

Whitefish

MONTANA

Fiscal 2012
Marketing Plan

Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau
P.O. Box 4232
Whitefish, Montana 59937
www.explorewhitefish.com

Whitefish

MONTANA

Convention and Visitors Bureau

April 25, 2011

MTOT
P.O. Box 250033
Helena, Montana 59620

Dear Montana Office of Tourism,

I am pleased to submit the FY 12 Marketing Plan for the Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau. The WCVB Board of Directors believes that our collections will exceed the budget amount provided by the State. The budget has been set at \$60,000. We base this decision on several factors:

- Non-resident visitors will continue to be attracted to Glacier National Park
- Strong summer bookings experienced by our members
- Indications by travel research entities that there is willingness to take a leisure trip
- Consumer confidence is improving and the economy is beginning to strengthen.
- The great job we do promoting and advertising Whitefish

The WCVB will supplement bed tax funds with our private funds should there be a shortfall in bed tax collections.

We appreciate our great relationship with the MTOT and the wonderful job you are doing to promote our State.

Best Wishes,

Jan Metzmaker
Director, WCVB

P.O. Box 4232 142 Railway Street Whitefish, Montana
406 862 3390 www.explorewhitefish.com

Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau

FY 12 Marketing Plan

July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012

1. Purpose of the Whitefish Marketing Plan

The purpose of the Whitefish CVB Marketing Plan is to enhance the economy of Whitefish by emphasizing its desirability as a travel and recreation destination to visitors who appreciate and respect the character of the place. Our mission is to build a high level of visibility and increase our name recognition as a premier year-round mountain resort town. The WCVB is the officially designated non-profit, established by the City of Whitefish, to market and promote Whitefish. The organization also provides critical support for visitor information services, travel infrastructure development, market research and public relations.

2. Strengths and Challenges of Whitefish Relative to other Destination Mountain Towns

Market Strengths

Whitefish aligns perfectly with the three Montana Brand platform statements:

- **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.**

- *Proximity to Glacier National Park* — Travel forecasts have predicted an increase in U.S. travelers expressing an interest in visiting a U.S. national park. In addition, the significant name recognition that Glacier National Park holds among North American and international travelers provides an advantage to “putting Whitefish on the map” for potential visitors.

- *Central Avenue Whitefish and the alluring character of the town’s built structures* - Research indicates that visitors are attracted to the character and scale of Whitefish, especially the town’s Central Avenue district. These are attributes that form the foundation of the town’s appeal to visitors who stay in, or around the community, eat at the town’s various restaurants, and shop at local stores.

- *Access to recreational activities* — A wide variety of recreational opportunities in and around Whitefish is a major draw for visitors. These include Whitefish Lake, Whitefish Mountain Resort, as well as the trails, rivers and scenic roadways in and around Glacier National Park.

Primary Pursuits that Draw Visitors:

- Activities in and around GNP
- Water sports on Whitefish Lake
- Skiing or snowboarding at Whitefish Mountain Resort
- Fishing
- Scenic Driving and Wildlife Viewing
- Golf at Whitefish Lake Golf Course
- Sporting Events
- Photography

Additional Activities:

- Biking
 - Hiking
 - Cross country skiing
 - Birding
 - Snowcat skiing
 - Horseback riding
 - Dog sledding
 - Whitewater rafting
 - Canoeing and kayaking
 - Ice skating and hockey
 - Snowmobiling
-
- *Cultural arts and entertainment* — A variety of performing arts venues, professional Equity Theatre, galleries and live music options provide additional support and attraction for potential visitors.
 - *Friendly and welcoming community* — Visitors frequently express that their visit is enhanced by the friendly and welcoming attitudes of local residents and the front line employees at Whitefish shops, restaurants and lodging businesses.
 - *Amtrak train service to Whitefish* — Amtrak train service to Whitefish from Seattle, Portland, Minneapolis and other key northern plains and Midwestern cities distinguishes Whitefish in the marketplace and provides a unique access opportunity for visitors.
 - *Major commercial airport within 11 miles* — Proximity of Glacier Park International Airport makes Whitefish one of the closest North American mountain towns to a major commercial airport.
 - *Dining-* Diverse and unique quality dining and nightlife
 - *Community events-* Farmers' Market, First Thursdays art gallery tours and Art Walks provide a Whitefish community experience.
 - *High quality health care-* Regional medical tourism attractor

