



DESTINATION  
*Missoula*  
MONTANA

2020 – 2021

MARKETING PLAN

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## *preface*

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As this is being written, we as a world, country, state and city are in unprecedented times. We are in the midst of a worldwide pandemic, COVID-19. We have no way of knowing how long it will last or the lasting health and economic impacts it will have on our world. What we do know is that our lives will be forever changed by this crisis, hopefully, eventually, for the better. The Destination Missoula 2020-21 Marketing Plan was written when we were only aware of COVID-19 as a disease that was taking its toll halfway around the world. We did not know, at that time, that we too would be embroiled in the same crisis only a few short months later.

Since we do not have the ability to predict the future, Destination Missoula has chosen to leave our Marketing Plan and budgets as originally written. We will be using it as an aspirational plan and target of where we will eventually bounce back to. That being said, our Board of Directors has in place an internal plan for constant evaluation of our Marketing Plan and budgets, working on a cash basis, to ensure that our expenditures do not exceed the income actually coming into the organization. The organization has made major adjustments to its immediate mission and goals. We have refocused our efforts to meet two main objectives: (1) to share a message of unity and strength throughout the community of Missoula and (2) inspire future travel. We are doing this in the most economical way possible—through our digital and web presence. We curtailed the majority of our print and in-person marketing efforts. Our messaging is focused on calm, inspirational, outdoor imagery, continuing to show that Missoula is a beautiful place to visit as soon as it is safe to travel. We are using no call to action other than to dream, plan for future trips, share your favorite Missoula memories, and be inspired. Our local messaging has been focused on showing care, concern and appreciation for our community. We are highlighting positive, uplifting messaging and stories of community involvement, coming together, and the unique ways people are adapting and helping one another. In addition, we have positioned our organization as a resource for the local tourism industry. We are using our website to list pertinent economic and educational resources for businesses, to highlight the businesses that are still open and encourage people to buy local, and to showcase how our amazing arts community is using live streaming events to help artists continue to generate income while they inspire and entertain our community. We know we are hitting the mark of what is important right now from the overwhelming positive response, both locally and nationally, to our campaign.



When we do begin to see signs of a desire by people to travel again and a desire by our community to welcome them, we will be ready to immediately react. Believing that our direct drive markets will be the first to come back, we will have a campaign ready. Then we will remain flexible to react to the remaining markets—direct flight, small meetings and sporting events, and eventually large meetings and events. Throughout this time our team will be staying in close contact with our leisure travelers, meeting and event planners to stay top-of-mind. Though the tourism industry is taking a massive blow with this crisis, it is also the industry that will lead the recovery of the country, our state, and our city. As we have shown so many times before, we are resilient and can respond quickly to market changes. Missoula has the perfect combination of assets to rebound quickly—safety, abundant recreation, clean air and water, inspirational arts, history and culture, unique attractions and, most importantly, wide-open spaces and relatively few people.

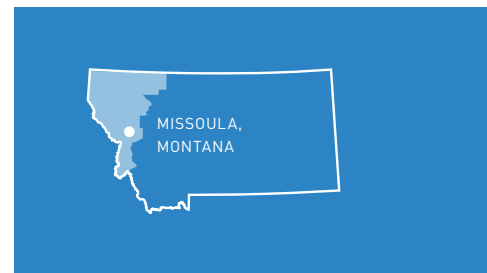
# THERE'S THIS PLACE



## INTRODUCTION

Destination Missoula is committed to upholding the Montana State Tourism brand pillars while promoting Missoula as a unique and transcendent destination where wanderlust is indulged and discovery is a given.

As we market Missoula we play to its strengths, of which there are a multitude. We also think ahead and take into account opportunities on the horizon that we can use to Destination Missoula's advantage. As a team, we keep our eyes open to inevitable challenges and work toward solving them efficiently and effectively. And we do it all with a foundation of pure gratitude that we get to live in and tout such an exceptional place.



# IDENTITY

In a valley that unfolds at the confluence of three rivers and seven wilderness areas, Missoula, Montana, is anything but ordinary. Here, nature inspires a philosophy of slowing your pace to mountain time, living out loud and taking it all in. Adventure is always top of mind in this paradise where recreation is second-to-none and a balanced and full life is priority number one.

Missoula is the second-largest city in Montana, but to those visitors from large urban areas, Missoula is a vibrant, eclectic and authentic small town bursting with charm and personality, perfectly situated halfway between Montana’s two awe-inspiring treasures—Glacier and Yellowstone national parks.

Served by Missoula International Airport and three major highways, Missoula is the ideal hub from which to explore the many wonders of Montana. Accessibility to world-class recreation makes Missoula an unparalleled place for outdoor exploration. Where else can you hit up one of the West’s best farmers markets, kayak or river surf right downtown, and hike or bike an epically scenic trail in 60,000 acres of wilderness (and wash it all down with a finely-crafted Montana beer, good food and friendly conversation at a local brewery) all in the same day?

Missoula is also a regional destination for shopping and dining, featuring three distinct shopping districts and an abundance of eateries and places to drink—like fine dining, authentic steakhouses, food trucks, iconic taco joints, cafés, coffee shops, distilleries and taprooms—with something to fit all budgets and palates.

Missoula is Montana’s most cosmopolitan and diverse community and the heart of arts and culture in the state, blending contemporary culture and historical heritage seamlessly. Visitors find this arts and cultural hub brimming with a seemingly endless array of entertainment and events. Think symphony, theater, film festivals, nationally recognized artists live in concert, author readings at independent bookstores, college sports, ballet, opera and even roller derby. And, Missoula proudly lives our history, from Native Americans and the Lewis and Clark Expedition to smokejumpers and Glacial Lake Missoula. Missoula is also a regional hub and state leader in commerce, education and health care.

Some might call it unique, cool or hip. Others will experience it as serene, welcoming and replete with natural beauty. Missoula is alive, pulsating with a unique small mountain-town spirit, offering pristine open spaces, places to go, incredible things to see and do and the best people around. Missoula’s unique character is shown through marketing efforts, while incorporating brand fonts, colors and stunning, authentic imagery.



DESTINATION  
**Missoula**  
MONTANA

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Marketing Missoula and surrounding areas as a premiere travel destination, thereby creating vibrant growth in the economy and enhancing quality of life.*

# STRENGTHS

## ARTS AND CULTURE

Nurtured by nature, culture is alive and well in Missoula, home to the most diverse and extensive arts and music community in Montana. From writers to performing artists, from painters to photographers, from historians to museum curators, all are inspired by the beauty, charm and roots of their surroundings. Missoula is fortunate to be home to numerous famous and creative people who add a dimension and depth to the community that is usually only seen in larger cities. Regionally, nationally and, in many cases, internationally renowned, Missoula’s cultural community creates an essence that urban travelers want but do not expect in Montana, making Missoula a surprisingly unique destination with an allure that draws visitors back again and again.

## IMMEDIACY OF ACCESS

In Missoula, the great outdoors really are right outside your door and a river really does run through it. On any given day anglers are gracefully casting in the Clark Fork River. Downstream, kayakers and river surfers perform athletic feats atop the man-made Brennan’s Wave. Tubing is an alternative form of transportation in the summer as people ride the river right through town, sometimes on their lunch breaks! Off the water, the trail system that crisscrosses the city keeps people grounded, and bicyclists ride on the country’s friendliest streets. The surrounding hills and mountains offer a powder paradise for winter lovers, like backcountry and cross-country skiing, plus Montana’s Snowbowl, providing downhill adventure right in Missoula’s backyard. So, whether you run, ski, paddleboard, river surf, kayak, bike, hunt, fish, hike, backpack, float or camp, you can indulge your passion in and minutes from Missoula.

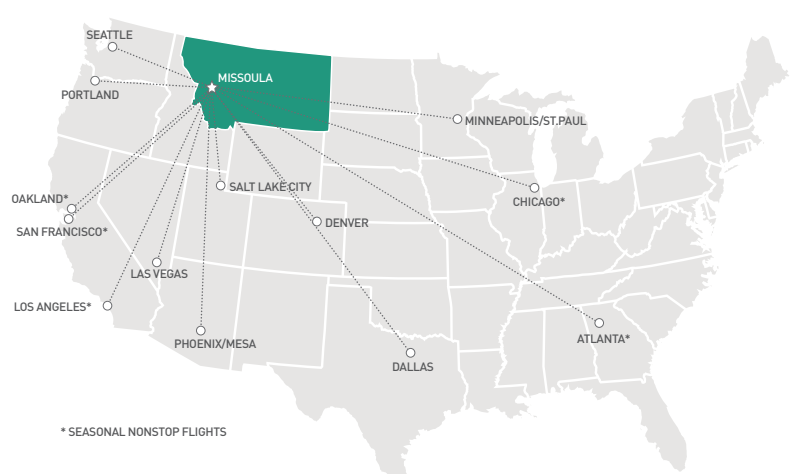
## REGIONAL HUB

Missoula is a regional center for retail, health care, education, forestry, ecology, transportation and culture. People come from across the state and region to shop in Missoula’s historic downtown boutiques and at Southgate Mall—Western Montana’s largest mall. The preeminent health care provided by renowned physicians and hospitals makes Missoula a center for Western Montana’s health care. Home to the University of Montana, Missoula hosts students from around the world who seek an education that is highly valued and recognized on a campus that is one of the country’s most picturesque. This level of education also produces a population of “top in the field” professionals who work in and serve our community. In order to support these industries, Missoula must also be a transportation hub. Missoula can be reached by two major highways—U.S. Highway 93 and State Highway 200—and Interstate Highway 90. Missoula International Airport hosts six major air carriers and has non-stop flights to Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Denver, Atlanta, Minneapolis, Dallas, Salt Lake City and Chicago. With over 59,333 more seats in the market than last year, Missoula is quickly becoming an accessible and affordable destination hub. The Missoula airport is currently undergoing a massive expansion project and by 2021, there will be more terminals and more flights into Missoula.

## NON-STOP FLIGHTS TO MISSOULA

- SEATTLE
- PORTLAND
- MINNEAPOLIS/ST.PAUL
- SALT LAKE CITY
- OAKLAND\*
- CHICAGO\*
- DENVER
- SAN FRANCISCO\*
- LAS VEGAS
- LOS ANGELES\*
- ATLANTA\*
- PHOENIX/MESA
- DALLAS

\* Seasonal non-stop flights





## SPORTS AND ADVENTURE

In Missoula, we play long after the game is over because our outfield is endless. Our proximity to three pristine rivers and seven wilderness areas, and within 100 miles of five ski areas, means adventure is virtually limitless here. We're a recreation hot spot where play is revered and where teams come together for the love of sport and play nurtured by natural beauty and fresh mountain air. Missoula is also home to a professional baseball team - The Missoula Paddleheads, UM Griz sporting events and the world-famous Missoula Marathon. This Boston qualifying race has been named #1 marathon for three years straight by Runner's World, and this year was named the [#2 marathon](#) in the U.S. by BibRave. Runner's World was quoted as saying:

*"For Missoula, a ton of runners cited the community support being second to none," said Jessica Murphy, cofounder of BibRave. "The entire town really comes out to support the race all weekend long." Not only that, but the constant view of the mountains serves as inspiration for runners. This flat, Boston-qualifying course is sure to please." (Runner's World 2019).*

Having also hosted such events as the U.S. Freestyle Kayak Championships, USA Cycling Pro XCT and USA Cycling Collegiate Men's Mountain Bike Championship for two years, Missoula has a proven track record for hosting major recreation-based events. Missoula's Minor League Baseball team, the Missoula PaddleHeads (formerly the Osprey) won the "Best New Look" Logo contest from the MLB in 2019, and their stadium at Ogren Park offers a great spot to enjoy baseball and the sun under Missoula's summer skies.

Missoula successfully hosted the 2017 and 2018 USA Cycling Collegiate Mountain Bike National Championships. Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District worked for a number of years in close collaboration with the USAC to bring this opportunity into Montana. Through a close partnership with the biking community in Missoula and Destination Missoula's proven track record with Missoula XC, Destination Missoula has been able to bring top collegiate athletes and future Olympians from across the country to compete in Missoula. By successfully hosting these events at the collegiate level, Missoula is now on track to successfully bid for USAC professional racing.



Missoula is also proud to be the host city for University of Montana athletics, where Montana Grizzly pride runs deep. Grizzly athletics brings people from across the region to enjoy Missoula’s unwavering tradition of college sports. In January of 2020, Stadium Journey Magazine ranked all the FCS stadiums across the country, and Washington Grizzly Stadium came in as #2. Stadiums were ranked on food and beverage inside the stadium, overall atmosphere, neighborhood where the stadium resides, the fans, access to and inside the stadium, overall return on investment and unique features not covered in other categories. “When one thinks of Montana one might think of wide open spaces. But Washington-Grizzly Stadium is wedged into the University of Montana campus at the junction of Mount Sentinel and the Clark Fork River with very little room to spare,” says Jason Karp. “The density of the stadium and campus generates an energy that transmits to the tailgate parties happening on almost every spare patch of grass creating a festive environment on game day in Missoula.”

