



Grant Details

108656 - FY22 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

113960 - FY22 Central Montana Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY22 Central Montana Marketing Plan
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 Project Start

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Contract Dates
Dates

[Contract Sent](#)
[Contract Received](#)
[Contract Executed](#)
[Contract Legal](#)

Project Dates
 07/01/2021
 06/30/2022
 Project Start
 Project End

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?

1. Purpose

Central Montana's FY22 marketing plan will be used to guide our marketing strategy from July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022.

The Central Montana board of directors has taken into consideration the past year's impact of COVID-19 on the region and on our individual tourism businesses. Some businesses have closed and don't feel they will reopen. Many businesses have shifted their focus, made changes to their operations and have become stronger with varied offerings. Needless to say, the tourism landscape has undergone changes.

In order to position Central Montana as a vacation destination, we will create awareness of the region to first time visitors by using a mixed media approach. We will use a much larger budget in digital and social media marketing than we have budgeted for print. Digital and social marketing will allow us to react quickly to changing travel issues, keeping in mind the speed with which we needed to adapt because of COVID-19. We will also strive to reach prior visitors to keep our region top-of-mind for repeat visits. Our ultimate goal is to bring visitors to Central Montana and have them spend time and dollars in the region.

Marketing will be developed based on Central Montana's past successes in promoting visitation to the region. We will strive to align our strategies with those executed by the Montana Office of Tourism Business Development. Central Montana's marketing decisions are based on research from Destination Analysts, Arrivalist (Eastern Montana Initiative), StackAdapt, VisaVue, the Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research, our website statistics and more. Our FY22 marketing will continue many of our successful projects completed in prior years and, based on funding, we will incorporate new projects.

2. Identity of the Area

Thirteen Montana counties comprise the Central Montana tourism region. We are mountains, rivers and plains. We have large and small communities. Our unique region offers a wide variety of landscapes, attractions, events and activities. Our storied rivers, island mountain ranges, short grass prairie and unique trails appeal to many. We fit well with the Montana brand offering:

- More spectacular, unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48
 - Central Montana has thousands of acres of public land (short grass prairie, river breaks, mountains, lakes and forests), in addition to thousands of acres of farm and ranch land
- Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to natural wonders

- Central Montana is comprised primarily of small charming towns located in close proximity to our unspoiled nature
- Breathtaking experiences by day, relaxing hospitality at night.
 - Central Montana's breathtaking experiences are many – from viewing spectacular art to seeing the locations where those scenes originated. Our hospitality is as varied as sleeping in a beautifully restored historic hotel, to a river guide pitching a tent along a wild and scenic river, or a guest ranch wrangler leading guests on a trail. Experiences are varied with local musicians playing in a local brewery to a craft cocktail named for the nearby geography.

The Central Montana board defines the region's identity as follows:

Central Montana offers visitors a remarkable experience of Montana's history, culture, clear skies and clean water, wildlife, outdoor recreation and adventure. From wide-open spaces to mountain ranges and the Missouri River and its tributaries, culturally rich towns and cities in Central Montana brush with the old west and ancient peoples. Visitors can see the landscapes and absorb the sense of place that inspired renowned western artist Charlie Russell, and walk in the footsteps of Lewis & Clark, all within reach of comfort and hospitality.

Strengths and Challenges of the Central Montana Tourism Region

The strengths that distinguish Central Montana include -

Historical and cultural sites and interpretation - home of numerous Lewis & Clark and Native American attractions and memorials, Charlie Russell, old forts and fur trade history, and National Park Service's Bear Paw Battlefield and the following:

- Kings Hill Scenic Byway and Missouri Breaks Backcountry Byway
- Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument and Wild & Scenic Missouri River
- Varied outdoor adventure and recreation with many activities offering a feeling of open spaces, yet they are still close to our communities' amenities.
- Excellent variety of fish and wildlife
- Multiple access points to the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex
- Viewable and accessible waterfalls in our mountain ranges and in Great Falls
- The iconic and sacred Sweetgrass Hills
- The Rocky Mountain Front – East slope of the Rockies
- Magnitude of birding opportunities detailed in a Central Montana birding brochure
- Spectacular geology and paleontology with 6 sites on the Montana Dinosaur Trail
- Our grand and diverse scenery that typifies the "Big Sky"
- Authentic Montana lifestyle - farms and ranches, guest ranches, Native American cultures, main-street Montana, friendly people
- Unique and fun organized trails - Pie a la Road, Brewery Trail and a Barn Quilt Trail
- Easily accessible open spaces for scenic touring and wildlife viewing
- Vast public recreation lands
- Our central location in the Glacier-to-Yellowstone National Parks corridor
- Close proximity to Canada with a 24-hour port of entry at Sweetgrass/Coutts
- Many of our tourism products are viewed as budget-friendly, both regionally and nationally
- A variety of public golf courses
- Craft breweries and a distillery using locally grown products
- Central location for statewide meetings and conventions
- Unique attractions such as Havre Beneath the Streets and the Charlie Russell Chew Choo
- Unique events such as Montana Bale Trail (What the Hay), Red Ants Pants Music Festival, Montana Chokecherry Festival, Whoop Up Days, numerous art shows & auctions
- Two Amtrak stops in the northern part of the region (Havre and Shelby)
- A large, central retail hub and international airport in Great Falls
- Our strong partnerships with chambers, Tourism BIDs and other promotional groups in the region
- A new event center with 1,000-person capacity opening Fall 2021 in downtown Great Falls

Challenges and critical issues facing the tourism region -

- While our vast public recreation lands are a strength, our public land managers do not have marketing and promotion budgets
- A need to develop more year-round visitor attractions and more activities in the shoulder seasons to enhance our vacation offerings
- Attractions and private businesses need longer business hours and longer seasons to accommodate visitors
- Lack of restaurants, lodging, attractions and gas stations in our small communities
- Shallow employee pool for businesses, particularly an issue after COVID-19 closures
- The need to continually educate front line personnel, not just those employed in lodging facilities, but in gas stations, grocery stores, retail businesses and restaurants
- The lack of a winter destination resort and, in some years, the lack of winter
- The need to effectively promote in Canada to reach our closest large population center, despite a fluctuating exchange rate and passport requirements. Border closures due to COVID-19 have negatively impacted the region.
- Transportation limitations such as no public bus service to some locations and the fluctuating cost of fuel
- Cost of airfare
- Small marketing budget combined with increasing media costs
- Percentage-limited administrative budget with a need to effectively carry out the budget and serve the widespread region
- The need to continue to strengthen our relationships and communications with the Native American tribes on our reservations and also our landless Little Shell tribe.

As travel restrictions related to COVID-19 change, Central Montana will continue media placement using a mix of print and digital advertising vehicles. A much larger budget will be devoted to digital which will allow the region to quickly react to changes related to safe travel guidelines.

Describe your destination.

The travel phases: Central Montana will Inspire, Orient and Facilitate our potential visitor as we guide them through the conversion funnel.

Our first goal is for potential visitors who see our ads to be inspired.

Potential visitors will need more information (orientation) about the area depicted in the photo that inspired them – the location, how do you get there, what activities can be done there and what amenities are available. Some Central Montana ads will direct viewers to click to our website home page, some marketing will direct them to a niche landing page, and all will offer the opportunity to receive our print travel planner with detailed information about the region and to sign up for our e-newsletter. In all scenarios, potential visitors will be able to learn about our vacation opportunities.

To facilitate the travel decision, visitors can read or click through to our information. Lodging, guides and outfitters, attraction information, dining, and scenic and historic routes are highlighted in our print travel planner and on our website. Our travel planner may be downloaded or viewed as a flip book. We also have niche brochures that can be mailed, obtained at local visitor centers, viewed on our website or printed from our website as a traveler is enroute. Some of these include a detailed Central Montana birding brochure, 10 Great Rides motorcycle

routes with maps, Bicycle Trails, C. M. Russell Auto Tour, Kings Hill Scenic Byway brochure, and the partnership brochure for the Montana Dinosaur Trail. Once visitors are in Central Montana, we urge them to seek out local tips offered by staff and volunteers at visitor centers, attractions and local businesses.

