



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
OFFICE OF TOURISM

FINAL PROGRESS REPORT
July 2010- June 2011

Tourism Marketing Plan
July 2010-June 2011

JUNE 30, 2011

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Montana Office of Tourism has developed the July 2010 – June 2011 Tourism Marketing Plan keeping in mind its mission statement, the *Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2008-2012* and the recently developed Montana brand platform.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Fiscal Year 2011 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 AND 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 2010 through June 2011. 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 is an emerging segment called the Geotraveler. This group numbers 55 million in the United States alone.

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:

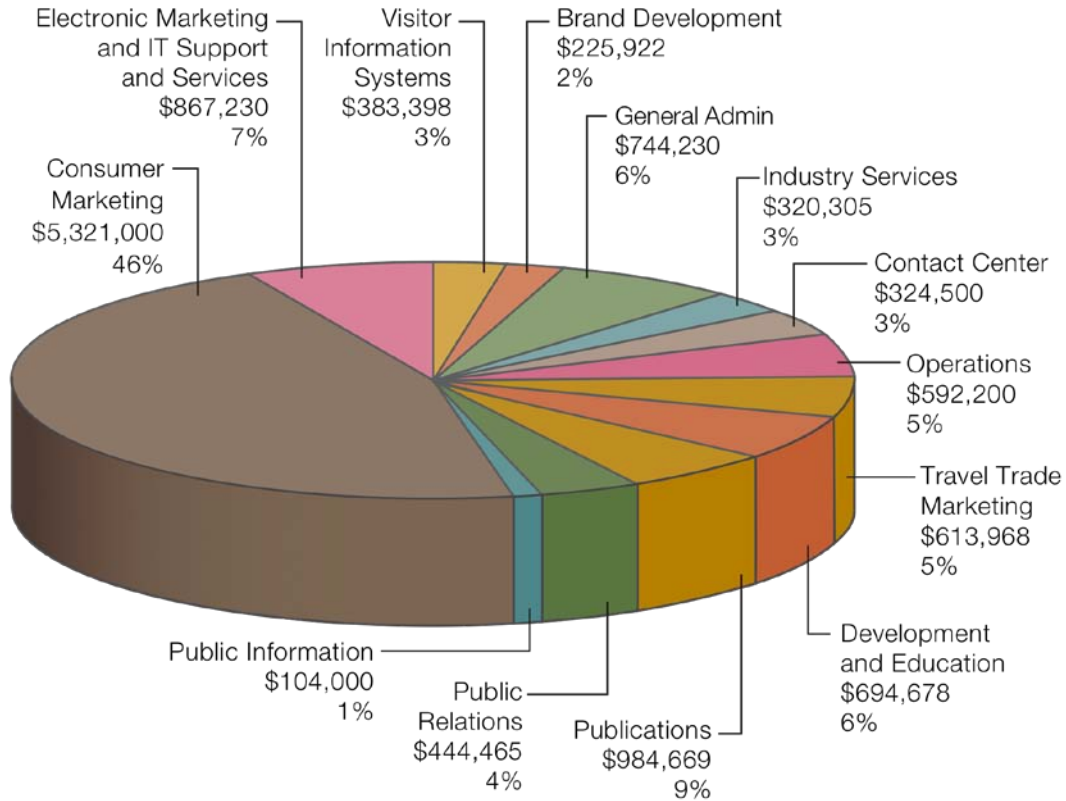
- Their desire to customize their experiences and create their own personal connections when traveling.
- An emphasis on making the most of every moment due to the lack of time in their day-to-day lives.
- The pervasive nature of technology in planning their travels and exploring their destinations before 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 AND 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 FY11 BUDGET OVERVIEW

The Montana Office of Tourism FY11 budget is \$11,620,565. 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 2011 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, Contact Center 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

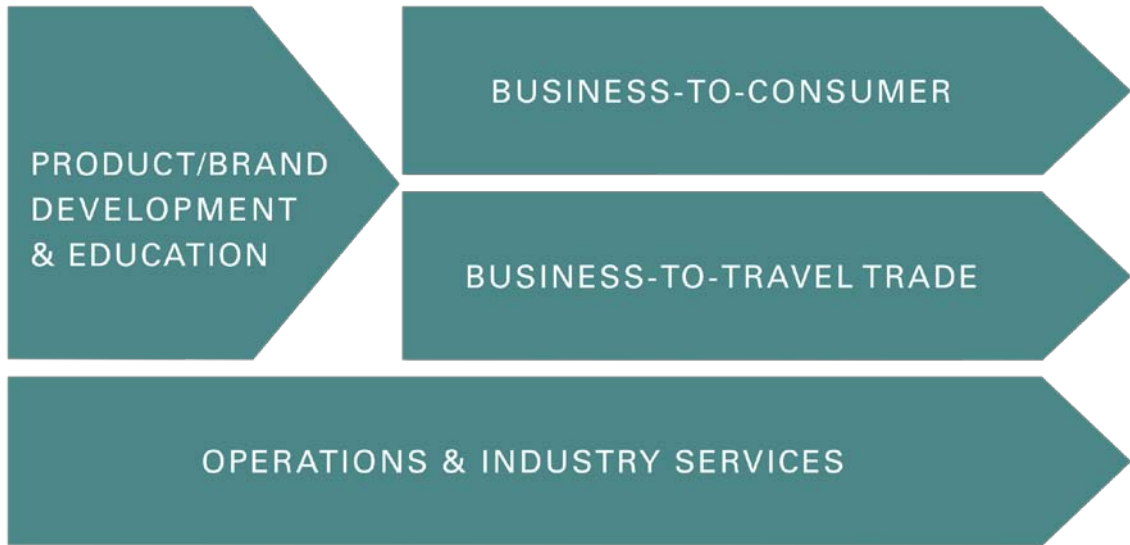
Internal programs that educate stakeholders about the brand, support stakeholder marketing and development efforts and identify product attributes, in coordination with tourism partners, that the target consumer desires.

4. OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES

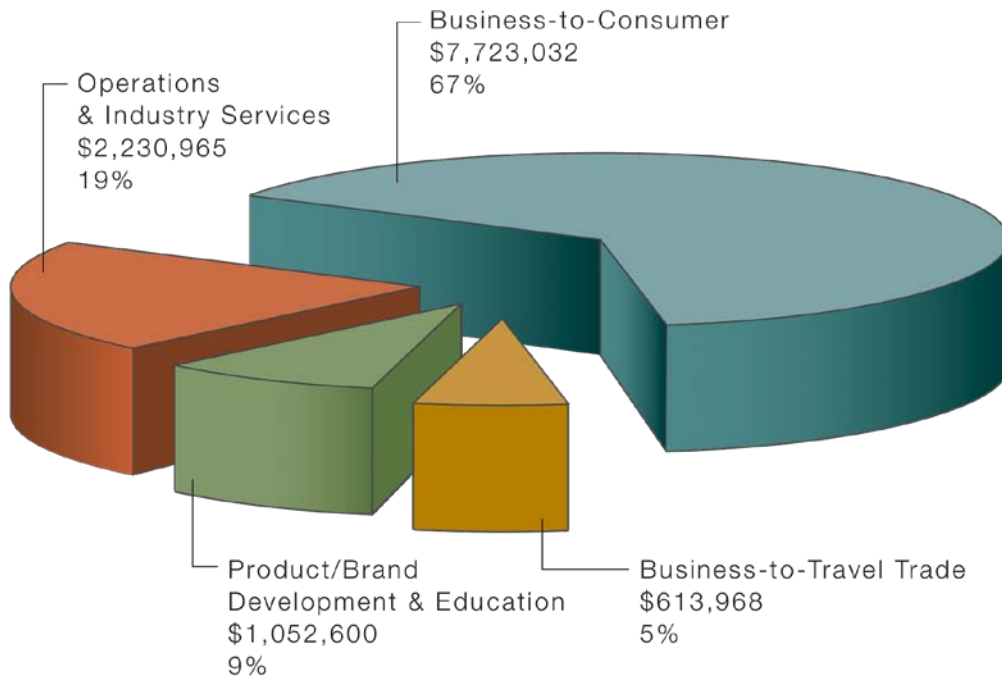
TARGET: The Montana Office of Tourism and the internal tourism constituency: the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC), the Regions and CVBs, private businesses and other governmental agencies

PROGRAMS INCLUDE: Operations and Industry Services, IT Support and Services, Public Information

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



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



MONTANA OFFICE OF TOURISM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Montana Office of Tourism has outlined the following three division goals and corresponding objectives for July 2010 through June 2011.