Market Challenges

- *Long delayed recovery of the U.S. Economy* – Lingering uncertainty affects intent and ability to travel.
- *Lack of competitive pricing for air access and limited seats* — When compared to mountain communities with which Whitefish competes for destination visitors, airline seats to Whitefish are regularly priced considerably higher. (See Appendix)
- *Market perceptions of low quality service and limited amenities* — Research performed by the Montana Office of Tourism in key destination markets reveals that Montana is perceived to offer lower quality amenities and services to visitors. While Montanans are perceived as being friendly, it should be distinguished that this friendliness does not automatically translate into a guest’s perception of a high level of service.
- *Highly seasonal visitation patterns* — Visitation patterns to Whitefish are highly seasonal with the majority of visitation occurring during the high demand months of July and August. This seasonality impacts the operating effectiveness of Whitefish businesses that must accommodate highly volatile demand swings.
- *Limited transportation infrastructure* — Public transportation options and visitor infrastructure services in and around Whitefish are fewer than those provided at competitor destinations.
- *Fire and other natural crises* – Weather uncertainty affects travel patterns and willingness to travel.

3. Goals (in no particular order)

- A.** Establish our identity and presence in the marketplace as a unique destination.
- B.** Encourage destination visitation from the national market.
- C.** Rebuild traditional visitation from other areas of the state and neighboring states.
- D.** Aggressively showcase Whitefish's vast array of winter sports.
- E.** Entice Glacier National Park visitors to spend a few extra days in Whitefish because of all of Whitefish's “natural” advantages.
- F.** Improve shoulder seasons with golf, fly fishing, bicycling, water sports, cultural activities, community events, fall foliage, birding, wildlife viewing, and encourage corporate retreats, medical tourism and sporting events.
- G.** Stimulate the publication of feature stories in national and regional magazines, major metropolitan newspapers, broadcast media, and new media.
- H.** Improve Meeting and Convention market year-round
- I.** Increase visibility in the international market.
- J.** Highlight Whitefish as a location to the film industry, outdoor commercial photo shoot locations.
- K.** Gather information and statistics on Whitefish visitors for the purpose of marketing planning.
- L.** Pursue new airline markets.
- M.** Increase occupancy for lodging facilities.
- N.** Work toward DMO certification and employee professional certification.
- O.** Support efforts to attract leisure groups with an added emphasis on community-wide groups.

4. Montana Office of Tourism 2008-2012 Strategic Plan

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.

1.1.a. Expand public-private marketing partnerships with tourism businesses and attractions in publicity, web marketing, advertising, publications, and other promotions.

1.1.b. Continue winter marketing, promoting Montana as a superb destination for skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, snowmobile touring, ice fishing.

1.1.c. Attend consumer travel shows that target specific high value, low impact markets attractions.

1.1.d. Continue marketing to international travelers.

1.1.e. Enhance tracking and reporting of results and return on investment (ROI) from state, regional, and CVB advertising efforts.

Action 1.2: Promote Montana to targeted groups and events, emphasizing off-peak season.

1.2.a. Amplify targeted sales and marketing to attract groups, meetings, and conferences to Montana

1.2.b. Work with local sports groups/clubs to attract regional and national sports competitions in off-peak seasons.

1.2.c. Continue to promote Montana as a film location.

1.2.d. Target travel media to increase the visibility of Montana as a leisure travel destination.

1.2.e. Continue to target tour operators to bring group tours and packaged vacations to Montana.

Action 1.3: Work collaboratively with other tourism marketing partners to plan and implement priority marketing efforts.

1.3.a. Attend an annual Marketing Plan meeting with the Montana Office of Tourism, Regions, CVBs, Tourism Advisory Council, MTTA, and other state/federal agencies involved in tourism and recreation

1.3.b. Implement the new Montana tourism brand to enhance the state's image and message in priority markets.

1.3.c. Conduct educational workshops, presentations, and webinars to build marketing capacity and awareness, and showcase successes, among community and business partners.

1.3.d. Create cooperative marketing campaigns between agriculture and tourism.

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

1.4.a. Create a database inventory of visitor information system (VIS) components available statewide.

1.4.b. Establish criteria for "officially-designated" visitor information sites and services, and foster more collaboration between agency and private visitor services

1.4.c. Provide advanced training for all Visitor Information Centers (VICs). Tap training resources such as Montana Superhost and the National Association of Interpretation.

1.4.d. Use technology to enhance Montana visitor information and marketing efforts.

1.4.e. Expand displays of Montana destinations and products at State rest areas, airports, train stations, and visitor centers.

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

Action 2.1: Build awareness through statewide publicity efforts about the new Montana Tourism Charter, geotourism, tourism benefits/impacts, tourism and recreation partner initiatives, and allocation of lodging facility use taxes.

Action 2.2: Provide concise, visual briefings and presentations to policy makers and business groups about Montana tourism issues and benefits.

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.

Action 3.2: Coordinate state, regional, and local tourism marketing efforts with state/federal land management strategies, to ensure that promotion messages are consistent with public land uses and available facilities.