Optional: Include attachments here

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

We will define geographic markets as follows: using research results from Destination Analysts, Arrivalist data pertaining to the eastern portion of the region, VisaVue (joint venture project), from information generated through the Interactive Data link on the website for Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research, and the inquiries Central Montana receives. Our primary geographic target markets include the following states and provinces: California, Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Colorado, Utah, Minnesota, North Dakota, Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, Florida, South Dakota, Arizona, Texas, Wyoming, Alberta and Saskatchewan.

We will target the following demographic markets: families, wildlife and bird watchers, anglers, adventure travelers, astrology viewers, bicyclers, motorcycle travelers, scenic drivers, cultural & heritage travelers, hunters, geo/eco tourists, winter recreationists, RVers and campers, golfers, education travelers, group tours, guest ranch visitors, snowbirds who travel through the region late fall and spring, dinosaur enthusiasts and train/rail enthusiasts.

The psychographic characteristics of Central Montana's target market include those who value local businesses and locally grown or produced items, enjoy our scenic landscapes and value access to public lands, waterways and open space.

b. *What are your emerging markets?*

Texas, Arizona and Illinois (especially Chicago) markets (arriving and spending money in the region) have grown based on recent research (VisaVue) and data obtained from hotels in the region. Central Montana has marketed consistently to the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan, Canada and we have seen interest grow from the nearby provinces of British Columbia and Manitoba. Once the US/Canada border opens, we will resume marketing to the provinces. While we usually feel there is great potential for visitors from international markets, we doubt that FY22 funds will be used for this based on safety measures due to COVID-19.

Optional: Include attachments here.

c. *What research supports your target marketing?*

We use the Interactive Data report builder option on the Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research along with several other niche ITRR reports to support our targeted marketing. Recent research done by Destination Analysts and Arrivalist have valuable data for the region, our CVBs and Tourism BIDs. Central Montana had three counties and Fort Belknap Indian Reservation included in MOTBD's Eastern Montana Initiative and we will use past data provided through that. Other reports used include: most current Nonresident Visitation and Expenditure Estimates, Expedia's Top Ten flights into Great Falls, Canadian Travelers in Montana: Traveler Profiles by Purpose of Trip to the State, Amtrak Passengers by Montana Station, and Nonresident Traveler Satisfaction & Information Sources Used. County and community data are extrapolated by using the Interactive Data function on ITRR's website although, in many cases, the sample size is not large enough to use for a marketing decision.

We monitor other data from "traffic count information by highway" from Montana Dept. of Transportation, and visitor logs from our staffed visitor centers in the region.

Central Montana's FY22 goals are as follows:

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

For several years we've had small but steady yearly gains in lodging tax collections, until COVID-19 changed everything. Our FY22 budget is projected to be about the same as our FY20 budget and we hope to not only meet, but exceed, that.

2. *Attract visitors by communicating an image that positions Central Montana as a vacation destination.*

Our positioning strategies are:

- featuring our access to outdoor recreation, spectacular unspoiled nature and adventure. All are strong points when looking at traveler sentiment data from Destination Analysts
- leveraging our authentic Montana lifestyle in our vibrant and charming communities
- highlighting our historic and cultural sites, building on our Lewis & Clark and Nez Perce legacies

3. *Expand our marketing potential by participating in joint ventures with other Montana tourism organizations and businesses.*

This goal has been critical to several of Central Montana's projects, however, at this time, we aren't sure it will be available through MOTBD in FY22. If there is funding set aside for joint ventures, or if other partnership opportunities arise, Central Montana will evaluate the projects and determine the potential to see if we participate. We will also continue to explore new opportunities for partnerships in an effort to enhance our marketing budget.

4. *Grow the visitor experience and opportunities by building relationships with the ranching and agriculture industry, adding to and building on our guest ranch and agri-tourism presence.*

Many segments of our target market are looking for safe, family vacations that return them to an unhurried, more grounded experience, even more after going through a year of COVID-19. Highlighting rural events, lifestyles, and products produced on our region's farms and ranches will increase visitor awareness and can ultimately provide supplemental income for agricultural and ranching operations. Central Montana will continue to explore partnerships with agricultural organizations, also with Grown in Montana and Made in Montana promotional efforts, and work closely with rural community promotion groups to enhance our agritourism offerings.