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 2011*

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 2011*

DIVISION GOAL 3

SUPPORT MONTANA TOURISM ENTITIES IN INCREASING THEIR REVENUES

- OBJECTIVE 3: Support the return of annual, non-resident expenditures in 2010 to the 2005 level of \$3.037 billion

Note: Percentage point increases for Objectives 1 and 2 are based on the baseline brand awareness study conducted by the Leisure Trends Group on behalf of the Montana Office of Tourism in February 2009. These percentages will be finalized by September 2010, based on outcomes of planning sessions with advertising and media planning agencies.

** Based on results of the Wave 4 Brand Awareness Study/Leisure Trends, due by July 2010.*

JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011 TOURISM MARKETING PLAN PRIORITIES

The Montana Office of Tourism has specified the following four strategic priorities for July 2010 through June 2011. 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 helps 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 2010 – June 2011 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 2010 – JUNE 2011 TOURISM MARKETING PLAN OVERVIEW



DIVISION PRIORITY 1 (P1):

Consumer: Create 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.

FY11 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 FY11 budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011

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 2010 through June 2011 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 2010 through June 2011, 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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Consumer Marketing is \$5,321,000, representing approximately 46% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Increase the target audience's awareness of the brand by 3 percentage points by July 2011.
 - Between May 2010 and May 2011, brand awareness did not increase, holding steady at 15%.
- Increase the target audience's intent to travel to Montana by 2 percentage points by July 2011.
 - Between May 2010 and May 2011, increased intent to travel by 2 percentage points (from 23% to 25%).
- 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 2011.
 - Provided range of co-op advertising opportunities for the winter and warm season tourism products and participated in strategic co-op partnerships with neighboring states and destination marketing organizations. Partners contributed \$498,817 representing 9.4% of the FY11 MTOT media budget.

Note: Percentage point increases for Objectives 1 and 2 are based on the baseline brand awareness study conducted by the Leisure Trends Group on behalf of the Montana Office of Tourism in February 2009. These percentages will be finalized by September 2010, based on outcomes of the planning sessions with advertising and media planning agencies

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 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)
- d. 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 24-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 C. Timeline:* Start in July 2010. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR, PUB, INTL, GRP, VIS, ADMIN and IS. (Supports P1, P2 and P4)
 - Continue to include key markets and a national presence in plan
 - National audiences are targeted according to travel interests, behaviors, and attitudes that match the geotraveler profile. Niche audiences, i.e. downhill skiing and winter sports, are targeted separately. Key market approach continues with focus on Seattle, Minneapolis, Chicago, and neighboring states to generate a combination of first-time and repeat visitation.
 - Conduct planning meeting with marketing and media partners
 - Completed FY12 planning meetings in April/May 2011 with a review of FY10-11 campaign performance to-date; priorities, goals, and objectives for FY12; and media and creative strategy documents. An initial request for media proposals was issued in May-June; evaluation, negotiation, and finalization of the plan June-July; developed and issued first-ever FY12 year-round cooperative advertising opportunities by deadline of August 1, 2011. Majority of creative strategy and concept work completed in May-August. Execution of winter push July-October with planned October 17th launch date. Warm season push to be developed Nov-February.
 - Create a measurement plan that includes conducting primary research (e.g. awareness research studies, web analytics) and utilizing secondary data (e.g. ITRR) to monitor target audience trends and measure campaign results. Results should be easily and readily available for tourism partners, including Regions and CVBs
 - Measured geotraveler awareness and perceptions of Montana as a travel destination and intent to travel to Montana through contracted third-party research. Research conducted February-July with results presented in July 2011.

Developed plan to extend this study into FY12 winter campaign. Other measurement/performance monitoring includes regular, monthly monitoring of online campaign performance and quarterly economic/visitation trends from ITRR.

- Integrate a digital communications strategy for first-time visitors, including mechanisms to gather/grow contact information through campaigns and communicate via email with audience
 - Launched email newsletter, or “eNews,” program through service provider eROI in Jan/Feb 2011. Collecting interests from list members to begin during first half of FY12 to allow further, more targeted communications (such as by interest, i.e. fly-fishing or skiing) by summer 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Create a comprehensive, unique and measurable 24-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 C.* **Timeline:** Start in July 2010. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR, PUB, INTL, GRP, VIS, ADMIN and IS. (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)
 - Continue to include regional key markets and in-state presence
 - Key markets of Seattle and Minneapolis continue to be good prospects for repeat as well as first-time visitors. Regional efforts, such as winter/ski season efforts and Montana High Plains target neighboring states of North Dakota, Wyoming, and Idaho; Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia; and drive markets of eastern Washington and Utah. MTOT continues to target in-state residents year-round with its Get Lost (in Montana) campaign.
 - Conduct planning meeting with marketing and media partners
 - Completed FY12 planning meetings in April/May 2011 with a review of FY10-11 campaign performance to-date; priorities, goals, and objectives for FY12; and media and creative strategy documents. An initial request for media proposals was issued in May-June; evaluation, negotiation, and finalization of the plan June-July; developed and issued first-ever FY12 year-round cooperative advertising opportunities by deadline of August 1, 2011. Majority of creative strategy and concept work completed in May-August. Execution of winter push July-October with planned October 17th launch date. Warm season push to be developed Nov-February.
 - Include co-op opportunities through campaign to tourism partners, including Regions, CVBs and Tourism Business Improvement Districts. Opportunities with costs and deadlines will be outlined on www.travelmontana.mt.gov/programs
 - 2010-11 winter/ski national and key market co-op advertising opportunities (print & online) were released in September 2010; 2011 winter in-state and 2011 warm season national and key market co-op advertising opportunities (print, online, radio) were released in November 2010; 2011 warm season in-state (including Montana's High Plains) were released in February 2011.
 - 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. Results should be easily and readily available for tourism partners, including Regions and CVBs
 - Measured geotraveler awareness and perceptions of Montana as a travel destination and intent to travel to Montana through contracted third-party research. Research conducted February-July with results presented in July 2011. Developed plan to extend this study into FY12 winter campaign. Other measurement/performance monitoring includes regular, monthly monitoring of

online campaign performance and quarterly economic/visitation trends from ITRR.

- Communicate specific experiences travelers could have that take place throughout the year, including shoulder seasons
 - Specific experiences are promoted in expanded print and online opportunities (where space, timing, audience, and editorial context permit), in mini-sites developed especially for campaigns (i.e. www.montanahighplains.com, www.getlostmt.com), and in partnership with other MTOT marketing staff on initiatives like the primary website, www.visitmt.com, publications, and social communities (like Facebook, Flickr, etc.). The primary purpose of the monthly Montana eNews (newsletter program to launch Feb 2011) is to inspire and inform readers with specific, actionable travel ideas, focusing on lesser-known and lesser-traveled areas of the state whenever possible.
- Integrate a digital communications strategy for return visitors, including mechanisms to gather/grow contact information through campaigns and communicate via email with audience
 - Launched email newsletter, or “eNews,” program through service provider eROI in Feb 2011. Collecting interests from list members to begin during first half of FY12 to allow further, more targeted communications (such as by interest, i.e. fly-fishing or skiing) by summer 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Collaborate with E-Marketing, Public Information and Public Relations to develop, launch and track an integrated interactive marketing program. **Timeline:** July 2010. **Support Programs:** WEB, PR and PIO. (Supports P1, P2 and P4)
 - Optimize visitmt.com for primary and secondary audiences and users
 - Content exists that speaks to both audiences, and content is regularly updated by eMarketing staff. However, no progress on data-driven capabilities to track and dynamically target visitors with content according to visitation history. Need to monitor recent legal concerns and developments related to consumer privacy protections.
 - Communicate with target audience through online and social media tactics
 - In absence of in-house staff resources, engaged contracted ad agency to lead social media strategy and execution. Prioritized on Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and YouTube.
 - Leverage word-of-mouth opportunities presented by return visitors
 - Launched a completely retooled www.getlostmt.com (accompanying website to in-state campaign) in January 2011 that provided return visitors (residents) the opportunity to share best loved, out of the way places to eat, stay, and recreate. Resident submissions will be used in creating itineraries for longer trips, as well as to inspire fellow travelers for spur-of-the-moment ideas in geographic locales across the state. Great potential for promoting Montana's lesser-known areas to non-residents as well.
- Work with eROI to implement an email marketing strategy that proactively promotes the Montana brand and its unique attributes to first-time visitors, continues communication with return visitors, and offers targeted promotional opportunities to private industry partners. *Also supports Strategies A and B.* **Timeline:** July 2010. **Support Program:** WEB. (Supports P1, P2, P3 and P4)
 - Combined and cleaned multiple source lists to form a “heritage” database in eROI in summer/fall 2010. Initiated communications with Welcome Series in Jan 2011. Launched monthly email newsletter, or “eNews,” program through service provider eROI in Feb 2011. Collecting interests from list members to begin during first half of

