



Grant Details

108656 - FY22 Region/CVB Marketing Plan

113974 - FY22 Miles City CVB Marketing Plan

DOC Office of Tourism

Grant Title: FY22 Miles City CVB Marketing Plan
Grant Number: 22-51-021
Grant Status: Underway
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Applicant Organization: Miles City Area Chamber of Commerce
Grantee Contact: John Laney
Award Year: FY22
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Contract Dates

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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?

Miles City is the "Old West". A charming small town that is located at the confluence of the Tongue and Yellowstone river, Miles City is rich in history. It has been a resting place for the likes of Lewis and Clark, General George Armstrong Custer, and Teddy Roosevelt, and was the birthplace of the Montana Stockgrowers Association in 1884. So much of our history still exists. Historic hotels and bars are still open for business for the true old west experience, making Miles City a great place to visit.

Miles City is the largest city east of Billings but with a population of less than 10,000 people we still offer that small town charm. We have a unique landscape for visitors, offering everything from rolling hills to the rough cuts of the Badlands. Farmland and cattle ranches along your drive are an advertisement for what Miles City is like.

Miles City has so many strengths. The beauty of the surrounding landscape, as you get closer to town, is a theatre of the mind. You can visualize what life would have been like, for the pioneers, as you gaze at the vastness of the land. Seeing the large herds of cattle, or the sprawling grain fields, assure you that you are not in the city anymore.

Herds of Antelope grazing in the cut fields and deer along the roadside make the hunter's hearts beat a little faster, just thinking of coming to the area to bag that big buck, a corn field littered with geese, ducks flying overhead, or grouse nestled on a sidehill caal to the avid bird hunter. The area around Miles City is a mecca for hunting, whether with a bow, a gun, or a camera.

Once in Miles City, your life begins to change. Relaxation and a slower pace of life begin to take over. You are still in the old

west but now it has a more of a modern flair, with all of the amenities of a big town but on a smaller scale. You will see Old West bars next to upscale dining facilities and lovely vintage diners next to a fast food chain. The difference is the people. Everyone is willing to share a story, to make a new friend, to tell the family history. Most of the population of Miles City are self-proclaimed trip advisors. They will always recommend the history that is the Range Riders Museum, the culture of the Waterworks Art Museum, and of course they will invite you to the World Famous Miles City Bucking Horse Sale. The third full weekend of May our town doubles in size, as visitors from all 50 states and numerous foreign countries come for one of the greatest old west rodeos in the world. This year we celebrate 70 years of this great event and it just gets better. When you say the name of Miles City to anyone, the next thing you hear is, "That's where the Bucking Horse Sale is, right?"

Miles City is located on I-94, as well as the intersection of HWY59 North and South, making it a great resting stop for travelers going to the National Parks from the east. The driving tourists are one of our many strengths, but it also points out one of our biggest issues. Miles City currently has no commercial air service, in or out of town. So far, or efforts to bring in a fixed-wing operation have proven fruitless. We will continue our efforts, as it is such a big piece of our puzzle, and by far one of our biggest challenges.

Miles City will always be a charming small town because that is who we are. As good stewards of the land we will always maintain and share the beauty of the land around us. Whether it be the rolling hills, the rough Badlands, or the red hues of the scorio bluffs, we will work to keep public access. You can rest assured, when your day is done we will have a great experience waiting for you when you get back to town.

Describe your destination.

Our marketing plan addresses all three phases of one's travel decision process. First, we have history to inspire. Many follow the Lewis and Clark Trail, the path of General Custer to the Little Bighorn Battle, and the battles leading up to that day, and even the mythical Lonesome Dove story brings visitors to Miles City.

The World Famous Miles City Bucking Horse Sale will always inspire a visit to Miles City because there is nothing like it in the world.

Inspiring photos, featuring our outdoor adventures, will always inspire those that don't see that kind of beauty outside their own doors.

