

# DESTINATION Missoula



2014 -2015 MARKETING PLAN

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MISSION STATEMENT</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>IDENTITY OF THE DESTINATION MISSOULA AREA</b>	<b>2</b>
STRENGTHS	2
OPPORTUNITIES	3
CHALLENGES	5
<b>THREE PHASES OF TRAVEL</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>MARKETS</b>	<b>6</b>
Target Geographic Markets	6
Target Demographic Markets	7
Individual Travelers	7
Sports Travelers	8
Group Travelers and Event Recruitment	9
Meetings and Conventions	9
Emerging Markets	9
Supporting Research	11
GOALS	12
STRATEGIES	12
Methods	12
Publicity	13
Group Marketing	15
Marketing Support	16
COOPERATIVE OPPORTUNITIES	19
<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>21</b>
Changes to be implemented if budget is 10% above or below anticipated	22

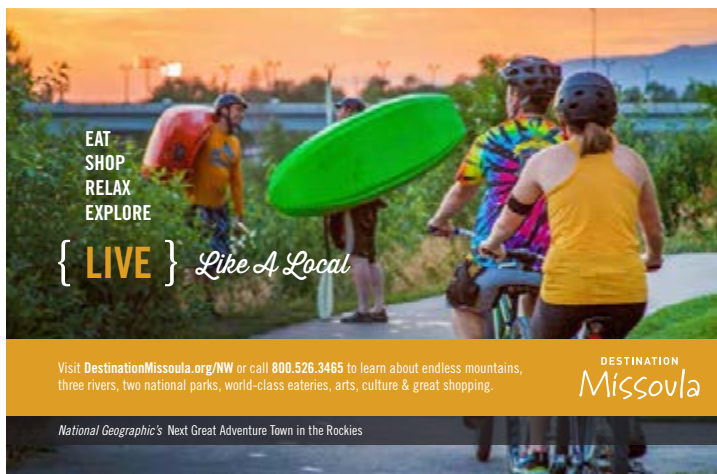
# INTRODUCTION

Missoula strives throughout its marketing to uphold the Montana State Tourism brand pillars. Sitting at the confluence of the Bitterroot, Clark Fork and Blackfoot Rivers and surrounded by seven wilderness areas, Missoula is encircled by spectacular, unspoiled nature. And although Missoula is the second largest city in the State of Montana, to those visitors from large urban areas, Missoula is indeed a vibrant and charming small town perfectly situated half way between our State's two jewels – Glacier and Yellowstone National Park. Served by Missoula International Airport and three major highways, it is the ideal hub from which to explore the many wonders of our State. The accessibility of Missoula's recreation makes it unparalleled. Where else can you kayak or surf downtown or take a hike or mountain bike in 60,000 acres of wilderness a mere 5 miles away?

Missoula is also a regional destination for shopping and dining, featuring three distinct shopping districts and an abundance of restaurants, cafes, coffee houses and breweries with something to fit all budgets and palates. Known for its eclectic culture, visitors will find this arts and cultural hub filled with a seeming endless array of arts and entertainment events. Think symphony, theater, film festivals, authors' readings at independent bookstores, college sports, ballet, opera and roller derby! And we proudly live our history – Native American and Lewis & Clark to smokejumpers and Glacial Lake Missoula.

Some might call it unique, cool or hip. Others will experience it as serene, welcoming and replete with natural beauty. You might see it as vibrant, active and pulsating with places to go and things to do. The beauty of Missoula is that it is all that and more.

We strive to show our unique character, as well as incorporating brand fonts, colors and imagery in our marketing.



EAT  
SHOP  
RELAX  
EXPLORE

{ LIVE } *Like A Local*

Visit [DestinationMissoula.org/NW](http://DestinationMissoula.org/NW) or call 800.526.3465 to learn about endless mountains, three rivers, two national parks, world-class eateries, arts, culture & great shopping.

DESTINATION  
Missoula

*National Geographic's Next Great Adventure Town in the Rockies*



EAT  
SHOP  
RELAX  
EXPLORE

{ PLAY } *Like A Local*

With 3 rivers, 7 wilderness areas, 83 distinctive sport and event venues and endless Montana experiences, there is no destination like Missoula.

Call our experts at 1.800.526.3465 or visit [playmissoula.org/sd](http://playmissoula.org/sd) for help planning your next event.

DESTINATION  
Missoula

# MISSION STATEMENT

---

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

## IDENTITY

---

*"I hiked around town, the air sweet and dry, and was sort of overwhelmed by the perfection of it – the old courthouse, the train depot, Mount Jumbo and Mount Sentinel rising up, the neon bars, the funky festivity of a college town." - Garrison Keeler*

Missoula is the state's most cosmopolitan and diverse community and the heart of arts and culture in the State of Montana, blending contemporary culture and historical heritage seamlessly. Missoula is also a regional hub and state leader in commerce, education and health care.