5. *Central Montana will continue to target our market as precisely as possible, assuring that our funding is spent to reach an audience that is qualified by likelihood of coming to the region, and has the discretionary income to spend significant dollars during the visit.*

Central Montana's consumer marketing plan will target those shown by research and/or past successes to have the propensity to travel to Montana, particularly to experience the kind of vacation the region offers. At this time, we feel FY22 marketing will primarily target regional drive markets.

6. *Continue our successful FAM trips and travel show attendance.*

Over the past few years our FAM and influencer trips have produced significant results in the form of print editorial, online editorial, social media posts by influencers, television and radio editorial and inquiries (both domestic and international). We have budgeted a small amount to continue to have a presence at travel and/or sportsman shows and we will partner with both the public and private sector to stretch our budget for any show that we attend. As health directives related to COVID-19 evolve, we will re-evaluate this goal before proceeding.

7. *Seek ways to promote our Native American tourism potential.*

We will work to identify opportunities to promote the cultures of our tribes and the tourism activities they offer. Past successes have included FAM trips to our Native American reservations and working with individual native entrepreneurs to showcase their talents to FAM trip participants. In FY21 we were able to secure video footage and still images to use in our marketing efforts. Our tribal lands are now open but we will respect directives from each tribal council when carrying out this goal.

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

We would like to participate in digital joint ventures that have a buy-in of \$10,000 or less. We aren't opposed to print joint ventures but, in the changing health climate due to COVID-19, Central Montana feels it would be best to plan for digital.

Optional: Include attachment here.

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

Dinosaur trail promotion, astro tourism promotion, Crown of the Continent promotion, and sharing an influencer or FAM trip attendees to not only share travel themes, but to save transportation costs for getting the influencer or FAM attendees to our region. We would also coordinate with adjoining regions or CVBs on video/photo projects. The Central Montana board realizes the value of joint ventures and they are always open to hearing additional opportunities.

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

Central Montana's most recent joint ventures with MOTBD included Sojern, Trip Advisor and OnTheSnow. The OnTheSnow campaign was turned off 3/18/20 due to COVID-19 although we did have OK results at the beginning of the campaign. OnTheSnow is something we would need to evaluate at the time it is presented to determine if we would buy in again. Sojern and TripAdvisor both had strong results and also added value (a good benefit of joint ventures). We would participate in both Sojern and TripAdvisor again if it fit within our budget.

In FY19 we participated in Parents Magazine (print), Sojern, LiveIntent and TripAdvisor. Parents Magazine controls ad design and it was not in the style of the Montana brand and rather corny-looking. We always receive a lot of leads from Parents Magazine but we don't feel the quality of leads is strong. It all begins with the design and that's the weakest part of Parents Magazine.

Sojern and TripAdvisor produced results above benchmark in FY19 and we feel they were successful. LiveIntent didn't produce as well.

Optional: Include attachments here.

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Marketing Segment, Method & Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Describe your method.	Provide supporting research/statistics.	Describe the quantifiable measurements for success including Regulations requirements.	Estimated budget for method.	Marketing Method Evaluation	Add'l Atchmnt
Consumer	Print Advertising	While we have reduced our budget for print advertising, we will still place ads in publications aligned with our target audience. We will look to publications that have relevant editorial and content, especially featuring our outdoor strengths. We always look at past performance of print media the region has placed. Our agency of record analyzes opportunities for our budget and presents them to a committee. After that review, a proposed	Destination Analysts Traveler Sentiment studies stating that people want to travel and they are looking for safe, outdoor experiences. Statista.com - Americans spend 15 minutes a day reading a magazine. According to the <i>State of the American Traveler</i> , an independent research report by Miles Partnership, print has seen declines but has consistently shown strength. 24.4% of travelers rely on offline media including TV, printed newspapers, magazines, etc. for travel inspiration.	We track all responses to our print ads. Our quantifiable measurement is the overall cost per inquiry for each publication. While we realize CPI can vary greatly in different publications, our goal is to keep the overall CPI under \$7.50.	\$14,000.00		