*Stadium Journey Magazine ranked Washington Grizzly Stadium No. 1 of all FCS stadiums in January of 2019.*



Missoula’s much-anticipated Fort Missoula Regional Park made its debut in the spring of 2017, with the opening of the soccer/multi-use fields and facilities at the west end of the park. In June of 2018 the fully completed park was opened to the public. The regional park features a five-field, lighted softball complex with moveable fences, two additional softball fields, nine full-size multi-use fields for soccer, football, lacrosse and rugby, one lighted artificial turf multi-use field, pickleball, basketball and volleyball courts. The addition of these amenities allows Missoula to bid for and host major tournaments that Destination Missoula previously not been able to for lack of infrastructure. These tournaments will have a significant economic impact on Missoula. This new park is the realization of a years-long effort to create a recreation epicenter in Missoula, including walking trails, open space, playgrounds, picnic shelters and pavilions, historic interpretation and more. Since the opening of the Park, Destination Missoula has supported their efforts with 20 leads to TBID hotels for a potential of over 10,459 room nights.





## MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT

Part of our charm is that we march to the beat of our own drum here in Missoula, and we wholeheartedly celebrate the mountain sound and the rhythm the rivers afford. Missoula's music scene is broad, running the gamut from orchestral to bluegrass and country to hip hop, and the city has hosted such icons as Pearl Jam, Paul McCartney, The Rolling Stones, Mumford and Sons, Chris Stapleton, Sheryl Crow and many more. The line up for 2020 is already wildly impressive—Guns N Roses, Brandi Carlisle, Ben Folds, Vampire Weekend and the Avett Brothers, to name a few headliners. Missoula's outdoor venues steal the scene during the summer. Ogren Park at Allegiance Field is a go-to for summer entertainment for crowds up to 10,000 people. Summer 2017 saw two outdoor amphitheatres open. Big Sky Brewing upgraded their concert facilities to feature an amphitheater next to the brewery with a capacity of 5,000. The 4,000 seat KettleHouse Amphitheater in Bonner (7 miles from Missoula) sits along the banks of the beautiful Blackfoot River. With a vast and seemingly endless array of arts and entertainment events and an abundance of restaurants, cafés, coffee houses, breweries, wine bars and distilleries, having fun off the trail is just as easy to do. The varied music venues in Missoula are receiving national acclaim with The Top Hat and The Wilma listed in Pollstar's Top 100 Clubs and the KettleHouse Amphitheater listed in the Top 100 Amphitheatres in the US!

## NIGHTLIFE

For a small town, Missoula surprises with a nightlife scene that is the perfect combination of laid back and trendy. Whether visitors are looking for upscale dining and cocktails or dive atmospheres, they will find affordable fare, great ambiance and many options throughout the entire town. The Dram Shop opening up in the Southgate Mall neighborhood provides a downtown flare to an area where many visitors stay outside of the heart of the city. First Friday Gallery Night is consistently a favorite for visitors where they can mingle with locals, have complimentary beverages and snacks and take in local artwork. The additional storefronts in the Mercantile Building have provided increased options for dining and nightlife and extended the already-vibrant downtown scene in Missoula.



# OPPORTUNITIES

## TRANSPORTATION

In January 2015, Mountain Line began a three-year Zero-Fare demonstration project with a goal of expanding total ridership by 45%. By the final year of the Zero-Fare demonstration project, the results were phenomenal. Ridership grew from just over 900,000 rides in 2014 to 1.4 million rides in 2016, an increase of more than 50%, and the growth continues today. Zero-Fare bus service improves the quality of life for Missoula's entire community by dramatically increasing ridership. More transit riders means better air quality, less traffic and parking congestion, more students getting to class, more employees getting to work, and more seniors and people with disabilities staying active and mobile. Destination Missoula—with partners from across the community—contribute to make Zero-Fare a reality and feel that it is an example to other Montana communities. It is a huge benefit to visitors, as there is service from the Missoula International Airport to all reaches of town. Mountain Line has launched six zero-emissions, all electric buses to their fleet in the summer of 2019, marking the beginning of an exciting new chapter in Missoula's public transit story. Together with Zero-Fare partners, Mountain Line provides free transportation to Missoulian locals and visitors alike. Their electric buses and frequent Bolt! scheduled routes make the bus a great option for visitors who wish to explore the city but have opted not to rent a car or other transportation method.

UBER and LYFT are also available transportation sources for the Missoula community. These app-based services put a ride or a delivery at your fingertips. It also provides a flexible source of income for Missoulians.



MISSOULA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT'S  
RECORD BREAKING YEAR:  
*Handled 907,777  
passengers in 2019,  
a 7% increase from 2018.*

Missoula International Airport had another record-setting year in 2019 MSO handled 907,777 passengers, an increase of 59,333 or 7% over 2018. With the addition of American Airlines and the direct flight to Dallas, Missoula is served by six airlines to 13 non-stop flight destinations, which makes it comparable to much larger cities. Since 2000, MSO has experienced a 97% increase in passenger traffic from 459,664 to 907,777 in 2018. MSO is anticipating another record setting year.

## ECONOMIC UPTURN

With the upturn in our economy, Missoula is beginning to see new growth in sectors that directly relate to tourism. Many new retail stores, restaurants and breweries have opened or are slated to open in Missoula in all three shopping districts. Southgate Mall's expansion, including the announcement that a SCHEELS store will be opening in 2020, will create even more opportunities for economic growth. Missoula will also see new hotels opening, existing hotels renovating, increased private student housing in the city core and has started the complete reconstruction of our airport to accommodate our increasing demand for air service.

"Visit the website [destinationmissoula.org](http://destinationmissoula.org) and the first thing which pops up is a series of vignettes which espouse the virtues of Missoula," Conforti said in a statement. "Having now visited Southgate Mall several times over the previous 18 months, I am pleased to report every single one of them is true ... music, dining, culture and especially the one which proclaims 'the great outdoors are right outside your door.'" Conforti went on to say that the store will cater to people seeking a variety of adventures. "With this in mind, there was only one logical choice to satisfy every hiking, skiing, skating, baseballing, boxing, softballing, cycling, hunting, swimming, soccering, fishing, running, camping, spectating, yogaing (just to name a few) needs of active Missoulians, and we're pleased to announce it is SCHEELS," he said. "They're one of the best merchants out there for the simple reason they respect their customers and colleagues (they're employee owned) and their stores are really cool." - Lou Conforti, CEO Washington Prime



## INFRASTRUCTURE

The face of Missoula is changing rapidly, all the while preserving the heart of what makes this community one truly extraordinary place. These are a few of the major projects that will be completed within the next few years:

**MIDTOWN GROWTH** – Southgate Mall is in the middle of a 70,000-square-foot expansion project bringing new dining, shopping, entertainment, residential housing, retail and office space to the midtown district of Missoula. With more than \$64 million in private investments and additional funding from the City of Missoula, this project has created a new street network in the surrounding neighborhoods to create ease of access for these neighborhoods to surrounding schools and entertainment options, and to enhance livability and raise property values. This multi-year project will create \$320,000 per year in new property taxes, 700 new construction jobs and 375 new permanent jobs, and it will safeguard 1,250 existing jobs. 2019 did bring some unexpected closures—due to national corporate decisions, Missoula’s midtown lost both Lucky’s Market and JC Penney at Southgate Mall. While these closures were a sad reality to this area, Southgate Mall’s renovations have begun to attract more big brand names, such as SCHEELS, and we anticipate many more restaurants and retail stores will take over the newly renovated storefronts at Southgate Mall.

In recent years, Midtown Missoula has seen local favorites expanding from downtown to Midtown, including Dram Shop, Notorious P.I.G., Big Dipper, Bridge Pizza, The Trail Head and Rattlesnake Distillery. The opening of second storefronts from these Missoula treasures has only served, and will continue to serve, to enhance the charm of the Midtown area and bring local Missoula flavors to an area of town that was once known primarily for larger branded stores.

Additionally, the Missoula Fairgrounds, home to the Western Montana Fair and other large special events, plans to expand their footprint, including the expansion of the ice rink, building the Missoula Butterfly House and Insectarium and Community Gardens, and improved work on the commercial building, with the goal of accessibility.



**DOWNTOWN MISSOULA REVITALIZATION** – Downtown Missoula has recently seen an influx of new businesses which are adding a fresh new face to the town. The Mercantile Building has brought a number of new storefronts including ZooThai, The Camino, Sobba Cycle, Basal, 1889 Steakhouse, the Montana Scene, Olive and Iron and CREATE Art Bar. Also, the downtown has seen the addition of Hype House Studio, Second Set Bistro and the new location of Radius Gallery.

**MISSOULA PUBLIC LIBRARY** – The Missoula Public Library is the busiest library in the state, with 700,000 visitors annually, 60,000 cardholders and more than 1 million items loaned out per year. The current library is inadequate to meet the growing demand, and the current building is not structurally sound to add more levels. A public bond of \$30 million was passed, and the new building will include \$5.5 million in private investment and an additional \$500,000 investment from the library and its foundation. Construction started this year, with an estimated opening of early 2020. The new library will represent Missoula’s core values. It will be a lifelong learning hub for Missoula County, a permanent anchor of downtown Missoula, and a popular cultural destination for Western Montana’s many visitors.

- 100,000 to 120,000 square feet: five levels, including increased parking
- Innovative partnerships with Children’s Museum Missoula/Families First, UM SpectrUM Science Discovery Center, and Missoula Cable Access Television
- Collection growth from 200,000 to 600,000 eventual items
- Increased and improved access to learning tools and resources
- Energy efficiency, and the highest possible LEED certification
- Climate control for preserving Missoula’s community history
- Tripled capacity for computer access and faster internet
- More public gathering spaces and meeting room flexibility





**SAWMILL DISTRICT** – Located on the southside of the Clark Fork just outside of downtown, the Sawmill District is a new-construction consisting of condos, restaurants, retail and office space. This year also saw the completion of The Sawyer, another private student housing project. A 57-unit, 218 bedroom pod-style living apartment building. This trendy new neighborhood abuts the Riverfront Trail System, providing easy access to the rest of town, and is in close proximity to Ogren Park, the Missoula Osprey Stadium at Allegiance Field, Silver Park, Currents Aquatic Center, MoBash Skate Park and numerous other recreational opportunities. 2019 brought the opening of a tech center with 200,000 feet of space for housing, restaurants, daycare and office.

**MISSOULA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT** – The Missoula International Airport has begun work on its \$110,000,000 expansion project. The project will be completed in two phases and is expected to be completely finished by 2021. Demolition of the west terminal has begun. When complete, the new airport terminal will be approximately 175,000 sq. ft. and three stories with 8 gates over two concourses. The plans also include room for future expansion of the airport.

**DRIFT** – In 2019, Nick Checota, owner of Logjam Presents, announced the plans for Drift, a 6,000 capacity entertainment venue to be built on Front and Orange just outside of downtown Missoula. This project will also bring storefront space for restaurants and other businesses, as well as a 200-room boutique hotel. The intention is to create a civic center space for Missoula to attract events that the town currently does not have the infrastructure to support, such as TED Talks, meetings and conferences, larger concerts and more.



### CULINARY AND SPIRITS TOURISM

Two of the hottest trends in travel right now are culinary trips and spirits trips, and Missoula is the perfect place for both. In 2018, culinary travel was estimated to generate a \$268 billion industry and 39 million people identifying themselves as culinary travelers.



*“Food has an unmatched ability to communicate a unique sense of place. Local cuisine provides a direct connection to the history of a region, the soul of its people, and the rhythm of daily life.”*

–Skift.com.

*“Food tourism is nothing new, but its exponential growth is remaking how destinations position themselves in the global tourism market.”*

–Greg Oates.

*“Whereas travelers in past generations may have opted for the five-star hotel restaurant or the gourmet wine and cheese pairing event, culinary travelers are more interested in the local food experiences often usually reserved for the middle and lower-middle class residents of the place travelers visit. Farmers markets, food stalls, food trucks, pubs, and other more native food venues represent a sense of time and place for today’s culinary traveler, who is more predisposed to these type of food experiences than those in the fine dining world.*

*But authenticity is only one part of the equation. Culinary travelers also seek to explore the artistry, traditions, and heritage surrounding the food and beverages of a specific city, country, or region, as well as the people who create the food and drink of a certain place. Chefs, winemakers, brewers, farmers, and other artisans are held in high regard by today’s food tourist, and while the gourmet wine tasting might be a thing of the past, a behind-the-scenes demonstration of how the wine and cheese is actually produced is much more appealing to food tourists who desire to know more about the ingredients and processes of the end product.”*

–DCS - Bon Appetit: The Rise of the Culinary Traveler

Missoula’s food scene has always been strong, but with the introduction of new retail and restaurant space downtown and Midtown, Missoula is witnessing a cultural food movement. Missoula’s continued growth in this sector sets us up solidly as a food travel destination. From Missoula’s locally sourced restaurants to our food trucks, breweries, distilleries, cider house and wineries, Missoula has the unique experiences these travelers expect. Destination Missoula will market directly to this niche.



### RETAIN TRANSIENT VISITORS

Approximately 3.1 million people pass through Missoula annually, but only 1.5 million spend one or more nights in the community. Destination Missoula will be producing marketing campaigns directed specifically to Canadian visitors and concentrating on park-to-park visitors. Destination Missoula will also be working on initiatives such as wayfinding to entice visitors off the highways and to stay at least one night. The Missoula Downtown Partnership was recently awarded grant funding from the Montana Department of Commerce which will be used to strategically place informational kiosks in downtown Missoula. Destination Missoula also recently produced new visitor center signage that coordinates and works within the wayfinding system and more easily identifies the visitor center location in the heart of downtown Missoula.

