



Grant Details

95522 - FY21 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

101307 - FY21 Missouri River Country Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

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Comments

Amendment Comments

Community & Brand Support

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

Covid-19

On March 28th Governor Steve Bullock ordered a statewide stay-at-home directive. On March 30th he asked that tourists refrain from traveling to Montana. While these decisions were necessary to protect all Montanan's, it is very devastating to so many of us in several ways, personally and for the organizations we work for. It affects our health and our wealth.

The hardest part at this time for MRC is the unknown. While the country is starting to open up, it has already done some financial damage and we don't know the future of travel and if there will be a second round of closures. We did see some construction workers in our area during March and April that quarantined for 14 days before going into the community, but they were staying in the motels.

Several major events had to be cancelled. A memorial basketball tournament in Glasgow that brings in over 1000 people in March and the Bakken Brewfest in Sidney to name a few.

We have put most advertising on hold, but we do believe that people are looking for a place to go that is wide open and not many people and can breathe fresh air. Missouri River Country is that ideal place. Digital and Social Media are ways that we can do promotions during these trying times, if we have the funding available. We have applied for a grant that can help us get some travel back if we are successful in receiving the funding.

Missouri River Country is being optimistic and moving forward cautiously. We are starting to see people camping and fishing around Fort Peck Lake and bringing revenue back to Northeast Montana.

If funding is limited, which we know it will be to some extent, we will push Social Media and digital, E-mail newsletters, and Website. We will focus on a Regional Market, close distances and easy to get here travel. We will market our outdoor opportunities. We applied for an Innovation Grant for \$25,000. If we receive funding we plan to do an outdoor media plan with the Montana Outdoor Radio Show. He also has banners on his website. Mark Ward is very familiar with our area, having hunted and fished it for years. He will create ads to attract the In-state outdoor enthusiasts. We know Fort Peck Lake and the surrounding area receives visitation from other parts of Montana and now with the current situation, we believe we will be seeing more in-state travelers. We will also target the ND Market. Jason Mitchell Outdoors has also fished and hunted our area and is familiar with what we have to offer. We will utilize his services as well. We know we really have to promote the Outdoor Recreation because that's what people are looking for with the current situation. Jason will produce radio and tv for us and videos that we will be able to use at Trade Shows and on our website, and social media not only during this Covid-19 Pandemic time, but for years to come. The Montana Outdoor Radio Show and Jason Mitchell have a huge presence on Social Media.

We decreased our budget by 25%. This might not be enough, but we are proceeding with caution and being optimistic. I have also attached a second scenario of a 50% decreased budget. We will not do much spending until we know for sure where we are and if funding is coming in unless we receive a grant.

If collections come in lower we will decrease our trade shows, travel planner, eliminate radio advertising, and press trips.

INTRODUCTION

Montana's Missouri River Country is a destination for outdoor adventurers, geotourists, history buffs, families, Native American culturists, dinosaur trail followers, fishermen and women, and overall recreationists. Here visitors find spectacular nature, charming small towns, exceptional wildlife watching, and breathtaking experiences. Missouri River Country is home to Fort Peck Lake, four national wildlife refuges, two Montana state parks, and 27 charming communities. Visitors also find perfect solitude with nature, opportunities to spend genuine, uninterrupted time with their loved ones, and more room to roam. We believe that in the 21st century when people are constantly engulfed in the hustle and bustle of daily life, what visitors now crave from their vacations is a chance to unplug and really connect. Less people and less traffic means more time to focus on real experiences, so we have chosen to take advantage of our amazing open spaces in our marketing campaign: More Room To Roam. More Room To Roam holds many meanings to us. It means that there are more opportunities to have an authentic, meaningful experience in Montana. It means there is more room to connect and more space to explore. We are proud of our campaign because it allows our target audiences to reflect: what would more room mean to me? Maybe that means time with family or friends. Maybe it means more time to sit still and observe the incredible biological diversity on our prairies and waters. Maybe it means getting lost—on purpose. We know that it means something different to everyone, but the message is clear: you can find whatever you are looking for in Missouri River Country, and we want to help you along the way.

Less people and less traffic means more time to focus on real experiences.

IDENTITY

Montana is an incredibly diverse state that is synonymous with the West. Our history is vast, and so is our landscape. Wide open spaces surround our friendly, small communities. This is a side of our state that few see, but all who see it fall in love with Montana all over again.

We understand that many visitors who come to Montana come to experience the two national parks in our state, and for that reason much of our visitation comes from drive-through travel. However, Missouri River Country has many attractions that bring in visitors directly to our towns, waterways, and wide-open spaces. Missouri River Country is a hub for outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, photography, hiking, boating, ATVing, and ice fishing, cross country skiing and snowmobiling in the winter. Thanks to the remoteness of the region, the best show in Montana can be seen each night in Missouri River Country's beautiful night skies, unpolluted by light from large cities and towns. The Missouri River, which was an integral part of the Lewis and Clark route, runs through our district and attracts history and culture buffs. Uniquely, dinosaurs once roamed this vast landscape and the remains of these giants can be seen at museums throughout the region, including full-sized fossils discovered in Northeast Montana.

A distinct region unto itself, this place of the Great Plains harbors unique landforms. Grand scenes intermingle with smaller bits of geologic wonder. Space, much of it undisturbed, is its greatest commodity, and an unending sky delivers a feeling of freedom with no borders or confinement. Missouri River Country is truly the land of wide open spaces—of opportunity and spectacular nature. You can see for miles, stretch your arms, breathe the fresh air, and sleep under the big starry sky. It's not the destination but rather the experiences had in Missouri River Country that are truly breathtaking.

STRENGTHS

Hunting

Visitors here spend less time hunting for open space and more time hunting! According to the 2019 ITRR report, hunting was a top 5 reason to visit Missouri River Country, and we believe that this is thanks, in large part, to our less-populated nature. No matter where you go in Northeast Montana, you are surrounded by wildlife, from trophy elk on the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge to Big Horn Sheep South of Malta. Hunters come from all over the US to bow hunt and/or rifle hunt for elk. The skies above are filled with upland gamebirds and waterfowl. Our wide-open spaces are home to pronghorn, mule deer and whitetails. Our corner of Montana is not only an exciting place for hunting adventures but a land of unrivaled beauty and wonder.

Fishing & Fort Peck Lake

In the summer, marinas are filled with fishermen and women looking to cast a line and pass the day on the water. Defined by sandstone formations, fields of grain and fertile river bottoms, Missouri River Country is a place where shorelines go on for more than a thousand miles and fish grow to more than 100 pounds. This is the land where men built a dam across the mighty Missouri River and created the largest body of water in Montana. This is the land of Fort Peck Reservoir, which boasts over 1,600 miles of shoreline (more than the California coast!) and an impressive variety of fish. According to the 2019 ITRR report, 42% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country visited Fort Peck Lake on their trip, which shows how immense of an attraction Fort Peck Lake truly is during all seasons. In the winter, Fort Peck Lake freezes over and makes way for some great ice fishing fun on the ice, which means that fishing is a four-season activity, opening up outdoor activities all year long for visitors. Summer water activities include fishing, tubing, water skiing, wake boarding and swimming, and during spring and fall, fishing and boating opportunities still abound. In addition to Fort Peck Lake, many rivers and dams in Missouri River Country provide fishing opportunities, such as Nelson Reservoir, the Missouri River, Milk River, and Yellowstone River.

Fort Peck Reservoir is over 1,600 miles of shoreline (more than the California coast!)

Dinosaurs

Millions of years before the formation of the Missouri River in Montana, dinosaurs made this once lush wetland their home. Northeastern Montana has provided a wealth of world class fossil discoveries and according to the 2019 ITRR report, 4% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country participated in activities related to dinosaur attractions. Visitors can experience dinosaur digs at Great Plains Dinosaur Museum in Malta and learn about the prehistoric nature of our dramatic landscape. At the Fort Peck Interpretive Center & Museum visitors can view "Peck's Rex," a skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus rex found near Fort Peck in 1996. The Fort Peck Power House Museum has a Triceratops skull on display, along with numerous fossils that were discovered during the digging of Fort Peck Dam. The Phillips County Museum features fossil discoveries from the nearby Judith River Formation including a late Brachylophosaurus, one of the best articulated dinosaur skeletons ever found. The Great Plains Dinosaur Museum offers the public an intimate look into a working paleontological institution. Their Brachylophosaurus fossil, "Leonardo" is in the Guinness Book of World Records "best preserved dinosaur," and the museum has the best growth series of this dinosaur anywhere. The Garfield County Museum displays a full-scale model of a Triceratops, which was found about 35 miles from Jordan in 1964.

History & Culture

History is as vast as our rolling landscape in Missouri River Country. Lewis and Clark buffs come here to experience the landscape that has remained virtually unchanged since the days of westward expansion. Lewis and Clark may have been early visitors to Missouri River Country, but when they arrived the region was already home to the Assiniboine people. Members of the Sioux nation also call our corner of Montana home, and their cultural heritage continues to be celebrated today through such events as pow wow and dancing ceremonies. Annual pow wows are held on the Fort Peck Reservation, where traditional dance, song, and tribal ceremonies can be experienced. Missouri River Country has many museums, cultural centers, visitor centers and historic downtown regions that attract history and culture buffs to our corner of Montana.

Outdoor Recreation & Wildlife

While we are most known for our hunting and fishing, there is a plethora of outdoor recreation opportunities in Missouri River Country. Hikers can enjoy total trail solitude in the Little Rocky Mountains, birders will be amazed by the uninterrupted views, wildlife viewing is plentiful, and boating and ATVing opportunities abound. RV and tent campers make their way to Northeast Montana to take part in a Montana adventure found only here. According to the 2019 ITRR report, 26% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country participated in wildlife watching, and Missouri River Country has wildlife watching opportunities in spades. Between four national wildlife refuges, the American Prairie Reserve, Fort Peck Lake and other riparian areas, and the elk rut areas, visitors have vast opportunities to participate in wildlife viewing. Slippery Ann Elk Viewing Area is one of the best places to view elk in the fall, and visitors are consistently enamored with the raw nature found in Missouri River Country. Bikers can stop in Glasgow at the Bike Bin at Smith Park, featuring a bicycle repair stand and bike wash station conveniently located near camping and showers at the adjacent Shady Rest RV Park. In the winter, visitors can bring their cross-country skis and explore our wide-open prairies on the snow, which is a fun and unique experience for locals and visitors alike.

Charming Communities

27 charming, small communities dot Missouri River Country, offering visitors authentic Montana character. Museums, outfitters and shops offer a taste of our history and culture. Visitors can pan for gold or go on a dinosaur dig based out of our communities, and then return to spend the night in our hotels and cabins. We have five microbreweries in the region and many wonderful dining options serving up delicious burgers, steaks, locally grown produce and so much more. Visitors have the chance to experience local farmers markets in the summer and festivals throughout the year. One of the best parts of our region is the people who call Missouri River Country home and get to share our beloved landscape with visitors.

Affordability

Compared to other vacation destinations, Missouri River Country offers affordable options for travelers. Lodging, food and drink is less expensive in Missouri River Country. Affordable and free activities like wildlife watching, hiking, museums, fishing and dinosaur digs are more abundant compared to other areas in the state. We know that our affordability is a great resource for travelers, and plays a role in our attraction to visitors as they choose where to spend their hard-earned vacation dollars.

Wide Open Spaces

There is more room to roam in Missouri River Country, and this is a huge draw for our visitors. According to the 2019 ITRR report, 23% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country were primarily attracted to Montana for open space/uncrowded areas. Oxford University scientists used population data and analytics to find “the middle of nowhere,” and their results determined that the top three spots were in Missouri River Country: Glasgow took the top spot with Scobey and Wolf Point coming in the second and third spots, respectively. The Washington Post published an article on Glasgow being, “in the middle of nowhere.” From that article, Glasgow gained momentum in the press with an NBC article that interviewed community members, airing on the NBC Nightly Newscast. The American Prairie Reserve calls Northeastern Montana home as well and is a great place to view the plains and the animals who thrive here, including the national mammal, the American Bison. We believe that our being in “the middle of nowhere” is exactly what certain tourists are looking for in a vacation—a place to escape from the city, get away from traffic, and find themselves in the middle of nowhere (or in the middle of everything, depending on how you look at it).