We will continue to utilize our website as an orientation piece. We also manage the Community's Calendar of Events, and make that available on our website to help facilitate their planning. We will continue to post our phone numbers and push person-to-person conversations as a planning service. We maintain a year around presence for visitors that come to our VIC.

Our office is open year around to facilitate any visitor needs. All information, that we provide, has our contact information, so we can assist in any way we can.

Optional: Include attachments here

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

Miles City uses SeeSource for their research and it shows that our Demographic Group is:

Age - 45 - 54

Income - Under 40K

Education - HS or Less

Household - 1-2

Miles City uses SeeSource for their research and it shows that our Geographic Group is:

Montana

North Dakota

Minnesota

Washington

Wyoming

Illinois

South Dakota

Wisconsin

Idaho

Utah

Florida

California

Oregon

Miles City tracks Psychographic markets using a combination of Demographics and Marketing Analysis.

The differences in age demographic is very small between ages 35 to 74 with the income pattern being similar from under 40K to 150K with the only exception being 40-50K being much lower. Education is very close in HS and Bachelors but some college and grad/4yr lag far behind. Household size is similar in the 1-2 and 3-5 categories. See Source research for each individual quarter leads us to believe that quarter 1 is primarily hockey and basketball tournaments driven as Miles City hosts a tourney almost weekly with some age group of hockey and several high school basketball and wrestling tournaments. This shows a rise in income and household size. Quarter 2 is pushed by the World famous Miles City Bucking Horse Sale. This would move the age and income up. Quarter 3 are the summer months when we have travelers more so than visitors, based on our research. Quarter 4 is the real picture that drives the needle on showing our baseline numbers. Hunting season brings the age group more into line with our baseline numbers. It also moves the mark on income, education and household size.

This is a pattern for the last 3 years including the Covid year so it gives us a very definite direction to market.

b. What are your emerging markets?

As cited in previous marketing plans, our most apparent and emerging market is the young hunter. We have made a concerted effort to move that market, and it appears we have, but it looks like, based on the early results we have seen, we should continue to go after that market. We will continue to support local sports and tournaments along with a constant presence in the marketing of the World Famous Miles City Bucking Horse Sale. Another market we plan to attack is the ESCAPE visitor. It became obvious to us, during Covid, that people want to go places with very little population, lots of outdoor activities, and the amenities they are use to getting. Basically, our brand pillars are dialed down to a targeted group, which is category that can afford to be gone for a specific length of time, or young individuals and new couples that can work from anywhere. We will market our internet capacity and our cost of living to visitors for a one-time stay that could turn into them spending the rest of their lives here.

Optional: Include attachments here.

c. What research supports your target marketing?

Miles City CVB was allowed to use funds to purchase research from both VisaView and SeeSource, along with numbers from ITRR. Along with that, the Miles City Area Chamber of Commerce and the Miles City Area Economic Development Office are operated out of this office, so we get a comprehensive view of what happens in Miles City. We have seen first hand the relocation of young businesses, and have spoken with numerous people about Covid and relocation. Being able to track these inquiries also provides good research data.

Since Covid, Miles City business seems primed to work together to increase tourism. When traffic stopped in 2020, they could finally admit that we really are a tourism destination. We have preached this for years, but it took the stop of interstate travel to realize where their money comes from. Local event planners have since become much more engaged with our office.

- Our goals for FY22 are to increase overall visitor awareness of year around events in Miles City;
- Increase overnight stays by prompting hotel staff to be engaged with local events, to increase length of stay;
- Promote The Range Riders Museum and WaterWorks Art Museum;
- Utilize available research to grow visitors, as well as length of stay.
- Keep website fresh and accurate, as well as increasing usage;
- Remain open to co-op and joint venture opportunities.

We have recovered very quickly from the Covid shutdown, and want to keep that trend going into the future. Our 1st quarter numbers are up 9%. Our overall goal has always been to increase our overall stay number from .08 to 1.0.