### TOURISM MASTER PLAN

Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District will spearhead a Tourism Master Planning process for Missoula and the surrounding area. Destination Missoula's goal is to create a community wide discussion based on extensive research regarding tourism's role in Missoula. The plan will assess infrastructure and management needs into the future so that the Missoula community has a roadmap to balance our resources and our quality of life with the economic resources provided by a healthy tourism economy. The plan will encompass partners across our community from city and county government, outdoor recreation interests, the University of Montana, the business community, economic development to bring awareness of the tourism industry and to help guide the final plan. Extensive research will be done with Missoula's visitors and also Missoula's residents to explore the role tourism plays in helping to sustain and advance Missoula's community values and quality of life.

# CHALLENGES

## AIR ACCESS

Missoula air service expansion is limited by the terminal facilities. Missoula International Airport has begun work on a major facilities expansion. The facilities will grow from four gates to eight and will be easily expandable for future growth. It will be intuitive and efficient to navigate and will have all the amenities passengers desire in a modern terminal while still maintaining the uniqueness that one would expect from a Montana airport. Destination Missoula works closely in partnership with the Missoula International Airport to continually investigate and expand service and new direct flights into Missoula. The Missoula Tourism Business Improvement is also a major sponsor for flight guaranty funds to help initiate new direct flights. Towards this end, Destination Missoula is working in partnership with the Missoula International Airport, Missoula Economic Partnership and other private and public entities in Missoula to form a coalition of funding partners for new flights in order to remain competitive. That being said, until the terminal and gates are expanded, Missoula is limited in its ability to bring new airlines into the market. Destination Missoula will continue to concentrate on expanding seasonal flights to year-round in the routes that make sense.

## SEASONALITY

Although Missoula has a more balanced annual visitation than most Montana cities, the vast majority is within the months of April through October, leaving an average of \$21,700,379 (down from \$20.99 million in 2018), in vacant room nights during the months of November through March. Since Missoula is not a major winter destination, Destination Missoula will continue to center marketing efforts to bolster Missoula's shoulder seasons through group and tour travel, sporting and cultural events, and meetings and conventions. This marketing strategy is having an effect as Missoula's annual occupancy numbers have risen from 55.8% seven years ago to 64.3% in 2018-19, an increase of 8.5%.

## CLIMATE CONCERNS

Climate change has created unpredictable conditions for tourism, especially in the late spring and early summer seasons. It is hard to say if the river will flood and be too high for floating and fishing in June, or if the coloration will mimic the gorgeous summertime photos that are spread to inspire people to visit. The dry summers have created fire conditions that have impacted travel to Missoula in the past few years, with the summer of 2017 causing much more distressing circumstances than that of 2018. Regardless, the unpredictability caused by climate change is proving a challenge when advising visitors on travel timetables and plans. Winter sports are also impacted by climate change, as it is hard to determine if snowshoeing, cross country skiing, snowmobiling and downhill skiing are activities that can be conducted as late as once was the norm.

## AIRBNB

Airbnbs and other short term rentals through private individuals have historically been a strain on organizations like Destination Missoula who rely on TBID and bed tax funding. However, even though Airbnbs are now required to pay the same taxes as hotels, they still create a strain to the community at large and to the traditional hotel industry that so much of Missoula tourism was built around. While having Airbnb rental options is a benefit to attract younger travelers, Missoula has seen an increase in housing prices, including investments in second homes or rental-only homes, which has made it challenging for locals to obtain affordable housing. Airbnbs typically offer lower prices than hotels or group accommodations that hotels cannot compete with, and this reality is putting a strain on hotels and their employees.





### LOW CONVERSION OF TRANSIENT TRAVEL

As mentioned in Opportunities, Missoula does not convert approximately 1.5 million transient travelers a year, who either drive through or stop shortly for gas and to eat but do not spend the night. It is difficult to pull them off the interstate. Destination Missoula will be continuing marketing campaigns directed specifically to Canadian visitors and concentrating on park-to-park visitors. Destination Missoula will also be working on initiatives such as wayfinding to entice pass-through visitors to stay at least one night. Even though the Canadian dollar is down, Missoula has had a very good response to the campaigns Destination Missoula did in Canada over the last year.



### INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

Although Destination Missoula, through our sales department, will continue to focus efforts on increasing and broadening our group and tour travel, it will definitely be another year of uncertainty in this sector. Given the current political policies and climate, and the unknown impacts, short and long term, of COVID-19 virus, it is unclear at this point how our international travel market will be affected. Working in cooperation with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development and Glacier Country Tourism, Destination Missoula will attend trade shows directly targeting these markets and looking to increase awareness of Missoula in international markets, specifically Canada, China and Western Europe. The United Kingdom remains the single largest destination for global long-travel and the third-largest destination for overall global travel, but our market share has declined considerably since 2015. After declining in 2016, total inbound travel to the U.S. grew by 0.7% in 2017 and 3.5% in 2018. Overseas travel grew by 2.0 percent in 2017 and 2.5% in 2018. Nevertheless, the U.S. continued to lose market share for a third straight year as global travel grew significantly faster. In 2018, the United States welcomed 80 million international visitors. These visitors stay on average 17.5 nights in the United States, visiting 1.4 states and spending approximately \$4,200.

### LACK OF TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE

Although Missoula has many wonderful venues, in order to take the next step in growth, there is a need for infrastructure currently missing in the community. The largest indoor arena is owned by the University of Montana, and although they are willing and accommodating partners, the university's schedule for the arena is paramount. Also, Missoula does not have one facility that can accommodate citywide conferences or conventions. In order to accommodate events of this size, Destination Missoula has to bid them out to a number of venues, which is not ideal to meeting and event planners.

### TIMELINE OF IMPLEMENTATION AND FUNDING FOR WAYFINDING

Although the Missoula Wayfinding project is through the planning stages, the time needed for fundraising a million-dollar project and the staged implementation of the system means a full completion of the system may be many years down the road. Destination Missoula is working with city and county government and leading organizations across the city to implement our Wayfinding system in a well-thought-out phased approach that takes available funding sources and the visitor experience into consideration.

### PARKING

With all of the new projects in downtown Missoula—especially new hotels and restaurants—and new employment opportunities, parking in downtown Missoula continues to be an issue until new parking facilities are built. Limited parking reduces access to the wonderful amenities that can be found in downtown Missoula. Luckily, Mountain Line bus does offer Park and Ride options for large events, providing much-needed access when parking is at its most limited.



### ORGANIZATIONAL FUNDING

With constantly trying to find new and innovative ways to raise private funding, and the lingering uncertainty of bed tax funding, stable funding for Destination Missoula is always an issue and a priority. Destination Missoula, in partnership with other tourism industry organizations, works on a continual basis to educate Missoula and Montana legislators and citizens on the importance of tourism to a healthy state economy and to work towards preserving and enhancing bed tax funding. Destination Missoula also works in partnership with the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District to expand and to create new private revenue sources for Destination Missoula. Destination Missoula was successful in expanding to full participation in TBID in 2019.

### LACK OF COMMUNITY-WIDE STRATEGIC ORGANIZATION

Although Missoula is seeing progress in this realm, due to a lack of communication and a comprehensive event strategic plan, Missoula does not have cohesion and lacks strategic community organization of citywide events. It is difficult to maximize economic opportunities and enhance visitor experiences around events with the lack of cohesion. Destination Missoula is proud to have worked with the Missoula Chamber on a combined Visitor and Relocation guide since 2017 and hope this partnership serves as a model for continued community organization.

In the upcoming year, Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District will begin an RFP process for a Tourism Master Plan for Missoula and the surrounding five valleys. It is the intention of the organizations to initiate research on both Missoula's citizens and visitors to help us better understand the optimal balance between Missoula's community and tourism. From that research and understanding and with community-wide input, Destination Missoula will create a vision and direction for tourism growth and infrastructure into the future, and how Destination Missoula's organizations can guide that plan to fruition.

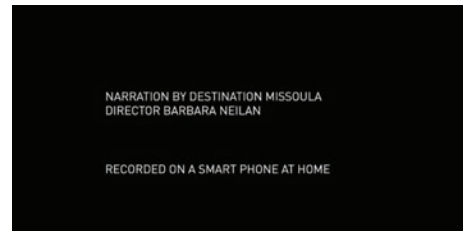
# THREE PHASE TRAVEL

In order to convert a person from someone who may be interested in Missoula to an actual visitor to our destination, Destination Missoula must reach them at all three phases of the decision process—Inspiration, Orientation and Facilitation.

Destination Missoula will be following the state brand by using large iconic imagery and brand font in print and digital advertising, on the website and on social media. These images inspire people to visit Missoula and to see what is so utterly captivating and unique about it. Destination Missoula created the “There’s This Place…” campaign to enhance this concept.

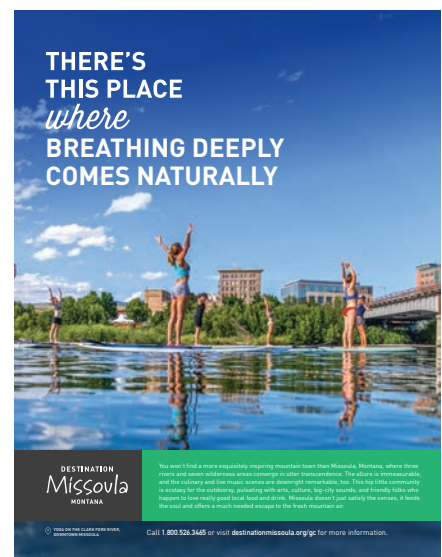
Video is the new language of brand communication, especially in inspiring millennial and Generation Z travelers, and social media has consistently been on the rise as a form of information for visitors. For these reasons, Destination Missoula has focused our efforts on increased video and photography to use in promotional materials and on social media, and 2019 saw the introduction of branded Instagram stories and Pinterest posts, which allowed for increased clicks to destinationmissoula.org from these social media platforms.

## INSPIRATION, ORIENTATION *and* FACILITATION





Destination Missoula will implement a number of tools that will help orient to where Missoula is in the country, region and state. Destination Missoula’s unique official Missoula Area Visitor Guide gives people an overview of our community and what it has to offer, including maps, directions to our visitor centers, numbers to reach our call center, and our website. implemented an itinerary builder on our website. The website is responsive to all devices for ease of use. This gives the visitor the opportunity to plan ahead where they will stay, eat, what attractions and events they want to attend and what loop tours they can take from Missoula to enjoy what this area has to offer. Finally, by using the itinerary builder or taking advantage of easy access to the information they need to book their trip, including the ability to talk to a knowledgeable travel expert on the phone (either through the call center or in one of our VICs), or through the chat function of the website, Destination Missoula will help facilitate the final sale and a successful, memorable trip.



# TARGET MARKETS

## GEOGRAPHIC

The strategy of targeting a particular type of traveler can be enhanced by also targeting a particular geographic area. It is most effective to market to those who are predisposed to come to this area.

Destination Missoula concentrates on more “niche” marketing, particularly direct flight and drive markets. Direct flight markets include Seattle, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Chicago, Denver, Portland, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Atlanta, Dallas and Phoenix. Destination Missoula also directs our outreach to our drive markets, which includes an approximate 200 – 300-mile radius from Missoula: Spokane, Washington; Coeur d’Alene, Sandpoint, Lewiston, Boise, Salmon and Idaho Falls, Idaho; and Yellowstone Park, Bozeman, Butte, Great Falls, Glacier National Park, Kalispell, Montana; and Alberta, Canada.

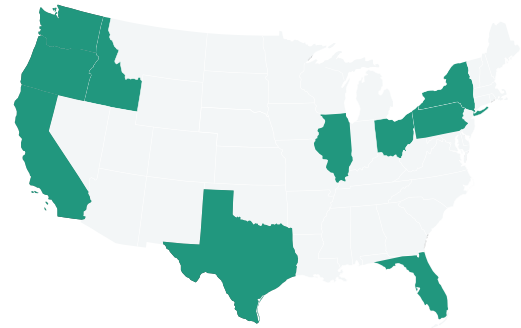
To ensure the most effective use of marketing funds and energies, markets will be pursued in the following order:

- The primary states from which most inquiries come: Texas, California, Washington, Illinois, Florida, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Idaho, Ohio.
- The secondary states from which most inquiries come: Colorado, Georgia, Arizona, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Carolina, Tennessee, Indiana, Iowa.
- The states immediately surrounding Montana and Canada.
- Non-stop flight markets including Seattle, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Chicago, Portland, Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Atlanta, Dallas and Phoenix.
- Residents from other parts of Montana.

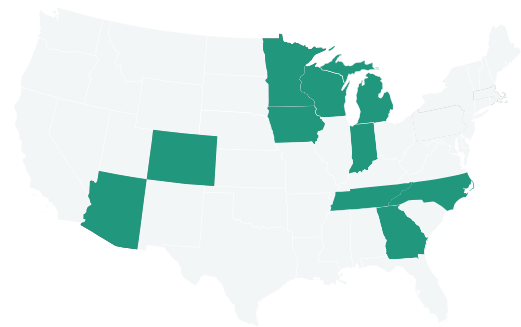
## DEMOGRAPHIC

In addition to the geographic target markets, there are four primary demographic markets Destination Missoula will target with tourism promotion and marketing. Each of these markets represents a strong and growing segment of the tourism marketplace. Destination Missoula will pay particular attention through this marketing plan to niche marketing for small and mid-size market meetings, sporting events, signature events, arts and culture, music and entertainment, food and spirits, leisure and family travel. The average visitor to Missoula is 58 years of age with an income of \$100,000 – \$150,000 and 70% are either traveling alone or as a couple. Groups of 1 – 3 travelers represent 88% of Missoula visitors, and family travel is heaviest during the summer months. The demographic markets are

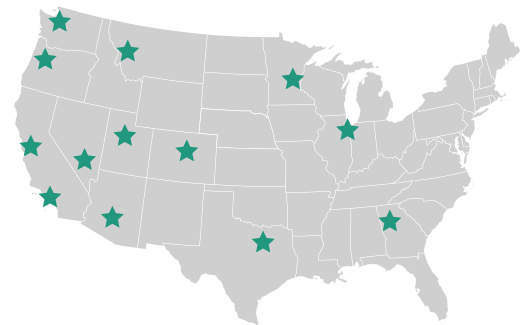
PRIMARY STATES WITH MOST INQUIRES



SECONDARY STATES WITH MOST INQUIRES



NON-STOP FLIGHT MARKETS





described on the following page.