Dark Skies

Missouri River Country is one of the most remote regions in the country and the closest major city is 4 ½ hours away. For this reason, our night skies remain unpolluted by light and allow visitors to have a truly out-of-this-world experience. We believe that our dark skies are a huge strength and provide visitors with a unique, star-studded experience that is fun for families, couples and retirees alike.

Events Calendar

According to the 2019 ITRR report, 3% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country were primarily attracted to Montana for special events, while 9% reported it was one of the reasons they were attracted. Our charming communities host a wide variety and large quantity of events each year which provide visitors with an authentic taste of our region while also providing entertainment, all while boosting our local economies. In the summer, each of our eight counties host a county fair, many complete with live concerts and rodeos. Additionally, the PRCA Rodeo Circuit comes through Northeastern Montana, including the Wolf Point Wild Horse Stampede, the oldest rodeo in Montana, and the Match Bronc Ride in Jordan, along with several other PRCA Rodeos during the warm season. Pioneer Days in Scobey is a huge event where visitors can experience what life was like in the years of the pioneers, and local pow wows provide insights into Native American culture and traditions. Fishing tournaments (in the summer and winter months!) attract sportsmen and women from all over. Visitors can easily access our events calendar and plan their visit through the events page on our newly redesigned website, and businesses can add their events directly to the calendar.

CHALLENGES

Drive-Through Status

Missouri River Country has historically been and continues to be a drive through region, meaning that visitors are “just passing through” to destinations with more widely recognized icons. Last year, 60% of visitors to Missouri River Country came in a truck or a car, and 11% of visitors were only passing through. We must continue to educate travelers that there are activities and points of interest in the region.

Accessibility

While being located in “the middle of nowhere” is a strength of ours in terms of providing visitors with uninterrupted solitude with nature, this continues to be a challenging factor for Missouri River Country. Some of our towns are 4 ½ hours driving distance from any major city and accessing our region by air service is difficult. We are fortunate to have Essential Air Service in Sidney, Wolf Point, and Glasgow. While these flights are beneficial, our challenge is getting them to connect with other flights. They are small planes that can only accommodate 9 passengers and fly solely into Billings.

Infrastructure

Infrastructure is one of Missouri River Country’s biggest challenges. In certain months, roads to attractions like U.L. Bend National Wildlife Refuge and Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge are impassable or closed, and ruts in roads can deter tourists from visiting certain areas. Maintaining hotels, cities, and roads will continue to be an issue in our region with limited funding. Lack of revenue from camping on Federal property also remains a challenge.

Access to Information

We know that once people are in Missouri River Country, they fall in love with our wide-open spaces, friendly communities and access to outdoor recreation. However, compared to other parts of Montana, information about Missouri River Country is harder for potential visitors to get a hold of. According to the 2019 ITRR report, 25% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country used information from friends or relatives living in Montana, 23% used no sources, and 21% used search engines. Our redesigned website is working to combat these gaps in information by adding pages specific to activities, events, and accommodations as well as updated blogs to inspire visitors. We also know that word of mouth from friends and family living in Montana is important to visitors, so increasing awareness of Missouri River Country to the people who live in Montana is also important for the information spreading about the many opportunities found in our region.

Amtrak

We are fortunate to have Amtrak go through MRC, but rental cars are a challenge. Wolf Point and Glasgow have dealerships that rent cars which helps. The dealerships/car rentals will bring cars to the train depot and airport. The one car rental in Wolf Point does advertise in our travel planner.

OPPORTUNITIES

Amtrak

Missouri River Country is fortunate to have Amtrak stops in Wolf Point, Glasgow and Malta. We believe that a unique opportunity lies in attracting visitors to stop over in Missouri River Country on their way from the Chicago and Minneapolis areas on route to Glacier National Park. We also believe that there is untapped potential for families from cities to the east who can easily access our charming communities and have authentic Montana experiences with less train-time than riding all the way towards Glacier National Park.

Dark Skies

Missouri River Country has some of the darkest skies in the continental United States. With our distance from major cities, most of our region is considered “dark sky” country, and we believe that this is an untapped marketing opportunity for us. We believe there is huge potential in marketing Missouri River Country as a place for astrotourism and eventually designating an International Dark Sky Park at Brush Lake State Park. The Northern Lights and amazing views of the Milky Way can be seen here, and marketing these dark sky opportunities presents a unique opportunity to draw visitors to our region.

Conventions

As a region, conventions and meetings have not been a focal point, but we do acknowledge that these events are a huge economic boom to communities. For this reason, marketing and outreach from communities in Missouri River Country to host these events is a worthwhile endeavor that Missouri River Country will strive to support and assist as needs arise.

Close Proximity Visitors

We believe that Missouri River Country can become a weekend destination for close proximity travelers, including flight traffic from Billings, families, couples and individuals looking to experience a unique side of Montana and the west not found elsewhere in the surrounding areas. Our region provides chances to attend events, take part in outdoor recreational opportunities including hunting and fishing, experience truly dark skies, and so much more, which can all be done in a long weekend to those who live nearby in other regions or bordering states.

Motorcyclists

We believe that the wide open spaces and wide open roads of Missouri River Country are a natural attraction to motorcyclists. This combined with friendly communities, expansive natural areas, wildlife viewing opportunities, and attractions along the way make our region a perfect fit for motorcycle tourism. According to the 2019 ITRR report, 6% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country entered Montana by motorcycle. In addition, 6% of visitors to the region participated in motorcycle touring, while 54% said they were interested in scenic driving. Each year, the Big Muddy Motorcycle Rally in Plentywood brings in many motorcyclists, and the BMW Rally in nearby Great Falls is an excellent chance for motorcyclists to pass through, or make their way towards, Missouri River Country on either end of their trip. For this reason, we developed specific travel itineraries for motorcyclists on our website, which allows for ease of planning and opportunities for multiple trips for visitors traveling by bike.

Video

In this age, video is the best way to catch the eye of visitors and encourage them to spend their hard-earned vacation dollars here, rather than anywhere else. We believe that better focusing on and integrating video into our marketing campaigns and social media presence is a fantastic way to increase interest in, and visitation to, Missouri River Country.

Repeat Visitation

ITRR indicates that in 2019, 91% of the visitation to Missouri River Country comes from repeat visitors. This leads us to believe that awareness of our activities and attractions is lacking. When visitors experience our hunting, fishing, history, open spaces, nature and culture, they will want to come back. We strive to attract first time visitors, and once they experience our region we believe they will spread the word to their home communities and come back again and again.

Missouri River Country has some of the darkest skies in the continental United States.

Sleeping Buffalo Hot Springs

A very exciting opportunity lies in the newly developed Sleeping Buffalo Hot Springs and Resort. ITRR indicates that 12% of state visitors ranked “hot springs” as a reason for visitation to Montana, and we believe that spreading awareness of this remote hot springs has the potential to increase visitation to our region.

Brewery Tour

The craft beer industry has been rapidly growing over the past decade, and many tourists incorporate craft beer tours and tastings into their vacations. According to ITRR’s 2019 report, 18% of visitors to the state visited a local brewery. Missouri River Country is home to five craft breweries: Blue Ridge Brewing in Malta, Busted Knuckle Brewery in Glasgow, Docz Missouri River Breaks Brewing in Wolf Point, Meadowlark Brewing Company and 1035 Brewing in Sidney. By marketing our breweries as an option for travelers and encouraging visitors to visit all breweries in the region, Missouri River Country can open our region to a new type of tourist market.

Rockhounding

Rockhounding and gold panning are two activities for which Montana is known for, and Missouri River Country provides opportunities for visitors to have an authentic experience. Gold panning kits are available for rent in Zortman, where visitors can explore the Little Rocky Mountains and search for gold nuggets in the waters outside of town. Missouri River Country provides access to the Yellowstone River

for rockhounding as well. We believe spreading awareness about these activities is a huge opportunity for garnering interest in our region.

Dinosaur Digs

In Missouri River Country, visitors not only have the opportunity to learn about the paleontological history of Montana and to see fossils and replicas of dinosaurs, they also have the chance to be real-life excavators at the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum, where they can accompany experts on dinosaur digs. This opportunity is unique to a very limited number of places in North America, and we believe spreading awareness about this fun activity is a great promotion of our region.

Fort Peck Reservation-Turtle Mound Buffalo Ranch

When the Missouri River Country Board of Directors toured the Turtle Mound Buffalo Ranch, we were very impressed with the Ranch and the possibility of creating a partnership between the Fort Peck Tribes and Missouri River Country. We will explore options to help both entities bring more visitation to Northeast Montana.

Eastern Montana Initiative

Missouri River Country is excited and confident in the potential for new and increased visitation to Eastern Montana through the Eastern Montana Initiative. We will be developing recreational opportunities and creating a dark skies trail with the help of the Eastern Montana Initiative grants. We will be able to expand more on these projects in the years to come. It is just a great opportunity to be able to get them started with the help of EMI.

Montana's Brand Pillars

Missouri River Country is a distinct region unto itself. The wealth of opportunities for adventure amidst the spectacular, unspoiled nature can't be overstated. Big water recreation, wildlife viewing, prairie topography, wild country paleontology, and uncluttered views that go on forever. We have 27 vibrant and small charming towns and our brilliant night skies are filled with stars and the landscapes give you more room to breathe and more room to roam.

- **Spectacular, Unspoiled Nature:** Missouri River Country has some of the most spectacular river breaks, badlands and unspoiled landscapes. If Lewis and Clark traveled through today as they did 200 years ago they would still recognize much of what they viewed back then.
- **Vibrant and Charming Small Towns:** Our charming small towns are filled with friendly, welcoming people. Expect a hand wave as you drive through, but make sure to stop for some of the home town hospitality.
- **Breathtaking Experiences by Day and Relaxing Hospitality at Night:** Whether it's hiking the badlands, visiting our museums or spending time on the lake, Missouri River Country has what it takes to have a breathtaking experience. Hang out at one of our Breweries in the evening and relax and experience MRC's night time hospitality.

Describe your destination.

THREE PHASES OF TRAVEL

It is easy to fall in love with Missouri River Country. Our rolling sea of prairie stretches for miles below big blue skies that come to life with stars at night. Missouri River Country will follow the State's three phase travel strategy of inspiration, orientation and facilitation to provide world-class experiences and unforgettable memories.

Stunning photography of our landscape *inspires* people through advertising and social media. It is hard to see bright green landscapes and giant blue skies and not want to learn more (or come see it for yourself!). Our open spaces and abundance of wildlife and recreation activities will draw interested visitors and make people want to learn more about Missouri River Country.

Once we have hooked people into wanting to learn more, we will *orient* them to our region with information about activities, lodging, events and opportunities. Using print marketing, trade show opportunities, social media outlets (ie: Twitter, Facebook and Instagram) and informational blog posts, we will provide information to our interested visitors. We recently built a state-of-the-art website which is responsive to mobile devices and will serve as an immeasurable tool in delivering the message about opportunities in Missouri River Country to the public.

We will *facilitate* visitors through continued hospitality. From the moment of interest to their last day of vacation, Missouri River Country staff and marketing teams will provide nothing but excellent information, service and resources. The new website is proving to be a huge asset in ensuring that visitors have an encore experience in our region, and our informational print materials such as travel guides, hunting and fishing guides, brochures and maps will help visitors experience all that Missouri River Country has to offer. In addition, promoting traffic to the visitor's center will enable us to have a hands-on

approach to facilitating the experience of our visitors.

Optional: Include attachments here

VMT - Fort Peck Stars 2.jpg

a. Define your target markets (demographic, geographic and psychographic).