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

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

4.1.e. Plan and promote commemorations of historic events in Montana.

4.2.d. Revitalize Montana's historic downtowns as vibrant destinations for travelers.

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

Action 5.1: Cultivate opportunities to leverage private and public dollars to create tourism products and attract new tourist markets.

5.1.a. Create vacation packages, and develop theme itineraries, designed for off-peak season niche markets targeted by promotion efforts.

5.1.b. Expand winter tourism products/activities to draw visitors.

5.1.c. Encourage use of Montana products by restaurants, markets, retail shops, and suppliers, to add value to local businesses and traveler experiences.

Action 5.2: Provide information about technical and financial assistance available to tourism and recreation businesses.

5.2.a. Inform businesses, communities, and organizations about technical and financial assistance programs through newsletters, websites, tourism meetings, press releases, and business trade associations.

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

Action 6.1: Enhance professional development opportunities and requirements for staff and board members of Montana tourism and recreation-related organizations.

6.1.a. Encourage all Montana CVBs to join either the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), or the Western Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (WACVB).

Goal 7: Improve Montana's transportation system for both residents and visitors.

Action 7.1: Increase air service capacity to and from Montana cities.

Action 7.4: Increase use of passenger rail and transit service in Montana.

7.4.a. Promote Amtrak's Empire Builder service in Montana.

7.4.c. Encourage and expand intercity transit service, and service to high traffic visitor locations.

Action 7.5: Expand bike/pedestrian trail systems in and between Montana communities, and connections to trailheads on state/federal lands.

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

8.1.c. Support City/County planning and growth policies that preserve the unique character of Montana, and minimize urban sprawl.

Action 8.2: Implement improvements to make Montana communities more visitor-friendly.

8.2.a. Improve the appearance of community entrances, highway commercial areas, and public parks/facilities

8.2.b. Address billboard proliferation and unsightly outdoor advertising signs.

8.2.c. Improve availability and visibility of public parking for visitors in downtown commercial areas.

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

Action 9.1: Seek increases in state funding sources for targeted tourism marketing, and for tourism and recreation-related programs and facilities.

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 regular Strategic Plan discussion and reporting mechanisms in a variety of venues to ensure that actual tourism and recreation activities are aligned with Strategic Plan goals and actions.

10.3.c. Submit implementation updates on Strategic Plan actions for an annual report to the Tourism Advisory Council, Governor, and partners.

Action 10.4: Streamline the process of reporting marketing plans, projects, and expenditures to the TAC and Montana Office of Tourism by Tourism Regions and CVBs.

Action 10.5: Obtain strategic research to inform tourism marketing, development, and policy decisions, and disseminate results and implications.

10.5.a. Continue to conduct research about resident and nonresident travelers in Montana.

10.5.c. Continue regular monitoring of Montanans' opinions about tourism and recreation.

10.5.d. Disseminate tourism research reports to partners statewide.

4. Measurable Objectives for FY 12

- **Increase awareness of the brand among target audience**
- **Move Whitefish into the target audience’s consideration set**
- **Create a multi-faceted campaign that builds awareness among first time visitors**
- **Drive consideration and preference among repeat visitors**

The following are the key objectives for accomplishment during FY 12:

- Grow Whitefish “opt-in” subscriber base by an additional 6,500 individuals from designated key markets of those who want to receive Whitefish travel information.
- Grow site traffic to www.ExploreWhitefish.com by 10% over previous year period.
- Increase overall resort tax collection by 3% rates at the average of last three year’s of collections (\$1,439,539).
- Build winter, autumn and spring season collection revenue.
 - Grow January 1 to February 28 resort tax collections by 5% over last 3 year average (\$196,217).
 - Grow September to October resort tax collections by 5% over last 3 year average (\$254,023).
- Increase high season levels by 2% over last three years’ average collections for July/August- (\$461,716).
- Improve access, ease and affordability travel to Whitefish.
- Establish an airline access commission that has a budget, ability to connect with expert advice, and directive to provide an implementation plan.
- Positive publicity placement in top 5 target markets.
- Publicity placement in 5 national markets.
- All media coverage positioned within branding initiative.
- Equivalent editorial space greater than ten times ad value.
- Hosting 15 media annually from target markets.

5. Target Markets

Potential visitors will be targeted by geographic location, demographic characteristics, and values that distinguish a potential visitor as a “geotraveler” (as defined by research conducted by the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) and the National Geographic Society). Geotravelers are high-value, low impact visitors that appreciate the unique characteristics, eccentricities and natural values of the places they visit. They place high value on travel experiences that respect and support the local character of place, and are less likely to become discouraged in their travel experiences by travel distances/difficulties and vagaries of weather.