A unique travel destination resting halfway between Glacier and Yellowstone, Montana's two majestic national parks, Missoula in itself offers paramount outdoor recreational opportunities. At the confluence of three rivers and surrounded by seven wilderness areas, its uniqueness lies in its accessibility. It provides travelers with scenic beauty, outdoor adventure, unique attractions, regionally renowned shopping and rich and diverse cultural attractions and events.

*"Many towns in the West consider themselves 'outdoor' towns -- suggesting a citizenry eager to bike, run, ski, paddle, hunt, fish, hike, backpack, float and camp. Missoula, Montana is one of those towns, but it possesses some indefinable spirit that keeps it from being confused with any other."*

*- Rick Bass, Smithsonian Magazine*

As with any city, Missoula has an array of strengths that we play to, opportunities on the horizon that we will market to, and challenges that we work toward solving.

## STRENGTHS

**Arts and Culture** – Missoula is home to the most diverse and extensive arts community in Montana. From writers to performing artists, from painters to photographers, from historians to museum curators, Missoula is fortunate to be home to numerous famous and creative people, who add a dimension and depth to the community that is only seen in larger cities. Regionally, nationally and in many cases internationally renowned, Missoula's cultural community creates an essence to the city that urban travelers want but do not expect in Montana, making Missoula a memorable destination.

**Immediacy of Access** – Where else but Missoula, Montana, can you kayak in downtown or take a walk in 50,000 acres of wilderness area over your lunch hour and be back to work on time? All of Montana has incredible varied natural resources to brag about, but the accessibility of Missoula’s natural bounty is unparalleled. Whether you run, ski, paddleboard, river surf, kayak, bike, hunt, fish, hike, backpack, float or camp, you can enjoy your passion 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 Idaho to shop in our historic downtown boutiques and 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 seeking an education that is highly valued and recognized. This level of education also produces a population of “top in the field” professionals that 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 and Interstate 90. Missoula’s International Airport hosts five major air carriers and has direct flights to Portland, Seattle, San Francisco, Oakland, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Las Vegas, Denver, Atlanta, Minneapolis and Chicago.

**Sports and Adventure** – If you can do it outdoors, you can do it in Missoula. Being surrounded by seven wilderness areas, at the confluence of three rivers and with five ski areas within 100 miles, adventure seekers need look no further. Missoula is also home to professional baseball, semi-professional hockey and football, and the world famous Missoula Marathon. Having already held such events as the US Freestyle Kayak Championships and USA Cycling Pro XCT, Missoula has a proven track record for hosting major recreation based events.

**Entertainment and Nightlife** – Whether your tastes run from urbane to eclectic, Missoula has nightlife to satisfy everyone. Missoula’s music scene is broad, running the gamut from orchestral to bluegrass, country to hip hop and the city has been host to such icons as The Rolling Stones, Elton John and Pearl Jam. With a vast and seemingly endless array of arts and entertainment events and an abundance of restaurants, cafes, coffee houses, breweries, wineries and distilleries, it is difficult to choose.

*“Where else can you find first-rate documentary and wildlife film festivals, the Roots Festival, jazz festivals, all right...all festivals, famous authors, artists, and playwrights in our shops and on our streets, gardens and galleries galore, acclaimed dance companies, creative restaurants, bakeries, and plenty of delicious coffee aromas, alphabetized mountains, and a community with a backyard minutes from alpine skiing, river rafting adventures, and just a few hours from Glacier and Yellowstone National Parks? Where else but Missoula?” - Michael McGill, Ex. Director MCT, Inc.*

## OPPORTUNITIES

**Air Access** – Missoula has seen the addition of a major air carrier this year with the announcement that Frontier Airlines would be entering our market. This opens numerous markets to Missoula and since it is a low-cost air carrier Missoula will see an adjustment in prices not only with Frontier, but also other carriers in our market who will want to remain competitive. Frontier will be bringing in an Air Bus to service the Missoula market, providing more seats than traditional regional jets. Destination Missoula works closely in partnership with the Missoula International Airport to continually investigate and expand service and new direct flight markets into Missoula.

**Wayfinding** – For two years, Missoula has been in the planning stages of a city-wide wayfinding system. Planning will conclude this summer, and fundraising for implementation will begin. This city-wide system will be the first of its kind in Montana and can become the standard to follow. It will enhance not only the visitor experience, but also familiarize residents with the many attractions Missoula has to offer. Research has shown that cities with well-thought-out wayfinding systems attract more visitors who stay longer in the community. Destination Missoula, in partnership with city and county government, and leading organizations, has led the effort to create this system for Missoula and will continue its role during implementation.

**Increase Group and Tour Travel** – Destination Missoula, through our Sales Department, will be focusing efforts on increasing and broadening our group and tour travel. Working in cooperation with the Montana Office of Tourism and Glacier Country Tourism, Destination Missoula will attend trade shows directly targeting these markets and looking to increase our awareness in International markets, specifically Canada, China and Western Europe. In 2013, international travel in the US increased 3.4% to 69 million visitors. It is projected that between 2013-2018, we will see an annual increase in visitation of 3.4 to 4.3%. Four countries will account for 64% of that growth – the two largest being Canada at 29% and China at 19%.

