2011-Summer 2012; Promotion and Development: Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All.
 - Participate in planning and development for the SE Montana heritage tourism corridor project involving Wyoming and South Dakota. **Timeline:** Summer 2011-Summer 2012. **Support Programs:** All.
 - Provide financial and technical support for the Friends of the Beartooth All-American Road organization. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All.
- Work with tourism partners to identify existing or new unique cultural and heritage tourism projects to assist with development and promotion. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- Work with the Montana Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, the Montana Commerce Department's Indian Country Economic Development Programs, STED Commission and other appropriate programs to identify ways the TD&E Program can coordinate its tourism development and education efforts in Montana's Indian Country with their efforts for more effective use of resources. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P3)
- Use the online Strategic Plan reporting system as a tool for communicating with Plan Stakeholders, developing outreach tools to increase education, buy-in and action on the plan's goals, objectives and actions and reporting to stakeholders and decision makers. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB and PIO. (Supports P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Work with Office of Tourism Program Managers and/or Region and CVB partners to plan, organize and implement one to two statewide and/or regional workshops on tourism-related topics. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM and PIO. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)

- Plan, organize and implement the 2012 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation. **Timeline:** Begin, October 2011; Implement, April 11-13, 2012. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
- Work with Montana Superhost Contractor to promote and provide the delivery systems for customer service training services across the state. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** PIO, WEB and IS. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

TIIP GRANT PROGRAM

- Public and private sector funding partners to assist in financing TIIP grant projects.
- Promotion and publicity efforts to highlight TIIP-funded facilities, their improvements, products and services.

CULTURE/HERITAGE PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

- Public and private sector partners to provide financial and technical assistance for the development, promotion and distribution of Montana's cultural and heritage tourism products and services.
- Promotion of the existing cultural and heritage tourism products in the state through the media – Montana, regional, national and international – as well as the Montana Office of Tourism's publications, consumer marketing and electronic marketing services.

EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE

- Participation in and promotion of the Montana Office of Tourism's education workshops, conferences, Montana Superhost Sessions and Strategic Plan implementation efforts.
- Assistance in putting into action a Strategic Plan implementation and monitoring process.
- Identify topics for regional and statewide workshops and Governor's Conference presentations.

CALENDAR:

AUGUST 3, 2011

- TIIP Grant Application Deadline.

OCTOBER 2011

- Tourism Advisory Council Sends TIIP Grant Award Recommendations to Montana Commerce Director for final approval.
- Montana Commerce Director gives final approval for 2011 TIIP Grant Awards.

APRIL 11-13, 2012

- Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation, Great Falls 2012, travelmontana.mt.gov/conference.

PRODUCT/BRAND DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION & OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES: PUBLIC INFORMATION

OVERVIEW:

This program provides outreach and public information programs to communicate and share the Montana Office of Tourism's and the Montana tourism industry's initiatives and activities in order to educate and encourage community cooperation, support and understanding of the industry.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.3 – Collaborate with tourism marketing partners to plan/implement priority marketing efforts.
- Action 1.3.c – Conduct educational tourism workshops, presentations and webinars.

GOAL 2: Attain public policy and citizen support for sustainable tourism and recreation.

- Action 2.1 – Build awareness about new Montana Tourism Charter, geotourism and tourism benefits.
- Action 2.2 – Give effective presentations to policy makers about Montana tourism issues/benefits.

GOAL 4: Enhance and preserve Montana's culture and history.

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

GOAL 10: Build an effective "team" to implement the Strategic Plan, and report results.

- Action 10.5 – Obtain strategic research to inform tourism marketing, development and policy decisions.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Public Information is \$104,000, representing approximately 1% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- A Montana Office of Tourism staff person to be in attendance at a total of 18 Region/CVB board and/or committee meetings – one for each of the 6 Regions and 12 CVBs.
- Revise the *Tourism Speaks* presentation and present it to at least one organization in each Region for a minimum total of six presentations.
- Develop two additional outreach presentations to be used by MTOT staff and/or other tourism partners throughout the state in addition to *Tourism Speaks*.
- Increase current number of visitor sessions by 10% (105 visitor sessions*) and average current length of session by 5% (5:38 length of session*) on the new industry news site, Montanaturismnews.org.