## INDIVIDUAL TRAVELERS

This group includes people traveling alone, adults traveling in small groups, and families. While these travelers may have taken advantage of a travel planner or the internet to facilitate their trip, they do not travel with a group and can be easily accommodated in one or two rooms and at any restaurant. Individual travelers come from all demographics. It is most important for Destination Missoula to concentrate its marketing efforts on the following:

- Active empty-nesters
- Baby boomers
- Business travelers
- Cultural and historical-experience travelers
- Family travel
- Leisure travelers
- Outdoor enthusiasts
- Motorcyclists
- Recreational vehicle travelers
- Women
- Geo-travelers
- Multigenerational travelers
- Culinary and spirits travelers
- LGBTQ travelers
- Adaptive travelers
- Music, concert and festival travelers
- Birders
- Sustainability travelers
- Wellness travelers

## SPORTS TRAVELERS

The North American sports market totaled \$71.1 billion in 2018 and is projected to grow 3.2% annually, reaching \$83.1 billion in 2023. More than 150 million people attended professional sporting events. In 2018, sports travel made up 8% of the total domestic travel market, resulting in 190 million domestic trips to attend or participate in a sporting event. On average, sports travelers spend 3.9 nights in a destination and consists of 3.2 people. Nearly half of sports travelers bring their children, 10% are first-time visitors, and one-quarter of them included a flight on their travels. Domestic travelers attending or participating in a sporting event spent \$41 billion in 2018.

Youth sports has become a very large segment of the sports industry. It is estimated that it generates \$9 billion and is growing by up to 20% annually. The Youth Sports industry provides travel to Missoula from drive markets. Since Missoula is a regional hub for shopping and dining, many families can be inspired to use their youth sports trip to spend time in Missoula. Fort Missoula Regional Park, Glacier Ice Rink and the University of Montana sports facilities are exceptional venues to host youth soccer, baseball and softball, volleyball, football, hockey and more.

During the 2018-19 fiscal year, Missoula saw \$607,769 in economic impact from 3 sporting events that received grant funding from the Missoula TBID Event Grant Fund. In addition, Destination Missoula's sales staff attended 4 sports trade shows and made 168 sport event planner contacts. The sports market segment generated 18 group sports leads, totalling 11,022 potential room nights for the city.

Demographics are as follows:

- Primarily male, 18 – 54 years old, and strong internet users.
- Gender – 68% male, 32% female.
- 84% of all sport event travelers are spectators.
- Sports travelers tend to be affluent, college educated.
- Sports travelers are long-term travelers, travelling long into retirement.
- Willing to travel long distances, spending more time and money at destination.
- 58% of sports travelers will return to destination on family leisure trip.

## GROUP TRAVELERS AND EVENT RECRUITMENT

Group travelers are looking toward small communities to provide the homey atmosphere, which implies safety and personal care. They want a high-touch experience in a high-tech world. To get what they want, they personally spend more in an area than individual travelers, and 43% – 60% of their total package cost stays in the destination's economy. Niche markets that Missoula will be specifically targeting in group travel are motorcoach recruitment, motorcycle rallies, bicycle races and new-event recruitment. During the 2018-19 fiscal year, Missoula saw \$116,312 in economic impact from 3 meetings and specialty events that received grant funding from the Missoula TBID Event Grant Fund. Destination Missoula's sales staff attended 4 meetings and convention trade shows and made 158 meeting planner contacts. In addition, Missoula hosted one meeting planner FAM with four meeting planners from across the country who generate several hundred RFPs annually. The meeting and conventions market segment generated 22 meeting and convention leads, totaling 9,770 potential room nights for the city.





## MEETINGS AND CONVENTIONS

Missoula enjoys the distinction of having urban amenities close to those outdoor opportunities a visitor would expect to find in a resort setting. This combination of attractive features gives Missoula an advantage over strictly urban or strictly resort settings.

Meetings have many of the same needs as group gatherings and produce similar economic benefit to an area. Missoula is very well suited for small to large meetings where ideas are inspired by nature and nurtured by unexpected sophistication, and where hospitality, technology and amenities are top notch. This small town has big offerings delivered by Missoula's service industry, which is second to none in terms of professionalism and warm hospitality. Missoula lets people come together in a world-class meeting place for corporate events, retreats, conferences and conventions. With the addition of new airline service and larger aircraft with additional seats coming into Missoula, the competition naturally decreases prices and Missoula becomes a more competitive flight destination, which will increase Missoula's ability to compete with other markets for large meeting and convention travel.

Destination Missoula's meetings and conventions website, [missoulameetings.com](http://missoulameetings.com), gives meeting planners the ability to research our amenities and services and to submit rfps online. Destination Missoula feels that a targeted print and online campaign is one of the most cost-effective means of reaching our target audience this year. This niche marketing will target industry-specific associations in our drive and direct fly markets, such as Spokane, Seattle, Portland, Minneapolis, Chicago and Dallas. Since Montana as a whole does not have a large presence at the meeting and convention shows, it is hard to make an impact against states and destinations that do have a large presence and offer better pricing. Through a print, online and social media campaign, plus attendance at specific trade shows, Destination Missoula can work with niche markets spreading what is unique about Missoula and the surrounding area that makes it worth the extra expense to hold a meeting here.

During the 2018-19 fiscal year, Missoula saw \$724,081 in economic impact from 6 sporting, meeting and specialty events that received grants from the Missoula TBID Event Grant Program. In addition, Destination Missoula staff attended 11 trade shows and made 793 contacts across all market segments. Overall, Destination Missoula's sales staff generated 60 leads across all market segments, totaling 20,792 potential room nights for Missoula.



# EMERGING MARKETS

The following areas are emerging tourism markets that Destination Missoula feels are a perfect fit for Missoula, and our marketing will be directly tailored to them:

## WELLNESS TRAVEL

The Global Wellness Institute estimates tourism grew into a \$639 billion market in 2017, and that number only stands to rise. World travelers made 830 million wellness trips in 2017, 139 million more than in 2015, according to the Global Wellness Institute. It used to be that food created the buzz that lured travelers to all sorts of destinations. Now, wellness is taking over as travelers seek out healthier, more active vacation. Food is still a draw, of course, but it is even more enticing if it satisfies a wellness craving. The hope is that if wellness travel is marketed in a strategic way, wellness travel can work to prevent overtourism, drawing people away from beyond-crowded cities and into more tranquil, less touristy locales that could use the economic boost. Missoula is a great option for health and wellness travelers because of the sheer number of spas and workout studios in a relatively small area. Spas like Skin Chic Apothecary Aesthetics, Sorella's, and Cedar Creek Spa and Salon provide options for wellness travelers while workout studios like Sobba Cycle, Hype House, Sweat Shop Studio and yoga studios like Inner Harmony Yoga, Hot House Yoga and Bikram Yoga provide space for visitors to workout in the downtown area. Missoula ranked number 1 on SmartAsset's Most Fitness-Friendly Places for 2018, and is ranked two for 2020 with 125 fitness businesses per 10,000 residents.

## MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT

More than 32 million people in the U.S. travel to attend at least one music festival per year. Of those 32 million, 14.7 million are millennials. Missoula's burgeoning music and entertainment scene is the perfect fit for this niche market. With Nationally acclaimed venues such as The Top Hat and The Wilma Theatre, their sound systems, and the addition of two new amphitheaters, and Ogren Park at Allegiance fields Missoula, with its enthusiastic audiences comprised of people as far away as Portland, is going to see the music scene explode over the next few years. Destination Missoula is actively partnering with music venues to market to music writers and media to bring them to Missoula for a full experience. Destination Missoula designed and launched a new music website for Missoula— [missoula.live](http://missoula.live)— to give people a comprehensive view of the music and entertainment experiences that Missoula offers. Destination Missoula also launched a major print and digital music campaign throughout drive and direct flight markets.

Pollstar named Missoula's Logjam Presents as #95 on their list of Top 100 World-Wide Promoters, with The Wilma taking #49 and on their list of Top 100 Clubs. Additionally, the KettleHouse Amphitheater landed #71 in their rankings of the Top 100 Outdoor Amphitheaters.

## FLIGHT MARKETS

Missoula International Airport had another record-setting year in 2019. Missoula is serviced by six airlines and 13 nonstop destinations, which makes it comparable to much larger cities. It is anticipated that in 2020 will be another record breaking year. Bringing American Airlines into the Missoula market created \$14 million in ticket price savings during 2018/2019. As Missoula is constantly looking for opportunities to bring new service into Missoula, it is vitally important that Destination Missoula markets to any new service areas, as well as our existing direct flight markets to make sure our existing flights remain viable and service only continues to expand. With the \$110,000,000 airport expansion, additional gates, increased capacity, and passenger amenities, Missoula will only continue to grow as a destination for travelers.





## CULINARY

We currently see 39 million travelers identify themselves as culinary travelers. Annually, they created a \$201 billion economic impact. On average, they spend \$1,194 per trip with up to 50% spent directly on food and food-related activities. It is currently one of the fastest-growing sectors in tourism worldwide.

They tend to be younger, more affluent and better educated traveler. Millennials, having become the largest traveling demographic in the U.S., list culinary experiences as very important. They feel it is the best way to get to “know the story” of a place. Trends are moving from the most expensive dining experience to the most authentic. The culinary traveler is looking for a unique experience and likes packages based around cooking classes, farmers markets, gourmet food shopping, winery, brewery and distillery tours and festivals. Culinary travelers tend to plan ahead using both print and online media sources. With Missoula’s exciting and varied food scene from fine dining and cafés, to farm-to-table sustainability, food trucks, breweries, wineries and distilleries, culinary tourism is a perfect niche. Destination Missoula advertised twice in Food and Travel Magazine in their Tasteful Towns and Outdoor Getaways feature issues. These placements included a full page ad plus a full page of advertorial to showcase some of the great restaurants in Missoula. There were also social and digital components and Destination Missoula was featured on their homepage for 90 days and featured in their newsletter. The Outdoors Getaways also included the promotion of a 30-second video on their social and web outlets. This unique opportunity gave Missoula’s unique food scene some great exposure, Destination Missoula will be looking for more opportunities to reach travelers in FY21. Food and travel will have a major focus in the digital magazine and those features will be incorporated into Destination Missoula’s social and digital message. Exposure to the food scene will also be a priority when bringing in press writers.

## CANADIAN TRAVEL

In 2018, it was estimated that Canadian visitors made up 10% (1,366,000) of all nonresident travelers to the state. Of those travelers, 45% were primarily “just passing through,” 37% were in Montana for “vacation, recreation, or pleasure,” and 9% were primarily in the state for “shopping.” One of the more striking overall trends in Canadian visitation to Montana is the decrease in not only the number of Canadian residents visiting Montana, but also their reported spending. In 2013, ITRR estimated that 1.6 million Canadians visited Montana, spending an estimated \$306 million in the process. By 2018, estimates for the number of Canadian visitors dropped to 1.34 million, with expenditure estimates being cut almost in half at roughly \$155 million. The most visited region was Glacier Country with 71% of respondents having been there on a previous visit. When asked what would increase their likelihood to return to Montana, visitors said more information on new and different things to do, a wider range of retail shopping opportunities, increased opportunities to experience local cuisine and more opportunities to experience cultural heritage. Missoula has the ability to provide all of these experiences for Canadian travelers. Destination Missoula will continue to market to Canada for regional drive events and contests and continues to see success attending the Calgary Outdoor Adventure and Travel Show annually.

## LGBTQ+

LGBTQ+ travel is a \$211 billion industry in the U.S. These travelers average seven trips annually, four leisure and three business. Their average age is 48 with a household income of \$50,000 and up. They prefer mid-range hotels that understand their needs, and they tend to return to areas they feel do the best job of outreach and are safe and relaxing. LGBTQ+ travelers look for culture, arts, food and wine, rest and relaxation, and nature is important to women. Of the 17 top cities they tend to visit, Missoula has direct flights into nine, and given the current political climate, Missoula's open and welcoming environment and status as a cultural hub make it a safe place for LGBTQ+ people to visit. The Missoula Art Museum's rainbow crosswalk across Pine street serves as a symbol of Missoula's diversity and openness to various identities.



## YOUTH SPORTS – SPORTS AND EVENTS

The youth sports travel sector is now a \$17 billion travel industry. The youth sports industry in the U.S. has ballooned to a \$15.3 billion business. There has been more than 55% growth since 2010. It is estimated that more than 48.9 million kids between the ages of 5 and 18 currently play at least one organized sport each year in the U.S. and 21 million are involved in non-school youth sports. The average youth athlete plays 2.5 sports. Youth sports also generate family and multigenerational travel. 41% of children with a household income of \$100,000 or more participate in team sports and 19% of children with household incomes of \$25,000 or less participate. American families spent an average of \$3,167 per player/per sport on the road for what are now being called "tournicitions." Missoula continues to see success in our Youth Sports Events market thanks to partners like the Montana High School Association, Missoula Youth Hockey Association and Fort Missoula Regional Park.