**Retain Transient Visitors** – Approximately three million people pass through Missoula annually, but only 1.5 million spend one or more nights in our community. Destination Missoula will be producing marketing campaigns directed specifically to Canadian visitors and concentrating on our Park-to-Park visitor. We will also be working on initiatives such as wayfinding to entice visitors off the highways and to stay at least one night.

**Culinary and Spirits Tourism** – Two of the hottest trends in travel right now are the culinary and spirits traveler and Missoula is the perfect fit. Culinary travel is a \$51 billion industry and 27 million people identifying themselves as culinary travelers. From our locally sourced restaurants to our food trucks, breweries, distilleries and wineries Missoula has the unique experiences these travelers expect. Destination Missoula will market directly to this niche.

**Sustainability** – The sustainable traveler is also looking for engaging, personable, memorable and, above all, authentic travel experiences. These tourists are “typically highly educated, mature, affluent, well-traveled, environmentally aware and sensitive to the social and cultural traditions, systems and mores of the destination they visit.” United Nations World Tourism Organization. From our unblemished recreational resources to our farm-to-college program, farmers markets, and green retailers, Missoula is the perfect fit for the sustainable traveler. Destination Missoula will work with the community and its partners to identify and highlight sustainable opportunities and businesses in our area through our website and social media. We will also work with the community to identify ways to enhance the experience through packages, tours, and certifications.

**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 have opened or are slated to open in Missoula in all three of our shopping districts. Missoula also has new hotels opening and Destination Missoula/TBID is partnering with the City of Missoula to fund a feasibility study for a conference center in Missoula.

## CHALLENGES

**Air Access** – Although Missoula is seeing continuing growth in our air access, with the merger of major airlines and demand from competitive communities with large guaranty resources, it is difficult to stay competitive and to provide excellent service and low prices. Destination Missoula is continually working with the Missoula International Airport and partners to seek out opportunities to raise guaranty funds, new direct flight opportunities, and low cost air service.

**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 on average \$20.7 million in vacant room nights during the months of November through March. Since Missoula is not a major winter destination, we will be centering our marketing to bolster our shoulder seasons through group and tour travel, sporting and cultural events, meetings and conventions.

**Low Conversion of Transient Travel** – As mentioned above in the Opportunities, Missoula loses approximately 1.5 million transient travelers a year. It is difficult to pull them off the Interstate. Destination Missoula will be producing marketing campaigns directed specifically to Canadian visitors and concentrating on our Park-to-Park visitor. We will also be working on initiatives such as wayfinding to entice pass thru visitors to stay at least one night.

**Lack of Tourism Infrastructure** – Although Missoula has many wonderful venues, in order to take the next step in growth, we are in need of infrastructure currently missing in our community. Our largest indoor arena is owned by the University, 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 city-wide conferences or conventions. In order to accommodate events of this size, we have to bid them out to a number of venues which is not ideal to meeting and event planners. Destination Missoula/TBID is partnering with the City of Missoula to fund a feasibility study for a conference center in Missoula. Destination Missoula will also be working in partnership with city and county leaders and private business to complete the Fort Missoula Regional Park, which would provide fields and sporting facilities that would enable Missoula to host major sporting events and tournaments.

**Timeline of Implementation and Funding for Wayfinding** – Although the Missoula Wayfinding project is almost 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.

**Organizational Funding** – With constantly trying to find new and innovative ways to raise private funding, Missoula's lack of full participation in our Tourism Business Improvement District, and the constant 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 our legislators and citizens on the importance of tourism to a healthy State economy and to work towards preserving and enhancing our bed tax funding. We also work in partnership with the Missoula Tourism Improvement District to expand participation in our TBID and private partnership in Destination Missoula.

# THREE PHASE TRAVEL

---

In order to convert a person from someone who may be interested in Missoula to an actual visitor to your destination, we 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 our print and digital advertising, on our website and in our social media. These images inspire people to visit our destination and to see what is unique about it. We have created the “Like A Local” advertising campaign to enhance this concept.

We will implement a number of tools that will help orient our customer to where we are in the country, region and state. Our 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. We use it to help create and promote Missoula as a brand. This year we will be implementing an itinerary builder on our newly redesigned website. 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 our area has to offer.

Finally, using the itinerary builder, and easy access to the information they need to book their trip or the ability to talk to a knowledgeable travel expert on the phone, either through our call center or in one of our VICs, will help facilitate the final sale and a successful trip.