TARGET MARKETS

GEOGRAPHIC

Strategically targeting certain geographic markets will enable Missouri River Country to stretch the impact of our marketing dollars. Missouri River Country will target the following geographical markets, which provide our current base of visitors and potential for increased visits by high-value, low-impact tourists:

According to Arrivalist Data for 2019 our top 10 states are:

Montana

North Dakota

Minnesota

Ohio

Washington

Wyoming

South Dakota

Wisconsin

Colorado

Texas

Our primary target market would be Regional:

Montana, North Dakota, Minnesota, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming

We also plan to target Saskatchewan, Canada

Arrivalist Data doesn't cover Canadian travel.

We also know that many Montanans visit Missouri River Country as a close-to-home, quick trip in our state. When it comes to Montana residents, we market the chance to fall in love with Montana all over again in a fresh, new part of the state.

North Dakota ranked first for nonresident visitors to Missouri River Country in 2019.

PSYCHO-GRAPHIC

Missouri River Country will target the visitors that present a high impact, such as history and culture buffs, hunters and anglers, and the families or couples that are interested in the many things Missouri River Country has to offer. Various visitors seek the hunting and fishing opportunities here, and they bring their families to visit museums and/or to recreate around the lakes, rivers and streams. Many families follow the Montana Dinosaur Trail through our region. The 50+ permanent RVer's are becoming popular in our area as well. These people like to visit our wide-open spaces and stay in our campgrounds. When the state "Montana" is mentioned, people get excited. We see this at our trade shows and in reactions online through social media. The beauty of Missouri River Country is the quiet, peace and solitude.

DEMOGRAPHIC

In addition to geographic targeted marketing, Missouri River Country strategically targets prime demographic groups who have inclination and reason to visit our region. Strategic marketing includes social media posts, ad placements, and trade shows.

Hunters & Anglers

This group includes hunters and fishermen and women from Montana and other states who would visit Missouri River Country for specific recreational opportunities. This demographic is heavily skewed as an affluent male audience. Census statistics suggest that 15% of the general US population 16 years of age or older fishes and 10% hunts from that same demographic. These people most likely come into the region to recreate and do not travel elsewhere in the state once they are here. 4% of visitors to our region listed hunting as an attraction while 14% listed fishing.

History & Culture Buffs

This group includes adults 30+ years of age who are traveling with or without children with a household income of \$60,000+. These travelers are interested in a variety of history, arts and culture and are likely to visit at least one historical site during their vacation. They will most likely pair their trip to include other historical regions of Montana. 18% of visitors to our region listed Lewis and Clark as an attractant to Montana.

Couples

This group includes adults 30+ years of age without children who have a household income of \$50,000+. These people are interested in history, culture, arts, museums, soft adventure, wildlife viewing and birding, dinosaurs, and scenic attractions.

Traditional Family Travelers

This group includes adults 35+ years of age with children whose household income is \$60,000+. These travelers participate in scenic driving, nature photography, camping/hiking, museums, wildlife viewing and birding and dinosaur activities. They are interested in creating a relaxing and memorable experience together.

RV & Camping Travelers

This group consists of adults 35-65 years of age with children or adults 55-64 years of age without children. They usually have a household income of \$75,000+. These travelers participate in camping, hiking, visiting historic sites, sightseeing, photography, wildlife viewing, birding, and dinosaur activities.

Outdoor Enthusiasts

This group consists of adults 35-65 years of age who are traveling with or without children. They have a household income of \$60,000+. They enjoy participating in outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, biking, fishing, hunting, birding, wildlife watching, dinosaur activities, ATVing, motorcycle riding and water recreation.

Sports Travelers

This group consists of adults 25+ years of age traveling with children to sporting events such as basketball, baseball, hockey, football and track and field. They have a household income of \$50,000+.

METHODS

Missouri River Country will reach geographic and demographic target markets through various advertisement placements to promote the region as a travel destination. Using branding and strong ad copy, we believe that we can successfully attract visitors to the region.

Branding

In FY18, Missouri River Country rebranded our logo with carefully selected color palettes to represent the aesthetic appeal of our region. Blues and greens evoke the colors of the prairie. Rolling green hills match bright blue skies, and the light blues represent the flowing Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers that crisscross our region. The dark orange evokes memories of swaying grasses in the fall, and the deep red evokes the boldness of sunsets in the summertime. We feel that this strong color palette is a powerful marketing tool to successfully brand Missouri River Country as a destination for potential travelers. Continuous integration in print, digital, and social media to create a consistent image for the region.

Print and Digital Ads

Last year, Missouri River Country placed many print and digital ads which were chosen to maximize reach to target demographics. In FY21, we will continue to place print and digital advertisements on sites and publications where we feel we can maximize our reach to our target and demographic markets. Our advertisements will focus on the pillars of Missouri River Country's attractions: dinosaurs, history and culture, dark skies, outdoor recreation, and charming small towns.

Website Marketing, Optimization, Development & Maintenance

After receiving a grant from the State of Montana, Missouri River Country has completely rebuilt a state-of-the-art website which is integral to boosting our presence in the 21st century market. The new website follows branded colors and fonts, and is compliant with the bed tax requirements. Many postings are directly from Visit Montana's website, meaning that visitors can have a streamlined experience while visiting our state. The design is dynamic and responsive to all devices. By using a different server, the website has increased security and allows Missouri River Country to upload higher quality photos to the site, meaning we now have a greater chance to inspire through imagery. The number of landing pages on the new website has increased greatly from the older site, meaning that Missouri River Country is increasing our SEO presence online. This also gives visitors more of a chance to explore the options of our region and spend more time on the site, which will in time create opportunities to drive revenue through ad sales on the website if desired. Through the continuance of fresh, monthly blog content, organic algorithms will drive traffic to the site and visitors can now easily explore and learn about our region. The launch of the new website in February of 2019 took Missouri River Country from an average of 8.6 travel guide orders per month to 26.5 travel guide orders per month via the online order a guide form. In addition, the website also saw a 36.52% increase in number of visitor sessions and a 72.65% decrease in the bounce rate in a snapshot of performance from February 1, 2019 to August 31, 2019. A goal for this year is to create seasonal itineraries to be housed on the web page to ease the planning process for visitors.

This past year, specific changes were made to the website to make it more attractive and user-friendly to viewers:

Added a photo slider to the homepage to increase inspiration while planning or considering a trip to the region.

Added an events submission page to allow local businesses to contribute to the calendar.

Added an "Order a Travel Guide" call to action on the homepage to assist with the goal of increasing the number of guides requested.

Added additional call to action buttons for the blog, newsletter, and photo gallery.

Made enhancements to the Community Pages to pull in relevant blog content.

Pinterest

This year, a Pinterest board was created for Missouri River Country with the goal of increasing visitation to the website and inspiring Pinterest users to save images and blogs about our region. After the first month, monthly viewers on the page were already over 700, and over 1000 users have viewed the pins. We anticipate upward trends as the page content grows and users save the pins promoted.

Content Development

In order to inspire and educate people on the offerings of our region, Missouri River Country needs to be constantly providing new content and information to our potential visitors. Using FAQs from the visitor's center and call center as well as tips from social media sites, Missouri River Country will build the content library through web page designs, blog posts, social media posts and through printed content and print pieces, such as our Travel Planner, Hunting and Fishing Guide, and Calendar of Events.

Printed Content Materials

This year, we put together a Hunting and Fishing Guide specific to our region with advice on where to hunt and fish, the seasons for various species, tips, and first person narratives from locals explaining what makes our region special. 20,000 Hunting and Fishing Guides were printed, and distribution ranges from in-person drop offs at chambers and gas stations throughout the state and mailings as requested. Our travel guide continues to be a great source of information for visitors, with 30,000 printed last year and distributed to Chambers and mailed out to individuals as requested. Our 2020 Events Calendar brochure serves as a great informational piece for potential visitors, with 7,500 copies printed last year.

SOCIAL MEDIA EXAMPLES

Photo & Video Library Development

Photography and video are critical in inspiring potential visitors to plan a trip to Missouri River Country. It is vital that we are able to maximize our budget while still obtaining high quality photos and videos of our region. We have been working on building relationships with photographers based in the area as well as using photo influencers through cooperative opportunities to increase the items in our photo library and, in turn, using these photos on social media, the new developing website, and in print advertisements to promote Missouri River Country in the best possible light. Over the past year, our photo library has steadily been growing with photography from locals, such as Ken Plourde, Kelsey of Malta, and Jennifer Caulkin, and professionals such as Andy Austin, Bradley Castaneda, and Justin Kauffman.

Publicity

Missouri River Country will strategically work with partners to increase publicity as well as continue our partnership with the State of Montana's tourism. We plan to recruit photo influencers, including seeking out specific astrotourism influencers in our market. We also want to continue our strategy of purposefully placing advertisements in other region's magazines, such as Glacier Country Montana and Destination Missoula's travel guides.

Trade Show Displays

Missouri River Country actively promotes our region at various trade shows throughout the country where we distribute print information about our region and MRC swag. We estimate that our trade show displays reach over 100,000 unique potential visitors a year.

Washington

Colorado

Michigan

Wisconsin

Minnesota

North Dakota

South Dakota

California

Regina, Canada

Calgary, Canada

Lead Collection

Missouri River Country will continue to collect leads through various methods including:
Providing promotional giveaways where lead data is collected like Wings Over the Big Sky.
Collecting information at trade shows.
Using website integration and using a form designed for increased conversation of information.

b. What are your emerging markets?

EMERGING MARKETS

Missouri River Country has isolated the following emerging markets that we believe are a perfect fit for our attractions. We plan to market directly to their travel desires and needs.

Young Outdoor Enthusiasts

This market includes young travelers between the ages of 18-30 who are interested in traveling for outdoor adventure. These travelers are more likely to camp at least one night of their trip, and they are looking for access to hiking, climbing, water sports, wildlife viewing, photography and camping experiences. These users are also highly active on social media, so we believe that targeting these audiences within our drive markets through social media channels will be an impactful way to reach this group.

Retirees

According to the 2017 ITRR report, a high number of couples ages 65-75 are traveling through Missouri River Country. We believe that retirees are a great group to target, as they are traditionally financially stable, traveling without children and looking to engage in soft adventure and historical and cultural experiences.

Amtrak Riders

Missouri River Country has three Amtrak stops in Wolf Point, Glasgow and Malta. We believe that a unique opportunity lies in attracting visitors to stop over in Missouri River Country on their way from the Chicago and Minneapolis area on route to Glacier National Park. We also believe that there is untapped potential in families from cities to the east who can easily access our charming communities and have authentic Montana experiences with less train-time than riding all the way to Glacier National Park.

Craft Beer Enthusiasts

Craft beer tours are becoming increasingly common, with some larger breweries serving as the single reason visitors take trips to specific areas. The Brewers Association found that 18% of craft beer drinkers visit three or more out-of-town breweries each year. Montana has the second most breweries per capita of any state in America, and we believe that promoting Missouri River Country as a brewery destination to the craft beer market would increase visitation to towns where craft breweries are present.

Montana MADE

Local, sustainable crafts and products are on the rise, and visitors appreciate the pride of local craftsmen and women. We believe that by promoting the Montana Made artisans and goods in our region, we can attract visitors to seek out our fairs, markets, and shops.

Compared to other vacation destinations, Missouri River Country offers affordable options for travelers.

Astrotourists

80% of Americans can't see the Milky Way anymore due to light pollution according to a 2016 study, and astrotourism is on the rise worldwide as city dwellers or people living in condensed population areas long to see the uninterrupted night sky. Since Missouri River Country has some of the darkest night skies in the country, we should be directly promoting our region as a destination for dark sky enthusiasts and photographers alike. We have long-term aspirations to create International Dark Parks. We plan to use target campaigns to show off our dark skies and grow awareness around the astrotourism options in our region. We are more than halfway through the application process of Brush Lake State Park becoming an IDSP. We also believe that promoting visitation to Hill Ranch Oasis, a bed and breakfast near Mosby, will allow for visitors who would prefer to sleep indoors, the chance to take in the uninterrupted skies—an opportunity specific to this particular place as opposed to other accommodations in towns.