*These are statistics generated from the time of our first e-newsletter via montanaturismnews.org 10/15/10 through 4/15/11.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Expand tourism education and outreach into Montana's communities and expand the Montana Office of Tourism staff outreach and visibility with our tourism partners throughout the state through programs and resources that provide education about Montana's tourism industry. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)
- b. Continue to develop more engaging and efficient methods of communicating with Montana's tourism industry. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Develop a 12-month strategic plan for tourism industry public relations. **Timeline:** July 2011. **Support Programs:** ADMIN. *Also supports Strategy B.* (Supports P1 and P3)
- Coordinate the attendance of a Montana Office of Tourism representative at one board and/or committee meeting of each of the six Regions and twelve CVBs in order to foster better communication between the state and our tourism partners and build awareness of the assistance available through the Office of Tourism's marketing and technical resources. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Develop, update and revise (as needed) presentations, such as *Tourism Speaks*, *Tourism 101*, and *MTOT Overview of Programs*, so that they can be used by the Montana Office of Tourism as well as other partners in Montana's tourism industry to increase support, understanding and local cooperation for Montana's tourism industry and build public awareness of the Montana Office of Tourism programs. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB. *Also supports Strategy B.* (Supports P1 and P3)
- Work with tourism partners to identify committees, councils and interested organizations within their communities that would benefit from MTOT presentations. Present the revised *Tourism Speaks* to at least one organization per Region per year. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** ADMIN. (Supports P1 and P3)
- Work with the Montana Office of Tourism staff to maintain and update the Office of Tourism's intranet website content. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1 and P2)
- Oversee the development, editing, and publication of the Office of Tourism monthly e-newsletters, speaking points, Tourism Fast Fact Sheets and other related outreach materials. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. *Also supports Strategy B.* (Supports P1 and P2)
- Establish and maintain effective working relationships with media contacts to promote and cultivate media coverage of Montana and its tourism opportunities through press releases, interviews, etc. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** ADMIN and PR. (Supports P1)
- Oversee crisis communication activities on behalf of the Office of Tourism and when applicable, assist partners with crisis communication. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR and ADMIN. (Supports P1)
- Assist in progress monitoring of the Montana Office of Tourism Marketing Plan. **Timeline:** Ongoing; **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P4)
- Attend industry conferences to keep abreast of tourism trends, initiatives and research. **Timeline:** August and October 2011; June 2012. (Supports P1)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Through newly developed tourism industry news website, montanaturismnews.org, provide ongoing content to share, educate and communicate in a more immediate manner to interested parties. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P2)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- Work with Regions, CVBs and other industry partners to identify organizations that would benefit from public outreach sessions regarding tourism's impacts, benefits and opportunities.
- Provide outreach materials to industry partners such as tourism statistics, fact sheets, presentations, talking points, etc.

CALENDAR:

AUGUST 2011

- ESTO, Salt Lake City, UT, August 28-30.

OCTOBER 2011

- Marketing Outlook Forum, Fort Worth, TX, October 26-27.

JUNE 2012

- PRSA Travel and Tourism Conference, TBD.
- TTRA Annual Tourism Conference, TBD.

ONGOING

- Produce monthly the Montana Office of Tourism Update e-newsletter.

OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN SUPPORT:

GOAL 1: Increase four-season tourism revenues statewide through effective marketing and promotions, focusing on high-value, low-impact visitors.

- Action 1.4 – Improve Montana’s Visitor Information Systems to extend visitor stays and spending.

GOAL 5: Support appropriate tourism business growth, including new tourism products and services.

- Action 5.2 – Provide information about technical/financial assistance available to tourism businesses.

GOAL 6: Address tourism and recreation professional development, workforce availability, training and affordable housing issues.

- Action 6. 1 – Enhance professional development opportunities/requirements for tourism organizations.

GOAL 9: Increase funding to maintain sustainable tourism and recreation.

- Action 9.2 – Foster opportunities to pool public and private marketing dollars.
- Action 9.3 – Enhance funding for Region and CVB marketing efforts.

GOAL 10: Build an effective “team” to implement the Strategic Plan, and report results.