## MARKETS

---

### 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.

DM will market to geographic areas which are also targeted by Glacier Country and Montana Office of Tourism and whose residents have shown a history of traveling to Missoula in order to maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness. We will be concentrating on more “niche” marketing this year, particularly our direct flight and drive markets. Our direct flight markets include Seattle, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Chicago, Denver, Portland, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Atlanta and Phoenix. We will also direct 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 Park, Kalispell, Montana. Destination Missoula will also be implementing a new marketing campaign in 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 inquires come: California, New York, Texas, Washington, Florida, Illinois, Minnesota and Arizona.
- The secondary states from which most inquires come: Colorado, Oregon and Pennsylvania.
- The states immediately surrounding Montana and Canada.
- Direct flight markets including Seattle, Salt Lake City, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, Chicago, Portland, Denver, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Oakland, Atlanta 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. DM will pay particular attention through this marketing plan to niche marketing for destination weddings and reunions, small and mid-size market meetings, sporting events, signature events, arts and culture, leisure and family travel. The average visitor to Missoula is 56 years of age with an income of \$75,000-\$100,000 and 79% are either traveling alone or as couples. Groups of 3-5 travelers represent 16% of Missoula visitors and family travel is heaviest during the summer months. The demographic markets are described below.

## 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 DM to concentrate its marketing efforts on the following:

- Active empty-nesters
- Baby boomers
- Business travelers
- Cultural and historical experiences travelers
- Family travel
- Leisure travelers
- Outdoor enthusiasts.
- Recreational Vehicle travelers
- Motorcyclists
- Women
- Geo-travelers
- Multi-generational travelers
- Culinary and spirits travelers
- LGBT travelers

## SPORTS TRAVELERS

The sports industry is currently a \$212.53 billion annual business. Sports travel is responsible for \$44.47 billion or 20.92% of the industry's annual worth. Sports related travel has increased 9% and the number of sporting events has grown 10.36% since 2011. 27.5 million travelers were classified as sports travelers in 2012. In addition to the sporting event, the sports traveler is looking for the presence of good tourism infrastructure providing accommodations, restaurants, bars, clubs, and various forms of entertainment beyond the sporting event. Just as cities have competed for decades for meetings, conventions, and traditional tourist travel they now compete to host sports events or attract the pursuit of favorite sports activities. Cities have also learned that most of the events take place whether the economy is good or in recession. This element of resistance to economic downturns has brought new cities and suppliers to the industry.

Demographics are as follows:

- Primarily male, 18-54 years old, and strong internet users.
- Gender – 68% male, 32% female.
- Age –
  - 6% 18-24
  - 18% 25-34
  - 72% 25-44
  - 49% 45+
  - 22% 55+
- Income –
  - 71% have a household income of \$50K+
  - 47% have a household income of \$75K+
- Education and Occupation –
  - 54% have graduated college or higher
  - 41% are professional/managerial
- 74% are married
- 81% attended a sport event in the last 12 months as either a spectator or participant while on a trip of 50 miles or more, one-way, away from home.
- Attending a sports event is the primary purpose of the trip for most sports event travelers (76%).
- Most sports events travelers are spectators (84%).
- Most sports events travelers stay overnight in a hotel, motel or bed and breakfast (52%).
- Sports events travelers are generally younger than total U.S. travelers. They are also more likely to have children and be employed full-time.

## 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. A niche markets that Missoula will be specifically targeting in group travel are destination weddings, motorcycle rallies and new event recruitment.

## 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. The personal attention and comforts, which can be delivered by Missoula's service industry, are second to none.

Missoula has done extensive work on the Meeting Planners portion of our website and will be redesigning and updating the site to have a cohesive feel with our main site. We feel 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 specifically target industry specific associations in our drive and direct fly markets, such as Spokane, Seattle, Portland, Minneapolis, and Chicago. 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, we can work with niche markets stressing what is unique about Missoula and the surrounding area that makes it worth the extra expense to hold a meeting here.

## EMERGING MARKETS

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

**Culinary** – We currently see 27 million travelers identify themselves as culinary travelers. Last year alone, they created a \$51 billion economic impact with \$12 billion spent directly on culinary activities. On average they spend \$1,194 per trip with up to 50% spent directly on food and food related activities. They tend to be a younger, more affluent and better educated traveler. 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.

**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 and in many cases cross-over the culinary traveler.

**Youth sports** - Sports and events – The sports travel sector is now comprised of over 27.5 million visitors. They are primarily male (68%), between the ages of 18-54, highly educated with a household income level of \$50,000 and above. Youth sports also generate family and multi-generational travel.

**Canadian travel** – Canadian travel to Montana last year saw 776,000 visitors, creating 2,558,000 room nights and spending \$270 million in our state. They stay an average of 3.8 nights per visit and their main interests are shopping, museums and galleries, cultural events, festivals and fairs and sporting events.