Geotravelers at a glance:

Income: HHI of \$50,000+

Education: Bachelors’ degree+

Age: 25-64

- A segment of the U.S. total travel market estimated to include over 56 million people.
- They seek authenticity in travel experiences.
- Seek out opportunities to experience businesses and activities that are locally unique.
- Travel is an important part of their “lifestyle” and they often combine learning with travel.
- Are more likely to be aware of their own impact, both environmental and community, on the places they are visiting.

Geotraveler psychographics:

Values: Creative, curious, connected, engaged, adventurous, independent,

mindful. (Source: Geotraveler Exploratory, December 2008).

Attitudes: Immerse yourself in the culture, go off the beaten trail, get out of your comfort zone, allow for spontaneity, take a risk, pay attention, go now. (Source: Geotraveler Exploratory, 2008).

Core geographic markets for focus:

The WCVB will focus its attention during this fiscal period on potential visitors who match the Geotourism profile in the following geographic markets. It is possible that opportunities will arise in additional markets, in partnership with other tourism organizations such as the Montana Office of Tourism. In these instances, the WCVB may extend its efforts beyond these core focus markets.

- Seattle, Washington – Puget Sound Area
- Minneapolis, Minnesota
- Chicagoland, (Chicago core and northern suburbs to Madison, Wisconsin)
- Alberta including Calgary and other provinces
- Portland, Oregon

Emerging Market:

- Las Vegas- will test this potential market for the winter season after looking at data if we find a partner.
- Los Angeles- dependent upon direct air service

Where Out-of State Visitors to Whitefish Primarily Come From:

10% Washington State (*predominately west coast Puget Sound region*)

7% Minnesota (*predominately Minneapolis region*)

7% Alberta (*predominately southern Alberta and Calgary region*)

6% California (*no singular concentration*)

6% Colorado

5% Illinois (*predominately Chicagoland*)

+ Everywhere else in the U.S. and the World (*without any regular pattern, who live further away in urban areas including Seattle, Portland, Los Angeles, Phoenix, New York/ New Jersey, Chicago, Washington, DC and have an interest in national parks and wilderness.*)

Visitor Characteristics:

53% are traveling as a pair (2 persons)

28% have HHI above \$120,000 per year

Average Age: 52

(Sources: ITRR: Whitefish-specific interviews / WMR Skier Surveys / Web Analytics Reports)

Value of Fly-In vs. Drive-In Customer Types

Not all visitors are alike. The same is true of their economic impact to Whitefish. Research by the ITRR indicates that Whitefish visitors from locations more than 300 miles away, who typically travel via airlines, spend considerably more money per day than visitors who travel by car.

FLY-IN VISITORS

\$2,240 per trip average fly-in (*excluding airfare*)

\$350 per day per party

DRIVE-IN VISITORS

\$853 per trip average drive-in

\$181 per day per party

Difference: \$1,387 in additional spending per fly-in visitor (Source: ITRR). Based on these metrics, the additional \$1,387 in additional average spending per fly-in visitor provides additional margin in the cost of customer acquisition.

Travel Outlook

There are some reasons to be optimistic that non-resident visitor numbers will increase in 2012, based on data from the US Travel Association.

The economy has not quite turned the corner but is getting closer.

- Consumer confidence is up but below normal
- Recovery is underway but will be slow
- There will be more improvement in 2012

Forecast for 2012

- Total domestic visitors will set a new record in 2012
- Domestic leisure visitors will surpass the high set in 2007
- Domestic business travel will improve

Overall Traveler Sentiment Index TM highest level since April 2007

Growth will be limited due to rising travel costs and lower discounts

The cost of flying is up to do higher prices and fees

Money available for travel is at its highest point since February 2008

- Interest in travel- up slightly
- Time for travel- up slightly
- Quality of service- no change
- Safety of US travel- returns to pre-Christmas bomber levels
- Gas prices are up- could impact outlook

International Visitors are back

- Spend more than \$1800 per visitor
- Stay longer
- Seek out National Parks

According to the ITRR's- (Institute for Tourism Recreation Research) data for 2010

- 2010 Non-resident visitors up 4%
- Montana air travel up 2%
- Glacier National Park Visitation up 8.9%
- Skier visits up 2%
- Airline Deboardings up 1%

7. Marketing Methods for State Bed Tax Funds

The WCVB will utilize public bed tax funds for the purpose of marketing to the above markets through the mediums listed below. Most Bed Tax funds will be leveraged through cooperative marketing arrangements with the Montana Office of Tourism, Glacier Country or other regional destination marketing organizations. The primary objective of Bed Tax Fund expenditures will be to create brand awareness for Whitefish.

Online: Display pay-per impression advertising done as part of cooperative programs with Travel Montana, Glacier Country and other tourism organizations.