		plan is submitted to the entire board of directors for approval or edits.					
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	<p>Central Montana's online marketing will consist of a diverse placement of digital media including banner ads, video pre-roll, HTML e-news blasts, Google AdWords, native content, streaming video on OTT and CTV, and social. This mix targets core platforms that are integral to sustained digital placement.</p> <p>In FY22 the above marketing platforms will target families and educated travelers that are interested in outdoor recreation and adventure, fishing, motorcycling, mountain biking, guest ranches and horseback riding.</p>	<p>Destination Analysts Traveler Sentiment studies stating that people want to travel and they are looking for safe, outdoor experiences.</p> <p>www.TrendHunter.com Consumer Insights show that the COVID-19 pandemic has driven even more vacation planners to online research.</p> <p>www.nsiight.com Executing Your Digital Journey (using a mix of digital).</p> <p>A recent study by Deloitte found that Americans collectively check their smart phones nearly 8 billion times per day.</p> <p>An industry survey conducted by MarketForce (worldwide leader in customer intelligence solutions showed that 78% of respondents said posts by companies they follow on social media impact their purchase decisions.</p> <p>A report by Social Media Today.com/news/the-state-of-videomarketing states that 90% of consumers claim a video will help them make a purchasing decision.</p>	<p>On banner ads we will track click-throughs to our website and will consider them successful if the click-through-rate is .24% or greater. For HTML e-news blasts we will track open rates will consider them successful if we achieve a click-through-rate of 2.0% or better. For video we will track number of views with a measurement benchmark of 45% view-through rate. On social digital marketing we will track engagement with an overall success measurement of .1.2% engagement. Google AdWords will be evaluated by the cost per click and our measurement of success will be a cost no higher than \$3.00 per click.</p>	\$97,000.00		
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	<p>With this budget we maintain our website CentralMontana.com and also produce videos with the same contracted agency chosen by an RFP.</p> <p>We have a blog on our website that will be updated monthly or more frequently, particularly featuring outdoor experiences in Central Montana. The calendar of events will be kept current. We will update changes in offerings along our scenic drives, historic trails, brewery page, pie trail page, and a other activity pages. Any Instagram photos hashtagged #CentralMontanaSkies appear on our home page whenever tagged which adds new images almost daily.</p> <p>Our home page will be updated seasonally with new images and a video clip as our header image. This past fiscal year a Covid landing was developed and updated. New video footage will be gathered and edited. Videos created will be</p>	<p>Destination Analysts Traveler Sentiment studies stating that people want to travel and they are looking for safe, outdoor experiences.</p> <p>For video, Techblog https://techblog.comsoc.org/2017/06/10/cisco-increased-use-of-web-video-to-be-82-of-all-internet-traffic-by-2021/ states that over 80% of all traffic will consist of video by 2021.</p> <p>Social Media Today research https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/the-state-of-video-marketing-in-2018infographic/518339 notes that 90% of consumers claim a video will help them make a purchasing decision.</p>	<p>We will track number of visitors to our website and measure success by having an increase of 3% over FY21 visitors to the site.</p>	\$25,000.00		