**Motorcycle** – Motorcycle travel is one of the fastest growing segments in tourism. In 2009, 7,883,000 bikes were registered in the US. With the Canadian and US markets it is a \$34 billion industry with over 11 million riders. The demographic is becoming older and more affluent as more baby boomer professionals become interested in motorcycle travel. Women are becoming the fastest growing segment. An average trip lasts 10-14 days spending \$3,100 per trip. They also love to attend related events averaging 3 events per year spending an average of \$400 per weekend event attended. Ten percent of all visitors enter Montana on motorcycles and 4% spend 1 or more nights in Missoula.

**LGBT** – LGBT travel is a \$70 billion industry in the US. These travelers average 7 trips annually, 4 leisure and 3 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 tend to return to areas they feel do the best job of outreach and are safe and relaxing. LGBT 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.

**International** – In 2013, the US saw 69 million international visitors. Between 2013 and 2018, international travel to the US is expected to rise between 3.4 to 4.3% annually and by 2018 is projected to encompass 83.9 million visitors. China is currently the largest source of outbound travel in the world and Canada and China are projected to be the top ranking countries for travel growth to the US in the next six years.

**New flight markets** – With the addition of Frontier Airlines this year, new markets are open to Missoula at affordable prices. We were also able to announce the addition of Atlanta to our direct flight market, an additional direct seasonal flights into Los Angeles, and believe we will be adding another direct flight market to the list soon. It only makes sense to market directly into these areas and increase visitation to sustain air service and boost the economy.

## SUPPORTING RESEARCH

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

- **Montana Office of Tourism** – General Travel Statistics
- **STR Reports** – Missoula specific hotel statistics
- **US Travel** - Facts and Statistics ([www.ustravel.org/news/press-kit/travel-facts-statistics](http://www.ustravel.org/news/press-kit/travel-facts-statistics))
- **International Trade Administration** – US Commerce Department Forecasts Continued Strong Growth for International Travel to the United States – 2013-2018 (<http://travel.trade.gov/tinews/archive/tinews2014/20140407.html>)
- **Canadian Government travel statistics** (<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/start-debut-eng.html>)
- **US 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/2013DomCanInterExpend.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>)
- **Gutsy Traveler.com** – women Travel Statistics – 80% of All Travel Decisions Made By Women (<http://gutsytraveler.com/women-travel-statistics>)
- **National Association of Sports Commissions** – 2012 Report on The Sports Travel Industry, 2013 Sports Tourism: A State of the Industry Report ([www.sportscommissions.org](http://www.sportscommissions.org))
- **Mandala Research, LLC** -The American Culinary Travelers 2013 ([http://mandalaresearch.com/index.php/purchase-reports/view\\_document/75-the-american-culinary-traveler-study-?tmpl=component](http://mandalaresearch.com/index.php/purchase-reports/view_document/75-the-american-culinary-traveler-study-?tmpl=component))
- **US Travel** – Comprehensive Culinary Travel Survey Provides Insights on Food and Wine Travelers (<http://www.ustravel.org/news/press-releases/comprehensive-culinary-travel-survey-provides-insights-food-and-wine-travelers>);
- **About Tourism** – Destination Marketing and the “FOOD” element: A Market Overview (<https://abouttourism.wordpress.com/tag/culinary-tourism>)
- **Lynn University College of Hospitality Management** – Best Practices in Culinary Tourism Development: Models and Applications Domestic and Abroad ([www.lynn.edu](http://www.lynn.edu))
- **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>)
- **Forbes Magazine** – 10 Things You Didn’t Know About Gay Travel (<http://www.forbes.com/sites/bethgreenfield/2011/12/14/10-things-you-didnt-know-about-gay-travel>)
- **CMI Community Marketing & Insights** – 18th Annual LGBT Travel Study (<http://www.communitymarketinginc.com>)

## GOALS

- Increase the demand in Missoula for hotel rooms, attraction visits, 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 Commission, 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 education and 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 visitor industry in Missoula.

## STRATEGIES

Consumer Advertising - Destination Missoula will use various mediums to promote Missoula as a 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.

### Methods

**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. Success for online digital ads will be measured through click through rates and impressions; print ads will be measured through unique URL and call center responses.

**Mobile Apps** - We will promote our Tour Missoula mobile app and others to be developed throughout the year to orient visitors to what Missoula has to offer and how to find it. Success will be measured through visitors and page views.

**Website Marketing, Optimization, Development and Maintenance** - Destination Missoula will launch a state-of-the-art responsive website redesign for [www.destinationmissoula.org](http://www.destinationmissoula.org) this year featuring itinerary builders to help visitors plan their vacation in advance and to excite them about the many unique possibilities a Missoula vacation can afford them. We will continue to develop and maintain our main site, as well as [www.missoulameetings.org](http://www.missoulameetings.org) and [www.playmissoula.org](http://www.playmissoula.org) to increase the perception of the Missoula area as a primary tourist and meetings destination by focusing on:

**Expanded Travel Planning Content** – [destinationmissoula.org](http://destinationmissoula.org) will receive additional content pages on key planning resources for out-of-state visitors, as well as the continued integration of social networking components to keep content fresh and easy to share.