- Action 10.1 – Recognize the Montana Office of Tourism as a ‘team captain’ to communicate/coordinate regularly with partners.
- Action 10.3 – Implement Strategic Plan discussion/reporting to align activities with goals and actions.
- Action 10.4 – Streamline reporting process of marketing plans/expenditures to TAC/Montana Office of Tourism by Regions and CVBs.

FY12 BUDGET:

The FY12 budget for Operations and Industry Services is divided into three budgets: the Operations budget of \$504,637 representing approximately 4% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget; the Contact Center budget of \$325,500, representing approximately 2% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget; and the Industry Services budget of \$322,791, representing approximately 2% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES: FULFILLMENT & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

OVERVIEW:

This program serves as the administrative and fulfillment center for the Montana Office of Tourism and the Montana Film Office. Operations works closely with the Montana Office of Tourism staff to provide vital information and administrative support to enhance the overall mission of tourism development and multi-dimensional marketing of the state as a year-round travel destination. The Fulfillment Program utilizes the Contact Center and the Montana Office of Tourism's front desk as key points of customer contact, by providing potential tourism customers with prompt, accurate and current information.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Fulfill the "Invite-A-Friend" request within 72 hours of receipt. Customers are to receive information within 10 days.
- Bulk product shipment customers are to receive orders within 10 days.
- Process individual requests daily.
- Periodically send out customer satisfaction surveys.

STRATEGIES:

- a. The program will continue to promote increased visitation by providing outstanding customer service and interactive relationships with the inquiring public by promptly answering all requests for information by phone and mail. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1)
- b. Increase availability of the Montana Office of Tourism's Publications to Visitor Information Centers and Convention and Visitor Bureaus and Area Chambers of Commerce. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Improve fulfillment timeline. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Continue to fulfill the "Invite-a-Friend" request within 72 hours of receipt of request. Consumers receive information within 10 days. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Answer all inquiries promptly and enter customer information into VISITS software system. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Keep current with the ever-changing USPS mail rates and specifications. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Continually seek the best rates for shipping large shipments (pallets) of information. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Work with Visitor Information Systems program to continue expanding and enhancing the distribution of Montana Guidebooks through a private contractor. Focus to be placed on high-traffic corridors of Montana. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** VIS. (Supports P1)
- Continue sending out Bulk information promotional materials in a timely manner to stakeholders. *Also supports Strategy A.* **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)

OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES: CONTACT CENTER

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- For every phone call document the date, ask the inquirers where they found the phone number and track their interests.
- Respond to all requests for information within 72 hours.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Provide professional travel counseling and customer service with coverage 7:00 am-6:00 pm, M-F. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1)
- b. Respond to consumer inquiries with Montana information and maintain a database of inquiries by date, source code and interests. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1)
- c. Implement the changes recommended in the IT audit recommendations to the Contact Center services. **Division Goal: 2.** (Supports P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A AND B:

- Begin to evaluate IT options for the Contact Center and Operation Fulfillment Support based upon the IT audit recommendations. **Timeline:** January 2012. **Support Programs:** WEB and CM.
- Streamline the VISITS computer program by requesting changes that would save time in processing requests and provide better service for the visitors. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB and CM.
- Provide feedback from potential visitors about difficulties in finding information in the Montana Office of Tourism publications or websites. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB and PUB.
- Working with the Montana Department of Transportation, continue to have a tourism component of the 511 system into the Contact Center via a direct phone transfer. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** VIS.
- Provide a FAM trip for the Contact Center agents to a tourism Region. **Timeline:** May 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Incorporate the recommendations of the IT audit into the Contact Center RFP. **Timeline:** August 2012. **Support Programs:** WEB and CM.
- Award the Contact Center RFP and finalize all required transition. **Timeline:** August 2012. **Support Programs:** WEB and CM.

OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES: INDUSTRY SERVICES

OVERVIEW:

Industry Services provides a staff liaison to the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC), Regions/Convention and Visitor Bureaus (CVBs) and other state agencies to assist with oversight and to assure compliance. By providing the staff liaison, this program provides essential support to Montana's nonprofit tourism organizations and oversees the distribution of the Lodging Facility Use Tax to the six Tourism Regions and twelve CVBs. In addition, the program monitors the Regions and CVBs for compliance and adherence to the current Regulations. It also works with the Department of Revenue to provide Lodging Facility Use Tax collection amounts to public and private sectors.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2011 – JUNE 2012:

- Have all 18 fiscal audits completed prior to the end of the calendar year.
- Post revenue reports within 90 days of the end of each quarter to the intranet site.
- Post Region/CVBs marketing plans by September of each fiscal year to the intranet site.
- Post Region/CVB project applications to the intranet within 20 days of receiving final approval from the Audits/Applications Committee.
- Continue to work as a liaison and assist TAC members, Committee Chairs and Task Force Chairs as needed in an ongoing, timely manner.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Serve as principal liaison between TAC, statewide tourism organizations, the Montana Office of Tourism and private sector representatives to coordinate projects; and apprise them of program changes, initiatives, and requirements; and facilitate exchange of ideas and information. **Division Goal: 3.**
- b. Provide information on program operations, activities and changes; interpret and explain state regulations; and answer questions from Region/CVB representatives. **Division Goal: 3.**
- c. Conduct annual financial and program audits of Region/CVB tourism organizations receiving Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue. **Division Goal: 3.**
- d. Distribute quarterly Lodging Facility Use Tax payments to tourism organizations according to approved project plans and ensure that necessary funding is available for timely disbursement. **Division Goal: 3.**
- e. Enhance and foster relationship with Department of Revenue to assure continued open lines of communication and sharing of information between Revenue, the Montana Office of Tourism, TAC and Regions/CVBs. **Division Goal: 3.**
- f. Report status of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan actions and measurable objectives for the Industry Program/Compliance Specialist. **Division Goal: 3.**
- g. Work with TAC Strategic Plan reporting committee to report the status of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan TAC actions and measurable objectives. **Division Goal: 3.**

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Work with the TAC agenda and speaker committee to develop and establish agendas, select and compile informational materials and coordinate other details required for successful TAC meetings. **Timeline:** September 2011, January 2012, May 2012.
Support Programs: All.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A & B:

- Verify accuracy and compliance of the six Tourism Regions and 12 CVBs annual marketing plans and project applications before submitting to the TAC for final approval. **Timeline:** May 2012.
- Distribute project applications submitted after June TAC meeting to the Audits/Applications Committee for final approval. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- Continue sharing Region and CVB annual marketing plans and approved project applications via the intranet. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Administer fiscal contracts for tourism organizations to ensure the effective distribution of funds according to decisions and guidelines of TAC. **Timeline:** June 2012.
- Work with Region/CVB co-chairs to plan and coordinate biannual Region/CVB meetings. **Timeline:** November 2011 and March 2012.
- Provide training and assistance for Region/CVB directors and their staff as needed. **Timeline:** Ongoing.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES B, C & D:

- Review quarterly financial and program compliance reports returned by the 18 certified tourism organizations. **Timeline:** July 2011, October 2011, January 2012 and April 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A, C & D:

- Present audit results to TAC with recommendations for follow-up or appropriate disciplinary actions. Ensure effective implementation of all post audit actions required by TAC. **Timeline:** October 2011 and February 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A, D & E:

- Track Lodging Facility Use Tax receipts throughout the year to ensure availability of revenue for approved programs, and apprise TAC of revenue status. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- Review revenue reports, calculate and verify adjustments, identify and resolve errors and discrepancies, and present findings to the Montana Office of Tourism Administrator and TAC. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
- Provide Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to public and private sector via the Montana Office of Tourism intranet website. To be updated on a quarterly basis. **Timeline:** September 2011, December 2011, March 2012 and June 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY E:

- Compile and distribute monthly revenue collection trends as reported by the Department of Revenue at each TAC meeting. **Timeline:** October 2011, February 2012 and June 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES F & G:

- Report status of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan actions and measurable objectives for the Industry Program/Compliance Specialist. **Timeline:** August 2011, November 2011, February 2012 and May 2012.
- Work with TAC Strategic Plan reporting committee to report the status of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan TAC actions and measurable objectives. **Timeline:** August 2011, November 2011, February 2012 and May 2012.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

N/A

CALENDAR:

JULY 2011

- 4th Quarter Compliance Reports due from Regions/CVBs.
- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs.

AUGUST 2011

- 1st Quarter payment to Regions/CVBs.
- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs.