FY12 to allow further, more targeted communications (such as by interest, i.e. fly-fishing or skiing) by summer 2012.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY D:

- Develop a brand tool kit to aid partners in using and implementing the brand, with technical assistance, online resources and content to help educate staff and industry on Montana's target audience, the brand platform and how to consistently apply the brand in various industry settings and promotional efforts. **Timeline:** August 2010 – October 2010. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1, P2, and P3)
 - Current resources remain Brand Books 1 & 2, developed in 2009. As of July 2011, no progress on developing a more thorough kit that can be customized to the various industry stakeholders (public, private, small, large, etc.). Need additional internal and external staff resources in order to fully realize potential of brand outreach program.
- 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:** August 2010 – October 2010. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - As of July 2011, no progress on a formal program. Consumer marketing continues to offer, oftentimes subsidizing, cooperative marketing opportunities. More MTOT-sponsored opportunities now offer seamless co-op advertising presence where partners are built in to editorial, images, etc. (not only formatted ads sold by third-party advertising reps).
- Develop an annual guidebook that will outline incentives and co-operative partnerships. **Timeline:** October 2010 – November 2010. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1)
 - An annual guidebook of opportunities was created and distributed in August 2011 for FY12 efforts. Worked with partners to understand expectations and needs for releasing cooperative opportunities while still allowing MTOT to negotiate most efficient prices and integrate learnings from current campaigns. Future efforts may widen scope to help identify opportunities for entities working with small budgets, as well as better coordinate and unify efforts under MTOT strategy and design umbrella.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- See Actions under Strategy B & D for details.

CALENDAR:

- To be finalized based on strategy development.
- Key upcoming dates
 - See FY12 Marketing Plan
- Campaigns currently in-market
 - See FY12 Marketing Plan

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER AND OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES: ELECTRONIC MARKETING AND 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
 - In cooperation with Consumer Marketing we have added an Experiences page that featured the Get Lost in Montana Campaign. Working with travel writer Bill Schneider we developed a Montana microbrew section on visitmt.com. The "Places to Go" section was completely redesigned. We have developed a major presence on Facebook and Twitter and have daily contact with over 50,000 friends.
 - We continue to enhance and add new sections to visitmt.com. During this period we added a motorcycle section and enhanced golfing, the Lewis & Clark trail and Montana Groups. We have also created feature towns on our cities page and reworked the region pages. We are also featuring skimt.com with its own homepage for the ski areas. Our social networking effort continues to grow rapidly. Currently we have over 121,000 friends on Facebook and 3800 followers on Twitter.

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
 - The High Plains mini site was integrated into visitmt.com. Working with our ad agency we developed an audio tour section for our Things to Do page. During the summer of 2010 we featured seven Montana communities on our Cities and Towns page.

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Electronic Marketing and IT Support and Services is \$867,230, representing approximately 7% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Increase time spent on visitmt.com by 2% and conversions by 5%.
 - Time spent on the site has increased from an average of 6:00 minutes to nearly 7:30 minutes.

- Demonstrate increased awareness of the Montana brand among target audience by increase of 20% of unique visitors to visitmt.com.
 - **Unique visitors have increased about 10%.**
- Develop a mobile base of at least 5,000 users.
 - **As of July 2011 we have nearly 15,000 mobile users monthly.**
- Have 100 packages and coupons on visitmt.com.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Create an integrated digital strategy, with short- and long-term goals for the Montana Office of Tourism, and the interactive media roadmap to support those goals. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P2)
- b. Collaborate with other consumer-facing programs to develop an integrated interactive strategy that incorporates consumer marketing elements online and increases target audience's conversion to Montana. **Division Goal: 2.** (Supports P1 and P2)
- c. Support Montana tourism entities in increasing their revenues by offering online electronic products and services and booking opportunities that benefit Montana businesses and provide helpful information to consumers. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P2) Develop a coordinated and archivable tracking system for key performance indicators to establish ongoing trend analysis. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P4)
- d. Implement recommendations from digital strategy review and IT systems audit. **Division Goals: 1, 2 and 3.** (Supports P2)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Conduct an Integrated Interactive Strategy Review and determine best steps for achieving division goals and objectives from an interactive, consumer-facing strategic approach. **Timeline:** September 2010. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)
 - Based on outcomes of the Integrated Interactive Strategy Review, develop a mobile application strategy for the 3.5 billion mobile phones and devices, worldwide, and provide opportunities for organizing, communications, and service and information delivery.
 - Develop a mobile application to find lodging by city. **Timeline:** June 2010. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)
 - Develop a mobile application to view current ski conditions. **Timeline:** October 2010. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)
 - Acquire a mobile-enabled version of visitmt.com. **Timeline:** December 2010. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)
 - **Our mobile version of visitmt.com has been completed.**
 - **We have added a winter and an Indian Nations sections on our mobile site.**
 - **We are currently conducting usability testing to improve the platform.**
 - Determine whether increasing traffic at montanakids.com fits in overall strategy; if it does, then develop partnerships with communities and existing organizations that encourage children to participate in outdoor activities. (Supports P1)
 - Develop Children's Games for mobile devices **Timeline:** June 2011. **Support Programs:** CM, PIO. (Supports P1 and P2)
 - **Not started.**
- Conduct a digital infrastructure audit to optimize resources spent on electronic marketing. **Timeline:** June 2010. **Support Programs:** CM, IS. (Supports P2)
 - **The audit was complete in June 2010 and we now have a strategic IT roadmap for the future.**
 - **Nearly all of the recommendations are in progress. We are currently implementing the .NET upgrade and we are gathering requirements for the CRM replacement.**

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Based on outcomes of the Integrated Interactive Strategy Review, determine and execute website enhancements that are relevant to the target audience and complement other consumer-facing program initiatives. Tactics may include:
 - Enhance transportation section of visitmt.com to emphasize that Montana can be very accessible and make it easily viewable on mobile devices **Timeline:** June 2011. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P1 and P2)
 - The transportation section of visitmt.com has been enhanced but more work remains to be done.
 - Provide target audience with online tools to assist in planning their travels **Timeline:** May 2011. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P1 and P2)
 - Working with our partner Axiom Solutions we have developed all the requirements for a redesign of the search, results and record level pages on visitmt.com. This will greatly enhance the travel planning function of the site.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Add opt-in lodging facilities reviews on visitmt.com. **Timeline:** December 2010. **Support Programs:** CM, PUB. (Supports P1 and P2)
 - This proposal went to the TAC in February 2011.
 - This functionality is built in to our .NET upgrade.
- Convert survey tool to an online application and add coupon and packaging component. **Timeline:** June 2011. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P4)
 - This initiative has been postponed and will begin in the fall of 2011
- Offer web-enabled survey tools and offer businesses an automated system for offering consumers packages and coupons from their listings. **Timeline:** June 2011. (Supports P2)
 - This initiative has been postponed and will begin in the spring of 2012.
 - Documenting business processes and requirements gathering has begun.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY D:

- Conduct regular, ongoing analysis and hold monthly KPI meetings with appropriate staff to evaluate promotions and guide future decisions. **Timeline:** Monthly, with additional meetings to analyze major campaigns. **Support Programs:** CM and PIO. (Supports P1, P2 and P4)
 - KPI meetings have been ongoing and with the eminent arrival of our Interactive Marketing Specialist will be greatly enhanced in the future.
 - We have added mobile and social media metrics to our KPI meeting.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY E:

- Develop a "Trip Planner" or "Shopping Cart" feature for visitmt.com. **Timeline:** March 2011. **Support Programs:** CM and PIO. (Supports P4)
 - This project will be implemented in Phase II of our .NET upgrade.
 - We currently have a CEP (Contractor Engagement Proposal) posted for this functionality.
- Develop a loyalty program integrated with an email campaign. **Timeline:** June 2011. **Support Programs:** CM and PIO. (Supports P4)
 - We have begun to send out monthly to opt-in email recipients.
- Emphasize seasonal opportunities with micro sites. **Timeline:** June 2011. **Support Programs:** CM and PIO. (Supports P4)
 - For the 2010/2011 Winter campaign wintermt.com and skimt.com have been separated for marketing purposes and each one highlights different aspects of winter recreational opportunities in Montana.

- After completion of interactive infrastructure audit, identify and implement preferred hosting platform. **Timeline:** June 2011. **Support Program:** CM. (Supports P2)
 - Our conversion to a .NET platform with C# as the primary coding language has been confirmed by the IT Audit.
 - During the summer of 2011 we moved all hardware systems to the state data center except for the Siebel system. That system is slated to be replaced with a cloud based system.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

VISITMT.COM

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

CALENDAR:

JULY-DECEMBER 2010

- Implement preferred hosting platform
- Develop a mobile application to view current ski conditions
- Develop a mobile-enabled version of visitmt.com
- Add lodging reviews
- Integrate social media
- Develop a mobile application to find lodging

JANUARY-JUNE 2011

- Develop children's games for mobile devices
- Enhanced transportation information accessible on web and on mobile devices
- Convert survey tool to an online application
- Implement preferred hosting platform

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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Public Relations is \$444,465, representing approximately 3.82% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Generate at least \$15 million in ad equivalency as measured by PR Trak.
 - Generated \$30,011,346 in publicity values; domestic media only.
- Grow our media database, currently at 1,636, by 3%, approximately 50 new entries, using both proactive (researching and developing relationships with appropriate media) and reactive (responding to media requests, thereby establishing relationships) approaches.
 - Media database at the end of FY11 numbered 1695.

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 AND/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)
 - Worked with IT to get a SAN expansion in place for housing digital images, as the library continues to grow.
- 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)
 - Updated images on the pressroom photo gallery.
- Continue to develop creative and enticing direct email campaigns to appropriate markets. **Strategies:** a and b. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1, P2, and P3)
 - Released Cold Smoke Chronicles in November, Montana's Vintage Lodging in April and High Steppin' and Road Trippin' in May
- 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)
 - Collaborated with PIO and Mercury's Donnie Clapp on both Facebook and Twitter postings.
- 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)
 - Supported seven group press trips: Beartooth Highway 75th Anniversary (Yellowstone Country); Riding the Rails (Glacier, Gold West and Missouri River countries); American Indian Treasures (Glacier Country); Big Sky/West Yellowstone Discovery; Girlfriend Getaway Winter Discovery (Yellowstone, Gold West, Glacier countries); Manventure (Glacier Country); Lewis & Clark Immersion (Russell Country). Hosted *Snowboard Magazine* staff as they toured ski areas around the state. Hosted 19 domestic journalists and 16 international journalists with assistance from regions/CVBs. Assisted with two international and three domestic tv productions, with the help of the regions/CVBs.
- With the support of the contracted PR agency – MercuryCSC – conduct media missions or themed media events in key national markets (New York, Los Angeles, Denver/Boulder) 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)
 - Conducted a media mission in late May to NYC, where we connected with 12 journalists and/or editors in the course of 3 days.
- Participate in trade/travel shows and markets with a record of strong media attendance to develop new media connections, such as SATW and Outdoor Retailer Markets. **Strategy:** a. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - Mike Harrelson (Mercury CSC) represented our office at the Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Salt Lake (August), where he connected with over a dozen journalists.
- 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)
 - Committed to a September 2011 Mentor Series photo trek in Yellowstone Country /YNP.

- 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 (Dino Trail, Crown of the Continent 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)
 - Focused the Beartooth 75th Anniversary press trip around the Greater Yellowstone MapGuide; supported the Crown of the Continent Guitar Foundation in the startup of their annual event in the Flathead. Focusing the Mentor Series workshop around the Greater Yellowstone Region Mapguide.

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)
 - Provided a report to the October 2010 TAC meeting on the PR efforts and publicity values (FY10 values tracked at \$30,011,346 – domestic only)

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 2010

- July 10-12: National Folk Festival, Butte
- Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Salt Lake City

JANUARY 2011

- TBD: Outdoor Retailer Winter Market in Salt Lake City
- Big Sky/Yellowstone National Park press trip

MARCH 2011

- Girlfriend Getaway Winter Discovery
- Snowboard Magazine staff press trip to various ski areas throughout western MT

MAY 2011

- Media Blitz – New York City

JUNE 2011

- Manventure / Glacier Country
- Lewis & Clark Immersion / Russell Country

AUGUST 2011

- Outdoor Retailer Summer Market in Salt Lake City

SEPTEMBER 2011

- Mentor Series photo trek (Yellowstone Country)

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER: PUBLICATIONS

OVERVIEW:

The Montana Office of Tourism publications provide statewide, 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, www.visitmt.com. Consumers can use the printed guides, supplemented by www.visitmt.com and www.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.

This program works closely with tourism partners to coordinate marketing efforts. Publication distribution is through chambers, visitor centers, consumer shows, conventions, local businesses and direct mail inquiries.

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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Publications is \$984,669, representing approximately 9% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

Collecting Geotraveler and potential Geotraveler vacation planning information via a research study conducted by Alexis Sanford Consulting, March – May, 2010. From this study we will learn the planning process the Geotraveler goes through to decide their travel destination and the process and tools they use to plan their trip. This information will tell us how best to spend the Publication budget to meet the needs of our target audience. We will redesign the guides and possibly create online planning tools to reflect the survey results.

Maintain the same number of inquiries for the Vacation Planner – either online or printed versions – as in FY10.

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 Vacation Planner online. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P2 and P3)
- d. Work closely with other Montana Office of Tourism marketing campaigns to coordinate branding efforts. **Division Goal: 1.** (Supports P1)
- e. 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)
- f. Continue communication with all State and Federal agencies, publishing consistent messages on public lands, regulations and permits. **Division Goal: 2.** (Supports P1)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A THROUGH G:

- Continue to work closely with contracted ad agency, print vendors and freelance photographers to maintain high-quality printed and online materials. **Strategies:** a, b, c, d, e, f, g. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM, PR. (Supports P1)
 - Ongoing
- Create a 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. **Timeline:** September, 2011. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM. (Supports P2)
- Coordinate the purchasing of photos through MT 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. **Timeline:** ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM, PR, FILM, Consumer Marketing & Publications Contractors. (Supports P1 and P2)
 - Create an MOU and coordinate efforts between MDT and MTOT to produce six, rest area kiosk panels, unique to each region. Work with regional directors on content and solicit photography. **Strategies:** b,d,f. **Timeline:** yearly. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM, PR, publication contractors, Regions (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 online at wintermt.com. The 2011-2012 MT Winter Guide will be our last stand-alone winter piece. Winter content will be merged into the MT Guidebook starting with the 2012-2013 issue.**

CALENDAR:

JANUARY 2011

- Montana Guidebook ready for distribution

EARLY AUGUST 2011

- Winter Guide ready for distribution

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER AND 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.