**Travel Guide Online** – Continue the updates of the online guide and maintain the latest technologies. Provide video and website jumps to the digital layout.

**Weekly Updates** – [destinationmissoula.org](http://destinationmissoula.org) will be provided with immediate updates to events, attractions, and all other trip planning resources as needed by DM, as well as any social media sites, we are using for promotion.

**Search Engine Optimization** – Aggressively optimize and modify website source code meta tags to ensure best possible placement on major search engines.

**Search Engine Marketing** - Keywords will be purchased in Google and Yahoo to promote [destinationmissoula.org](http://destinationmissoula.org) as an online tourism resource for Montana. (See attached Appendix A for complete keyword list).

**Success will be measured for the websites by visitor and page views; SEM** – key word directed visitors to the website; SEO – visitors, search visitors, non-traditional web visitors, organic placement on Google and other search engines. We would expect to see a 3% growth in website visitation and to add 35,000 new names to our lead database.

**Photo/Video Library** – Destination Missoula will continue to develop and maintain its photo and video library used for all media to promote what is unique about Missoula and the surrounding area. 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 DM in marketing Missoula. Destination Missoula will purchase photo/design software to work with and catalogue photographs in said library. 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.

**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.

## PUBLICITY

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

## Methods

**FAMS** – Destination Missoula will arrange a minimum of one (1) FAM trip specifically targeting arts and culture in Missoula. The trip will be designed to highlight what is truly unique about Missoula specifically during off peak and shoulder seasons. This trip may be arranged solely or in partnership with Glacier Country Tourism and/or the Montana Office of Tourism other tourism organizations, local organizations and private businesses. Success will be measured through participation rate and amount of resulting earned media.

**Press Promotions** – Destination Missoula will partner with the Missoula Tourism Business Improvement District to contract public relations services. These services will include production of a media/press kit to include interchangeable information on sports, group travel, events and conference plan, press releases and story pitches to appropriate publications in our drive and direct flight markets. These story lines will be directed to niche marketing efforts and to drive off peak/shoulder season business. 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, Glacier Country Tourism, and other industry partners to directly promote Montana and Missoula to media partners throughout the Northwest.

**Marketing/Publicity Personnel** – Destination Missoula will continue a part-time, year-round marketing staff position, whose responsibilities may include, but will not be limited to:

- Help conceive and develop strategies to market Missoula as a destination.
- Research and maintain demographic and geographic data in order to most effectively market Missoula.
- Work with area meeting and convention facilities, Montana Office of Tourism, Glacier Country and other interested parties to partner to market Missoula and the surrounding area.
- Create printed materials to market Missoula.
- Work with area hotels and partner businesses to help increase funding sources for use in marketing Missoula and the surrounding area.
- Help plan and conduct FAMS.

**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.

**Crisis Management** – Destination Missoula will actively participate with the Tourism Advisory Council, Montana Office of Tourism, 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 crises, 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.



## GROUP MARKETING

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

### Methods

**Electronic Ads/EBlasts** – Destination Missoula will send out 2 meeting and 1 sports e-blasts to targeted meeting planners and sports and event planners reminding them why Missoula is a unique destination for meetings and events. We will continue to develop and maintain our main site, as well as [www.missoulameetings.org](http://www.missoulameetings.org) and [www.playmissoula.org](http://www.playmissoula.org) to increase the perception of the Missoula area as a primary tourist and meetings destination. Success will be measured through open rates, click through rates, and bounce rates.

**FAMS** - Destination Missoula will arrange a minimum of one (1) 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 solely or in partnership with Glacier Country Tourism and/or the Montana Office of Tourism other tourism organizations, local organizations and 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. Success for online digital ads will be measured through click through rates and impressions.

**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 off-peak and shoulder seasons. Print ads will be measured through unique URL and call center responses.

**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.

**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 number of qualified leads and RFPs resulting from attendance at said trade shows.

## Group Marketing Support/Personnel

- Destination Missoula will continue to sponsor and incentivize the Bring It Home Missoula campaign encouraging Missoula residents and groups to bring their meetings and conferences to Missoula.
- Provide sales support through research; subscribing to Destination Marketing Association International's EmpowerMINT; maintaining and enhancing our trade show booth as necessary and production of sales materials.
- Increase sales staff industry knowledge through attendance at key industry conferences, such as Travel, Entertainment and Management in Sports, National Association of Sport Commissions and Montana High School Association.
- 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 new events in the Missoula area.

Success will be measured by an increase in the number of meetings and events held in Missoula annually, the number of new leads produced from campaigns and show attendance and the number of grants applied for and the economic impact of those 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.

### Methods

**Administration** – Funding for operations, key personnel and services in order to provide the best experience for visitors to our 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.

**DMAI** – Staff attendance at DMAI niche and Annual Conferences in order to stay abreast of industry trends and how to incorporate them in our market. Success will be measured by conferences successfully attended.