Tracking: Online ads will be referenced to a phantom URL for tracking of clicks originating from external ads. Clicks will be tracked once a visitor arrives at our website to measure the number of visitor inquiries (subscriptions). The target cost per online lead will be \$35.

Print: WCVB will partner with the Montana Office of Tourism, Glacier Country and other tourism organizations in key publications. The list of potential publications is attached.

Key Areas of WCVB Activity for FY 12

The Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau will undertake initiatives and activities in the following key areas during FY12. Tourism and visitation to Whitefish are critical to the economic health and vibrancy of Whitefish, Montana. However, tourism and the associated support infrastructure do not “just happen.” The Whitefish Convention and Visitor Bureau actively serves as a fundamental support to the town’s economy and well-being through engagement in the following pursuits:

Advertising

The WCVB enters into paid advertising agreements in select key markets. These advertisements are in print (magazine, newspaper) media as well as online. The WCVB may also purchase broadcast (television or radio) time. When paid campaigns are initiated, the WCVB often seeks to partner with the state tourism promotion agency (Montana Office of Tourism), the regional tourism authority (Glacier Country) or a strategic additional partner (for instance, Amtrak or Whitefish Mountain Resort), in order to leverage the purchase and extend the investment.

Public Relations

The WCVB invests in public relations and travel writer recruitment efforts to both encourage and enhance the coverage of the town in major North American publications and media outlets. The WCVB engages in a contract with a public relations firm for the purpose of reaching out to select writers to encourage them to cover Whitefish. These efforts may include hosting “press trips” (helping cover the costs of legitimate and published writers in a visit to Whitefish) and helping to steward the experience of these writers in Whitefish to maximize the quality of the resulting story. These efforts also include helping to support authors with imagery, background video, facts, interviews, social media and any permits that may be required. The PR firm also recruits and assists with location photo shoots for outdoor catalogs, as well as coordinating trip giveaways/promotions in target markets with media and advertising sponsors. In the past year, the media efforts of the WCVB have facilitated and enhanced major stories about Whitefish in such notable media outlets as *Association News*, *Ski Magazine*, *Sunset Magazine*, *Time Out Chicago*, *PBS Endless Feast television show*, *Outside Magazine TV*, *Portland Oregonian*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, and *ESPN.com*, to name a few.

Website

Research indicates that over 90 percent of travelers use the internet to gather information, plan and make reservations for their travels. In response to the significant role the internet plays in travel planning and booking, the WCVB has built and maintains a very powerful internet resource at www.ExploreWhitefish.com. The site provides significant information for prospective visitors, including photo and video galleries, a calendar of events, activities and detailed information on every member business. The website also serves as a key fulfillment resource for advertising and public relations efforts. Visitors to the site may also register in order to receive periodic email news about travel news and events in and around Whitefish. Currently, the E Newsletter is sent to over 18,775 individuals who have signed up to receive updates and information about Whitefish.

Trade Shows

The WCVB both coordinates and attends several consumer travel shows in key markets. These shows include a significant booth presence, staffing and collateral distribution. The WCVB also invites and coordinates the participation of its members at these shows in order to facilitate a larger Whitefish-branded “footprint” for show attendees. Assist in coop marketing effort with lodging properties to attend group ski shows.

MTOT opportunities

The MTOT occasionally offers unique marketing opportunities to its partners and we aggressively pursue those opportunities. Last year we attended the Outdoor Retailer Show and met with major national retailers and media and were able to host a major catalog shoot.

Visitor Information Services

The WCVB financially supports the Whitefish Visitor Information Center in cooperation with the Whitefish Chamber of Commerce. This visitor center hosts thousands of guests each year. The financial support of the WCVB allows the visitor center to remain open on key weekends and other holiday periods. The WCVB also provides funding for the fulfillment of free Visitor Travel Planners via U.S. mail, either from calls to our toll-free telephone number or requests from the www.explorewhitefish.com website. In addition, the WCVB operates the Visitor Information Center at Glacier Park International Airport with video monitor, Amtrak train depot, and new visitor kiosks in downtown Whitefish stocked with travel planners and maps.

Trade Partner Relations

The WCVB actively works to foster, enhance and support relationships with key trade partners, including State and regional tourism organizations, meeting planners, airlines, travel agencies, travel wholesalers and Amtrak. We also purchase qualified leads for specific email campaigns. The organization facilitates connections between member businesses and these trade partners, and also works to provide connectivity between individual businesses to assist in accommodating larger meeting and convention demands such as the town’s Western Regional Governor’s Conference and National Model T Convention FY 11. In FY 12 we will be hosting Ski Tops University. Possibility of hosting the RMI Mega Fam for international tour operators.