Agritourists

Agritourism centers around tourists who come from cities and want to get a taste of the rural farming and ranching communities. Agritourism is one of the fastest-growing forms of global tourism with an economic impact of more than \$1 billion in many US states and countries, and we believe that Missouri River Country is a no-brainer for agritourism activities in the state of Montana. Agritourism activities that can be found in Missouri

River Country include: farmers markets, horseback riding, and shopping for local honeys, breads, and other handcrafted items. We believe our small, charming rural communities make us an ideal travel option for agritourists. All 8 counties in Missouri River Country are home to an annual county fair, where opportunities for agritourism abound, from rodeos, 4H competitions, petting zoos, live music and dancing, and so much more.

Digital Detox Travelers

We are living in the age of technology overload, and we believe that promoting our “no cell service, no worries” attitude towards travel can be a huge attractant for Digital Detox Travelers, a group of people looking to get away from the over-stimulus of our digital world. According to the 2019 ITRR report, 23% of nonresident visitors who spent at least one night in Missouri River Country said that the primary reason they were attracted to Montana was open space and uncrowded areas. With more room to roam and more time to disconnect, Missouri River Country is a natural fit for these visitors. According to Intrepid, bookings to locations in this category were up significantly in 2018, and Darshika Jones, Intrepid’s director of North America, explained that they saw “an increase in those more remote destinations where you get that opportunity to unplug and reconnect.”

Optional: Include attachments here.

_DMS8399.jpg

c. *What research supports your target marketing?*

SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Institute for Tourism & Recreation. University of Montana. 2017, 2018 2019.

“Stairway to the heavens: astro-tourism on the rise worldwide.” *LonelyPlanet.com.* 2015.

Amtrak Train Routes. Amtrak.com. 2018.

Agritourism is growing in America. SustainableAmerica.org. 2013.

80 Percent of Americans Can’t See the Milky Way Anymore. National Geographic. 2016.

Local Food Trend Keeps Farms at Center of Tourism Strategies. Skift. 2017.

Tourism on tap: Beer Related Travel. Travel Weekly. 2017.

Skift Megatrends 2019. Skift. 2019.

With the opportunity to receive updated Arrivalist Data from MOTBD, Missouri River Country will be able to see where our visitors are coming from, how long they are staying and how many are coming into our region. This data is separated out by counties and will be useful in our marketing strategies.

GOALS

Our primary marketing goals are to increase visitation and communicate a cohesive and effective marketing identity. We will follow the MOTBD’s 2013-2017 Strategic Plan, incorporating the plan into Montana’s Missouri River Country’s FY21 Marketing Plan. We will support the Montana brand with our charming and unique towns, spectacular nature and breathtaking experiences. In addition, we will continue taking advantage of partnerships with MOTBD, other tourism regions/CVB’s, local chambers, and tribal entities, working together to more effectively promote our area as a tourist destination. The following are the goals for Missouri River Country in FY21:

Increase arrivals and encourage extended stays and increased expenditures from our frequent repeat visitors by focusing promotions and advertising in the warm season.

Increase overall visitor awareness of Missouri River Country’s attractions and activities.

Promote and support Missouri River Country’s newer attractions including: Sleeping Buffalo Hot Springs & Resort, Fort Peck Interpretive Center & Museum, the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum, the Children’s Museum of Northeast Montana, World Wildlife Exhibit, the Montana Dinosaur Trail and the Northeast Montana Birding Trail.

Promote microbreweries in the region including: Blue Ridge Brewing in Malta, Busted Knuckle Brewery in Glasgow, Docz Missouri River Breaks Brewing in Wolf Point, Meadowlark Brewing and 1035 Brewing in Sidney.

Seek joint venture and co-op marketing opportunities with the State of Montana and other appropriate entities.

Increase awareness of Missouri River Country and the organization’s role in regional tourism development.

Promote our unique outdoor recreation activities including: hunting, fishing, dark sky viewing, Brush Lake State Park, Hell Creek State Park & Campground, and promote more access and additional public amenities, camping and state parks.

Promote regional conventions, community events, sporting events and shopping.

Gain feature stories in regional and national consumer publications about events and attractions that expose our region's unique appeal, with particular emphasis on expanding dinosaur opportunities.

Develop both online marketing and online resources to increase visitor interest in the region and make it easy for visitors to find and use information that will inspire planning.

Gain increased exposure of Missouri River Country online through web-based public relations, keyword placements on the search engines, online packages, social media, apps and related tactics.

Implement state's brand of three pillars: 1) More spectacular, unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48; 2) Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders; 3) Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.

Seek opportunities to promote the Fort Peck and Fort Belknap Indian Reservations and work with tribal leaders to promote cultures of the tribes and tourism activities.

To measure success we listed increase bed tax by 1% and website visits by 5% in several of the methods. For several years our bed tax collections and our website were both down. We see our bed tax as an overall achievement, if it increases it relates to all of our advertising efforts. Last year it was up 6% and now with Covid-19 we will probably drop again. We finally felt we were coming out of our downward trend. The Eastern MT Initiative was a huge benefit to us and we would see results from it for years with the grants to establish new marketing that we didn't have the funds to do on our own. A few years ago we had a grant to do a complete redo of our website. That's part of the reason for the website increasing. We were up 26% last year. If both methods were successful, bed tax is overall and visitors use the website to plan trips we would know that the website is working and our advertising is working to bring visitation to MRC.

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

JOINT VENTURES

Missouri River Country recognizes that budgeting is a limitation on our marketing expenses. For this reason, seeking Joint Ventures with MOTBD and building a relationship is a vital part of our marketing strategy. In FY20, Joint Venture placements included:

Photographer Justin Kauffman visited Missouri River Country, through which we gained a number of high quality photographs to use for marketing.

Sojern Digital Joint Venture with MOTBD

Parent Magazine Joint Venture with MOTBD

We would like to do these again in FY21, but due to the current conditions we might not be able to. We realize the benefits of these Joint Ventures and they will take top priority. At this time we don't know of any JV's that would be more Regional, but that would be something that might fit into our plan for FY21. We would like to see more JV's at affordable costs to us lower funded entities.

Optional: Include attachment here.

Photo Infuencer 3.jpg

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

COOPERATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

With MRC's budgeting limitations, seeking Co-op opportunities with other Regions/CVB's and building relationships with other partners in the industry is a vital part of our marketing strategy. In FY19, cooperative placements included:

In June of 2018, Missouri River Country was one stop in a three-week, multi-region cooperative venture with social media influencer and photographer, Andy Austin. Andy started his journey in Missouri River Country where he visited Fort Peck and Fort Peck Lake, Sidney and Meadowlark Brewing Company, toured the MonDak Heritage Center, camped, fished and explored the night skies along the Yellowstone River, and much more. This was a joint venture with Visit Southeast Montana, Southwest Montana, Western Montana's Glacier Country, Yellowstone Country Montana, Inc., and Destination Missoula.

Ad was placed in Western Montana's Glacier Country's travel guide

Ad was placed in Visit Southeast Montana's travel guide

Lee Newspaper Statewide buy with Glasgow TBID

Cape Air Magazine with Visit Southeast Montana

True West feature with Visit Southeast Montana

MT Dinosaur Trail-website and video project

Lewis & Clark Partnership

Local Co-op Marketing with Chambers and Communities-Glasgow, Sidney, Garfield County, Daniels County and Malta

Missouri River Country would like to continue to do Joint Ventures with the other Regions/CVB's. We don't know what these would be at this time or if funding will be available, but once again we know that partnering leverages our marketing dollars. See section "c" for results.

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

In FY20 Missouri River Country participated in Sojern and Parenting Magazine, with MOTBD. We also partnered with Sidney CVB on a couple print ads, and with other regions on the Montana Dinosaur Trail and Lewis and Clark Trail.

Joint ventures that we did in FY19: Lewis and Clark with several Regions, Sojern, and Parenting Magazine with MOTBD and a Candian Campaign partnership with Central MT, Dakota Magazine with Sidney Chamber, Glacier Country, and Destination Missoula, and the Accommodations Book with MOTBD and the other Regions. Partnerships are a huge benefit for our Region. Our bed tax increased 6% and our website showed a 26% increase. CPC on our banners were \$1.20, CTR is .36% with 1,651,137 impressions. We will continue the L&C campaign, it has done website updates that link to our site. We find that L&C is still popular with inquiry calls to the office. The cost was \$1500. The Accommodation book we feel is necessary to support with a small contribution on our part of \$102.77. The Canadian Campaign with Central MT was a huge success. MRC contributed \$500, MOTBD also contributed to this campaign. Other partnerships with Glacier, Missoula, Parenting, Sojern, Dakota Magazine. We will continue to do Joint Ventures when it fits into our Marketing Plan for success. We try to budget as much as we can into Joint Ventures because partnerships arise throughout the year. All the Joint Ventures we did were successful and we will continue to do them as funding allows.

Optional: Include attachments here. Alicia Nelson Hell Creek.jpg

Optional: Include attachments here. YELLOWSTONE ABOVE SIDNEY (2).jpg

Optional: Include attachment here: Billboard Wolf Point.pdf

Marketing Segment, Method & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Describe your method.	Provide supporting research/statistics.	How do you plan to measure success?	Provide a brief rationale for this method.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Add'l Atchmnt
		MRC will attend trade shows that target our geographic, demographic and psychographic markets to the high-value, low-impact visitors according to the narrative of our plan and provide them with information about our region. We will purchase giveaway items for an additional attraction to our booth, such as agates, and novelty items. At our sports shows we have interest from people seeking outfitters and guides. We supply the information to them and	In a Consumer Show survey done by ITRR it was noted that two regions that exhibited at a show were able to highlight the entire state and help in visitation. When we do shows people are interested in MT and we provide them with the information to plan their trip. Our recent shows that we attended in FY20 have showed a great response rate. All results haven't been finalized yet, the ISE Sacramento, CA Sportshow had an attendance of 36,000 to 38,000. CA is in our top 10 visited states according to 2019 ITRR. A couple years ago we marketed in ND and according to 2019 ITRR report ND is our top state where visitors come from. According to the Tourism Research Dashboard, Mobile Location	MRC will measure success by tracking the attendance, with a goal of at least 10,000 attendees and interest shown at the shows and the information handed out. A goal of at least 350 MRC travel planners at each show, along with 100	MRC will exhibit at target market trade shows and promote our spectacular nature, charming small towns, and breathtaking experiences and provide them with information. We will market our winter, ice fishing, hunting/fishing, and warm season attractions and events. We will attract them to our booth with giveaways, trinkets, and give them our MRC bags		Unfortunately, due to the Pandemic we didn't attend any of those events and most of them were cancelled. Our booth fee was returned. We will plan to exhibit again in FY22 depending on the Pandemic,	

Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	<p>will bring home any leads and distribute them to the appropriate businesses. With the recent Covid-19 Pandemic we probably won't be able to do as many shows and we will focus on a Regional Market, such as in-state, North Dakota and South Dakota. We will also consider a show in Regina, which would be a close driving distance if the borders open.</p>	<p>Data, ND was second to Montana for visitors coming to our region. According to ISE "the biggest advantage Destination Exhibitors have is putting a smiling and informed face in front of the hundreds of attendees who come to shows. MRC is one of Montana's Ambassadors. Folks stop by with questions about what Montana has to offer, and they get answers. The internet is a wonderful thing but it only leaves a momentary impression." Arrivalist Data shows most of our regions visitors come from MT, ND and MN. It also had WA and SD on the list. If funding is available we will focus on these shows.</p>	<p>each other misc. brochures and information. A report will be given after the show to see if it was successful or not and whether we should continue to do shows at that destination.</p>	<p>to collect information. We display dino replicas on our table for an added attraction. The response is overwhelming from adults and youth alike. For our outdoor sports shows we will distribute our new Hunting/Fishing Guidebook.</p>	\$6,000.00	<p>because we do see success in having the one on one experience with potential visitors. Funds were budgeted in FY22 for Trade Shows.</p>	
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	<p>In previous years MRC leased billboards designed to reach out-of-state tourists traveling through our region, increasing awareness of the MT Dinosaur Trail. We did a new design in FY19 to attract visitors to the Dinosaur Museums and also other museums and attractions. These billboards are strategically placed along Hwy 2 by Wolf Point, Oswego and Dodson. We update the signs as needed.</p> <p>In FY21 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic some of the Dinosaur Museums might not open, therefore we will need to re-evaluate this segment moving forward. The MRC BOD have set a date of Sept. 15th to review how the last 3 months have gone with travel, visitors and the opening of the museums. We realize the importance of spending the funds wisely and if we can't receive a ROI then we will transfer funding from the Billboard budget to other areas of our marketing budget. We would look at more website development and SEM. We would like to keep the Billboards in the budget at this time because if we cancel them we chance not getting signage back.</p>	<p>ITRR's report showed that 3% of visitors used billboards as a source of information during their trip. According to Geopath, our three signs had a weekly average total of 25,686 impressions. Dodson-6,238, Oswego-6,762, Wolf Point-12,686. According to Yesco Sign Company, billboards deliver a timely message, convenient to the point of visitation, and impulsive visitation. They also state that there is a low CPM and high ROI on billboards. Profile types of people driving by our boards are Young & Rustic, and Back Country Folks. The Wolf Point and Oswego boards have a very high percentage of people driving by it that fall into the "Young and Rustic" category. The description of these people are composed of restless singles and young families in the nation's rural areas. They enjoy the outdoors on their ATVs but are also big video gamers and follow NASCAR and monster trucks. This is based on survey data and cell phone data from Geopath.</p> <p>Our billboards advertise our dinosaur museums. Here is what we are seeing for visitation at those facilities. The Fort Peck Interpretive Center's visitation was down 11% at 20,760 recorded visitors, Phillips County Museum, up by 24% at 4926, GPDM had a 15% increase in visitors. They reported that visitors did comment on seeing the billboard signs. The Garfield County Museum was up 10% at 785 visitors.</p>	<p>We will measure success by driving traffic to Missouri River Country attractions and the Dinosaur Trail, ultimately contributing to 1% or more increased visitation to those facilities. We will continue to track visitation at the museums in our region and have the museums ask if they saw the billboards and if that's what attracted them to the facility with a goal of 25 responding to the signs. After evaluating on Sept. 15, 2020 we will determine if we will move forward with the billboard segment if not we will move the funds to other parts of our FY21 budget, such as website and SEM.</p>	<p>These billboards will drive traffic to the four facilities in MRC and increase visitation to the MT Dinosaur Trail. The billboards are attractive and maintained and designate the MT Dinosaur Trail through MRC. We aren't cluttered with billboards in Eastern MT isn't an eye sore, it's more of an eye catcher for something else to do out here in the "middle of nowhere".</p> <p>We will re-evaluate on Sept. 15th so see if we want to continue with signage. One of the leases expires in Nov. and the other two in April and June 2021. No funding for billboards will be spent before October if we decide it is profitable to continue them.</p>	\$6,000.00	<p>The purpose of these billboard signs are to direct traffic to our dinosaur museums. These 3 signs are located along Hwy 2 and they promote the MT Dinosaur Trail and the facilities in MRC. Visitation for the summer increased or stayed about the same according to the 4 reporting facilities. Reports from the facilities say that there are many people that say they saw the billboard signs on Hwy 2 and the facility directors and staff see value in the signs and would like MRC to continue them. They didn't record the people. The Phillips Co. Museum said the billboard signs have had a positive impact on the visitation. The Fort Peck Interp. Center, said when asking visitors how they found the museum they sometimes hear they "saw the sign". The signs keep the dinosaur trail on the forefront of resident's minds, therefore contributing to their out of town visitors to come to the museum. We will continue to advertise the MT Dinosaur Trail facilities using the Hwy billboards. MRC bed tax revenue was up 2%. Most of the museums had the same amount of visitors as in FY20, but the FPIC had limited hours and still had an 81% increase. The MRC board reviewed our options to continue the billboards in FY21 in Sept. The decision was to continue to pay the lease for another year and to show support of the Dinosaur Museums in MRC and the MT Dinosaur Trail. See attached the 3 billboard signs. MRC feels these signs are successful to have in our area and we will continue to do them in FY22. Out here in the "middle of nowhere" billboards don't clutter the beauty of the land. They are actually a useful marketing tool. The total billboard campaign had 972,296 annual impressions according to Yesco Sign Co. The billboards are successful and we will continue to use the out of home advertising method in the future when and where appropriate.</p>	scan_20201123212656.pdf
		<p>MRC has an ongoing need for photos and</p>	<p>MRC purchases photos and develops videos in our marketing efforts. The photos have been used in print and online advertising and our Travel Planner. Photos play an important role in the attractiveness of advertising our charming and</p>	<p>We will measure</p>	<p>MRC realizes the importance of having our spectacular nature captured through photos and videos. We will</p>		<p>MRC increased our wildlife photos</p>	

Consumer	Photo/Video Library	<p>videos for our marketing projects and social media. We will utilize the MOTBD photos in Web Dam to use where there is a need, but those photos are limited and doesn't provide any videos. Photography and videos are critical in inspiring potential visitors to plan a trip to MRC. It is vital that we are able to maximize our budget while still obtaining high quality photos and videos of our region. Our Travel Planner designer lets us use his photos for other projects which really helps with our limited budget.</p>	<p>breathtaking wonders. Research shows that pictures tell the story. Photography helps utilize the social media platforms for marketing. The brain usually can only process limited information at a time. Photos are images to make the potential traveler have a better understanding of what we have to offer. According to www.guttulus.com, "Good photography commands the attention of customers. No matter how great your product or the service that you offer is, without impressive imagery that communicates, potential customers are more likely to ignore the product." Or in our case look for other places to visit. We believe good photography sells us, as we have some of the most spectacular nature and some of the darkest, beautiful skies. According to 2019 ITRR nature photography is 19% of the reason people visit our region. We realize they take their own photos, but showing what we have entices them to come and do their own photography.</p>	<p>success by increasing our photo library with wildlife, nature, night skies and people photos to use in our travel guide, creative and website. We will also work on promoting MRC with video footage to show at trade shows and on our website and promote MRC's spectacular nature, contributing to at least 1 new video and 5 new photos.</p>	<p>continue to maintain and update photos and videos as needed. We have been working on building relationships with photographers based in the area as well as using photo influencers through cooperative opportunities to increase the items in our photo library and then, in turn, use these photos on social media, and in developing our new website and travel planner. We are in need of photos with people. People photos make our spectacular nature even more appealing when you can place yourself viewing the landscape.</p>	\$750.00	<p>by one in FY21. We purchased an awesome photo of an elk for \$75 for unlimited use. We have used this photo in many places including the cover of our H&F booklet. We consider it a success although only one photo was purchased. We didn't meet our objective of 5 photos and a video, but the photo we did purchase is valuable for our marketing needs. We met our needs at this time with the one photo but will continue to budget funds into FY22 because there is always a need to have fresh new photos and videos. Photo attached.</p>	Elk Gloria Allwin.jpeg
Consumer	Print Advertising	<p>MRC will place print advertisements on sites and publications where we feel that we can maximize our reach to our target and demographic markets according to our narrative. Our print advertisements will focus on the pillars of MRC's attractions: dinosaurs, history and culture, outdoor recreation, hunting/fishing, night skies and charming small towns. We will continue to use our "More Room to Roam" tagline.</p>	<p>MRC received 29,544 inquires in FY19 from our print advertising. According to https://marketing.sfgate.com/blog/4-reasons-why-print-advertising-stillworks, print advertisements have a significant impact on converting prospects into customers, or in our case visitors. It also states that printed ads have much more influence on buying or visiting decisions than electronic advertisements, if the correct target demographics are used and bought by the target audience. Each year we carefully determine the right placements for our advertising.</p>	<p>MRC will measure success by tracking the effectiveness of our advertising with a goal of under \$5.00 CPM and will strive to receive at least 5000 leads/inquiries per year if available. We will also plan to increase our website visits by 10% and add 9000 more unique visitors, since our print advertising lists our website and also allows potential visitors to sign up for a travel planner.</p>	<p>Print advertising is still effective in MRC. We will continue to advertise, creating attractive ads using our "More Room to Roam" campaign, and reach our target markets to attract the potential visitor that plans a trip to MRC. While internet is becoming more popular MRC feels that print advertising is still useful for MRC. We will participate in MOTBD joint ventures and partnerships when available and fit within our budget. Due to funding limitations we will have a smaller budget to work with for print advertising this year. It will limit our print advertising. We will focus on an outdoor recreation theme.</p>	\$5,500.00	<p>We placed ads in NW Sportsman, Dakota Magazine, Good Housekeeping/Woman's Day, True West, and Distinctly MT print magazines. NW Sportsman and Dakota Magazine doesn't have readerservice. Dakota Magazine is close in proximity to MRC, so we feel this is a beneficial market to target with 9000 print circulation with an additional 1000 online subscribers. We don't have tracking numbers but we know advertising close to home is a benefit, especially in ND, according to ITRR reports. It's a great publication. NW Sportsman is also a great publication that we advertise in every year in the months Nov.-Feb. because these get taken to trade shows along with their regular circulation so we are getting great exposure. For \$600 we advertised in the Sidney, Richland County Road Map. This map is used by visitors to the area. CPM was more than expected for GH/WD, True West and Distinctly MT at \$13.62. Our website visits were increased by 53% and unique visitors increased by 126,776. This goal was successful. We will continue to do print advertising and even though our CPM was high we still see the value. Copies of the ads are attached.</p>	MRC FY21 Print Ads .zip
		<p>MRC will continue to do regular E-Newsletters using Constant Contact to promote our area events and attractions. These newsletters provide information about attractions and events to entice a potential visitor to MRC. We will also do</p>	<p>MRC sends out our E-Newsletters to a growing data base of 5000+ recipients with an average of 18% opens. According to Constant Contact the average open rate is 20%, but can fluctuate from 15% to 50% with an open click rate of 6%. We are currently seeing an average click rate of 4%. Email</p>	<p>MRC will measure the success of our e-mail efforts by increasing our data base by 250 and continue to</p>	<p>MRC realizes the importance of e-mails in this technology age whether by computer or mobile. The past E-Newsletters and E-Blasts have proven effective. We will continue to promote MRC through E-mails since we have seen success in the past and</p>		<p>In FY21 we sent 12 newsletters and added contacts, but there were many that unsubscribed, so our final (net) database for FY2 was 4832. We did not increase overall by 250. Although we did not meet our goal, this was in part due to the pandemic, we feel there is success in increasing and maintaining a good amount of contacts in our data base. We have a sign up button on our website. We also get leads at trade shows. Our CTR was an average of 1% and the open rate was 15%. These numbers are lower than we projected, but we will try to increase our open and click through rate.</p>	

Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	customized E-mails with different target audiences and niche markets. Large format E-blasts are more engaging to the reader with more links and useful information.	automation ensures that everything you have to say or offer to potential visitors reaches them automatically and immediately. Sending emails drives significant results according to Quick Facts-Constant Contact.	receive at least an open rate of 18% and click through rate of at least 5%.	has drove visitors to our website. The Marketing Personnel director sends out these newsletters on a regular basis using the program Constant Contact. This is a cost saving way of doing it.	\$900.00	We will have catchy open lines to get people interested to explore MRC. We will continue to do our e-newsletters with a goal to continue to increase our data base, CTR and Open rate. Copies of the enewsletter that were sent are attached. The Marketing Personnel does the newsletters. This project is successful even though we didn't reach our objectives. We perhaps set our objectives too high and even with a 15% open rate our newsletters are getting opened. We will continue to use this method and adjust our objectives in the future.	FY21 Enewsletters.zip
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	MRC will continue to do online advertising. We will continue to do banner ads and Facebook and Social Media venues to get the attention of the internet user due to the growing use of technology. These marketing efforts will drive more traffic to our website where they can receive more information on MRC. We will do joint ventures with MOTBD and other Regions when it fits into our budget and marketing strategy	Website visits in FY19 were up 26% with the launching of our new website. MRC realizes websites are one of the most important ways to promote our area. According to mindfirecomm.com, "banner ads first introduced in Global Network Navigator in 1993, few people understood the impact this would have on the advertising industry. To sum things up-it was a preeeeeetty big deal." As we all know it's a technology world and online advertising is the right direction to go when marketing our region. There are also countless ways to track the success.	MRC will measure success by tracking our website visits with a goal of 10% increase and 9000 more unique visitors to the site. We will also track CPM on our banner ads and online/digital advertising with a goal of under \$5.00.	MRC will place digital advertisements on sites and publications where we feel that we can maximize our reach to our target and demographic markets in our narrative. Our advertisements will focus on the pillars of MRC's attractions: dinosaurs, history and culture, outdoor recreation, hunting/fishing and charming small towns	\$6,000.00	We were successful and met our objectives to increase traffic to the MRC website. Online banner ads were placed on Sojern travel site. We also did online advertising on True West, Distinctly MT, Yellowstone Journal, MT Lee Newspaper and a Geo-fencing campaign. We also did a banner ad on the NW Sportsman website, which received 48,956 impressions and 48 clicks. Our website missourivermt.com had a 53% increase in website visitors and 126,776 unique visitors, which was over the targeted 9000. See attachment on results of the advertising. We will continue to do online advertising because this project was successful. This performed well above industry standard. CPM was under \$5.00 at \$1.59. Results and samples in attachment.	MRC FY21 Digital Ads.zip
Consumer	Printed Material	MRC will print and update as needed, our promotional pocket maps, and brochures such as Canoe/Kayaking, L &C, hunting & fishing, calendar of events, rock hounding, astronomy locations, brewery trail, birding and dinosaurs. We will also print and design a useful resource map of MRC showing attractions, roads, trails and points of interest. Any printed material that we do will include shipping costs that will be invoiced accordingly. We will continue to do Co-op Marketing projects with communities that want to print a brochure/rack card or do signage for their communities. We will distribute an allocated amount of these brochures throughout MRC, at trade shows, and send out upon request. We will also purchase a few brochure racks where brochures are needed to be distributed. MRC doesn't have a paid distribution service,	These specialty brochures are handed out at trade shows and requested through our website. They are delivered to area brochure racks. We usually hand out around 200 each at our trade shows. We were running low on several of these brochures so the demand has been high. According to naturalnewsblogs.com/-8-reasons-brochure-still-important-marketing-tool-business, "they give a clean look to your readers" "Brochures are the best for marketing products as they offer a simple and clean look to a design and it is easier for the viewers to find relevant information about your business or products. In other words, your readers are able to scan critical information about your products and its features without straining their eyes." Here in MRC we find them very useful for people that like to have a print piece in their hands.	MRC will measure success by the interest shown in these brochures contributing to a 1% increase in bed tax collections. We will have communities track their visitation and the economic impact to their area with a 1% increase to the individual counties. When delivering these brochures we will note how fast they are taken off the brochure racks.	MRC continues to see a benefit in putting print pieces in the hands of visitors to plan their trips and when they are here in MRC to pick up and plan to spend another night due to an event or attraction that is seen in these specialty brochures. While the internet is becoming more popular there are still people who like to have a print piece in their hands. We will only print and reprint those that are the most popular. Each year we print a new calendar of events brochure. The size is 3 1/2" x 9" folded.	\$1,600.00	MRC's birding brochure's supply was almost depleted, so we decided to do a complete redesign since the original was printed in 2005. It turned out to be attractive with a Sage Grouse on the cover. Size is 18 x 23.75 on 80# gloss paper with a print run of 30,000. It is distributed by mail order requests from our website and delivered by the MP to communities in MRC. Mileage is paid for the MP to deliver all printed brochures since we don't have certified folders in our area. Our bed tax collections were up by 2% and all communities were up in visitation to their counties except one county, but overall there was a large increase with one county being up over 188%. All print delivered brochures go quickly once out on the racks. Printed material is successful when printed as needed, which the birding brochure needed reprinted. Our goals were met and exceeded our expectations. \$22,000.00 was budgeted and \$10,886.74 was spent for distribution and printing of the brochure. We will continue to budget funds for print advertising.	Birding brochure.jpg

		therefore paid staff will deliver the brochures and travel planners within and on the outskirts of MRC. Mileage will be paid at state rate to deliver the brochures.						
Consumer	Travel Guide	MRC will design our primary and informational travel planner in FY21. Travel planners are an important marketing piece that provides information, pictures, maps and tools needed by the visitor to plan their trips and spend more time in MRC. FY20 was our print year. This has proven to be very cost effective by doing an updated planner every 2 years, alternating years between design and print. Shipping costs are included in the bidding process and will be invoiced accordingly.	In FY19 MRC distributed 13,766 travel planners through the mail, delivered to communities by the ED and MP, mileage paid at state rate, and taken to trade shows. First time visitor groups according to ITRR were 3%, and repeat visitors 91%. These statistics show that once visitors experience MRC they return. Travel guides have proven to help a potential visitor plan their trip and spend extra time in MRC. Arrivist Data shows visitors to our region are mainly from MT, ND and MN.	MRC will measure success by tracking the amount of planners that are sent out each year and track our bed tax collections with a goal of 1% increase, and track how many are handed out at trade shows with an average of 350 for each show, and track our website visits with a goal of 10% increase and 9000 more unique visitors to the site.	MRC prints and designs our travel planner in a 2-year cycle. This informational piece is a necessity to attracting visitors to MRC and providing them a print piece to help plan their trip and to extend their stay. We will continue to distribute them at trade shows and mail to inquiry requests, chambers and VIC's, and distribute them in MRC and the surrounding area for visitors to pick up along their way. Due to restricted travel conditions if funding is limited, we will work on design for two years to stretch funding.	\$9,000.00	MRC designed an attractive travel planner in FY19. We printed it in FY20. We continue to design one year and print the second year, but in FY21 due to the Pandemic we reviewed our inventory and with our limited budget we chose to do design work over two years and print in FY23. There is still a need for a print travel planner. A total of 4434 Travel Planners were mailed out upon request. We didn't attend any trade shows in FY21. Our bed tax collections were up by 2%, our website visits were up 53% with 126,776 unique visitors to the site. This is a cost effective method and we consider this to be a successful project. We will continue to use this method in the future on a schedule where we update the design one year and print the next year. A report on design work for FY21 is attached.	MRC Northern Rockies Publishing.docx
Consumer	Joint Ventures	MRC sees the value of Joint Ventures and partnering with MOTBD and other Regions to reach the best market and leverage our marketing dollars. We will take advantage of match funding opportunities when available and within our budget. Please see the narrative portion of our FY21 Marketing Plan to see where our Joint Venture Marketing funds were spent. New joint venture marketing will include Night Skies with other regions and a Glacier Country campaign to develop a dark sky landing page and blog posts that will contain information about the opportunities to observe and enjoy the dark skies of Glacier Country and Missouri River Country. We will continue to promote the MT Dinosaur Trail and L&C Trail. The Eastern MT Initiative helped boost our marketing efforts with grants they provided and the extra marketing MOTBD did to promote Eastern MT.	A Joint Ventures line item will help with more accurate tracking. When partnering with MOTBD and other Regions our marketing efforts go further. According to Google, meaningful partnerships are the foundation for success. Partnerships is what enables many companies to make continuous improvements. By sharing with others, you can direct your resources and capabilities to projects you consider most important. In MRC, Joint Ventures are even more beneficial with our limited budget. We would like to see more affordable and regional opportunities	MRC will measure success by our bed tax revenue, website visits and overall inquiries including the MT dinosaur trail, Lewis and Clark, and Glacier Country partnership projects. Reports and results will be given on all our JV projects to measure success. We will plan to increase our bed tax by 1% and website visits by 10% and 9000 more unique visitors to the website.	Joint ventures and partnerships are an important part in marketing Montana and MRC. We gain more exposure and our marketing dollars go further, especially with our limited budget. We will join in partnerships whenever it meets our target markets and budget. For FY21 we will consider Parenting and Sojern joint ventures with MOTBD if available. We will also do other partnerships throughout the year with other regions. See the narrative portion or our marketing plan to see where our Joint Ventures funds have been spent in the past.	\$9,000.00	Joint ventures that we did in FY21: Lewis and Clark with several Regions, and a Dark Skies Cooperative Campaign with Glacier Country. Overall, we recorded 2608 inquires in the office related to the joint venture activities. Our website showed a 53% increase in traffic to certain pages related to the Joint Venture and 126,776 unique visitors. In addition, various brochures tied to the joint venture projects were picked up and mailed out and distributed in our region. The Lewis & Clark campaign included updates on their website and a link to the MRC site; see attached the L&C report. We find that Lewis & Clark is still popular based on the amount of inquiry calls to the office. This was a successful project. The cost was \$2,100, report attached. This was a successful joint venture and we would do it again if available. 399 L&C brochures were mailed out along with 500 distributed in our region. The Dark Skies Campaign with Glacier Country dates were July-Aug. with Programmatic Banners, FB and IG and Social feed ads and stories. 3,040,724 impressions were received, 15,045 Clicks with a CTR of .49%, CPM \$1.64 and CPC of .33. We will continue to do Joint Ventures when it fits into our Marketing Plan for success. Samples attached and results from the	MRC + GC- Stargazing 2021 Screenshots 7.20.21 (1).pdf