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Visitor Information Systems is \$383,398, representing approximately 3% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Increase visitation to the Montana Office of Tourism supported VICs by 5% over 2009 calendar year figures.
 - 2010 VIC visitation increased 4.6% over 2009 figures. Total visitation, May through September, was 189,319.
- Increase attendance to at least one quarter of SEGP-funded events by 2% over previous year's attendance, if applicable.
 - Kootenai River Bluegrass Festival, Troy – 1,300 to 1,500 attendees. 33% increase over 2009 attendance.

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.
 - Ongoing. SEGP awarded \$80,000 to 4 events for 2011: Big Sky: *Classical Music Festival* - \$6,000; Butte: *Montana Folk Festival* - \$50,000; Hardin: *Custer's Last Stand Reenactment* - \$13,550; Trout Creek: *Huckleberry Festival* - \$10,450
Sponsor: Huckleberry Inc.
 - SEGP Workshops scheduled in Billings, August 25, 2011 and Missoula August 26, 2011. Workshop will cover event management and marketing. Instructor is Kent Gustafson, Extension Office, Tourism, University of Minnesota.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Conduct MTOT VIC staff training that will provide the tools necessary to influence visitor travel and spending patterns. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** Brand, CM.
 - VIC staff training is scheduled to take place in Lewistown, May 19-20, 2011. Training will include attraction and destination site visits, presentations by areas businesses and educational workshops by state and federal agency partners.
 - Lewistown training was attended by 14 VIC staff from 7 VICs. Presentations were given by Jon Axline, MT Department of Transportation and Ellen Baumler, Montana Historical Society. Staff conducted site visits to several local attractions including the Charlie Russell Chew Choo, the Lewistown Satellite Airfield and the Reed & Bowles Trading Post.
- Make Montana more visitor-friendly and easily accessible by providing interpretive travel information and quality service at MTOT's VICs. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** Brand, CM, TD&E.
 - Ongoing. Continue to identify new interpretive material and brochures and ensure VICs have adequate inventory to meet demand.
 - Worked with MT Department of Transportation to develop and install interpretive kiosks at approximately 55 MDT rest areas around the state. The kiosks provided visitors with a "Top 10 Attractions" list as well as local contact information. Produced 6 different panels for each of the Tourism Regions.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Seek new opportunities to move Montana into the target audience's consideration set. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** CM, WEB, PR.
 - Ongoing. Partner with the Made in Montana program to showcase quality Montana products available for purchase by nonresident travelers.

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:

JULY 2010

- July 1: Release SEGP application to the public

SEPTEMBER 2010

- Sept. 24: SEGP grant deadline

NOVEMBER 2010

- November 30: VICs close for the season

APRIL 2011

- April 1: Begin statewide distribution of Travel Planner through Certified Folder Displays

MAY 2011

- May 1: VICs open for the season

BUSINESS-TO-CONSUMER: CONTACT CENTER

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- 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 2011. **Support Programs:** WEB and CM.
 - **This project was postponed until FY 2012.**
- 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.
 - **Maintaining support contract.**
- 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.
 - **Provide information to the WEB program when links or other web pages need to be fixed.**
- 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.
 - **Continue to pay the 511 transfer to our contact center costs.**
- Provide a FAM trip for the Contact Center agents to a tourism Region. **Timeline:** May 2011.
 - **This project was postponed until FY 2012.**

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- Incorporate the recommendations of the IT audit into the Contact Center RFP. **Timeline:** August 2010. **Support Programs:** WEB and Consumer Advertising.
 - **After consulting with Procurement it was determined that we didn't need to have a contact center RFP this year; however, the suggestions will be incorporated in the future.**
- Award the Contact Center RFP and finalize all required transition. **Timeline:** August 2010. **Support Programs:** WEB and Consumer Advertising
 - **After consulting with Procurement it was determined that we didn't need to have a contact center RFP this year.**

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/package 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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Overseas Marketing and Group Travel is \$613,968, representing approximately 5% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Increase overseas visitation to Montana from the reported 3% to 4% (ITRR sampling) to 5%.
- Increase the number of Montana overnights offered ("product on the shelf") in the RMI TRIP report from 1% to 7%.

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 Vacation Planners, etc. **Timeline:** July 2010-June 2011. **Support Programs:** PUB (Supports P1)
 - Ongoing
- 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:** July 2010. **Support Programs:** GRP, PUB, PR, PIO. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - Ongoing

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Include an international marketing session at annual Governor's Conference. **Timeline:** March 2011. **Support Program:** TD&E. (Supports P1)
 - Mei Mei Wong is expected to speak on the China Market during the conference.
- 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)
 - An advertising co-op will be offered for FY12 in *Discover America Magazine*
- Present information and updates on international marketing at TAC meetings and to Regions/CVBs as needed. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- In April 2011, prepare list of lodging facilities, attractions, etc., for site visits by fall of 2011; 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)
 - Conducted prefam in Glacier Country planning for MegaFam in September.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A, B AND C:

- Attend the RMI RoundUp in partnership with RMI, Montana Regions, CVBs and suppliers to showcase Montana as an international destination. **Timeline:** February 2011. **Support Programs:** PUB, PR, PIO. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - 30 Tour Operators and international staff attended the Roundup in Rapid City, February 13-15. Fourteen Montana suppliers also participated.
- 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:** July 2010 through June 2011/Ongoing. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - In July a tour operator from Switzerland was in the region.
 - In August a journalist from Denmark was in Montana
 - In August nine participants of VUSA Austria were in the region.
 - Participated in the MEGA fam that went through Wyoming and Idaho.
 - Seven tour operators participated on the RMI Post Fam offered in the Billings and Red Lodge area after the Roundup in South Dakota.
 - A Norwegian tour operator scouted a trip in May that included Bozeman, Virginia City and West Yellowstone.
 - Two tour operators from the United Kingdom scouted a tour that included West Yellowstone in May.
 - A Tour Operator based in Sweden had several staff visiting the region in May and included West Yellowstone.

- A tour operator based in Germany with offices in Las Vegas scouted a motorcycle trip in June.

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)
 - Leads from Missions and Trade Shows are available on website.
- Track results via RMI Annual Marketing and TRIP report and via information/ samplings through ITRR if funding is available. **Timeline:** November 2011. (Supports P4)
 - The RMI Annual report is available.
- Develop a measurement tool to calculate the actual number of overnights booked in Montana per overseas market. **Timeline:** December 2011. (Supports P4)

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- Work with the CVBs, Regions and private sector to conduct international marketing training sessions (goal is three sessions for FY11) 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 2010

- September 17-25: RMI Mega Fam in Wyoming and Idaho.

OCTOBER 2010

- TTG Incontri, Rimini, Italy RMI and state attendance
- Sales Mission, Milan Italy RMI and state attendance

NOVEMBER 2010

- RMI attends WTM in London on behalf of Montana

JANUARY 2011

- January 11-19: Scandinavian Mission including Norway and Sweden, RMI and state attendance
- Vakantiebeurs Utrecht, Benelux Representative only

FEBRUARY 2011

- February 7-10: Go West Summit in Sacramento, CA
- February 11-15: RMI Summit Meeting and Roundup in South Dakota, location TBA
- February 21-24: Australian Mission in cooperation with RMI

MARCH 2011

- March 9-13: ITB trade show in Berlin, Germany, RMI and state attendance
- French Press/Trade Sales Mission Paris (Date TBD) RMI and state attendance
- March 28-29: Montana Governor's Conference in Helena

MAY 2011

- May 21-25: Attend TIA's International Pow Wow in San Francisco, CA

TBD 2011

- UK Press/Trade Sales Mission (Date 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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Overseas Marketing and Group Travel is \$613,968, representing approximately 5% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Increase visits and inquiries to www.montanagroups.com by 5% over 2009 and 2010.
- Measure data by establishing an evaluation method for advertising/promotion efforts.