## MOTORCYCLE

Motorcycle travel is one of the fastest growing segments in tourism. It is a \$34 billion industry with over 11 million riders. The demographic trend has been older and more affluent as more baby boomer professionals become interested in motorcycle travel. The average HHI is \$85,000+ with 84% having attended college and 16% with postgraduate degrees. However, now you are starting to see more millennial riders. Women are becoming the fastest growing segment. Gen X women are three times more likely to own and regularly ride their bikes, and women motorcycle tour businesses are starting to thrive. An average trip lasts 10– 14 days, spending \$3,100 per trip. They also love to attend related events averaging three events per year spending an average of \$400 per weekend event attended.

A 2019 study released by the Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research, states that in 2018 393,800 nonresident motorcyclists visited the state. They spent approximately \$110/day and stayed an average of 2.45 nights. Total spending in quarters 2 and 3 of 2018 by nonresident motorcyclists was \$80,030,000. Ten percent of all visitors enter Montana on motorcycles and 4% spend one or more nights in Missoula.

Missoula is on a major route for riders coming from the West Coast and those wanting to see Glacier National Park. Destination Missoula will be doing specific niche marketing and website itineraries to market to these riders. More specifically, Missoula will be targeting women motorcycle riders. Destination Missoula is also seeing more interest from international tour operators in motorcycle itineraries for their clients and will create specific itineraries scoped to this market.

## INTERNATIONAL

After declining in 2016, total inbound travel to the U.S. grew by 0.7% in 2017 and 3.5% in 2018. Overseas travel grew by 2.0% in 2017 and 2.5% in 2018. Nevertheless, the U.S. continued to lose market share for a third straight year as global travel grew significantly faster. The United States remains the single largest destination for global long-haul travel and the third-largest destination for overall global travel, but our market share has declined considerably since 2015 - down 6.4% and 13.7% respectively. Each overseas traveler spends approximately \$4,200 and stays on average 18 nights. Approximately 80 million international travelers arrived in the U.S. in 2018. The top international markets were Canada (20.2 million); Mexico (17.8 million); United Kingdom (4.5 million); Japan (3.6 million); China (3.2 million); South Korea (2.3 million); Germany (2.1 million); Brazil (1.9 million); France (1.7 million) and Australia (1.3 million), and the top leisure travel activities for overseas visitors are shopping, sightseeing, fine dining, national parks/monuments, and amusement/theme parks. At the time of writing this Marketing Plan, political factors and impacts of COVID-19 make it almost impossible to forecast the impact for international travel this year.



### UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA FAMILY AND RECRUITS

The University of Montana is located in Missoula. The university is comprised of students from all over the state, region and country, meaning prospective students and their families will visit Missoula when touring campus. During this time, students will have the opportunity to fall in love with Missoula as a place to live as well as attend school. Once accepted, student families will continue to visit Missoula for events, sports, graduation and general visits. This is a huge benefit to Missoula as it allows a constant influx of visitors. What is more, once these students graduate, many might choose to live in Missoula. Those who do relocate will come back to their old college stomping grounds for decades to come. Destination Missoula is working with the University of Montana to help recruiting efforts by promoting Missoula as a place of great diversity of ideas, as a cultural haven in Montana and in the region, and as a welcoming and safe community for locals and visitors alike.

### SUSTAINABILITY

These travelers tend to be highly educated, mature, affluent, well-traveled, environmentally aware and sensitive to the social and cultural traditions, systems and mores of the destination they visit. They are similar to, and in many cases crossover with, the culinary traveler. Missoula is proud of the many sustainable initiatives that show our commitment to living our values. For example, Logjam Presents has implemented a Zero Waste policy at their venues with compostable cups, plates and cutlery and recycle cans with readily available bins. Mountain Line has introduced six zero-emissions electric buses to their fleet in the summer of 2019.

The Big Sky Documentary Film Festival is striving to be a Zero-Waste event by providing recycling and composting stations at all of their venues, limiting food vendors to those who provide recyclable and compostable silverware, promoting reuse by distributing reusable cups to guests and making the festival walking-friendly. The River City Roots Festival has taken on a similar goal by also providing compost and recycle stations, limiting food vendors, providing reusable cups in the place of single-use plastics and housing the events in a walkable zone. Both the City of Missoula and Missoula County have also recently committed an initiative for 100% clean electricity by 2030.

Logjam Presents began using compostable materials at all their concert venues in 2018, including cups, utensils and plates at KettleHouse Amphitheater and at the Wilma and Top Hat. Additionally, composting bins for food scraps can also be found, and recycling is prioritized at these venues.

## BIRDING

It is estimated that approximately 45 million people in the U.S. are bird-watchers. According to an analysis done by The American Birding Expo, birders in the U.S. spend approximately \$14.8 billion on travel-related expenses, and the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service states that the higher the income and education level, the more likely a person is to be a birder. According to a 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife Associated Recreation produced by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, birders contribute more than \$75 billion to the U.S. economy. A 2011 survey showed that bird-watchers spend nearly \$41 billion annually on trips and equipment and that local economies benefit from the \$14.9 billion bird-watchers spend on food, lodging and transportation. U.S. bird-watchers are usually highly educated, affluent, slightly more women (56%), usually travel solo or with a partner, but not large groups, and, although made up of all age groups, middle-aged and elderly people represent the largest group (40 – 70). They usually will spend 13 –14 days birding away from home.

Situated along pristine rivers offering exceptional riparian zones, Missoula and the Bitterroot Valley are brimming with numerous habitats and a wide variety of bird species. Both areas are havens for bird-watchers. Three of the best known spots in the area are Kelly Island, a 650-acre conservation area comprised of six islands at the confluence of the Bitterroot and Clark Fork rivers; Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge, a 2,700-acre refuge with more than 225 identified species; and the 1,200-acre Teller Wildlife Refuge. Destination Missoula is going to advertise in the July/August issue of Bird Watcher's Digest where they will be featuring Montana in the print and digital section.

## HISTORY AND CULTURE

Missoula proudly lives our history. Evidence of the prehistoric ice age floods and Glacial Lake Missoula are still etched on the mountains surrounding Missoula. The indigenous peoples of the Missoula Valley were members of the Salish Tribes. Over the centuries, Salish, Kootenai, Pend d'Oreille, Nez Perce, Gros Ventre and the Blackfoot Tribes used the Missoula Valley as a travel route to the eastern plains and buffalo. They called the area "Nemissoolatakoo," from which "Missoula" is derived. The word translates roughly to "river of ambush/surprise," a reflection of the inter-tribal fighting common to the area. Their first encounter with non-natives came in 1805, when the Lewis and Clark expedition passed through the Missoula Valley. Missoula and the surrounding five valleys' rich history comes alive in places like Travelers' Rest State Park and the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula. Missoula is full of ways to become immersed in the history and culture - from historic downtown tours, river walks and tours of the Missoula Smokejumper's Center to walking portions of the Lewis and Clark trail, enjoying traditional pow wows and sharing meals from the many diverse cultures that have since made this special place home. Currently, the Downtown Missoula Partnership, has partnered with Historical Research Associates, the city's Historic Preservation Commission and the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula to produce a vision for a comprehensive heritage program in downtown Missoula, including both banks of the Clark Fork River. There are few, if any, communities the size of Missoula that have developed a defined heritage interpretive plan, and it could act as a prototype for other Montana towns to use. The Montana Natural History Center serves as a fantastic spot to learn about the biodiversity of Western Montana, including full-scale replicas and mounts of local animals like bears, mountain lions and ungulate species. Visitors can learn about the history, legacy and modern traditions of the American Indian tribes who call this area their ancestral home at places like the Payne Family Native American Center, which is the site of a historic Salish Indian encampment, the Native American Studies building on the University of Montana campus and the People's Center north of town.



Charming College Towns  
with Off-Campus Appeal

*Afar.com, August 2019*

## supporting research

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Research on each of the existing and emerging markets for Missoula is available from the following sources:

- Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development – General Travel Statistics
- STR Reports – Missoula-Specific Hotel Statistics and competitive market analysis
- U.S. Travel Association – U.S. Travel Answer Sheet – <https://www.ustravel.org/answersheet>
- Destination Analysts - America's Tourism Challenge - The Trump Slump Update - <http://www.destinationanalysts.com/americas-tourism-challenge-the-trump-slump-update/>
- Destination Analysts - Welcome to 2019: The American Traveler Sentiment Weakens - <http://www.destinationanalysts.com/welcome-to-2019-american-traveler-sentiment-weakens/>
- Canadian Government Travel Statistics – <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/start-debut-eng.html>
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Office of Travel & Tourism Industries – Canadian Travel Statistics – [http://travel.trade.gov/outreachpages/inbound.general\\_information.inbound\\_overview.html](http://travel.trade.gov/outreachpages/inbound.general_information.inbound_overview.html)
- Institute of Tourism and Recreation Research – <http://www.itrr.umt.edu/nonres/2018DomCanInterExpend.pdf>
- University of Minnesota Tourism Research Reports – Sustainable Tourism – <http://www.tourism.umn.edu/ResearchReports/MarketSegments/Sustainable>
- Hoteliers – Hotel, Travel & Hospitality News – Report: More Affluent Travelers, More Women Setting Travel Trends – <http://www.4hoteliers.com/features/article/8196>
- GutsyTraveler.com – Women Travel Statistics – 80% of All Travel Decisions Made by Women – <http://gutsytraveler.com/women-travel-statistics>
- National Association of Sports Commissions – 2017 Sports Tourism: A State of the Industry Report – [www.sportscommissions.org](http://www.sportscommissions.org)
- Sports Tourism: Sleeping Giant of the Tourism Market, Lavonne Wittmann
- Forbes.com - Youth Sports Tourism Keeps Booming, But How Deep Do Its Dollars Go In Communities – <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bobcook/2017/08/25/youth-sports-tourism-keeps-booming-but-how-deep-do-its-dollars-go-in-communities/#5e2a2d3755d4>
- Skift.com - The New Era of Food Tourism Trends and Best Practices for Stakeholders – [research.skift.com/reports/the-new-era-of-food-tourism-trends-and-best-practices-for-stakeholders/](http://research.skift.com/reports/the-new-era-of-food-tourism-trends-and-best-practices-for-stakeholders/)
- U.S. Travel – Comprehensive Culinary Travel Survey Provides Insights on Food and Wine Travelers – <http://www.ustravel.org/news/press-releases/comprehensive-culinary-travel-survey-provides-insightsfood-and-wine-travelers>
- Skift – Megatrends Defining Travel in 2019, Yearbook/Issue:01
- About Tourism – Destination Marketing and the “FOOD” Element: A Market Overview – <https://abouttourism.wordpress.com/tag/culinary-tourism>
- Kaplan University – Mapping the Study of Motorcycle Tourism – [www.kaplanuniversity.edu](http://www.kaplanuniversity.edu)
- Motorcycle Tourism – Motorcyclists the PURE Tourist – <http://www.slideshare.net/alig8r/motorcycle-tourism>
- ITRR - Motorcycle Touring in Montana: A Market Analysis
- USA Today – Women Help Rev Up Motorcycle Industry – <https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/business/2017/09/01/women-help-rev-up-motorcycle-industry/573631001/>
- CMI Community Marketing & Insights – 23rd Annual LGBT Tourism and Hospitality Survey <http://www.communitymarketinginc.com>
- Travel Weekly – Music Tourism Has Potential, But Industry Must Pick Up The Tempo – <http://www.travelweekly.com/north-America-Travel/Music-tourism-has-potential-but-industry-must-pick-up-the-tempo>



## GOALS

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- Increase the demand in Missoula for hotel rooms, attraction visits, concert and festival attendees, package tours, retail sales, restaurant receipts, local transportation and other events and activities that positively affect the economic impact of the local tourism industry.
- Boost the demand for and usage of venues in Missoula for groups and special events that, in turn, draw attendees to stay overnight in Missoula hotels.
- Via the Missoula Sports Committee and direct sales efforts, recruit, grow and retain sports events in the Missoula area and continue to expand visibility of Missoula as a premier athletic destination, especially in the youth sports market.
- Gain national and international media exposure for Missoula's diverse attractions, natural environment, rich history and unique personality to further educate and facilitate understanding of the Missoula product.
- Support and contribute to the enrichment of Missoula's multicultural, performing and visual arts, historic, recreation, education, sports, business and entertainment communities.
- Welcome all visitors, regardless of age, sex, sexual orientation, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, veteran status or disability.
- Through strong community outreach and with recognized expertise in the tourism industry, actively participate in and contribute to the overall strategic planning for the growth and sustainability of the tourism industry in Missoula.
- To educate and bring awareness to the community of the importance of tourism to Missoula's economic health and the preservation of its residents' lifestyle.
- Actively seek cooperative community partners to assist Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District in meeting the above goals.

# CONSUMER ADVERTISING

Destination Missoula will use various mediums to promote Missoula as a premiere and unique travel destination, reaching diverse geographic and demographic markets with the goal of acquiring new and repeat visitors, as well as increasing their length of stay and brand awareness.

**THERE'S THIS PLACE**  
*where*  
**EXPLORATION NEVER TASTED SO GOOD**

DESTINATION **Missoula** MONTANA

You won't find a more exquisitely inspiring mountain town than Missoula, Montana, where three rivers and seven wilderness areas converge in utter transcendence. The allure is immeasurable, and the culinary scene is downright remarkable, too. This hip little community is ecstasy for the outdoorsy, and pulsates with arts, culture, an incredible live music scene with big-city sounds, and friendly folks who happen to love really good local food and drink. Missoula doesn't just feed the soul, it satisfies the senses.