							campaigns. Our bed tax collections increased by 2%. We were successful in our JV projects.	
Consumer	Ad Agency Services	MRC has contracted with Windfall, Inc. as their Agency of Record. Windfall is a professional agency that excels in Marketing Strategies. The MRC board of directors are confident that Windfall will market MRC as a destination that will result in more visitation to our Region. They will provide a full media plan, marketing plan, market research, social media support, digital leadership, search engine marketing and optimization, and website support. Windfall is also contracted by other tourism partners so they are knowledgeable to follow the MT brand.	Windfall, Inc. has contracted with 4 other tourism regions and 1 CVB. Research has shown that the previous regions and CVB have been successful with Windfall's marketing efforts. FY21 will be our 4th year contracting with them. We have confidence that they will provide the marketing strategies necessary to increase our bed tax revenue with a new and aggressive marketing, media and social plan. They have created new ads that are attractive and eye catching. According to Google, by partnering with an agency, you will gain unprecedented access to a considerable talent pool, which will ultimately save your business both time and money.	MRC will measure the success of these projects by tracking our website visits and our visitation at our events, attractions and the whole region. MRC needs the assistance of an ad agency to help market our region as a destination. They will provide us with the marketing necessary to bring more visitors and recognition to MRC. We will measure our success by tracking our website visits, bed tax revenue, social media, and collect leads with a goal of a 1% bed tax increase, 10% website increase and 9000 more unique visitors, 100 more likes on social media channels and 5000 leads.	Windfall will provide a yearlong strategic media plan that will focus on media placements, strategic partnerships, and digital and social resource management. They will research and develop new and expanded strategies to grow the website and develop content.	\$12,000.00	MRC used the services of Windfall agency for our FY21 Marketing Strategies. Windfall has put a special effort into our website. We contribute that to the high increase in website traffic. Windfall helps with online/digital, and print placement. The agency created a new "More Room to Room" campaign that will extend into future marketing. The events and attractions in MRC increased on visitation in FY21. Key indicators of performance include: website traffic up 53%, unique visitors 126,776, Social Media, specifically Facebook increased from last year 14,254 total page likes to 15,529, Instagram had increased to 1,248 from 1,182 followers and Twitter is up to 402 followers, compared to 377 last year. We collected 2608 leads. With the success from our new campaigns, website and online presence and the marketing strategy that our ad agency has provided we will continue to allocate funding for our ad agency support. Our bed tax collections were up 2%. Our objectives were met using this method, so we consider it successful and we will continue to use the method in the future to build upon the success. The leads were down, but they will show a large increase in FY22 because most of them came in after July 1st. A list of duties performed is attached.	Ad Agency.pdf
Consumer	Search Engine Marketing	MRC hasn't used keyword search terms for a couple years. Our main focus was to get our website functional, informative and user friendly. Now that our website is up and going we realize Search terms are a way to drive traffic to the new MRC website and increase visitation from internet users. Hunting and Fishing seem to be our top search terms.	According to <i>marketingmo.com</i> , Search engine marketing is about gaining visibility on search engines when users search for terms that relate to your business. For most companies, ranking highly in search results isn't luck – it's a result of solid effort of knowing your business. MRC will choose high impact keywords such as hunting/fishing.	MRC will track our website visits with a goal of 10% increase and 9000 more unique visitors, bed tax collections with a goal of 1% increase, consumer advertising, print and online with a CPC of less than \$5.00.	MRC sees a benefit in search engine marketing with the increasing use of the internet. We will keep a tight control on our keywords and center on hunting and fishing which perform the best. Keywords drive more traffic to our website to use as a trip planning tool.	\$2,000.00	MRC's google ad words pay per click marketing ran from March-July 2021. The ads were to promote our website and to help with SEO and website traffic. Target markets were MT, ND, Sask, and WY. 167,819 impressions, 5,119 clicks with a CTR of 3.05%, CPM \$23.84, CPC .78, were received. Website visitors showed an increase of 53% with 126,776 unique visitors, which met the targeted 9000. Bed tax collections were up 2%. MRC considers this a successful method and we will plan to continue to use this method in the future.	MRC FY21 SEM.zip
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	MRC will make updates as needed to our website to maintain the most current links, photos, and information. The website is designed to be informative to the visitor and encourage extended stays. We would like to put more content on	According to MRC website analytics we showed a 26% increase in website visits from FY18 to FY19. This shows the importance of having a current useful website.	MRC will continue to track our website visits through google analytics with a goal of a 10% increase and 9000 more unique	It is important to keep websites accurate and current, especially during these uncertain times. MRC will continue to do updates to keep the most important and current	\$3,000.00	No funds were spent. Minimal updates were done through the Ad Agency contract. Updating websites are very important and we will continue to budget funds in the future to keep our website current.	

		the homepage, such as a map listing all the locations in MRC. This will depend on funding.		visitors, and 3% increase on page views.	information available.		
Events	Radio & Television Advertising	MRC continues to see a benefit in advertising on the Outdoor Radio Show. The Captain, Mark Ward, knows our area and talks about MRC like he's lived here all his life. All advertising is done outside the area to attract people coming a distance in order to increase the nights' stay in MRC. The Outdoor Radio Show airs every Saturday morning from 6:00 - 8:00 am and targets the outdoor enthusiasts over the entire state of Montana. With the recent Covid-19 Pandemic, when it's safe for people to travel we will also focus more regionally, reaching out to the Bismarck, ND radio outdoor show with Jason Mitchell.	Outdoor recreation supports and contributes to a high quality of life and attracts visitors from outside our immediate area. Outdoor recreation is the economy of the future. In MT, outdoor recreation generates \$7.1 Billion in annual consumer spending. The Outdoor Radio Show reaches thousands of outdoor enthusiasts on 28 radio stations throughout Montana and reaches 75 cities. Their page views are 3,347,224 per year on montanaoutdoor.com, plus over 14,978 likes on their Facebook page. This number is up 32.62% from last year. We have worked with Jason Mitchell in the past on videos and he as proven successful to MRC.	MRC will measure success by continuing to advertise on the Montana Outdoor Radio Show with a goal of reaching out to 28 radio stations that will cover 75 cities. Our ads will be aired every Saturday morning on the months that we have chosen promoting our communities and the great outdoors. We will plan to increase our overnight stays with a 1% bed tax increase and our website by 10% with 9000 more unique visitors to the website. The banner ads directs them to our website and the mention of our website by the radio ads.	MRC will do radio advertising on the Montana Outdoor Radio Show, hosted by <i>The Captain</i> , for special events and attractions. We will partner with the MT Outdoor Radio Show to run ads for our events and outdoor activities, we will also get a banner ad with this buy in. We will also consider working with Jason Mitchell Outdoors to stay regional doing broadcasts in the Bismarck, ND area.	\$3,280.00	In FY21 MRC advertised on the MT Outdoor Radio show with the "Captain", Mark Ward. Mark is very familiar with our area and has hunted and fished it for years. The advertising took place several months throughout the year. He promoted towns, events and of course the hunting and fishing opportunities. The audios are on file at the organizations office per rules and procedures, from the MT Outdoor Radio Show that airs on Saturdays on 26 radio stations across the whole state of MT and reaches 75 cities. His radio show and website reaches hunters, fishermen and folks that want to enjoy the outdoors. The shows are also available on the website montanaoutdoor.com giving additional longevity and exposure of MRC. MRC was up by 2% in bed tax revenue. Our website visits were up 53% with 126,776 unique visitors, which met the targeted 9000. We met our objective of reaching a large audience on 26 radio stations that cover 75 cities. This project was successful and we will continue to use this method to advertise on the MT Outdoor Radio Show
Marketing Support	Administration	MRC supports the Montana Brand through our Administration efforts. We will continue to communicate a cohesive and effective marketing identity using the Montana Brand and operate the Missouri River Country office with the help of the Executive Director and purchase supplies, insurance and fees associated with maintaining a professional office.	ITRR is a research tool that is useful for tracking success. Through ITRR we see where visitors come from, how long they stay and the reasons why they come and the sources used to plan their trip. The Arrivallist Data helps with a breakdown of counties, which provides useful information especially for each chamber in a county. Administration is an operational method employed by the organization in order to adhere to the state statute and governing rules and regulations.	We will measure success by staying within a 20% of our total budget. We will file our quarterly compliance reports on time.	MRC will continue to maintain an office with an Executive Director to oversee daily operations of the business and maintain a professional office. MRC will stay within a 20% budget for administration and will follow the Regulations and Procedures when using Lodging Facility Use Tax Revenue.	\$30,000.00	The use of Administration funds was successful. MRC stayed within a 20% budget and maintained a professional office and followed all Rules and Procedures when using Lodging Facility Use Tax Revenue. Required reports were submitted on time and there has been no major audit issues. Our bed tax collections were up 2%. MRC will continue to use Administration funds to maintain a professional office. This method was successful.
		MRC will contribute funds for educational use and Voices of Montana to help promote the tourism industry. Education is needed in our general area. Some people and	Voices of Montana states, "As a leading industry in Montana, non-resident tourism supports 59,380 local jobs, adds over \$3.7 billion to the economy annually, and contributes to the preservation of historical, cultural and recreational treasures. Voices of	We will measure success by supporting Voices of Montana and to engage in our communities, attending Chamber of Commerce	Voices of Montana is a valuable resource for reaching more tourism success. Education is important for the business person to		Education is important for the business person to realize that tourism does support them and to give great customer service for return visits. Voices of Montana knew it would be a financially difficult year so they didn't ask for any funding. However we did some public and educational outreach to MRC communities. Our objective was to engage in statewide outreach efforts to reach an audience in an effective and efficient way that we would not be able to

Marketing Support	Outreach	businesses don't realize the value of tourists to their communities. The Eastern MT Initiative meetings are helping with educating our communities.	Montana Tourism exists to educate audiences on the importance of tourism promotion funding—which comes from a lodging tax paid by overnight guests. In a competitive marketplace, travelers have many options, Montana cannot take its success for granted.”	meetings and educating them on the benefits that tourism provides to their area. We will measure success by the results of our bed tax collections and website visitors.	realize that tourism does support them and to give great customer service for return visits. MRC will also work to educate each of their communities.	\$800.00	do with just our own resources. Although we didn't contribute funding to Voices of Montana, the local outreach we did with our communities was successful and Voices of Montana was still working for us. Anytime education on tourism is provided in MRC it is a benefit. We met our objective and considered this method successful. We will continue to include and fund the Outreach Method in the future and will plan to fund Voices of Montana in the future. http://www.voicesoftourism.com/ Our bed tax was up 2% and our website was up 53%.	
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	MRC will continue to provide visitors with a variety of information they request, including our Travel Planner, a current Calendar of Events and targeted brochures all supporting the Montana Brand. These efforts include our toll-free phone number, internet services, postage, fulfillment by the contractor, mailing supplies and storage to store our fulfillment pieces.	MRC responded to 29,544 inquiries in FY19. With the assistance of a Group Home located in MRC we mail out all information within a 72 hour time frame. Accurate records are kept to track mailings. Research shows that “a fulfillment center exists to get online orders to customers in a timely fashion and relieve ecommerce companies of managing this crucial-yet-challenging process.”	MRC will measure success by tracking the number of inquiries and travel planners that are sent out each year with the help of our fulfillment services. We will strive to receive at least 2000 leads/inquiries per year and mail out 4000 travel planners.	MRC continues to use a fulfillment service to fulfill requests and provide potential visitors with our travel planner and information used to plan a trip to MRC. The Group Home is very efficient and allows the Executive Director more time to work on office duties.	\$16,000.00	MRC uses a fulfillment service, Malta Opportunities in Malta, MT to fulfill inquiry requests. They mailed out a total of 4434 travel planners and 2645 misc. brochures. They recorded 2608 inquiries. The state of TX was the state with the most requests with CA, IL, MN and WA coming in next top states. We will continue to mail out upon request realizing the internet is becoming more popular. In addition to the physical mailing, the travel planner is downloadable from our website and distributed/available electronically to those requesting on a self-serve basis. We will retain their services of Malta Opportunities, a group home in Malta, MT. They provide excellent distribution services and record/database management and reporting for all our fulfillment needs. A full report is attached with inquiries, brochures and mailings. This method of using a fulfillment service is successful as we met our objective to distribute requested information to target markets and potential visitors in a cost-effective and efficient manner. We will continue to distribute and fulfill requests using Malta Opportunities services in the future. We are expecting to have an increase in inquiries in FY22 because some of the leads came in after the end of the FY 21.	FY21 MOI report.pdf
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	Throughout the year MRC may take advantage of opportune projects to promote MRC that we weren't aware of at the time of creating our annual marketing plan. Some of these projects that we have done in the past are publications, print, online, social media, signage, insertions, motorcycle ad books, and videos. We would like to continue to take advantage of opportunities if they fall within the scope of MRC's marketing efforts. An opportunity marketing project we would like to include in this FY21 Marketing Plan is Night Sky	Research would be obtained for an Opportunity Project when we know what the project would be. We would use ITRR or Arrivalist Data or whatever resources would apply to the project.	MRC will measure success by tracking our bed tax revenue and set a goal of a 1% increase, website visits 10% increase and 9000 more unique visitors to the website. We will also track inquiries, and general interest to attend or needing more information	While opportunity projects are unknown at this time MRC would make sure they fall within the scope of our overall promoting efforts and follow the Rules and Regulations.	\$250.00	No funds were spent. We will continue to budget funds in Opportunity Marketing for unknown projects throughout the year.	