		added to CentralMontana.com and our YouTube channel as they are completed.					
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	<p>Central Montana has partnered with other private sector businesses and bed tax funded entities to attend travel and sportsman shows in our target markets. As consumer show promoters return to host their annual events, we will evaluate the markets and our budget to see if we will attend any in FY22.</p> <p>Getting our message out to potential visitors who aren't familiar with Central Montana has been successful at past attended shows. Most visitors we interact with at consumer shows aren't as familiar with Central Montana like they are with areas bordering national parks.</p> <p>We have an existing travel show booth and would use our annual travel planner as the primary handout. Other niche brochures and Montana maps would also be distributed.</p>	<p>ITRR's report on Repeat Visitors. We can easily lure repeat visitors to explore lesser traveled areas like Central Montana. One on one contact with them at consumer shows is a way to focus on our region.</p> <p>Outsellinc.com Return to Events - shows that people are ready to attend larger events if safety protocols are in place.</p> <p>Outsell Inc. https://www.outsellinc.com/product/digital-transformation-in-the-exhibition-industry/ research notes the No. 1 ranked factor for allocating spending to trade and travel shows is "Maximizing pre-qualification of prospects" (2013 through 2016). Exhibition (trade shows) are the third highest form of lead generation with close to \$9billion spent in 2016.</p> <p>ITRR's report on visitors to national parks realizing that many from the Midwest may consider visiting Central Montana, especially if they are driving to Glacier Natl Park.</p>	<p>We will measure the success of consumer shows by giving out 100% of the literature we ship to the show.</p>	\$3,000.00		
Consumer	Ad Agency Services	<p>Our contracted Ad Agency, secured from an RFP process, will research options for advertising and placing our media. They will track our media with the various vendors and do creative design for our ads. They work with a committee to select geographic targets, ad themes and types of media placement.</p>	<p>https://whatagraph.com/blog/articles/this-is-what-clients-actually-want-from-their-ad-agencies</p> <p>The above blog covers the standard things clients want from an Ad Agency (media strategy, creative design) but also consumer insights, quantifiable results, and "more with less budget".</p> <p>The measurement of our agency placed media is the statistical measurement we use to determine if this project is successful.</p>	<p>We will measure the success of our agency placed media by achieving a .5% increase in our click-through-rates for online/digital placement and a decrease in our cost-per-inquiry of print media, compared to FY21 statistics.</p>	\$14,000.00		
Consumer	Printed Material	<p>A Central Montana travel planner was not produced in FY21. Our supply had not been exhausted due to limited travelers in the region because of COVID-19. We felt it would not be fair to our advertisers to not receive full distribution benefit of the 2020 planner and we also did not want to have to recycle the remaining supply.</p> <p>In FY22 a new planner will be designed and printed. Ads will be sold to support the print run and distribution will be paid on specific Certified Folder routes.</p>	<p>ITRR's report of Traveler Characteristics shows that people do pick up travel information enroute to Central Montana, and while in the region.</p> <p>ResearchGate cites the following study supporting print publications https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257881050_Is_An_Advertisement_Worth_The_Paper_It's_Printed_on_The_Impact_of_Premium_Print_Advertising_On_Consumer_Perceptions Results show that tested advertisements employing premium-print technologies convey a greater sense of uniqueness and prestige than conventional advertising, boost consumer attitudes toward an advertisement as well as toward the brand and enjoy higher ratings on measures of willingness to buy, positive word of mouth and consumer willingness to pay a premium price.</p>	<p>By the end of FY22 our measurable goal is to have 30% of the travel planner print run distributed. The remainder of the</p>	\$52,000.00		

		<p>We will stay with a magazine style publication, 8 3/8" x 10 7/8", using large-format images and a 2-page Montana map as the centerfold. We will determine quantity based on what the ad sales and budget (combined) will support.</p> <p>We usually have the piece off a press and ready to mail by early January of the fiscal year (approx. January 10, 2022).</p>		print run would need to last until January 2023.			
Consumer	Cooperative Marketing	<p>Central Montana budgets for cooperative marketing to assist our regional non-profit partners with tourism promotion.</p> <p>A project application is submitted, reviewed by a Central Montana committee, then presented at a board meeting for final determination of funding.</p> <p>Central Montana can pay up to 50% of the nonprofit partner's project cost.</p>	After a project is submitted and approved, relevant research will be given.	After a project is submitted and approved, quantifiable measurements for success will be given.	\$5,000.00		
Consumer	Opportunity Marketing	<p>Central Montana's Opportunity Marketing budget is for those projects that come up during FY22 that we weren't aware of at the time of writing this marketing plan. Project details and strategy will be determined once the project is approved by Central Montana's board.</p>	Supporting research will be determined once the project is finalized.	Success measurements will be determined when the project is finalized.	\$2,000.00		
Consumer	Joint Ventures	<p>Joint ventures have not been proposed at the time of writing the FY22 marketing plan. Strategy will be described upon approval of a project by the Central Montana board.</p>	Supporting research/statistics will be provided once a project is determined and approved by the Central Montana board.	Quantifiable measurements will be provided once a project is determined and approved by the Central Montana board.	\$4,000.00		
		<p>Central Montana needs inspiring photos for every project we do. Each year we budget funding to purchase images for unlimited use from photographers. The photographers are typically not professional full time photographers, instead they are usually locals who are out in our beautiful landscapes and taking photos for their own pleasure.</p>					