Specialty Marketing Programs and Sponsorships

As part of the overall marketing efforts for Whitefish, the WCVB engages in unique sponsorship and promotional initiatives that fall outside of traditional advertising venues, e.g., Amtrak Tim’s Cascade Potato Chips/Warren Miller Ski Show/ Mountain Radio partnering marketing initiative. Also had the 20% off travel to WF online discount for the ski season. Participated in an out of home marketing guerilla saturation of Portland during ski season. New media blogger promotion opportunity with Trazzler.com.

Collateral and Collateral Fulfillment

Beyond the internet, the WCVB provides important travel planning and visitor information in the form of a printed Travel Guide, fulfillment postcards and a visitor map. These items are provided to members for free distribution throughout the town, the Whitefish Visitor Information Center, the Glacier Park International Airport Whitefish Information Center and downtown visitor kiosks, travel shows and regional visitor information centers.

Accessibility to Whitefish

Establish access commission and look for ways to provide incentives for travel. Improve access, ease and affordability of travel to Whitefish. For example the online 20% off ride the train to Whitefish promotion.

Legislative Oversight and Monitoring

The WCVB actively engages with state representatives, Montana Office of Tourism and other key stakeholders to educate the public on the value of tourism to the Whitefish economy, as well as providing input on the affect of potential legislation on tourism and tourism businesses.

State Compliance and Administration

The WCVB is funded through a combination of public “bed-tax” funds collected locally at lodging properties, and member dues. The WCVB provides state-required compliance for all activities including bed tax funds, project application and completion reports, quarterly reports and audits. The WCVB facilitates public access at board meetings and compliance with open meeting laws.

Appendix

New sample air fare rates- Expedia.com June 24-June 30, 2011- cheapest fare available

	2010	2011
Seattle (SEA) – Glacier Park Int'l (FCA):	\$283	\$275
Seattle – Jackson Hole (JAC)	\$385	\$492
Seattle – Bozeman: (BZN)	\$344	\$315
Seattle – Salt Lake City: (SLC)	\$213	\$354
Seattle – Reno: (RNO)	\$228	\$319
Minneapolis (MSP) – FCA:	\$607	\$661
Minneapolis – Jackson Hole:	\$372	\$510
Minneapolis – Bozeman:	\$469	\$498
Minneapolis – SLC:	\$463	\$433
Minneapolis – Reno:	\$422	\$493
Chicago (CHI) – FCA:	\$677	\$550 Horizon, United-\$755
Chicago – Jackson Hole:	\$384	\$484
Chicago – Bozeman:	\$522	\$448
Chicago – SLC:	\$321	\$435
Chicago – Reno:	\$411	\$459
Chicago – Steamboat Springs: (SBS)	\$354	\$614
Denver (DNR) – FCA:	\$408	\$538
Denver – Jackson Hole:	\$268	\$395
Denver – Bozeman:	\$272	\$297
Denver – Reno:	\$282	\$314

Whitefish Convention & Visitor Bureau
 Fiscal Year 2011-2012 - Annual Budget Overview

**FY 12
 PUBLIC**

Support

Administration

Rent/utilities \$12,000

Consumer Advertising

Joint Ventures (with Travel
 Montana) \$44,300

Opportunity \$100

Print

Broadcast

Online Advertising

Meetings & Conventions

Publicity

Public Relations Firm

Photography

TAC Travel/ Gov. Tourism Conf. \$1,500

Marketing Plan Development

SuperHost \$100

DMAI Certification \$2,000

Fulfillment

Website

TOTAL BUDGET REQUESTED \$60,000

Budget Projections- at 100%

FY 10 Public cancelled/under budget
 project funds added to FY 11 budget

FY 10 Private Budget is reduced by 9% over FY 09- \$18,000 reduction

FY 10 Private Revenue YTD increased 8.25%

FY 11 Private budget increased by 5%

FY 12 Budget remains the same as FY 11

IF HB 316 passes, we will reduce our FY 12 budget by 10%

Application for projects over \$500

Organization Name: WCVB

Project Name: FY 12 Joint Ventures with other Bed Tax Entities

Application Completed by: Jan Metzmaker

Approval Requested

Final

Preliminary

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

It is important to leverage our marketing dollars with the Montana Office of Tourism and other bed tax collection entities. The WCVB appreciates the well thought out advertising opportunities MTOT has been able to offer. They follow the branding initiative and hit our target markets. With the MTOT buying power, we are able to purchase quality ads at a much cheaper rate. We may also use our Joint Venture funds to partner with other tourism entities such as Glacier Country and Kalispell CVB. The WCVB would like to use \$44,300 of our bed tax funds for Joint Venture projects.