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)
 - Attended NTA in Montreal last November.
 - Attended ABA in Philadelphia in January.
- Sponsor refreshment booth at the NTA Convention to gain Montana exposure and enhance awareness. **Strategies:** a, b, c, d and e. **Timeline:** November 2010 (Supports P1, P3)
 - The group decided not to do the sponsorship in 2010
- Provide Group Tour Planning manual and continually update www.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)
 - The NTA trip winner that was supposed to come in 2010 has postponed his trip to 2011.
 - The trip winner came in July and spent time in Bozeman, West Yellowstone, Butte, Missoula and Glacier area.
 - A tour operator was in the Billings, Great Falls, Glacier, and Flathead area scouting a couple of motorcoach tours in February.
- 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 2010. (Supports P1)
 - Calendars were sent in early December.
- 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 P3)
- Explore additional opportunities for co-op projects with Regions, CVBs and Montana tourism suppliers. **Strategies:** d and e. **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1, P3)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY F:

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

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

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

CALENDAR:

SUMMER 2010

- August: Tour Operator Winner of the NTA Trip Giveaway

NOVEMBER 2010

- November 13-17: NTA, Montreal, Canada

JANUARY 2011

- January 8-12: ABA, Philadelphia, PA

JUNE 2011

- TBD: Travel Alliance Partners, TBD

ONGOING

- TBD: 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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Brand Development is \$225,922, representing approximately 2% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Make nine road show presentations to a total of 500+ people by June 30, 2011.
- Hold up to 40 Montana brand presentations (in addition to the road shows) by June 2011.
- Enlist 12 brand/tourism ambassadors in new ambassador program by June 30, 2011.

STRATEGIES:

- a. Develop a comprehensive 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 AND 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:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - Brand presentations were given to Gold West Country (9/10); MT Main Street Conference (9/10); Bozeman TBID (10/10); Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce (11/10).

- Brand presentations were presented to the Billings CVB (2/11); Custer Country Tourism Region and Glacier Country Tourism Region (3/11).
- Develop an ambassador program that will help to promote and support the brand and also create champions for our statewide tourism efforts by educating all Montanans about the importance of tourism. **Timeline:** by June 2011. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - To be developed starting in Jan. 2011.
 - Working with MercuryCSC, MTOT has developed a plan in which to continue promoting the brand to tourism constituents. There are three phases: Brand Planning, Brand Intranet Brand Toolbook and reprint/revision of the Brand Books.
 - The Brand Planning phase was implemented in June 2011, sending a survey to over 7,000 tourism entities in various databases. Questions addressed the brand, marketing, tourism development and agriculture. The results show that folks are eager to learn about all of the above, and we are in the process of developing a workshop agenda, schedule and locations.
 - The Brand books are being reprinted; some images were switched out to include more winter and tribal culture images in both Brand Books I and II.
- 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, CM. (Supports P1)
 - Ongoing.
- 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,CM. (Supports P3)
 - Ongoing.

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

- See Actions noted above for details.

CALENDAR:

ONGOING

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

JANUARY 2011

- Ambassador Program Development

PRODUCT/BRAND DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION: TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND 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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Tourism Development and Education is \$694,678, representing approximately 6% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Leverage more than \$1.5 million in public and/or private sector funds in the projects awarded for 2010 TIIP Grants.
- Complete a survey of all TIIP grant recipients in 2010 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.
- Montana Strategic Plan online reporting system used to provide an updated mid-plan status report for TAC, Governor's Office and Elected Officials in 2011.
- Montana Superhost training services reach 1500 participants annually.
- Provide technical and financial assistance for one to three cultural and heritage tourism projects.
- Provide tourism development outreach and education services on two to three of Montana's Indian Reservations and/or to the membership of an officially recognized statewide tribal tourism organization.
- Implement 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)
 - \$530,000 in TIIP Grant Funds available for 2011 TIIP Program. Information about program, process and funds available distributed through MTOT's information sources as well as tourism partner organizations. TIIP Application Materials updated and available for users in March 2011. Application deadline Aug. 3, 2011.
- Survey TIIP Grant Recipients 1995-2009 regarding visitation, visitor spending, benefits from TIIP grant project. *Also supports Strategy C.* **Timeline:** September-November 2010. **Support Program:** OP. (Supports P4)
 - Survey TIIP Grant Recipients 1995-2010 postponed due to other higher priority TD&E projects. Will work to get survey back into schedule in FY2012.

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 2011 for production, Ongoing for statewide distribution through Certified Folder Display Services. **Support Program:** IS. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - \$20,000 provided Montana Cultural Treasures booklet project to produce 100,000 copies for distribution across Montana in 2011/12. Also, contracted with Certified Folder Display Services, Inc. to distribute booklets statewide in their brochure racks.
- 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)
 - MTOT's TD&E Program supporting Yellowstone Business Partnership in their efforts to secure financing for a Greater Yellowstone Geotourism Project Coordinator Position.
 - Working with Yellowstone Country, Big Sky, Bozeman and West Yellowstone CVBs to increase MT content on the Greater Yellowstone Geotourism Website.
- 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)
 - TD&E budget provided funding to support the Crown Coordinator Position through FY 2012.
 - Financial support provided to allow Crown of the Continent Coordinator and website managers to add sponsorship listings on the Crown website as a revenue source to support the geotourism project.
 - Funding and technical support provided Crown Coordinator's Outreach Program which provided community meetings in SW Alberta and 7 Montana communities. Meetings involved geotourism and Crown presentation and open discussions on how to participate and benefit from the project.
- 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)
 - Montana Indian Country Tourism Opportunities Session offered at the 2011 MT Tourism Conference in Helena, March 28-29. Presenters from Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes and Northern Cheyenne Reservation provided information about their area and tourism-related services, events and products.
 - Consulted with Blackfeet Heritage Center in Browning on membership in the MT Dinosaur Trail and other No & Low Cost Marketing Opportunities provided by MTOT
 - Met with Blackfeet Department of Commerce and Planning Department Staff regarding TIIP Grant Program and project ideas they are pursuing.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES B AND C:

- Explore opportunities and interest among Montana and National Geographic partners for developing a Geotourism Project in Central and Eastern Montana. **Timeline:** 2011-Spring 2012 **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
 - No formal action on this item at this time. Informal discussions with potential partners regarding process and groundwork needed before moving forward on this initiative.
- Provide technical and financial assistance for one to three 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: Summer 2011; Website: 2011; Promotion and Development: Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All.
 - April 2011 trail meeting hosted by the Blaine County Museum in Chinook. Plans for 2011 include increased use of Facebook Group Page, reprinting brochure and website update, removal of Fort Peck Field Station of Paleontology from trail list due to inoperable organization, and research into new sales products for use by facilities (posters).
 - 100,000 MT Dinosaur Trail brochures printed and sent out for distribution in Summer 2011. Reprinting provides two year supply for Trail facilities.
- Participate in planning and development for the SE Montana heritage tourism corridor project involving Wyoming and South Dakota. **Timeline:** Planning Winter-Summer 2011 Begin Project Fall 2011. **Support Programs:** All.
 - US Commerce Department EDA Planning Grant awarded to Regional Tourism Planning Project involving SE MT, NE WY and the western Dakotas.
 - February and May meetings worked on priorities for study and development of an RFQ for contractors to conduct the determined that regional representatives wanted to pursue Participated in a planning conference call in August. Multi-state group decided to submit a planning grant application to the US Commerce Department EDA program. Success of the grant application should be known in early 2011. MTOT will provide financial support to help meet the required hard match funds for the planning grant.
- Provide financial and technical support for the Friends of the Beartooth All American Road organization. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** All.
 - Worked with FBAAR Coordinator, Red Lodge Chamber of Commerce and Cooke City Community Council to identify two interpretive projects qualified for funding assistance from MTOT. Cooke City's outdoor mining equipment interpretive path and Joe's Campfire facility received funding assistance along with planning for a Beartooth AAR Interactive Interpretive Display for the Red Lodge Area Chamber of Commerce Visitors Center.
- 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)
 - Joined Bitterroot Valley Heritage Trust and Montana Preservation Alliance in Cultural/Heritage Tourism Corridor Planning Meeting in Hamilton.
 - Bitterroot Valley Chamber of Commerce Presentation on MTOT's No & Low Cost Marketing services, grants, and other technical and financial assistance available.
- Work with the Montana Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity, 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)
 - Ongoing contact with state's Indian Country Program managers regarding partnership opportunities and needs that MTOT can help address.
- 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. (P4)
 - About 70% of Strategic Plan Stakeholders keeping on-line reporting system updated. Providing training to new stakeholders on use of system and offering refreshers to other stakeholders who request additional training.