WATERBURY HILL

Call 1.800.526.3465 or visit [destinationmissoula.org/ft](http://destinationmissoula.org/ft) for more information.

**THERE'S THIS PLACE**  
*where*  
**ADVENTURE FINDS YOU**

DESTINATION **Missoula**

START PLANNING YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE

DESTINATION **Missoula**

START PLANNING YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE →

**THERE'S THIS PLACE**  
*where*  
**ADVENTURE FINDS YOU**

DESTINATION **Missoula**

START PLANNING YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE →

**THERE'S THIS PLACE**  
*where*  
**BREATHING DEEP COMES NATURALLY**

DESTINATION **Missoula** MONTANA

You won't find a more exquisitely inspiring mountain town than Missoula, Montana, where three rivers and seven wilderness areas converge in utter transcendence. The allure is immeasurable, and the culinary and live music scenes are downright remarkable, too. This hip little community is ecstasy for the outdoorsy, pulsating with arts, culture, big-city sounds, and friendly folks who happen to love really good local food and drink. Missoula doesn't just satisfy the senses, it feeds the soul and offers a much needed escape to the fresh mountain air.

Call 1.800.526.3465 or visit [destinationmissoula.org/yj](http://destinationmissoula.org/yj) for more information.

YOGA ON THE CLARK FORK RIVER, DOWNTOWN MISSOULA.

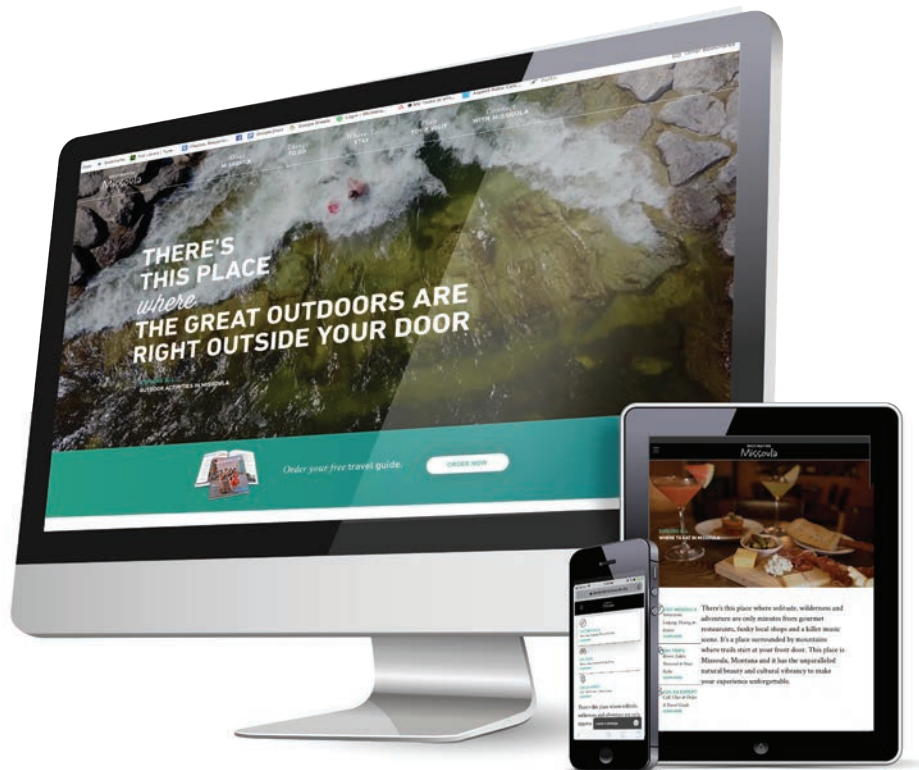


## PRINT AND DIGITAL ADS

Destination Missoula will place print advertising in a variety of publications and will place online digital ads targeting diverse geographic and demographic markets showing what is unique about the Missoula area with an emphasis on off-peak and shoulder seasons. Print ads will be measured through unique URL and call center responses. Destination Missoula's overall target is to acquire 5% inquiry growth over prior-year total inquiries (236,997) and web visitation numbers (1,166,256) via print and digital media placements. Individual digital display ads will aim to perform above a .30% CTR. National average is closer to .08% CTR.

## WEBSITE MARKETING, OPTIMIZATION, DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

Destination Missoula completed a redesign of destinationmissoula.org for FY19. The site is a completely responsive, state-of-the-art website featuring itinerary builders, large photos and integrated social media, including blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest. Destination Missoula has continued to grow visitation to the site each year by adding fresh content, videos and photos to inspire travelers. In FY18, Destination Missoula created missoula.live to promote the music scene in Missoula, including information on upcoming events, venues, music education and music shops, which has been and will continue to server as a huge asset for marketing Missoula as a premier music destination in the Rocky Mountain West. Destination Missoula will continue to leverage the latest digital audience tools and products. Success will be measured for the websites by visitor and page views; SEM – keyword directed visitors to the website; SEO – visitors, search visitors, non-traditional web visitors, organic placement on Google and other search engines. Destination Missoula will grow the number of visitors to the search via search engines and other non-display ad digital media marketing by 8% over prior year. (FY19 1,166,256 unique visits).



### OPPORTUNITY

Destination Missoula will set aside funds to participate in marketing opportunities that come up throughout the year that were not available at the time this marketing plan was written. Success measures will vary depending on the segment of the projects participated in.

### JOINT VENTURES

Destination Missoula will set aside funds to continue participation in joint venture opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development and Glacier Country Tourism and seek out opportunities with other CVBs/regions that come up throughout the year. Success measures will vary depending on the segment of the project participated in.

### TRAVEL GUIDE ONLINE

The online travel guide provides us with an opportunity to reach international travelers, last-minute travelers and digital-friendly travelers, with an expanded amount of travel information at a much lower cost than the printed, mailed version of the travel guide. The online version can be viewed online or downloaded as a PDF and printed or viewed on a mobile device. Destination Missoula will continue to provide updates

of the online guide and maintain the latest technologies for readers. Destination Missoula will also offer video and website jumps to the digital layout. Destination Missoula’s goal is to grow visibility and usage of the print edition guide with the digital-friendly version by 7% over prior year. (FY19 - 59,597 views) FY19 Growth was 12% over prior year.

### DAILY UPDATES

We know that fresh content is key to providing organic SEO for destinationmissoula.org. Destination Missoula will stay on top of this by providing weekly updates to events, attractions and all other trip-planning resources as needed. Destination Missoula will also make frequent social posts to ensure that Missoula is top of mind with followers on all social channels. Destination Missoula’s overall goal is visitor growth to the website and related digital resources. This strategy ties into our website marketing, optimization and maintenance and has the same 8% growth target via search and SEO strategies. (FY19 609,742 visits) FY19 Growth was 8.2% over prior year.

### SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Destination Missoula will aggressively optimize and modify website source code meta tags to ensure best possible placement on major search engines and to promote organic SEO. Destination Missoula’s overall goal is visitor growth to the website and related digital resources. Success will be measured for the websites by visitor and page views; SEO – visitors, search visitors, non-traditional web visitors, organic placement on Google and other search engines. This strategy ties into our website marketing, optimization and maintenance, and has the same 8% growth target via search and SEO strategies. (FY19 609,742 visits)



## SEARCH ENGINE MARKETING

Keywords will be purchased in Google to promote destinationmissoula.org as an online tourism resource for Montana. Destination Missoula will also pursue content marketing, SEO-friendly opportunities with major marketing partners such as Madden Media, Matador, TripAdvisor and others. Destination Missoula's overall goal is visitor growth to the website and related digital resources. Success will be measured for the websites by visitor and page views; SEM – keyword-directed visitors to the website; SEO – visitors, search visitors, non-traditional web visitors, organic placement on Google and other search engines. This strategy ties into our website marketing, optimization and maintenance and has the same 8% growth target via search and SEO strategies. (See attached Appendix A for complete keyword list.) FY18 had already reached 58% growth over prior year. Destination Missoula's goal was to see a 20% growth in FY19 for organic search results. FY19 we reached 21% growth with 78,896 visits.

Success will be measured for the websites by visitor and page views; SEM—keyword-directed visitors to the website; SEO—visitors, search visitors, non-traditional web visitors, organic placement on Google and other search engines. Destination Missoula would expect to see a 7% growth in website visitation (FY19 - 1,166,256 unique visits)

## PHOTO AND VIDEO LIBRARY

Missoula will continue to develop and maintain its photo and video library used for all media. The goal with photography is to tell the story about the uniqueness of Missoula and the surrounding area with imagery that authentically speaks to the nature of this exceptional place. The photography used will draw visitors in by showcasing the natural beauty and the abundance of recreational opportunities, arts and culture, and food and drink options you would expect to find in a much larger city. Destination Missoula will purchase high-quality, all-season photographs and videos and will encourage non-professional photographers to submit their favorite area photo for potential use by Destination Missoula in marketing Missoula. Success will be measured by an addition of at least 25 new high quality photographs and one video to the library, and the ability of DM staff to easily catalogue and work with said photo/video. New and updated photos being used on the website will help to bolster the goal of 8% growth in searches.



### ELECTRONIC ADS/EBLASTS

Four targeted seasonal electronic email campaigns will remind previous website visitors to visit Missoula and to revisit the website for new content on the latest activities and attractions. Email mini-eblasts will focus on major events and happenings in Missoula to our loyal marketing database of contacts. Success will be measured through open rates, click through rates, and bounce rates. In FY19 the open rate was 21.6%. Destination Missoula’s goal is a 15% open rate overall on the four email blasts and adding an additional 10,000 recipients to the email marketing list. Destination Missoula will focus on growing our overall open rate by 2% and the click-through rate from the email messaging by 5% during the marketing year.

### PLANNING CONTENT

Destinationmissoula.org will continue to receive additional content pages targeted on search trends that are monitored online, frequently asked questions of the call center staff, and topics that will assist with tourism partnerships and opportunities as they arise. Destination Missoula has monthly blog series, including INSPIRE Missoula, a series where prominent, inspirational members or groups in the community are interviewed about what makes this place so special. Additionally, content for the destinationmissoula.org blog is updated on a weekly basis, keeping content relevant, fresh and pertinent. Another monthly series is the “Your Monthly Guide to Missoula” posts, which highlight big events and recurring events each month in town. Lastly, Destination Missoula is creating a digital magazine to take advantage of the growing e-mag trend and to continue to deliver content in the most sophisticated and technological way. The e-mag will feature a story-telling model that integrates video, mapping, photography and the written word in an interactive, eye-catching and inspiring way. The e-mag will focus on locals: the people who make Missoula what it is and who contribute their ideas, their life’s work, their passion, their creativity and their weirdness to this amazing place. This is an exciting opportunity to tell Missoula’s story in an honest, thought-provoking way and, in turn, increase interest in Missoula.

### PUBLICITY

Destination Missoula will use the latest social media in combination with traditional media to increase brand exposure with proactive strategic messaging.

The screenshot shows the Destination Missoula website layout. At the top is the navigation menu with links for 'ABOUT MISSOULA', 'THINGS TO DO', 'WHERE TO STAY', and 'PLAN YOUR VISIT'. Below the navigation is a hero section with a sunset background, the text '#MOREMISSOULATHANEVER', and a 'WATCH THE VIDEO' button. The middle section features two article cards: 'Responsible Ways You Can Still Enjoy Missoula While Social Distancing' (under 'THINGS TO DO') and 'The History Behind Missoula's Iconic Lock Bridge' (under 'ABOUT MISSOULA'). Below these is an 'Upcoming Events' section with two event cards: 'International Wildlife Film Festival - Virtual' on April 18 and 'Tom Catmull & Travis Yost...& The Electric Cactus - Virtual' on April 23. A 'VIEW ALL EVENTS' link is provided. Further down is a yellow banner for 'SOUTHGATE MALL' with the slogan 'EAT. SHOP. PLAY.' and a 'TAX-FREE SHOPPING' offer. Below that is a 'Thrillist' article snippet about Missoula as a beer destination. The footer contains service links: 'VISIT MISSOULA' (Attractions, Lodging, Dining & Events), 'DAY TRIPS' (Rivers, Lakes, National & State Parks), and 'ASK AN EXPERT' (Call, Chat, or Order A Travel Guide). The address '101 East Main Missoula, MT 59802' and social media icons are also present.

# METHODS

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## FAMS

Destination Missoula will arrange a minimum of one (1) FAM trip highlighting arts and culture, recreational opportunities and food and beverage. The trip will be designed to draw attention to what is truly unique about Missoula, specifically during off-peak and shoulder seasons. This trip may be arranged independently or in partnership with Glacier Country Tourism and/ or the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development other tourism organizations, local organizations and/or private businesses. Success will be measured through participation rate and amount of resulting earned media.