SEPTEMBER 2011

- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs.
- TAC Meeting Preparation.
- Post FY12 Region/CVB Marketing Plans to intranet.
- Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to intranet.

OCTOBER 2011

- October 3-5: TAC Meeting – Review audits.
- 1st Quarter Compliance Reports due from Regions/CVBs.
- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs.

NOVEMBER 2011

- Region/CVB meeting (two ½ days).
- 2nd Quarter payment to Regions/CVBs.
- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs.
- Updated FY12 Revenue Projections to Regions/CVBs.
- Previous fiscal year rollover dollar amounts to Regions/CVBs.

DECEMBER 2011

- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs.
- Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to intranet.

JANUARY 2012

- January 1: FY11 Completion Reports due from Regions/CVBs.
- 2nd Quarter Compliance Reports due from Regions/CVBs.
- TAC Meeting preparation.

FEBRUARY 2012

- February 6-8: TAC Meeting – review audits.
- 3rd Quarter payment to Regions/CVBs.

MARCH 2012

- Region/CVB meeting (one full day).
- FY13 Projected revenue figures to Regions/CVBs.
- Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to intranet.

APRIL 2012

- 3rd Quarter Compliance Reports due from Regions/CVBs.
- Update annual marketing plan.
- Prepare annual budget for Industry Services, Regions/CVBs and TAC.
- April 25: Region/CVB annual marketing plans due.
- Review 18 Region/CVB Marketing Plans for accuracy and compliance.

MAY 2012

- Review 18 Region/CVB Marketing Plans for accuracy and compliance.
- TAC Meeting Preparation.

JUNE 2012

- June 4-6: TAC Meeting – review and approve marketing plans.
- 4th Quarter payment to Regions/CVBs.
- FY13 Annual Contracts to Regions/CVBs.
- FY13 Marketing Plan approval letters to Regions/CVBs.
- Prepare FY13 Region/CVB Budget/Compliance Worksheets.
- Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to intranet.

APPENDIX: BACKGROUND & INDUSTRY INSIGHT

CURRENT TRAVEL INDUSTRY TRENDS

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- Travel appears to have begun the slow climb out of the recession.
- While a lot of the indicators are up for 2010, one needs to keep in mind that 2009 had some very significant decreases over 2008.
 - So while travel is improving, it hasn't recovered to 2007/2008 levels yet.
- Domestic leisure travel was up 2.8% with spending up 7.2% in 2010.
- Most destinations reported growth in domestic visitors in 2010. (46%: 1 - 4% increase; 32%: 5%+ increase)
- Business travel was up 4.2%.
- International visitation was up 8% and spending was up 7.9%. (Only the U.K. had a decrease in visitation.)
 - Canada was up 13% — the U.S.'s largest international traveler.
- For lodging, rooms sold increased 7.7% and RevPAR was up 5.5%. 2010 gains outpaced 2009 declines.
- Domestic passenger air travel was even with 2009.
- RV shipments were up 44.8% in 2010.
- Attraction industry was up 0.1%.
 - Zoos, state/national parks, aquariums performed better than average.
 - Broadway shows, theme parks and sporting events were below average.
- Skier visits were up 4.2% and spending was up.
- National Park Service saw a 1% decrease in visitation, with lesser known parks doing better than iconic parks.
- Most components of the recreation industry reported gains in 2010.

NATIONAL OUTLOOK

- 2011 will be better but not great. Growth will slow in 2011 but will be sustained. More improvement expected in 2012.
- "Guarded optimism" going into 2011.
- Rising gas prices are a concern. Less discretionary money for travel.
- Anticipation is strong for increased (or stable) travel. No destinations are expecting a decline in visitation in 2011. (U.S. Travel Survey of 348 states/cities)
- 2011 and beyond is expected to provide slow and steady improvement (up 1.5%) but it is dependent on a return of consumer confidence and an increase in employment.
- Domestic leisure travel forecasted to increase 1.6% with a 2.6% increase in business/convention travel.
- International travel to U.S. expected to increase 3.7%.
- 2.6% economic growth for 2010 and 2.5% forecasted for 2011. (Oxford Economics)
- Consumer spending, while slightly improving, continues to be restrained. Continues to be in the 2009-2010 "new normal" spending range and far below the 2008 levels.
- Domestic spending is forecasted to increase 4.5%. International spending is estimated at a 10% increase.
- Consumer Confidence Index, climbed to a new three year high in early 2011 (70.4 in February; 90.0 is considered healthy.), but then dropped due to concerns about rising inflation and gas prices and the ability to sustain recent growth. (The Conference Board)
- Hotel RevPAR projected to be up 6.1%. ADR is expected to be up 4.2%. Expect an even stronger increase in 2012.