Objectives

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

- Grow Whitefish “opt-in” subscriber base by an additional 6,500 individuals from designated key markets of those who want to receive Whitefish travel information.
- Grow site traffic to www.ExploreWhitefish.com by 10% over previous year period.
- Increase overall resort tax collection by 3% rates at the average of last three year’s of collections (\$1,439,539).
- Build winter, autumn and spring season collection revenue.
 - Grow January 1 to February 28 resort tax collections by 5% over last 3 year average (\$196,217).
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- Increase high season levels by 2% over last three years’ average collections for July/August- (\$461,716).

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

5. Goals

- A. **Establish our identity and presence in the marketplace as a unique destination.**
- B. **Encourage destination visitation from the national market.**

- C. Rebuild traditional visitation from other areas of the state and neighboring states.
- D. Aggressively showcase Whitefish's vast array of winter sports.
- E. Entice Glacier National Park visitors to spend a few extra days in Whitefish because of all of Whitefish's "natural" advantages.
- F. Improve shoulder seasons with golf, fly fishing, bicycling, water sports, cultural activities, community, events, fall foliage, birding, wildlife viewing, and encourage corporate retreats and sporting events.
- G. Stimulate the publication of feature stories in national and regional magazines, major metropolitan newspapers, and broadcast media.
- H. Improve Meeting and Convention market year-round.
- I. Increase visibility in the international market.
- M. Increase occupancy for lodging facilities

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

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.

1.1.a. Expand public-private marketing partnerships with tourism businesses and attractions in publicity, web marketing, advertising, publications, and other promotions.

1.1.b. Continue winter marketing, promoting Montana as a superb destination for skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, snowmobile touring, ice fishing.

1.1.c. Attend consumer travel shows that target specific high value, low impact markets attractions.

1.1.d. Continue marketing to international travelers.

1.1.e. Enhance tracking and reporting of results and return on investment (ROI) from state, regional, and CVB advertising efforts.

Action 1.2: Promote Montana to targeted groups and events, emphasizing off-peak season.

1.2.a. Amplify targeted sales and marketing to attract groups, meetings, and conferences to Montana

1.3.b. Implement the new Montana tourism brand to enhance the state's image and message in priority markets.

Please complete the appropriate project pages attached. If complete information is not available at the time of the application, it will be necessary to submit these details to the Audits/Applications Committee for final approval, prior to commitment of funds.

Detail pages attached: No

Budget page attached: Yes

WCVB Project Budget FY 12 Joint Ventures

	State Tourism Funds		Other Funds		Total
PROFESSIONALSERVICES:					
Creative	\$4,300.00	+		=	\$4,300.00
	\$0.00	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
TOTAL	4,300.00		0.00	=	4,300.00
MARKETING/ADVERTISING:					
Joint Ventures with Travel MT	\$40,000	+		=	\$40,000
Joint Ventures with Other Bed Tax Entities		+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
TOTAL	\$40,000		\$0	=	\$40,000
TRAVEL:					
		+		=	\$0
		+		=	\$0
		+		=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0	=	\$0
OTHER:					
	\$0	+		=	\$0
	\$0	+		=	\$0
		+		=	\$0
		+		=	\$0
TOTAL				=	\$0
<hr/> <hr/>					
REGION/CVB PROJECT TOTAL	44,300.00	+	0.00	=	44,300.00

Application for projects over \$500

Organization Name: WCVB

Project Name: FY 12 DMAI Certification

Application Completed by: Jan Metzmaker

Approval Requested

Final

Preliminary

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

The WCVB wishes to use \$2,000 of public funds to continue the process of DMAI certification. Professional development and DMO certification are important because it allows the WCVB and its director to be more effective, professional and productive. The DMAI program offers a wide variety of relevant courses that would be very beneficial to our organization. DMO certification is called out in the Montana Office of Tourism Strategic Plan. Acquiring this certification would enhance our ability to work with higher end meetings and convention planners. Note: We are combining FY 10 funds with FY 11 in order to fund this project.

Objectives

- Begin DMAI certification process by attending one annual conference**
- Start one professional course**

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

N. Work toward DMO certification and employee professional certification.

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

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

6.1: Enhance professional development opportunities and requirements for staff and board members of Montana tourism and recreation-related organizations.

6.1.a. Encourage all Montana CVBs to join either the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI), or the Western Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus (WACVB).