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

The Miles City CVB participated in one joint venture with the state this year, by purchasing the Visaview research data. We plan to continue with this agreement, as long as it stays affordable. The combination of VisaView and SeeSource data provides us with valuable information we have never had before, due to such small sample groups. We will also watch for the Eastern Montana Initiative, that stalled last year.

Optional: Include attachment here. Demographics Profile.pdf

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

The Miles City CVB is willing to consider any/all opportunities, but our small budget forces us to be very selective. We are always excited to look at offerings from Southeast Montana Tourism. As stated before, we will look forward to seeing what comes out of the Eastern Montana Initiative.

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

As stated before, our only joint venture this year has purchasing VisaView, with MOTBD. It is not fully functional as of yet, but we are assured that it will be soon. Since we will own the raw data from VisaView, SeeSource will incorporate that data into our program with them, giving us both Visa and Mastercard data, side-by-side and intermingled, for a greater picture. This information will give us invaluable leverage in the marketing of Miles City.

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 Attchmnt
		Miles City will stay committed to having a				We have been putting alot of time and energy into our website and it continues to show value. As in the past we have continued to divide our content into multiple avenues to serve Miles City	

Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	<p>fresh, accurate, and inviting website. We will have inviting photos, videos, and up to date information such as upcoming events and visitor information. We remain committed to having evrything necessary to planning a stay in Miles City. We have opened our site so that we offer the visitor has the ability to link to other sites, such as Southeast Montana and others to move seamlessly through Montana.</p>	<p>Our analitic show that our website is performing quite well. We have a average per day visit of 304. That amounts to 110,960 per year. Visitors are averaging 3.2 minutes staying on one site. Visitors go to an average of 4.14 pages per visit. Search engine referrals account for 51% +/- of our visitors, Facebook another 36% and 13% come from miscellaneous sources.</p>	<p>Miles City will stay within the guidelines of 15.2.1 of the rules and regs. as we continue to grow our site. It is our hope that we can increase visitors by 5% and average stays to 3.5 minutes based on content and a strong incouragement to visit from our other marketing practices such as print advertising and radio/TV.</p>	\$6,000.00	<p>but we have maintained the tourism recruitment aspect in all we do. All numbers are sound with another small rise in mobile visitors. Improved internet services along with a better presentation are responsible for this uptick. Our search engine visitors ranges between 13 and 15% with our mobile usage above 81%. Our visitations are over 115,000 annually, which equate to over 5% as desired, and our time on is at 3.74 minutes and the page per visit stayed steady with 4.23 per visit. With the current motel rates to the west being so high we are seeing more mobile visitors that shop rate. We will look to be more active in this category in the future.</p>	
Consumer	Printed Material	<p>The Miles City CVB has no firm plans to do any Printed Materials this year based on the fact that we were able to do several reprints last year. Our inventory is a full strength at present. We will hold a spot in case we have something we wish to do .</p>	<p>We will research anything that were to come up. We may find a need based on the new research we acquired jsut recently. When and if we do it will be done according to the Rules and Regulations, 15.2.15 of the rules and regs.</p>	<p>We will show the reasons for the use of this method based on research and cost effectiveness, as well as being in compliance with the rules and regs.</p>	\$100.00	<p>No funds were expended for this method, we will use this method in the future.</p>	
		<p>Miles City plans to us print advertising primarily to push local events as a way to stimulate overnight stays.</p> <p>We will use regional newspaper, outdoor magazines if affordable, and we will have a</p>	<p>Based on new research with a more targeted sampling we have seen the need to market to hunters.</p> <p>We require that any local event we advertise most keep a gate count as well as make an attempt</p>	<p>All print ads will be purchased in compliance with 15.2.6 of the rullles and regs.</p>		<p>This method has had proven value year after year. We use place printed ads were we fell the demographics dictate to accomplish our goals and objectives. Travel guide placement is valueable to</p>	