**Fulfillment/Telemarketing** – Destination Missoula will provide the following services through our fulfillment company:

- Provide potential visitors with information they have requested 5 days a week (24/7 ordering capabilities provided). Expand to 6 days during peak inquiry periods and campaigns.
- Implement a central clearing house for management, fulfillment, and tracking of all inquiries via email, telephone, live helper chat, 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.
- Provide a customizable database to track additional traveler interest and preferences. Utilize the database to provide sample call backs 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 back up 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.

Success will be measured by the number of guides and electronic mail responses, call center engagement, increase in consumer database and social media engagements. We would expect to expand our database by 35,000 new names and increase our social media engagement by 25%.

**Opportunity** – Destination Missoula will set aside funds to participate in marketing opportunities that come up through-out 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 participate in joint venture opportunities with the Montana Office of Tourism, Glacier Country Tourism and other CVBs/Regions that come up through-out the year that were not available at the time this Marketing Plan was written. Success measures will vary depending on the segment of the project participated in.

**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 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** – DM 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, e-mail, fax and letter.
- Compiling and inputting data into the computer regarding information on visitation, calendar of events, local hotels and other related tourism businesses.
- Making lists of businesses to contact about tourism concerns.
- Researching information for guests.

- Order, storing and stocking brochures and maps from attractions, hotels, and other tourism related businesses.
- Maintaining the VIC area.
- Conceiving and developing area wide tours and support materials for same.
- Serving as support staff for the Montana visitor information website.
- Maintaining VIC scheduling and payroll.
- Attending Superhost training and other familiarization activities with all the attractions in their area.
- Maintaining a thorough knowledge of the content of all Montana guides and brochures, which the VIC has in our racks, and area-wide special events and be able 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 our 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 six hours Sunday, from July 1 through September 7, 2014, and June 2 through June 30, 2015.
- Staff will keep statistics about how many visitors requested information and home states of visitors
- Staff will keep track of the number of bulk requests filled.
- VIC staff may also be asked to package visitor packets for bulk requests from conventions, meetings and other groups.

These hours are not covered by the Destination Missoula regular staff. We want to be sure visitors feel welcome and know what is available to them, even if they arrive outside our regular hours.

Destination Missoula has seen steady increases in visitor use of our official Visitor Information Centers with an 87% increase with our move to our downtown location. On average we have seen a 17% increase in visitation annually. We have also partnered with the Missoula International Airport to open a Visitor Information Center at the Missoula International Airport. Servicing thousands of visitors annually, our visitor centers have assisted people from across the United States and 21 countries around the world.

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 the length of visitor stays and satisfaction, brand awareness, increased visitation to VICs, and public education of Missoula as a travel destination.

**Research** – In order to track Missoula’s occupancy rates, 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 Smith Travel Reports 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 2014-15 through the DMAI Economic Impact Calculator, and will work through the Bring It Home Missoula campaign to bring awareness to the community of the impact on our community.
- DM will implement 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, in partnership with TBID, will hire a research company to look at visitation trends, rates and conversion rates specific to Missoula.

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 coop opportunities with partners in the industry. Many times it is a way to reach markets with a larger message and presence than we can individually. The types of coops that we would like to participate in with the Montana Office of Tourism are:

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

We 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

We have participated in many cooperative opportunities with industry partners in the past, many of which have been highly successful. Following are some of the more recent coops we have participated in on all levels:

Destination Missoula has participated in the Glacier Country summer and winter coops for a number of years. These coops have been highly successful generating close to 20,000 fresh leads annually and which are directly responsible for one-third of all visitor guide requests.

This year Destination Missoula has participated in two Montana Office of Tourism cooperatives purchasing print and digital buys in both Backpacker and iExplore. Since these are new coops that have just launched we don't have decisive results to report at this time.

Upon receiving new air service into both San Francisco and Atlanta, Destination Missoula partnered with the airlines involved and Missoula International Airport on a print and digital marketing campaign into both cities to advertise the new flight opportunities into Missoula. We do consider these campaigns a success as enough tickets are being sold that both cities see continuing service.

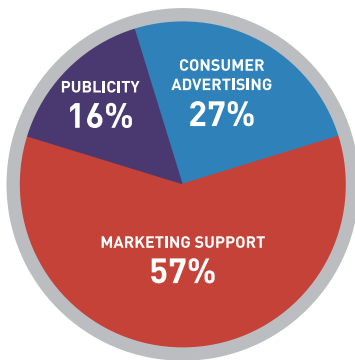
Destination Missoula has also participated with the Montana Office of Tourism in the Madden Media print and digital campaign which generated approximately 2,400 new leads.

For a number of years, Destination Missoula created a cooperative opportunity for community business partners to participate in a print campaign in Brides & Grooms magazine. Destination Missoula purchased the center gatefold of the magazine, with partners able to purchase full page ads adjoining and inside the gatefold for a discounted rate. Over the years this was a successful campaign. The most recent campaign generated only 210 direct inquiries, but generated 900 unique website visits and was responsible for 630 travel guide requests for an overall engagement of 1,740.