Detail pages attached No

Budget page attached Yes

**WCVB BUDGET FY 12
DMAI Certification**

	State Tourism Funds		Other Funds		Total
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:					
		+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

MARKETING/ADVERTISING:					
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

TRAVEL:					
Conference attendance fee	\$550	+	\$0	=	\$550
Travel,	\$300	+	\$0	=	\$300
Hotel	\$200	+	\$0	=	\$200
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$1,050		\$0		\$1,050

OTHER:					
Annual membership	\$950	+	\$0	=	\$950
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$950		\$0		\$950

REGION/CVB	PROJECT				
TOTAL		\$2,000	+	\$0	= \$2,000
					0

Application for projects over \$500

Organization Name: WCVB

Project Name: FY 12 SuperHost

Application Completed by: Jan Metzmaker

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

Please explain the need for this project as well as a clear overview of the concept of the project.

The WCVB would like to use \$100 of bed tax funds for SuperHost Training. Customer Service training is very important for those involved in the hospitality industry. The more front line employees we can train will result in satisfied customers who will in turn tell their friends and neighbors and become repeat customers. The WCVB will offer SuperHost training prior to the beginning of the busy summer season.

Objectives

- Grow Whitefish “opt-in” subscriber base by an additional 6,500 individuals from designated key markets of those who want to receive Whitefish travel information.
- Grow site traffic to www.ExploreWhitefish.com by 10% over previous year period.
- Increase overall resort tax collection by 3% rates at the average of last three year’s of collections (\$1,439,539).
- Build winter, autumn and spring season collection revenue.
 - Grow January 1 to February 28 resort tax collections by 5% over last 3 year average (\$196,217).
 - Grow September to October resort tax collections by 5% over last 3 year average (\$254,023).
- Increase high season levels by 2% over last three years’ average collections for July/August- (\$461,716).

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

Goals

- A. Establish our identity and presence in the marketplace as a unique destination.**
- E. Entice Glacier National Park visitors to spend a few extra days in Whitefish because of all of Whitefish's “natural” advantages.**

How does this project support the Strategic Plan?

1.3.c. Conduct educational workshops, presentations, and webinars to build marketing capacity and awareness, and showcase successes, among community and business partners.

1.4.c. Provide advanced training for all Visitor Information Centers (VICs).. Tap training resources such as Montana SuperHost and the National Association of Interpretation

Detail pages attached: **No** Budget page attached: **Yes**

WCVB PROJECT BUDGET
FY 12 SuperHost Training

	State Tourism Funds		Other Funds		Total
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES:					
Hosting workshops and training	\$100	+	\$0	=	\$100
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$100		\$0		\$100

MARKETING/ADVERTISING:					
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

TRAVEL:					
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

OTHER:					
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
	\$0	+	\$0	=	\$0
TOTAL	\$0		\$0		\$0

REGION/CVB	PROJECT				
TOTAL		\$100	+	\$0	= \$100

FY 12 Consumer Ad List of Publications

The WCVB would like to advertise in the following publications:

Montana Travel Planner
Glacier Country Guide
Glacier Waterton Visitors Assoc. Map
Montana Winter Guide
Flathead Golf Guide
Montana's Cultural Treasures
KCVB Travel Planner

PRINT ADVERTISING:

Any Publications offered by the Montana Office of Tourism as a Co-op.

Alberta Golf Publication Amtrak Magazine

Audubon

Big Sky Journal

Calgary Herald

Calgary Sun

Chicago Tribune

Daily Inter Lake

Delta Inflight

Empire Builder Magazine

FFwd (weekly magazine in Calgary)

Flathead Beacon

Good Housekeeping

Horizon Inflight

Horse Trader

I.M. Cowgirl

Lethbridge Herald

Lively Times

Meetings magazines

Smart Meetings

Association News

Other inflight magazines

Missoula Independent/Headwall

Missoulia

Montana Magazine

Mountain Living

National Geographic(any of their publications)

Northwest Magazines

Outside

Portland Oregonian

Powder Magazine

Ready to Retire
Seattle Post Intelligencer
Seattle Times
Seattle Weekly
Skiing Magazine
Ski Journal
Ski Magazine
Snow
Snowboard Journal
Spokesman Review
Trail Blazer
Trail Rider
United Airlines Hemisphere
Western Horseman
Whitefish Pilot
Whitefish Review

FY 12 Consumer Online Ad List

The WCVB would like to advertise online in the following sources:

Any online co-op offered by the Montana Office of Tourism and the following:

Audubon.com
away.com
backpacker.com
biglines.com
budgettravel.com
calgaryherald.com
chicagotribune.com
crownofthecontinent.net
facebook.com
flick'r.com
freeskier.com
googleadwords.com
matador.com
nationalgeographic.com
onthesnow.com
oregonian.com
outside.com
portlandtribune.com
seattlepi.com
seattleweekly.com
skiing.com
skimag.com
skinet.com
snowboarding.com
startribune.com
suntimes.com
tripadvisor.com
twincities.com
twitter.com
weather.com
wildernet.com
yahoo.com