## PRESS PROMOTIONS

Destination Missoula and the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District have contracted and partnered with Windfall for public relations services. These services include production of a media/press kit to include interchangeable information on sports, group travel, events and conference planning, press releases and story pitches to appropriate publications in drive and direct flight markets. These storylines are directed to appropriate writers and publications to bolster paid media endeavors and meet the goal of driving shoulder season business. Destination Missoula will produce press boxes that will be sent directly to niche influencers who Destination Missoula wants to attract. These boxes serve as a unique and fun introduction to Missoula and the PR team. Destination Missoula is partnering with the music venues in Missoula to help promote the emerging live-music scene, including summer concert giveaways. Destination Missoula will arrange and execute a press trip with music-focused travel writers to help get the word out about music in Missoula and to entice music lovers to travel to Missoula to experience it for themselves. Success will be measured by participation rate and amount of earned media. Destination Missoula will also work in partnership with the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, Glacier Country Tourism and other industry partners to directly promote Montana and Missoula to media partners throughout the Northwest. Last year, Destination Missoula partnered with Glacier Country Tourism on a press tour to Dallas to promote the new American Airlines direct flight into Missoula. This event was highly successful and well attended garnering continuing interest in the Missoula area from writers. Destination Missoula is looking forward to additional partnership opportunities with Montana regions and CVBs. Destination Missoula's digital influencer recruitment strategy will be boosted by the use of Meltwater for prospecting, social media planning and earned media tracking. Success will be measured by participation rate and amount of earned media.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Destination Missoula will continue to create a social media marketing strategy with a unified voice and message across all social media platforms. Success will be measured by social media engagement, including followers, likes, shares and web visitation from social media. In FY20, Destination Missoula saw steady growth in Facebook likes. Destination Missoula currently has 59,993 followers, but is a little off pace to meet the goal of 72,000 followers. In addition, Destination Missoula saw growth in Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest followers. The FY20 goal for Instagram was 15,000 followers which was a little more than a 30% increase. We exceeded that goal and we have 15,500 followers currently. We are on pace to meet our 10% increase goal for 7,000 Twitter followers (6,840 currently) and Pinterest is 1,200 followers (a 20% increase from the current 1000 followers). Destination Missoula's goal for FY21 is 72,000 Facebook Likes (20% increase), 17,325 Instagram followers (15% increase), 7,700 Twitter followers (10% increase) and 1,380 Pinterest followers (15% increase).

## LIVE CHAT

The LiveChat feature on the Destination Missoula website allows for quick, easy, personalized access to information through the use of online chatting. Visitors can easily reach a Missoula representative online and ask questions. This appeals to the visitor who is not likely to make a phone call or might feel that their question is not large enough to warrant a call. There were 8,109 live chat conversations in FY19.

## » METHODS

### GROUP MARKETING

Destination Missoula will use traditional media, social media and direct sales to stimulate interest in Missoula as a group travel destination.

### ELECTRONIC ADS/EBLASTS

Destination Missoula will send out two meeting and one sports e-blast to targeted meeting planners and sports and event planners reminding them why Missoula is a unique destination for meetings and events.

- Two meeting blasts will have a goal of 12% open rates.
- One sports blast will have a goal of 12% open rate.

### IN-STATE CAMPAIGN

Destination Missoula and the Missoula TBID will create a 30-second video spot to highlight what is truly unique about Missoula as a meeting destination and, in particular, a sporting event destination. Destination Missoula will promote the new venues and the enjoyable opportunities available outside of scheduled event times.

### FAMS

Destination Missoula will arrange a minimum of one FAM trip specifically targeting meeting planners. The trip will be designed to highlight what is truly unique about Missoula as a meeting destination specifically during off peak and shoulder seasons. This trip may be arranged independently or in partnership with Glacier Country Tourism and/or the Montana Office of Tourism, other tourism organizations, local organizations and/or private businesses. Success will be measured through participation rate, amount of resulting earned media and bookings.

### ONLINE DIGITAL ADS

Destination Missoula will place online digital ads targeting diverse geographic and demographic group travel markets showing what is unique about the Missoula area with an emphasis on off-peak and shoulder seasons. For this niche group the goal is to perform above .15% CTR. National average is about .08% CTR. Overall this will help us achieve 10% overall group meeting website traffic to prior year. In FY19 the website received 288,003 clicks to website driven by our online digital advertising campaigns. This was over 100,000 more clicks than in FY18.

### PRINT ADS

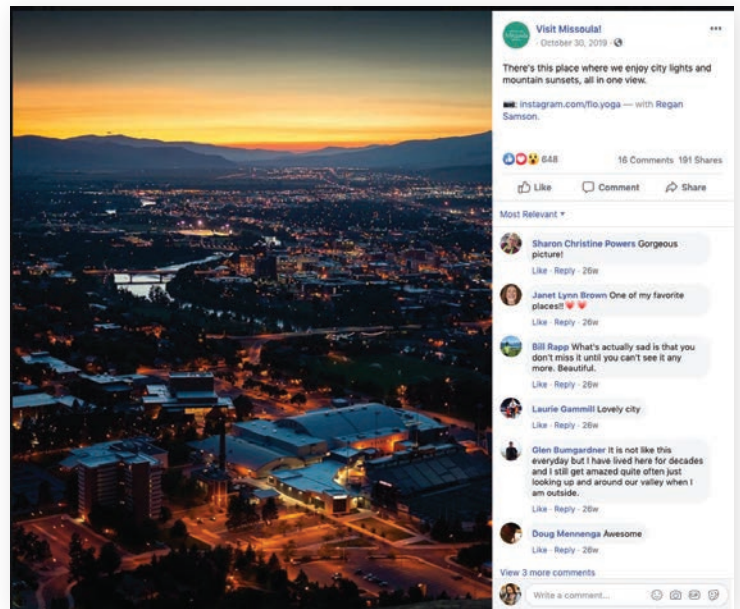
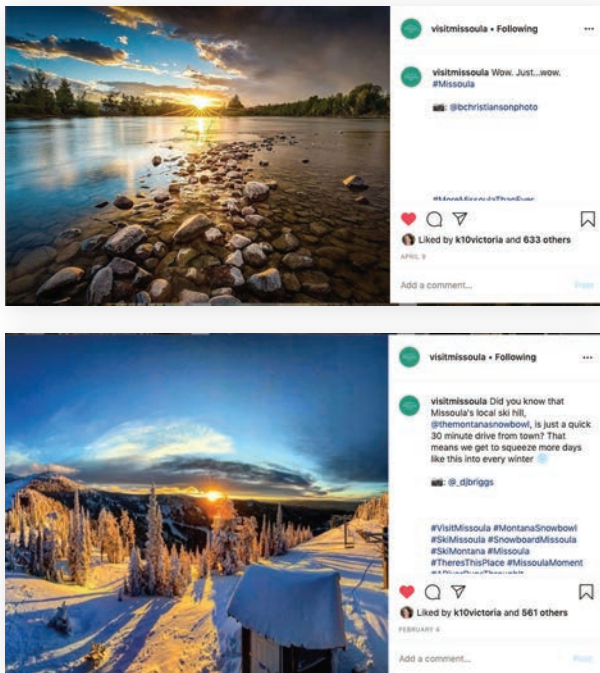
Destination Missoula will place print advertising in a variety of publications targeting diverse geographic and demographic group travel markets, meeting planners and event coordinators showing what is unique about the Missoula area with an emphasis on warm season and off-peak and shoulder seasons. Destination Missoula's overall goal is a 3% inquiry growth over prior year total inquiries (236,997) and web visitation numbers (1,166,256) via print and digital media placements. Individual digital display ads will aim to perform above a .20% CTR. National average is closer to .08% CTR. Unique URLs used in the ads will help contribute to the 10% growth, as well as a goal of direct inquiries to Group Marketing staff position.

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Destination Missoula will continue to create a social media marketing strategy with a unified voice and message across all social media platforms, which can be used to specifically target group travelers, meeting and event planners. Success will be measured by social media engagement, including followers, likes, shares and web visitation from social media. Destination Missoula released a Snapchat geofilter. When Snapchat users are in the area, the Missoula-specific geofilter becomes available. Destination Missoula's goal for FY20 is 70,000 Facebook likes (20% increase), 15,000 Instagram followers (15% increase), 7,000 Twitter followers (10% increase) and 1,200 Pinterest followers (15% increase).

### TRADE SHOWS

Destination Missoula, in partnership with the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District, will attend a variety of meeting and convention, sports and event, and tour and group travel shows to increase exposure of Missoula as a group travel destination. Success will be measured through the number of qualified leads and RFPs resulting from attendance at said trade shows.



### GROUP MARKETING SUPPORT/PERSONNEL

Provide sales support through research, maintaining and enhancing Destination Missoula’s trade show booth as necessary and production of sales materials.

Increase sales staff industry knowledge through attendance at key industry conferences, such as National Association of Sports Commissions and Destinations International continuing education.

Collaborate with the Destination Missoula Sports Commission in spreading awareness of Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District grant funding for new and existing events and application assistance.

Work to create or support new events in the Missoula area.

Success will be measured by an increased brand awareness in the group market, an increase in the number of meetings and events held in Missoula annually, the number of new leads produced from direct sales, campaigns and show attendance and the number of grants applied for and the economic impact of the resulting events on the community.

### MARKETING SUPPORT

Destination Missoula will create and provide essential tools and facilities in order to maximize marketing opportunities and partnerships. Destination Missoula will also stay abreast of industry trends and regulations and focus on increasing destination conversion.

### MEET ME IN MISSOULA

Twice annually during shoulder seasons, Destination Missoula hosts the Meet Me In Missoula Weekend Giveaway. Paid ads are strategically placed in drive markets, as well as paid online promotions on social media to gather leads and garner interest in Missoula as an all-season vacation destination. This also serves as a great opportunity to boast some of the special events, annual events and highlights of our town in the hopes that they will have Missoula on the forefront of their minds when they begin planning their next getaway.



### SUMMER CONCERT GIVEAWAY SERIES

Each summer, Destination Missoula partners with Logjam Presents and Big Sky Brewing to host a series of summer concert ticket giveaways. Along with hotel partners, people can score tickets to popular headlining shows, including sold old concerts. This giveaway is an excellent opportunity to promote Missoula's impressive summer concert scene as well as market to strategic drive locations and increase leads.

### ADMINISTRATION

Funding for operations, key personnel and services is necessary in order to provide the best experience for visitors to the Missoula community, and highly trained staff that is knowledgeable on industry trends and how to implement them to the advantage of the Missoula market. Success will be measured through visitor center contacts, materials distributed, attendance at educational conferences, annual reviews and evaluations.

### DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

Staff attendance at Destinations International's niche and annual conferences will keep staff abreast of industry trends and how to incorporate them in our market. Success is measured by increased knowledge, efficiency and creativity of the staff and their ability to pass that on to the community and visitors.

### FULFILLMENT/TELEMARKETING

Destination Missoula will provide the following services through our fulfillment company:

- Provide potential visitors with information they have requested five days a week (24/7 ordering capabilities provided), including expanded hours for peak inquiry periods and large-scale campaigns.
- Execute a central clearing house for management, fulfillment and tracking of all inquiries via email, telephone, LiveChat, fax, mail and reader response cards.
- Provide targeted extension numbers for better tracking of print media, as well as special URLs for web response measurement. Destination Missoula has also boosted capabilities to provide additional website tracking of visitors who order visitor guides to help provide even more tracking about where inquiries are coming from.
- Provide a customizable database to track additional traveler interest and preferences. Utilize the database to provide sample callbacks to ensure guide arrived timely for consumers.
- Provide timely fulfillment of travel guides and electronic mail responses.
- Provide additional travel planning assistance to visitors needing help with directions, weather conditions and attraction and lodging details.
- Maintain quality data in the consumer database and backup the data daily for protection.
- Provide storage and local and national distribution of the guides via call center and local tourism business requests for guides.
- Integrate call center with web 2.0 opportunities to place questions and answers and other valuable dialog with consumers online to assist website-based travel planners.
- Provide social media content support and tracking information—Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest. A major share of the travel guides will come into and be distributed by the call center/fulfillment center. More than 60,000 travel guides will be sent from the call center to direct inquiries from print, digital, social media and related travel guide requests. The call center will ship the travel guides using the latest requirements with the U.S. Postal Service. They will ship guides to the United States and Canada, but will restrict guides requested outside those areas to only special mailing circumstances approved by the director. In those cases, Destination Missoula pushes visitors, when possible, to the online guide version. Destination Missoula's overall goal is to improve by 5% the number of inquiries handled at the call center. In FY18 inquiries reached over 236,997 inquiries.





### CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Destination Missoula will actively participate with the Tourism Advisory Council, Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development, Glacier Country Tourism and other tourism organizations in educational programs and crisis management issues related to the promotion of tourism. Success measurements will vary greatly based on the crisis. Destination Missoula will be proactive in helping to resolve the crisis, will maintain an updated crisis communication plan to meet all needs, will provide rapid communication via the call center, social media, website and with the media.

### TAC/GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE/MEETINGS

Destination Missoula will set aside funds for key personnel to attend TAC meetings and the annual Governor's Conference on Tourism & Recreation in order to stay abreast of industry rules, regulations and trends. Success will be measured by meeting and conference attendance and incorporation of new rules, regulations and trends in daily operations of Destination Missoula.