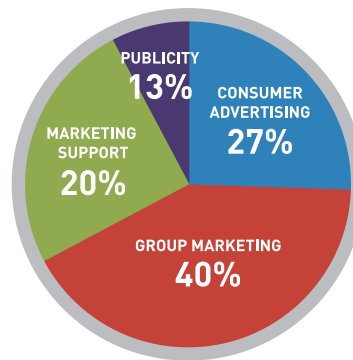
# 2014 - 2015 BUDGET

	BED TAX	OTHER	TOTAL
<b>CONSUMER ADVERTISING</b>	<b>\$50,800</b>	<b>\$126,000</b>	<b>\$176,800</b>
Electronic Adv./E-Blasts/Newsletters	7,500		
Online/ Digital Advertising	9,800	yes	
Photo/Video Library	4,000	yes	
Print Advertising	26,500	yes	
Search Engine Marketing		yes	
Search Engine Optimization	3,000	yes	
Website Internet Development/Updates		yes	
<b>GROUP MARKETING</b>		<b>\$188,840</b>	<b>\$188,840</b>
Electronic Adv./E-Blasts/Newsletters		yes	
FAMS		yes	
Online/Digital Advertising		yes	
Print Advertising		yes	
Social Media		yes	
Travel/Trade Shows		yes	
Press Trips		yes	
Group Marketing Support/Personnel		yes	
<b>MARKETING SUPPORT</b>	<b>\$106,952</b>	<b>\$ 91,034</b>	<b>\$197,986</b>
Administration	36,000	yes	
DMAI	3,000	yes	
Fulfillment/Telemarketing	39,600	yes	
Opportunity	1,435	yes	
TAC/Governor's Conference	2,000	yes	
VIC Funding/Staff/Signage	21,092	yes	
Crisis Management	100		
Research		yes	
Joint Venture	3,725		
<b>PUBLICITY</b>	<b>\$ 30,498</b>	<b>\$ 60,502</b>	<b>\$ 91,000</b>
FAMS		yes	
Marketing/Publicity Personnel	15,498	yes	
Press Promotion/Media Outreach	15,000		
Social Media		yes	
<b>TOTAL 2014/15 BUDGET</b>	<b>\$188,250</b>		

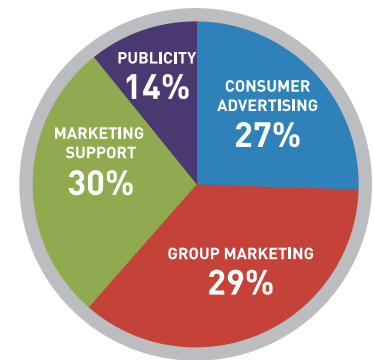
**BED TAX**



**OTHER FUNDING**



**COMBINED FUNDING**



<b>MTOT Projection @ 100%</b>	<b>\$170,498</b>
<b>Uncommitted Funds @ Audit (under budget line items)</b>	
<b>Rollover @ MTOT (unanticipated revenue)</b>	
<b>FY 2014 Project Monies moved to FY 2015</b>	<b>\$8,250</b>
<b>TOTAL PROJECTED BUDGET FY 2014-15</b>	<b>\$178,748</b>

Projecting 4% growth in occupancy and RevPar for Missoula (similar to last year), and rollover funds at audit, Missoula will meet its full budget of \$188,250.00

**Please identify projects and amounts you would eliminate or reduce if revenue decreases by 10%.**

Destination Missoula would reduce consumer advertising, opportunity, joint venture and Internet development/maintenance/marketing 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.



# APPENDIX A

---

Destination Missoula Keyword Targets (actual words used will vary based on cost of keywords at time of seasonal purchase) - This is the maximum list:

- Missoula Events
- Missoula Montana
- Missoula MT
- Missoula Airport
- Shopping in Missoula
- Missoula Restaurants
- Visit Missoula
- Lewis and Clark
- Missoula Weather
- Missoula Farmers Market
- Lake Missoula
- Glacial Lake Missoula
- Things To Do in Missoula
- Things To Do in Missoula Montana
- A River Runs Through It
- Missoula Map
- Missoula Breweries
- Missoula Winery
- Missoula Concerts
- Missoula Fly Fishing
- Downtown Missoula
- Montana Wildlife
- Montana
- Missoula Tourism
- Missoula Activities
- Breweries in Missoula
- Caras Park Missoula
- Missoula Camping
- University of Montana
- Missoula Museum
- Missoula Water Park
- Missoula Music
- Missoula Hotels
- Bars in Missoula MT
- Missoula Distillery
- Glacier National Park
- Yellowstone National Park
- Missoula Pictures
- Missoula Lodging
- Hot Springs in Montana
- Missoula Hot Springs
- Missoula Art Museum
- Missoula Parks
- Hotels in Missoula MT