<p>Consumer</p>	<p>Print Advertising</p>	<p>presence in regional travel guides Research shows that we have some strong seasonal visitors, primarily in the fall and early winter. This is hunting season and that means we should target that market. The World famous Miles City Bucking Horse Sale will be supported with print ads as will our museums and summer music on Main Street.</p>	<p>to chronicle were the attendee is from. This allows us to check value of our ad placement and make changes if need be. See Source gives us a daily count of visitors so we can track back against local events also to show increases in visitors. Publications will also give subscription numbers and print numbers that have great value in your buying decisions.</p>	<p>We plan to utilize travel guides from other regions to drive visitors our way such as Southeast Montana travel Guide and Glacier Country Travel Guide. We will also utilize local newspaper for events specific to the area.</p>	<p>\$6,000.00</p>	<p>us as funds allow. We use Glacier and Southeast to cover entries from the west as well as a captured audience already planning to visit or is already in Southeast Montana. We also used local newspaper based on the reach to potential area event goers. This will always be a constant in our market methods.</p>
<p>Consumer</p>	<p>Radio & Television Advertising</p>	<p>We have historically used radio to advertise local events and regular schedules for our museums. We use 30 sec. ads that will air from 6am until 7pm. We do take advantage of later evening times as they are sold at 10% of lowest quoted rate. We utilize AM based on large coverage and FM by target market for the event. We use TV for special coverage, usually as a lure piece good for the entire year. We use those seasonally to assure best return. We use Billings based TV channels that give us the best coverage for the money. With a limited budget we have to be dialed in on our market. All radio and TV ads will besides increasing visitors to</p>	<p>Miles City will use research made available to us from our vendors to direct our message. Coverage maps, viewership, and cost will be determining factors along with our own research such as Visaview, See Source, and ITRR to make sure that the vendors we use have formats that meet our target market. We will use radio for most local events and will plan to use television for Bucking Horse advertising.</p>	<p>We will place local radio on regional stations that will pull visitors to events and we will put together a tv campaign for the Bucking Horse sale that will cover North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming. We will have more weeks of live horse racing at the BHS which will require a bigger ad presence so we will increase accordingly</p>	<p>\$6,000.00</p>	<p>We increased this budget throughout the year based on the impact we realized from television affordability. We had an increase in live horse racing dates so we used television to run the entire meet with extra push on the weekends other than the Bucking Horse sale and saw great numbers despite a weak horse turnout. We saw great results by moving funds that we felt may have been under serving in other categories and we feel we improved our position. We used Cowle Media for tv because they gave us the largest and most effective coverage map for the</p>

		events will direct listeners to our website for more information.				best price. This method is successful and we will continue in the future.	
Marketing Support	Administration	The Miles City CVB uses it's Administration budget for a portion of the rent and supplies necessary to do the operations of the Miles City CVB. We also operate a VIC in the office charged with promotions of local, regional, and state tourism. The office is a year round facility offering print information as well as personal contact with visitors.	We monitor the printed material we display at the start and the end of the year to chart the movement of inventory, the number of visitors, as well as the interaction of visitors. We maintain a welcoming facility for our visitors all while staying within the rules and regulations given and within our 20% of total budget mandate.	We are mandated to not exceed 20% of our total fiscal budget as well as meet certain criteria for legal expenses. We strictly adhere to these rules and do the best for Miles City, the region, and the state at the same time.	\$7,400.00	We consider this method successful as we remained within our 20% budget allowance. We will continue this method in the future.	
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	We will use the budgeted funds to attend TAC meetings as well as the Governors Conference meetings. We will only request reimbursement for legal expenses as written in rules and regs.	The information we receive at these meetins is vetted with the TAC and MOTBD for it's value to us and our operation.	Attending these meetings while staying within budget, gaining the most knowledge possible and sharing that with our local board will be the way we will measure success.	\$3,000.00	We will always attend these meetings for the education and face to face sharing experience. The Governors Conference continues to be a key learning experience as is the June Tac when all presentation are presented. We will continue to make a point of using this method as it affords us educational resources at a great value.	
		As we did in the previous fiscal year we are joining MOTBD in the purchase of the Visaview research opportunity. We will purchase this years data again and we	The data we are given makes making educated use of our budgeted funds. We are able to make assumptions of who we need to target for events, but more importantly	We plan to engage with office of Tourism in a		We purchased research data through a joint venture with Office of Tourism. We were able to purchase data at a	

Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	will share the raw data with Seesource, a company we bought into in FY21. This will give us a compilation of both Visa and Mastercard Data.	seasonal markets such as hunting, rodeo, and winter sports. It would be impossible to do our marketing plans without good research.	joint venture to purchase research data.	\$5,000.00	great rate due to the partnership and it worked well for us. We hope to continue this practice in the future.	
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	We are keeping this line in our plan so that if and when a project comes up we can act on it immediately. Funding and research will dictate usage.	Whatever the opportunity, we will research it for value and fit in our marketing plan. We will also research how it adheres to the current rules and regs.	We will evaluate using best practices when and if the time comes.	\$1,000.00	No funds were expended for this method. We will use this method in the future.	
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	This is a method that we use annually for the purpose of having funds for things that may come up that has benefit to our success. It seems that with all the people we come across in the industry someone has a great idea or project we see as beneficial to us.	We will make sure that any thing we do is properly researched.	We will evaluate using best practice if and when the time comes. We will not exceed 10% of our total budget as stated in 15.1.1 of the rules and regs.	\$3,000.00	No funds were used in this method but we will use this method in the future.	
Research	Survey/Data Collection	We plan to use \$5000.00 to purchase another year of See Source. This a data/research service that offers data that shows where our visitors come from, age, economic background, as well as household income and household size. This will be the second year we will have this as a resource for marketing.	The Office of Tourism, ITRR, and the TAC have suggested that we increase our research knowledge and with help from ITRR, our joint venture with Office of Tourism for Visa View, and with this purchase of See Source we will have a well rounded research library at hand.	We will be using budgeted funds to purchase SeeSource, a data research program based on Mastercard purchases in our area. This added to Visa View, the Visa Card based research, we purchase as a joint venture with Office of Tourism and information from ITRR we have a strong research capability for marketing.	\$5,000.00	With the combination of SeeSource and Visa View we were able to make sound decisions on direction for our marketing. Based on the urging of the TAC it was a great addition and worth the expense. We will continue to use this as funds are available.	
					\$42,500.00		

Marketing Method Evaluation Attachments

Marketing Method Budget

Marketing Segment	Marketing Method	Bed tax funded budget
Consumer	Printed Material	\$0.00
Consumer	Print Advertising	\$6,000.00
Consumer	Radio & Television Advertising	\$12,730.22
Consumer	Website/Internet Development/Updates	\$6,000.00
		\$24,730.22
Marketing Support	Administration	\$7,400.00
Marketing Support	TAC/Governor's Conference meetings	\$1,000.00
Marketing Support	Joint Ventures	\$6,000.00
Marketing Support	Cooperative Marketing	\$0.00
Marketing Support	Opportunity Marketing	\$0.00
		\$14,400.00
Research	Survey/Data Collection	\$5,000.00
		\$5,000.00
		\$44,130.22

Miscellaneous Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size
Board Minutes approving plan	April 28_2021 Minutes.pdf	245 KB
FY22 pie chart	FY22piechart.xlsx	17 KB
FY22 Budget to Actual report	Miles City FY22 evaluation worksheet.xlsx	13 KB
FY 22 Pie Chart	pie chart Fy22.xlsx	17 KB
FY22 Methods	segments pie chart.xlsx	15 KB

Reg/CVB Required Documents

Description	File Name	File Size
Required Documents FY22	Application for Lodging Tax Revenue FY22.pdf	2.5 MB