- National Park Service is predicting a 0.9% increase.
- RV shipments are expecting another 8.2% gain in 2011 over the 44.8% gain in 2010.

NATIONAL TRENDS

- Travel still viewed as a “right”.
- Still staying close to home, but ready to drive longer distances (gas prices may affect this).
- High gas prices may impact household budgets and discretionary income.
- Frugality and value continue to reign.
- Average number of expected leisure trips is up.
- Leisure travel intentions up slightly.
- Most Americans prefer the convenience and affordability of a drive vacation.

MONTANA PERFORMANCE

- Montana fared well in 2010.
- 2010 non-resident visitation grew 5% to 10.5 million visitors.
- Expenditures also increased 9% over 2009 to \$2.48 billion.
- Montana hotel occupancy was up 5.2%, ADR was up 1.9% and RevPAR was up 7.2%, with the strongest gains occurring in July and August.
- Montana had the highest lodging occupancy in July in the entire nation and the second highest in August.
- Bed tax revenue was up 7% over 2009 to its highest level yet.
- Airline travel was up 2%.
- Skier visits were up 2.3%.
- According to ITRR’s Tourism Business Survey, 61% of business owners reported an increase in visitation to their businesses in 2010; 15% stayed the same as 2009.
- For the second year in a row, and the third time in four years, Yellowstone National Park set a new annual visitation record in 2010. Visitation was 10.5% higher than in 2009 (also a record year) with 3,640,184 visitors.
 - Monthly visitation records were set June through October.
- Glacier National Park also had record visitation year with 2.2 million visitors, an 8% increase over 2009.
- State parks saw a 3% decrease from the record 2 million visitors they hosted in 2009 (84% are MT residents).

MONTANA OUTLOOK

- 2%+ increase in non-resident visitation in 2011.
- Rooms sold expected to increase 1.5%.
- National Parks expected to continue to see strong visitation. Yellowstone expects a 3.3% increase and Glacier a 0.3% increase.
- Skier visits expected to increase by 2%.
- Airline travel will increase 1%.
- ITRR Business Outlook Survey found that 92% of Montana businesses expect an increase in visitation or to remain the same in 2011.
 - The most optimism since the 2007 survey.
- Montana figures highly in terms of value, so even if gas prices continue to rise, we are still a very affordable destination. Our hotel rates are still 20% lower than the national average.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL TRENDS

- Travelers demanding more for their money (i.e. more leg room; upgraded guest room; free internet and wi-fi).
- Social media – interest and usage continues to grow rapidly. Still elusive in its influence on travel selection.
- Hand-held devices figure prominently (purchase travel; make on-the-go decisions; adjust routes; provide more flexibility).
- Last minute travel is still popular (29% took at least one last-minute trip this past year).
- Vacations in travelers' local areas remain popular — “staycations”.
- Multi-generational leisure travel continues to grow.
 - 3 out of 10 grandparents took a vacation with their grandchildren in the past year.

CONSUMER TRENDS

- New Culture of Impatience – want everything faster.
- The New Frugal – “cheaper is chicer”.
- New resourcefulness – being more careful/smarter shoppers.
- With lodging choices – rate is more important than brand.

PROGRAM ACRONYMS LISTED UNDER STRATEGIES

(LISTED IN SAME ORDER AS TABLE OF CONTENTS)

CM: CONSUMER MARKETING

WEB: ELECTRONIC MARKETING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT AND SERVICES

PR: PUBLIC RELATIONS

PUB: PUBLICATIONS

VIS: VISITOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS

ADMIN: CONTACT CENTER, FULFILLMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

IS: INDUSTRY SERVICES

INTL: OVERSEAS MARKETING

GRP: GROUP TRAVEL MARKETING

BRAND: BRAND DEVELOPMENT

TD&E: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

PIO: PUBLIC INFORMATION

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