### VIC FUNDING/STAFFING/SIGNAGE

Destination Missoula will maintain a full-time, year-round travel counselor for our VIC during regular office hours, whose responsibilities may include but are not limited to:

- Responding to tourism inquiries in person, via phone, email, fax and letter.
- Compiling and inputting data into the computer regarding information on visitation, calendar of events, local hotels and other related tourism businesses. Destination Missoula will use a professional CRM system to track this information.
- Making lists of businesses to contact about tourism concerns.
- Researching information for guests. Ordering, storing and stocking brochures and maps from attractions, hotels, and other tourism-related businesses. Destination Missoula will use a professional CRM system to inventory and track our brochure usage.
- Maintaining the VIC area.
- Conceiving and developing area-wide tours and support materials for tours.
- Serving as support staff for the Montana visitor information website.
- Maintaining VIC scheduling.
- Producing training and other familiarization activities with all the attractions in area for frontline staff in order to give the visitor a more personal and knowledgeable view of what Missoula has to offer.
- Maintaining a thorough knowledge of the content of all Montana guides and brochures, which the VIC has in its racks, and area-wide special events in order to intelligently converse with visitors of all ages. VIC staff should know road conditions, any construction areas and suggested alternate routes. Staff should also be aware of alternative things to do in case of weather conditions. DM will also hire staff during peak visitor seasons to cover the VIC during non-office hours: Staff will assist visitors for two hours after building closing time, Monday through Friday, and for eight hours Saturday and five hours Sunday, from July 1 through the end of September 2019, and May 1 through June 30, 2020. Staff will be given a training period with full-time staff present and also have an additional 120 hours that may be used throughout the year to cover during large events with busy visitation and for full-time staff vacations.
- Keeping statistics about how many visitors requested information and home states of visitors.
- Keeping track of the number of bulk requests filled.
- Packaging visitor packets for bulk requests from conventions, meetings and other groups. These hours are not covered by the Destination Missoula regular staff. Destination Missoula wants to be sure visitors feel welcome and know what is available to them, even if they arrive outside our regular hours.



Destination Missoula continues to partner with the Missoula International Airport with a visitor information center at the airport. This VIC services thousands of visitors annually. Destination Missoula will create highly visible signage for the outside of our main visitor center, and signage within the visitor center to help direct visitors to the information they are looking for. Success will be measured by the increase in visitor satisfaction, brand awareness, increased visitation to VICs and public education of Missoula as a travel destination.

## DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT/ACQUISITION

Destination Missoula uses Simpleview software. This enables the Visitor Services staff to track visitors with greater accuracy and generate much more detailed visitor reports. The software creates a simple form that visitors can type their information into on an iPad. The information is automatically inputted into the database, thereby saving staff time with data entry. The Simpleview software also has an inventory module, so staff can track brochures and guides and know when to order more. Success will be measured by the increase in accuracy and detailed reporting of travelers visiting the Visitor Center. We'll be able to use the data to further focus our marketing efforts as well.

## RESEARCH

In order to track Missoula's occupancy rates and understand the results of key marketing campaigns, including advertising and event promotion, and our conversion rates, Destination Missoula will use the following tools:

- DM will continue to purchase appropriate STR in order to track Missoula city occupancy rates, average daily rates, averages and changes in the Missoula hotel market. This will aid DM in understanding the Missoula market, to identify times of need, and to develop niche marketing opportunities to increase occupancy.
- DM will work with major event and conference planners, organizations and individuals to establish the economic impact of such events and conferences during 2020-2021 through the Destinations International Economic Impact Calculator. During 2019 – 20 DM was able to establish over \$724,000 in economic impact from 6 funded events throughout the year. Missoula will also be creating a new, updated campaign to bring awareness to the community of the impact of such events on the community.
- DM will continue with its implementation web trends and survey tools to measure inquiries, actual visitations, visitor satisfaction and feedback in order to identify marketing successes, areas needing improvement or misperceptions about Missoula and the surrounding area, and to raise community awareness of tourism as an economic driver. DM will create a short survey to be filled out with the guest book at DM VICs.

DM and the Missoula TBID initiate a Tourism Master Plan for Missoula. The initial months of the planning process will encompass extensive research on Missoula visitors and the perception of tourism's impact on the community and its resources. This research will be specific to Missoula and the surrounding areas and provide up-to-date information on visitors to the community. It will also help Destination Missoula to evaluate its current messaging and align it with the most effective geographic and demographic targets.

Success will be measured by awareness of industry and specific community trends, ability to specifically define and increase target markets, and conversion rates.

## COOPERATIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Destination Missoula strongly believes in the value of co-op opportunities with partners in the industry. Many times it is a way to reach markets with a larger message and presence than Destination Missoula can individually. The types of co-ops that Destination Missoula would like to participate in alongside the Montana Office of Tourism and Business Development are:

- Affordable print and digital advertising that includes reader service
- Matching funds programs that hit our target markets
- Shoulder season, outdoor, non-winter specific
- Arts and culture
- Entertainment
- Two Nations
- Mountain bike travel
- International

Destination Missoula also would like to participate in cooperative programs with Glacier Country Tourism and the other Regions and CVBs across the state with the following themes in mind:

- Park-to-park travel
- Arts and culture travel
- Canadian and international travel



## 2020 – 2020 BUDGET

MOTBD Projection @ 95%	\$299,740
Uncommitted Funds @ Audit (under budget line items)	\$0
Rollover @ MOTBD (unanticipated revenue)	\$0
BY 2019 Project Monies moved to FY 2020	\$43,429
<b>TOTAL PROJECTED BUDGET FY 2020-21</b>	<b>\$343,169</b>

Best Places  
to Live 2019

*Money, August 2019*

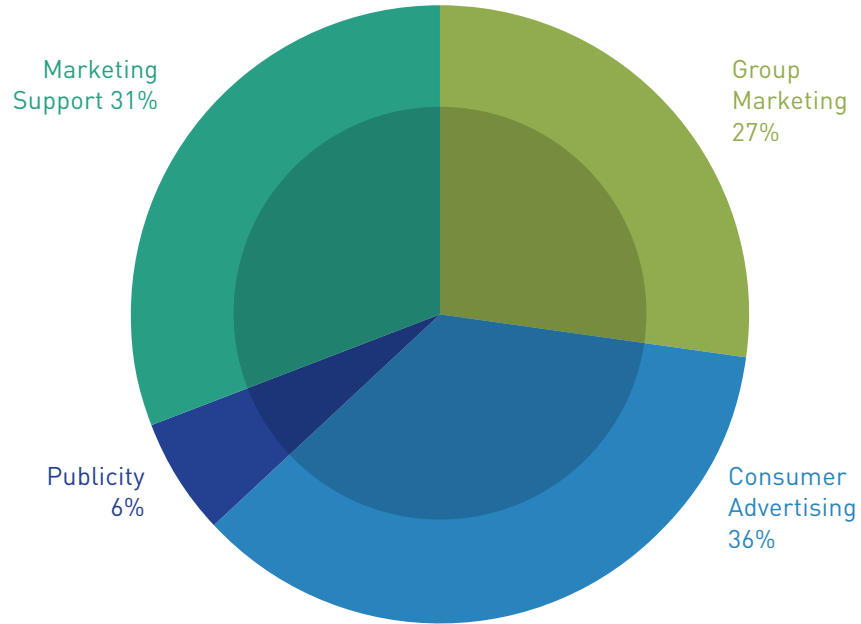
Please identify projects and amounts you would eliminate or reduce if revenue decreases by 10%. Budget is already at 95%. If revenue should drop another 5% (\$17,158) Destination Missoula would reduce Opportunity as necessary.

If you choose to reserve funds for future years, please identify purpose, anticipated project budget and amount of funds to be reserved this year.

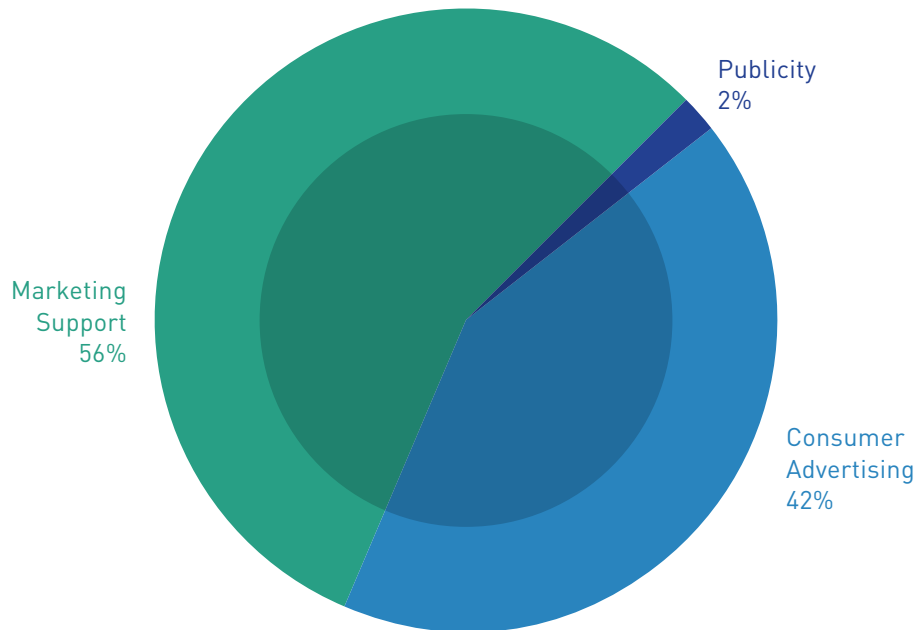
Destination Missoula will hold no funds in reserve this year.

	BED TAX	OTHER	TOTAL
<b>CONSUMER ADVERTISING</b>	<b>\$142,752.40</b>	<b>\$309,400</b>	<b>\$449,152.40</b>
Photo / Video Library	\$10,000	yes	
Online / Digital Advertising	\$17,000	yes	
Search Engine Optimization	\$7,000	yes	
Opportunity	\$20,000	yes	
Search Engine Marketing	-	yes	
Website Internet Development / Updates	-	yes	
Social Media Management	-	yes	
Joint Venture	\$16,000	-	
Print Advertising	\$51,752.40	-	
Electronic Adv. / Newsletters, E-Blasts	\$21,000	-	
Targeted Music – Print & Digital		yes	
<b>GROUP MARKETING</b>		<b>\$336,400</b>	<b>\$336,400</b>
Meeting Specific SEO	-	yes	
Fam Trips	-	yes	
Print Advertising	-	yes	
Travel / Trade Shows	-	yes	
Group Marketing Support / Personnel	-	yes	
Sales Materials	-	yes	
<b>MARKETING SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$188,458.60</b>	<b>\$189,545</b>	<b>\$378,003.60</b>
Administration	\$59,958	yes	
Fulfillment / Telemarketing	\$54,856	yes	
DMAI	\$7,900	yes	
TAC / Governor's Conference	\$2,000	yes	
VIC Funding / Staff / Signage	\$40,450	yes	
Crisis Management	\$100	-	
Research (Tourism Master Plan)	\$25,662.60	yes	
Marketing Support Services	-	yes	
Digital Asset Management / Acquisition	\$2,500	yes	
<b>PUBLICITY</b>	<b>\$ 7,000</b>	<b>\$67,000</b>	<b>\$74,000</b>
Publicity Support		yes	
Press Promotion / Media Outreach	\$7,000	yes	
Press Trips	-	yes	
Fam Trips	-	yes	
PR Shows & Conferences	-	yes	
<b>TOTAL 2020/2021 BED TAX BUDGET</b>			<b>\$343,169</b>

## COMBINED FUNDING



## BED TAX



## APPENDIX A

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Destination Missoula Keyword Targets (actual words used will vary based on cost of keywords at time of seasonal purchase) - This is the general list we will modify add and remove based on search trending:

Missoula	Bars in Missoula MT	Big Sky Brewery
Missoula Events	Missoula Distillery	Missoula Summer Concerts
Missoula Montana	Glacier National Park	Missoula Fall Colors
Missoula MT	Yellowstone National Park	Montana Travel Deals
Missoula Airport	Missoula Pictures	Missoula Travel Assistance
Shopping in Missoula	Missoula Lodging	Missoula Visitor Guide
Missoula Restaurants	Hot Springs in Montana	Missoula Visitor Information
Visit Missoula	Missoula Hot Springs	Missoula Trip Planning
Lewis and Clark	Missoula Art Museum	Bitterroot Valley Montana
Missoula Weather	Missoula Parks	Seeley Lake Montana
Missoula Farmers Market	Hotels in Missoula MT	Girlfriend Getaways Missoula
Lake Missoula	Camping in Missoula	Missoula Fishing Trip
Glacial Lake Missoula	Camping in Montana	Missoula Cultural Activities
Things To Do in Missoula	RV Camping Montana	University of Montana
Things To Do in Missoula Montana	Tent Camping Montana	Montana University
A River Runs Through It	Missoula Cycling	Missoula College
Missoula Map	Missoula Bike Celebration	Missoula Festivals
Missoula Breweries	Missoula Marathon	Missoula Sports
Missoula Winery	Missoula Ballet Competition	Missoula Venues
Missoula Concerts	Vibe Missoula	Missoula Weddings
Missoula Fly Fishing	Bitterroot Trail Montana	Missoula Meetings
Missoula Stand Up Paddle Boarding	Missoula Pet Friendly	Missoula Convention
Downtown Missoula	Missoula Kid Friendly	Missoula Churches
Montana Wildlife Montana	Missoula Vacation Deals	Missoula Markets
Montana Vacation	Montana Vacation Deals	Lolo Montana
Vacation in Montana	Montana Shopping	
Missoula Tourism	Missoula Shopping	
Missoula Activities	Missoula Visual Art Galleries	
Breweries in Missoula	Missoula Museums	
Caras Park Missoula	Missoula Flyfishing	
Missoula Camping	Missoula Fishing	
University of Montana	Missoula Byways	
Missoula Museum	Montana Byways	
Missoula Water Activities	Clark Fork River	
Missoula Music	Blackfoot River	
Missoula Hotels	Missoula Mercantile	

DESTINATION  
*Missoula*  
MONTANA