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)
 - Joined with MTOT Marketing Program, MT Commerce Dept Business Resource Division, MT Ag Dept Marketing Program and MercuryCSC in discussion and development of ideas for a series of MT Brand Workshops for Fall 2011/Winter 2012.
- Plan, organize and implement the 2011 Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation. **Timeline:** Begin, October 2010; Implement, March 28-29, 2011. **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
 - 2011 MT Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation held March 28-29, in Helena. Conference had 412 attendees.
 - Next conference is scheduled for April 11-13, 2012, at Great Falls' Best Western Heritage Inn.
- Work with Montana Superhost Contractor to promote and provide the new menu and delivery systems for customer service training services across the state. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** PIO, WEB and IS. (Supports P1, P2 and P3)
 - In March & April provided two more Supervisor Level Webinars, free of charge, to Montana tourism and recreation organization and businesses. Each had 35-50 participants and received positive reviews and requests to be notified of future sessions.

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:

MARCH 28-29, 2011

- Montana Governor's Conference on Tourism and Recreation, Helena 2011, <http://travelmontana.mt.gov/conference/>

JUNE 2011

- 2011 TIIP Grant Funding Pool Announced

AUGUST 3, 2011

- TIIP Grant Application Deadline

OCTOBER 3, 2011

- TIIP Grant Award Recommendations Made to Tourism Advisory Council, Ennis

MID OCTOBER 2011

- MT Commerce Director Approval and Announcement of 2011 TIIP Grant Awards.

PRODUCT/BRAND DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION AND 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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Public Information is \$104,000, representing approximately 1% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES FOR JULY 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- 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.
- Begin measuring monthly visitor traffic to new industry news site, Montanatourismnews.org to establish baseline traffic to measure against in the future.
- Continue to grow number of fans, followers, subscribers, etc. to Montana's various social media initiatives to establish baseline usage to measure against in the future.

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. Develop a more engaging and efficient method of communicating with Montana's tourism industry. **Division Goal: 3.** (Supports P1 and P3)
- c. Assist in developing and monitoring an online social media presence for Montana. **Division Goals: 1 and 2.** (P2 and P4)

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY A:

- Develop a 12-month strategic plan for tourism industry public relations. **Timeline:** July 2010. **Support Programs:** ADMIN. Also supports Strategy B. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - Initial discussions in July 2010. Awaiting hiring of new administrator to develop further course of action.
- 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)
 - Ongoing
- Develop, update and revise (as needed) presentations, such as *Tourism Speaks* and *Tourism 101*, 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. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - Revised *Tourism Speaks* with updated facts and figures and shortened presentation from 61 slides to 23 to aid in condensing material to most salient points. Looking at replacing *Tourism Speaks* in the future.
 - Currently working on revision of *Tourism 101*.
- Work with tourism partners to identify committees, councils and interested organizations within their communities that would benefit from MTOT presentations, such as the *Tourism Speaks* presentation. Present the revised *Tourism Speaks* to at least one organization per Region per year. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** ADMIN. (Supports P1 and P3)
 - Continue to provide revised *Tourism Speaks* presentation materials when requested.
- 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)
 - Ongoing.
- 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. (Supports P1 and P2)
 - Launched the new industry website – montanaturismnews.org – and accompanying e-newsletter in October 2010.
 - Produced and posted updated Fact Sheets and Funding Sheets in January 2011, March 2011 and June 2011.
 - Develop speaking points for Acting Administrator for numerous media interviews.
- 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)
 - Have conducted 27 media interviews b/t July 10-June 11 (4 television, 5 radio, 14 newspaper, 2 newsletters, 2 online media) – (Sarah – 18; other staff – 9)
- Oversee crisis communication activities on behalf of the Office of Tourism and when applicable, assist partners with crisis communication. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB and PR. (Supports P1)
 - Ongoing monitoring of issues that may affect tourism i.e. wolves, bison, bear, etc.
 - Ongoing communication with Commerce Communications Director and Governor's Office on proper handling of inquiries.
 - Sent Fire Updates as needed July & August 2010.

- Sent Flood Updates as needed in May, June & July 2011.
- Developed, manage and oversee MTOT's Crisis Fund.
 - In June 2011, provided \$20,000 in crisis funding to Custer Country due to flooding impacts in southeastern Montana.
- Assist in progress monitoring of the Montana Office of Tourism Marketing Plan. **Timeline:** Ongoing; **Support Programs:** All. (Supports P4)
 - Solicited and input 6-month progress update for July-Dec 10 and final progress update through June 11.
- Attend industry conferences to keep abreast of tourism trends, initiatives and research. **Timeline:** August and October 2010; June 2011. (Supports P1)
 - Travel restrictions prevented attendance at ESTO in August 10.
 - Attended Marketing Outlook Forum in October 10.

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)
 - Launched new website – montanaturismnews.org – in October 2010. Continually add links and content throughout the month.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY C:

- In conjunction with marketing and IT staff, monitor, contribute content and expand the social media presence for Montana. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Programs:** WEB, CM and PR. (Supports P2 and P4)
 - Work in conjunction with e-marketing staff and Mercury Staff in contributing tweets and Facebook posts and monitoring content.

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, etc.

CALENDAR:

AUGUST 2010

- August 8-10: ESTO, Savannah, GA

OCTOBER 2010

- October 26-27: Marketing Outlook Forum, Las Vegas, NV

MAY/JUNE 2011

- PRSA 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

FY11 BUDGET:

The FY11 budget for Operations & Industry Services is divided into three budgets: the Operations budget of \$592,200, representing approximately 5% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget; the Contact Center budget of \$324,500, representing approximately 3% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget; and the Industry Services budget of \$320,305, representing approximately 3% of the total Montana Office of Tourism budget.

OPERATIONS & INDUSTRY SERVICES: FULFILLMENT AND 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 2010 – JUNE 2011:

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

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGY B:

- Work with Visitor Information Systems program to continue expanding and enhancing the distribution of Travel Planners through a private contractor. Focus to be placed on high-traffic corridors of Montana. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** VIS. (Supports P1)

- Ongoing.
- Continue sending out Bulk information promotional materials in a timely manner to stakeholders. *Also supports Strategy A.* **Timeline:** Ongoing. (Supports P1)
- Ongoing.

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 2010 – JUNE 2011:

- Have all 17 fiscal audits completed prior to the end of the calendar year.
 - 13 audits completed by calendar year end. Remaining 4 audits completed January 2011.
- Post revenue reports within 90 days of the end of each quarter to the intranet site.
 - Completed in a timely manner.
- Post Region/CVBs marketing plans by September of each fiscal year to the intranet site.
 - Completed in a timely manner.
- Post Region/CVB project applications to the intranet within 20 days of receiving final approval from the Audits/Applications Committee.
 - Completed as work schedule allowed. Posting not always completed within the 20 day time frame.
- Continue to work as a liaison and assist TAC members, Committee Chairs and Task Force Chairs as needed in an ongoing, timely manner.
 - Assisted as needed in a 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; apprise cooperators 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 2010, January 2011, May 2011. **Support Programs:** All.
 - Completed September 2010, January 2011, May 2011.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A AND B:

- Verify accuracy and compliance of the 6 Tourism Regions and 12 CVBs annual marketing plans and project applications before submitting to the TAC for final approval. **Timeline:** May 2011.
 - Completed May 2011.
- Distribute project applications submitted after June TAC meeting to the Audits/Applications Committee for final approval. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
 - Ongoing, completed as needed
- Continue sharing Region and CVB annual marketing plans and approved project applications via the intranet. **Timeline:** Ongoing. **Support Program:** WEB.
 - Ongoing

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 2010.
 - Completed July 2010
- Work with Region/CVB co-chairs to plan and coordinate biannual Region/CVB meetings. **Timeline:** November 2010, March 2011.
 - Region/CVB meetings took place November 18, 2010 and March 29-30, 2011.
- Provide training and assistance for Region/CVB directors and their staff as needed. **Timeline:** Ongoing.
 - Provided training to the Tourism Advisory Council members, Havre CVB and Butte CVB. Continue to provide assistance and training as requested via phone or in person.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES B, C AND D:

- Review quarterly financial and program compliance reports returned by the 18 certified tourism organizations. **Timeline:** July 2010, October 2010, January 2011, April 2011.
 - Completed July 2010, October 2010, February 2011, April 2011.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A, C AND 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 2010, February 2011.
 - 5 audits presented in October 2010, 12 audits presented in February 2011.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES A, D AND 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.
 - Tracking of receipts ongoing. TAC apprised of revenue status during October 2010, February 2011 and June 2011 TAC meetings.