		opportunities. We don't know exactly what they would be at this time, but as our night sky promotions continue opportunities might arise. They would comply with all Rules and Regulations		depending on the Opportunity Project.				
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	TAC and Governor's Conference meetings are important for the Region Director to attend to stay informed on tourism trends, updates, rules and regulations, and useful marketing tools	These meetings are informative and a necessity in operating a cohesive organization and staying informed of the rules and regulations in tourism. MRC has not had any issues of misuse of bed tax funds brought before the TAC within the last 16 years. According to getminute.com/importance-of-meetings , meetings are the best way to collaborate and build strength with your team.	Success will be measured by the tracking of accomplishing MRC's goals and objectives and continuing to operate according to the Rules and Regulations for Lodging Facility Use Tax Revenue.	These meetings play an important role for the director to attend, to accomplish MRC's goals in the tourism industry. More travel time and mileage is allowed for this budget due to distances to travel to meetings.	\$3,500.00	The TAC meetings were held virtually and the Governor's Conf. was cancelled. These meetings are important, and the Executive Director attended virtually. We will continue to budget funds for meetings because of the importance of keeping up on updates from MOTBD, and other important information at these meetings.	
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	MRC's ED will commit to marketing obligations outside the normal scope of responsibilities outlined in the current job description. No overtime will be received between the two positions and hours will be tracked and recorded for this position. Duties will be directed at marketing MRC as a destination.	In FY19 MRC's website visits were up by 26%, bed tax up 6%. Our consumer advertising CPM was under \$5.00. These all contribute to the efforts of the marketing personnel position. Our new website has been launched, but work continues to do updates and keep current information. We are expecting an increase in FY20 for website visits to our site. We realize the importance of having an updated website, but it doesn't come without continual work. According to: https://movingtargets.com/blog/business-marketing/why-marketing-is-so-important , "Marketing is an important strategy to ensure the growth of your business."	MRC will measure success bed tax collections with a goal of 1% increase, consumer advertising performance improvement, print and online with a CPM of less than \$5.00 and CPC less than \$5.00, social media efforts to show an increase in likes by 100.	The duties of MP will include but not limited to plan and host FAM tours for qualified journalists, plan and attend trade shows, implement educational workshops, prepare press releases, prepare the annual Marketing Plan, prepare tourism marketing presentations, attend marketing meetings, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and social media opportunities, photography, website, creating calendar of events, promotional brochures, design ads, newsletters, trade shows Co-op Marketing, and Joint Ventures, FAM tours and to visit the communities in Missouri River Country and talk about the options that are available to market their businesses as a destination. This will be a challenging year with less funding, so the MP will have to take over more duties that our Ad Agency has done in the past.	\$28,000.00	A list of the hours worked, dates and duties performed is attached. We will continue the Marketing Personnel position. Our website showed an increase of 53% and 126,776 unique visitors to the site. Website is part of this position along with social media that is done almost daily. FB is up to 15,529 page likes, compared to 14,254 in FY20. We also do Twitter and Instagram with increase likes and impressions on both sites. Instagram has 1182 followers and Twitter has 377 followers. Our bed tax revenue was up by 2%. The Marketing Personnel also does trade shows, press trips, and all marketing duties to promote MRC as a destination. All of our media placements performed well above industry average and our goal of under \$5.00 for CPM and CPC was reached. See reports on Social Media and Online/Digital Advertising on the specific methods. According to ITRR repeat visitors are at 85%. While this is great we will work on first time visitation. The Marketing Personnel position is a valuable position that is split between the ED. Hours and duties are carefully tracked according to the Rules and Procedures and no overtime is received. We do consider this overall method successful and we will continue to have a Marketing Personnel position in the future.	Marketing Personnel.pdf
		MRC will continue to work with communities to help them promote their area or an event in their town. In the past we have done a	In previous years MRC advertised with Co-	MRC will measure the			MRC did Co-op Marketing grants with the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce on several of their summer events and the NE MT Fair/Concert. We also did a Co-op project with the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum in Malta. MRC provided a 50/50 match of funding for the advertising of these events and ads. Our bed tax was up by 2%	

Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	50/50 match with a community to print brochures, posters, signage and advertise an event on the radio, newspaper or TV. See Cooperative Marketing in the MRC FY21 narrative portion. We will take advantage of the new Rules and Regulations that permit MRC to advertise Conventions. We would like to partner with the larger Chambers and communities with motels to accommodate convention attendees. MRC will plan to bring more Conventions to our region.	op Marketing funds with the Glasgow Chamber the MT Gov. Cup Walleye Tournament. Last year the attendance and entries increased. A result of more advertising. Brochures from various communities have shown an increase in visitation to MRC and the community and their events. Our bed tax revenue increased by 6%, meaning more travelers to MRC. As stated in Joint Ventures, meaningful partnerships are the foundation for success. Partnerships are what enables many companies to make continuous improvements. By sharing with others, you can direct your resources and capabilities to projects you consider most important.	success of the co-op projects by tracking the visitation to an event or attraction in the community where a co-op project was held with a plan to increase visitation by 1%. These projects will include partnering with the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce and the GPDM.	By partnering with communities we leverage more dollars and increase the advertising of a community or an event. Therefore, increasing more nights spent in MRC.	\$4,000.00	and Valley Co. was up 61% for the summer and Phillips Co. was up 113%. Our website was up 53% with 126,776 unique visitors to the site. The 2021 NE MT Fair had around 1350 in attendance showing people coming from all over. They said they saw many people they didn't know. This was slightly down from 2019 by 250 attendees. The Gov. Cup Walleye Tournament filled up immediately with a waiting list. The summer events had attendance from 12 different states. The GPDM did TV advertising and they reported the highest visitation since they opened. We will continue to do Co-op Marketing projects with our communities to help them get their events and attractions record number visitors. Ad copies attached and radio ads are on file at the organization. These Co-op Marketing projects are carefully reviewed before paying any of the bills and we will continue to do Co-op Marketing projects to help the communities as long as funding allows. These projects were successful according to the Co-op recipients.	FY21 Co-op Marketing.pdf
Marketing Support	Equipment	Office equipment is needed to maintain a professional office. With the increase in technology the most up to date equipment is needed.	According to: https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/81634 , "Businesses existed before there were computers, fax machines, telephones and copiers, but few entrepreneurs these days would want to try to grow a company without the advantages modern information technology can bring. Merely having access to the internet--with its myriad opportunities for finding customers, building brands, researching suppliers and communicating with employees and others--can easily justify updating the technology in your office."	MRC will purchase equipment as needed.	MRC needs to maintain a professional office. New equipment is necessary to keep up with the new technology and advancing society. We will only get new equipment when and as needed.	\$420.00	No new equipment was needed therefore no funds were spent. MRC will continue to budget funds into the equipment line item.	
Publicity	Press Trips	MRC will host Press/FAM Trips, allowing us to reach more writers and ultimately generate more publicity. In the past we have coordinated FAM's with MOTBD and other regions. We would plan to continue this joint venture to increase awareness of our region of nature, hunting, fishing, dinosaurs, history, birding, Native American Culture, recreation/outdoors, night skies, outlaws, boating, canoeing, ice fishing and anything thing that would make MRC a memorable place to a visitor.	Our recent Press Trips with Jason Mitchell Outdoor Television on mule deer hunting, ice fishing, walleye fishing, and lake trout fishing have produced several articles in publications such as Midwest Outdoors, In-Fisherman and MN Sporting Journal. They are still producing inquiries because he runs the TV shows several times throughout the year. Earned media/Press Trips, are viewed by the public as the most credible source used. 75% of journalists say fewer than a quarter of the pitches they receive are relevant. Knowing that, it's important to get the right pitches out there. https://earnedmediarising.com	MRC will measure the success of our FAM's by increasing awareness of MRC through publications, videos, and television with a goal of \$15,000 in Publicity Value	Press/FAM Trips are an important way of getting exposure to MRC. When working with the MOTBD they help us get the best journalists to produce the best coverage of our area. We will continue to work with Jason Mitchell because of past successes. He has produced videos and You Tube videos that we will continue to utilize and keep updating as needed. We will take advantage of opportunities to use photographers and outfitters to achieve our publicity goals.	\$1,000.00	No funds were spent in FY 21. MRC struggles to get journalists for press trips. We rely heavily on assistance from MOTBD. The last couple of years MOTBD has been helping MRC with Photo Influencers instead of doing press trips with us. Press/FAM trips can be very successful so we will continue to budget funds if an opportunity arises with journalists.	
		MRC's social media		MRC will	Social Media is growing and becoming a popular way of advertising. MRC will continue with the		Our social media engagements and likes continue to grow and provides a desired return on investment for marketing MRC. Facebook: FY21 15,529 total page likes,	

Publicity	Social Media	efforts will include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, You Tube, and Pinterest and any social media venues that fit our market. We will continue to do promotions, contests and giveaways to increase our "Likes", and recognition of MRC.	We currently have 14,023 likes on Face Book. We have gained 913 in the past year, and we will continue to grow our likes with social media campaigns. We have 1135 followers on Instagram, an increase of 149 and, 371 followers on Twitter, an increase of 26. Research shows that we have increased on all Social sites.	measure success by tracking our "Likes" and "Followers" with a goal of 100 new likes on all Social Media channels. We will also try to do a minimum of 2 posts a week.	social media venues to capture the social media audiences to attract visitors to MRC. While much effort is put into Social Media, MRC struggles with likes and followers. We continually increase and will increase with our continued efforts, contests and giveaways. The MP will contribute to most of the social media marketing efforts.	\$1,000.00	FY20 14,254. Twitter: FY21 402 FY20 377 followers. Instagram: FY21 1,248 FY20 1,182 followers. Social Media is a cost effective way of marketing MRC and we will continue to use social media to attract the potential visitor. The MP posts an average of 2 posts a week. See attached reports and additional attachments. We accomplished our goals with an overall increase on all our social media sites. We consider Social Media to be successful and we will continue to do this method in the future.	MRC FY21 Social .zip
						\$150,000.00		

Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments

- Attachment 1** FY21 eveluation Budget vs actual.xlsx
- Attachment 2** FY21 Budget vs Actual Pie Chart Final.png
- Attachment 3** Dakota, NW Sportsman Print.pdf
- Attachment 4** Social Media FY21.pdf
- Attachment 5** Missouri River Country FY 2021 Media Performance (7).pdf
- Attachment 6** Sidney Map.pdf
- Attachment 7** FY21 L&C website report.pdf
- Attachment 8** L&C brochure.pdf
- Attachment 9**
- Attachment 10**

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget	Non bed tax funded budget (optional)
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Billboards/Out-of-Home	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$2,750.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$14,500.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Electronic Adv - Newsletter, E-blast	\$900.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$17,941.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$22,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Travel Guide	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Joint Ventures	\$15,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Ad Agency Services	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Search Engine Marketing	\$4,000.00	\$0.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$9,936.00	\$0.00

		\$132,027.00	\$0.00
Events	Radio & Television Advertising	\$5,365.00	\$0.00
		\$5,365.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$30,289.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Outreach	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	\$22,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$10,948.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$3,500.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	\$30,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$7,000.00	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Equipment	\$1,420.00	\$0.00
		\$106,157.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Press Trips	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
Publicity	Social Media	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
		\$5,500.00	\$0.00
		\$249,049.00	\$0.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
Second budget option if collections are lower than predicted.	FY21 Budget (2).docx	20 KB
FY21 Pie Chart	FY21 Pie Chart Budget.xlsx	14 KB
FY21 Pie Chart	FY21 Pie Chart Budget.xlsx	14 KB
Segment Pie Chart	FY21 Segment Pie Chart.xlsx	15 KB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
FY21 Pie Chart Budget	FY21 Pie Chart Budget.xlsx	14 KB
4-21-20 MRC board meeting minutes approving Marketing Plan	MRC minutes 04-21-2020.docx	29 KB
4-21-20 MRC board meeting minutes approving Marketing Plan	MRC minutes 04-21-2020.docx	29 KB
Pledge of Understanding, Application for Lodging Tax Revenue FY21, Certificate of Compliance FY21	scan_20200415171347.pdf	984 KB
Pledge of Understanding, Application for Lodging Tax Revenue FY21, Certificate of Compliance FY21	scan_20200415171347.pdf	984 KB