Consumer	Photo/Video Library	<p>We increased our photographer fee in FY21 to \$80 (\$10 increase over prior year) but it is still a bargain for Central Montana. With 13 large and diverse counties to cover, we could not represent the region nearly as well if we didn't have these photos.</p> <p>We contact photographers submitted by Central Montana board members, give them project details, and submission deadlines. Once the submissions have all been downloaded and labeled with the photographer's name, a committee reviews them and decides which to purchase. Photographers are sent a contract and upon receipt of a signed contract, payment is sent to them.</p>	<p>Social Media Today research https://www.socialmediatoday.com/news/7-tips-for-using-visual-content-marketing/548660/</p> <p>Our brain only needs 1/10th of a second to process an image. Reading 200-250 words takes an average of 60 seconds. People remember visual information six times more than the information they have read or heard. The click-through-rate (CTR) of a website is about 47% higher in sites containing strong images.</p>	Our measurement of success for this project is to purchase a minimum of 50 photos.	\$5,000.00		
Marketing Support	Administration	<p>Central Montana's Administration budget is \$65,000 or 20% of our gross projected revenue for FY22.</p> <p>At this time, we are in the process of changing from an independent contractor selected by an RFP process to serve as executive director, to an employee. The region's board realizes the different expenses they will have (payroll taxes, some benefits, office rent, higher CGL insurance) relating to hiring an employee but the RFP search for an independent contractor has not been successful.</p> <p>The Administration budget will cover employee payroll and taxes, rent, insurance, travel for the executive director not associated with marketing projects, equipment for the office, office supplies, 990 tax preparation, Constant Contact fee, Dropbox fee, phone and internet. These costs are basic necessities to conduct the business of Central Montana.</p>	In order to adhere to the governing rules and regulations established by the Tourism Advisory Council, Central Montana will hire an executive director to carry out the business of the region.	Success will be measured by having all of the required reports submitted to the Montana Office of Tourism/Business Development on time.	\$65,000.00	Not to exceed 20% of our new annual revenue per Rules & Procedures.	
		Specific duties for marketing projects will be carried out by office staff. Duties will include writing posts for Central Montana's					

Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	<p>blog, developing itineraries for FAM trips, recruiting media for the trips and conducting the trips, doing follow up with media to evaluate the effectiveness of the trip, writing content for a variety of media placement, writing content for the website, writing a marketing plan, writing an e-newsletter, taking and securing photos for the region to use, and attending and reporting on consumer show attendance. The marketing person will also proof/review content written by the contracted ad agency and search images to submit to the agency for marketing.</p> <p>Hours charged to this project will be logged on a time chart with a general recap of the duties performed.</p>	<p>Taking photos for use in all of Central Montana's marketing efforts - a stunning image is worth a thousand words. Destination Marketing Association International.</p> <p>Content placed, such as a paid e-newsletter to an opt-in subscriber base, has higher engagement - Social MediaToday.</p> <p>Earned media gained from hosting media personnel is viewed as more valid than a paid ad - Social Media Today.</p>	<p>We will create a job description for the marketing personnel position and review performance against the duties outlined in the job description.</p>	\$25,000.00		
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	<p>Central Montana's executive director will attend the Tourism Advisory Council meetings and the Governor's Conference on Tourism. Attendance by the primary region contact is required at TAC meetings. Bed tax regulations are discussed at meetings and statewide marketing updates are presented, all valuable to the operations of Central Montana.</p> <p>The Governor's Conference on Tourism allows the executive director to gain professional development, learn about opportunities for partnership marketing and connect with other tourism providers. All of these can be critical to the success of the region.</p>	<p>Indeed.com cites supports for this at https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/learning-and-development Portions of this report are below:</p> <p>Learning and development can occur anywhere, but when you're trying to improve your skills in the workplace, it's important to know how continuous development impacts you. There are several ways that learning and skill development can be achieved on both the employee side of the business and the employer side. Some training programs are formal and include structured education, others are not.</p> <p>Ongoing learning and development refer to both formal and informal education that allows you to expand your skillset to adapt to an ever-changing environment.</p> <p>You can learn through informal or formal learning and development methods, although most employees and workplaces will engage in both forms.</p> <p>Informal learning is probably the most common form of learning because it does not require any sort of curriculum or structure. Informal learning is ideal for more experienced employees who want to hone their skills, learn by doing or learn from their colleagues by working alongside them.</p> <p>Informal training is typically not institutionalized or evaluated.</p> <p>Rather, it often happens so naturally that you may not even know of it. For example, you could chat with a colleague over lunch about their favorite way to use a piece of software, learn how to complete a particular task by asking a peer how they do it or read a newspaper article on a work-relevant topic. Although this is not formally offered or even noticed by your management, it still counts as learning and development.</p>	<p>Success will be measured by the executive director giving a report to the Central Montana board of directors on each Tourism Advisory Council meeting and the Governor's Conference on Tourism.</p> <p>Attendance is required per the Rules and Regulations</p>	\$2,000.00		
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	<p>This strategy will set aside a budget to cover postage for our mailings to those who request more information about Central Montana. It will also cover the costs associated with our toll-free phone number and costs to print envelopes for our travel planner mailings.</p> <p>Our postage costs are primarily for standard (formerly "bulk") mailings although we do accommodate requests from</p>	<p>We don't have research statistics for this project. It is a support project.</p>	<p>Our quantifiable measurement will be to have all inquiries responded to in two weeks' time from receiving the inquiry. In peak times we typically do one large mailing a week. However, in slower marketing times it can take</p>	\$6,000.00		