- 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.
 - Ongoing, being completed in a timely manner
- 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 2010, December 2010, March 2011, June 2011.
 - Completed September 2010, December 2010, March 2011, June 2011.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES E:

- Compile and distribute monthly revenue collection trends as reported by the Department of Revenue at each TAC meeting. **Timeline:** October 2010, February 2011, June 2011.
 - Completed October 2010, February 2011, June 2011.

ACTIONS FOR STRATEGIES F AND G:

- Report status of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan actions and measurable objectives for the Industry Program/Compliance Specialist. **Timeline:** August 2010, November 2010, February 2011, May 2011.
 - Done January 2011, June 2011
- Work with TAC Strategic Plan reporting committee to report the status of the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan TAC actions and measurable objectives. **Timeline:** August 2010, November 2010, February 2011, May 2011.
 - Done January 2011, June 2011

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

N/A

CALENDAR:

JULY 2010

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

AUGUST 2010

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

SEPTEMBER 2010

- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs
- TAC Meeting Preparation
- Post FY11 Region/CVB Marketing Plans to intranet
- Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to intranet

OCTOBER 2010

- October 4 – 6 : TAC Meeting – Review audits
- 1st Quarter Compliance Reports due from Regions/CVBs
- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs

NOVEMBER 2010

- Region/CVB meeting (two ½ days)

- 2nd Quarter payment to Regions/CVBs
- Schedule and perform audits for Regions/CVBs
- Updated FY11 Revenue Projections to Regions/CVBs
- Previous fiscal year rollover dollar amounts to Regions/CVBs

DECEMBER 2010

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

JANUARY 2011

- January 1: FY10 Completion Reports due from Regions/CVBs
- 2nd Quarter Compliance Reports due from Regions/CVBs
- TAC Meeting preparation

FEBRUARY 2011

- February 7 – 9 : TAC Meeting– review audits
- 3rd Quarter payment to Regions/CVBs

MARCH 2011

- Region/CVB meeting (one full day)
- FY12 Projected revenue figures to Regions/CVBs
- Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to intranet

APRIL 2011

- 3rd Quarter Compliance Reports due from Regions/CVBs

MAY 2011

- 1: Region/CVB Annual Marketing Plans due
- Review 18 Region/CVB Marketing Plans for accuracy and compliance
- TAC Meeting Preparation

JUNE 2011

- June 6-8: TAC Meeting – review and approve marketing plans
- 4th Quarter payment to Regions/CVBs
- FY12 Annual Contracts to Regions/CVBs
- FY12 Marketing Plan approval letters to Regions/CVBs
- Prepare FY12 Region/CVB Budget/Compliance Worksheets
- Post Lodging Facility Use Tax revenue collection figures to intranet

APPENDIX: BACKGROUND AND INDUSTRY INSIGHT

CURRENT TRAVEL INDUSTRY TRENDS

NATIONAL PERFORMANCE

- Economic recovery continues to build slowly. Most economists believe the recession which began in December 2007 ended by July 2009.
- Domestic travel was down 3.8% with spending down 10.3% in 2009.
- Business travel was down 7.5%, with business spending down 13.6%.
- International visitation was down 6% and spending was down 15%.
- For lodging, rooms sold declined 7% and domestic passenger air travel was down 2%.
- RVs sold in 2009 were down 54% compared to 2008.
- Attraction industry was down 4-6%.
- Majority of outfitter and guides in the U.S. had decreases in revenue.
- Ski industry was down 5% over the previous year.
- National Park Service saw a 5% increase in visitation.
- Campgrounds, such as KOA, saw a 1% increase in visitation.

NATIONAL OUTLOOK

- Travel remains on the radar – topping the list of pursuits consumers rank most valuable to their livelihood and well-being.
- Domestic leisure travel forecasted to increase 1.9% with a 2.5% increase in business/convention travel.
- International travel to U.S. expected to increase 2.8% with the biggest increases expected from Canada and Mexico.
- Moderate economic growth is predicted for 2010. (Oxford Economics)
- Spending improves but still below pre-recession levels.
- Spending continues within the “new normal” levels – 25-30% lower than pre-recession levels.
- Consumer Confidence Index, while at its highest level in a year and a half as of the spring of 2010, still remains very weak at 57.9. (The Conference Board)
- Hotel RevPar projected to be down .5% to 1% compared to 16.7% for 2009. Both ADR and RevPar are expected to improve slightly in 2011 with a stronger rebound in 2012.
- Travelers will remain very cautious about their spending; “Conscious Consumption.”
- Prices associated with travel will rise modestly as the economy slowly recovers.
- Fuel prices will rise to an average \$2.92/gallon this summer, up from \$2.44/gallon last summer. (U.S. Energy Information Administration)
- Amtrak continues to outperform other modes of transportation.
- Attractions are forecasting a slight increase but do not expect to see pre-recession levels until 2011 or 2012.
- National Park Service is predicting a 2% increase.
- Travel intentions decreased in the South; holding steady in the Northeast; increased slightly in the West and Midwest.
- Increase in share of intended leisure travelers saying they plan to drive more instead of fly.
- Prospects have improved but travel still has challenges including unemployment, volatile oil prices, security threats, environmental disasters, travel boycotts and potential increases in travel costs and hassles.

NATIONAL TRENDS

- Will continue to see the “New Normal” in spending – reduced discretionary spending.
- Discounts and values will continue – as travelers continue to restrain spending they will look for deals and values.
- Continued shorter planning window.
- Closer to home travel and shorter stays.
- Travelers’ intentions to travel more by car/RV and travel longer distances are on the increase.
- Mobile marketing due to mass usage of mobile devices and services is increasingly important.
- Park visitation expected to remain high.

MONTANA PERFORMANCE

- Montana fared better than most in 2009. There were declines but smaller decreases than elsewhere.
- 2009 non-resident visitation declined only .1% or by just 10,000 visitors.
- 2009 ended with a 4.1% decline in rooms sold.
- Bed tax revenue was down 8% over 2008.
- Airline deboardings decreased 4.5%.
- Skier visits were down 5.9% from the 2008-09 season but this is after a 14.5% increase in 2007-08.
- Montana saw travelers but they are traveling differently.
- A lot of last minute bookings and walk-in business.
- Campground stays and RV travel were up.
- Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks experienced record visitation. Glacier was up 12.4% and Yellowstone was up 7.5% for an all-time record of 3.3 million visitors.
- State parks hosted a record 2 million visitors – 83% were Montanans (up from 81% in 2008).
- Biggest change was in spending patterns. Preliminary estimates of 3rd quarter put average daily spend at 27% below 2008.
- Businesses saw a decrease in retail sales and most visitors were looking for less expensive activities.
- Significant decrease in outfitter and guide bookings.

MONTANA OUTLOOK

- 2% increase in non-resident visitation in 2010.
- National Parks expected to continue to see strong visitation.
- ITRR Business Outlook Survey found that 47% of Montana businesses expect an increase in visitation (only 11% predict a decrease).
- Montana should benefit from the shift to more cost-conscious travel because Montana is considered a good value for the money.

ADDITIONAL TRAVEL TRENDS

- Going mobile – technology, social media, smartphone apps all figure largely in planning and experiencing travel.
- Desire among travelers for authentic experiences is stronger than ever. (Travel & Leisure Magazine)
- Green/Eco travel practices continue to factor into travelers’ choices of hotel, transportation mode, services, etc. (TripAdvisor)
- High-end luxury and adventure travel is on the rise. Travelers are seeking above-and-beyond adventures in exciting new destinations. (SceneAdvisor)
- Video-conferencing is gaining traction while reducing the need for business travel.