		international visitors and they are mailed first class. The volume of calls to our toll-free phone number continues to decline but it is a published number and we will continue to keep it active.			two weeks to reach the quantity required for a bulk mailing.		
Publicity	Fam Trips	Our strategy is to contact different media contributors and influencers in an effort to gain earned media and publicity for Central Montana. The budget for this marketing method covers costs to host the media. In past years we have partnered on some earned media efforts with adjoining tourism regions, the Montana Office of Tourism and in-region CVBs in an effort to get the best use of our budget. When potential visitors to Central Montana see publicity generated by someone else, it carries great credibility.	The ABBi Agency - Increase of Influencers From Niche Travel Markets 2020 https://theabbiagency.com/blog/digital/destination-marketing-trends-in-2020/?utm_campaign=Newsletter%20Subscribers&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=124073266&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_0C1Px-7XaDy94ihmFD2_8NEyauFGIFD1QJYfucB7Cwwa7yu-5A5EHD8AwzcQjxB4IEFgHWinoYFJGmjZmjC9ECzt3w&utm_content=124073266&utm_source=hs_email Ogilvy https://www.adweek.com/performance-marketing/study-earned-media-still-matters-a-lot/ The survey reveals that earned media is still, by leaps and bounds, the most powerful resource for influencing purchasing decisions and business outcomes. According to the study, traditional media outlets are still the most trusted sources of news, followed by influencer driven news. Almost half of respondents (47%) consider earned media the most influential medium of all.		Social media posts will be measured by the reach and engagement. A print article will be measured by the number of pages or columns compared to the equivalent of purchasing that same amount of space for an ad. We want to see each media person hosted generate a minimum of one story/article. If they are an influencer, we will establish a minimum number of posts in their contract and evaluate that by counting the number of posts done.	\$6,000.00	
						\$325,000.00	

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$14,000.00
Consumer	Online/Digital Advertising	\$97,000.00
Consumer	Ad Agency Services	\$14,000.00
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$25,000.00
Consumer	Travel/Trade Shows	\$3,000.00
Consumer	Opportunity Marketing	\$2,000.00
Consumer	Cooperative Marketing	\$5,000.00
Consumer	Joint Ventures	\$4,000.00
Consumer	Photo/Video Library	\$5,000.00
Consumer	Printed Material	\$52,000.00
		\$221,000.00
Marketing Support	Administration	\$65,000.00
Marketing Support	Marketing/Publicity Personnel	\$25,000.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$2,000.00
Marketing Support	Fulfillment/Telemarketing/Call Center	\$6,000.00
		\$98,000.00
Publicity	Fam Trips	\$6,000.00
		\$6,000.00
		\$325,000.00

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
FY22 Budget Overview	FY22 BUDGET OVERVIEW.xlsx	212 KB
FY22 Marketing Segment Detail pie chart	FY22 PIE CHART Marketing Segment Detail.xlsx	212 KB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
Required documents for Central Montana's FY22 Marketing Plan	Central Montana Required documents FY22.pdf	184 KB

