



Discover Kalispell
FY'16 ANNUAL MARKETING PLAN
Kalispell TBID and Bed Tax



Photo Credit: Philip Granrud, Donnie Sexton, Firewater Films, Devin Schmit

Marketing Kalispell

Our marketing strategy identifies a mix of advertising, sales and service programs to deliver a consistent brand message and outstanding experiences through a cohesive allocation of bed tax and TBID funds. Key strategies are designed to make a measurable impact on visitations during the shoulder and winter months. Our target market consists of adventure travelers and Geotravelers who like to mix outdoor adventure with culture, history and a charming small town experience. Today's traveler is looking for unique experiences that connect them with the destination in a way that is authentic. Glacier National Park, Flathead Lake, and the vast availability of outdoor recreation in NW Montana offer unlimited adventure. In the center of it all lies Kalispell, a friendly community with historic charm, affordable experiences and soul-stirring beauty.

Key Accomplishments in 2014

- ✓ Montana Dragon Boat Festival Sep, 2014 = 73 teams, 47% out of market, \$1,763,775 economic impact
- ✓ Montana Spartan Race May, 2014– 5,500 racers, 80% out of market, \$1,709,180 economic impact
- ✓ Montana Pond Hockey Classic Feb, 2014 - 51 teams, 90% out of market, \$632,613 economic impact
- ✓ Montana State High School Rodeo Finals Jun, 2014 – 235 competitors, 98% out of market, \$1,072,536 economic impact
- ✓ Awarded three grants from MT Department of Commerce: SPEG for MT Pond Hockey Classic, TIIP Grant for Kalispell City-Wide Wayfinding, and VIC funding grant.
- ✓ Produced winter destination video: Kalispell Montana Discovery In Every Direction
- ✓ Kalispell VIC achieved a 12% increase in walk-ins over previous year
- ✓ TBID collections (FY14) = 8% increase in revenue for 2014 / + 25% in room nights between October-June
- ✓ Bed Tax collections (2014) = 11% increase in collections



Kalispell Chamber of Commerce/Convention & Visitor Bureau
 15 Depot Park
 Kalispell, MT 59901
 406-758-2800

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Discover & connect with Kalispell

Web: www.discoverkalispell.com

 Facebook/Discover Kalispell

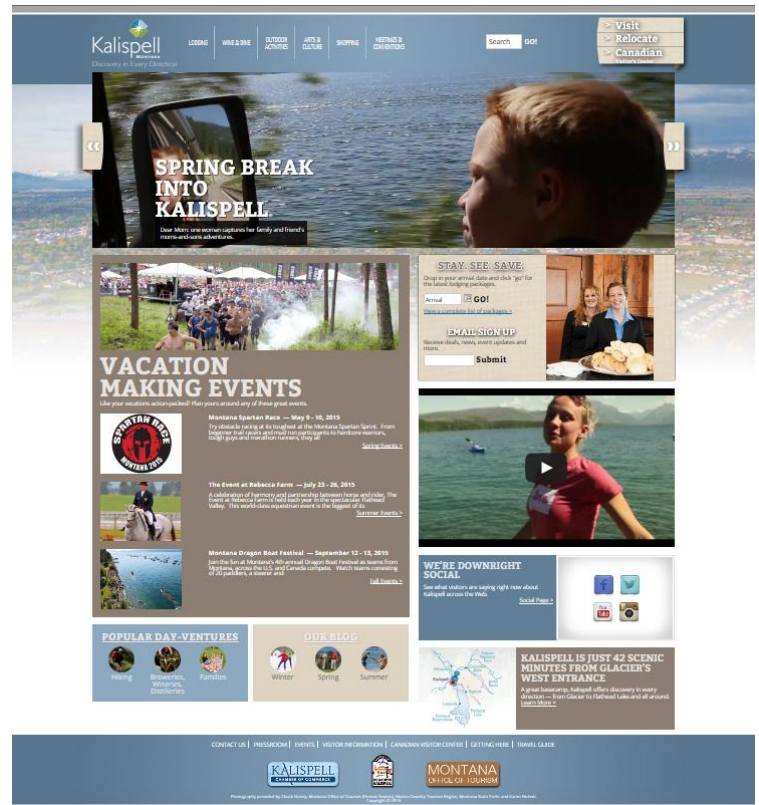
 Twitter @visit_Kalispell

 Instagram/Discover Kalispell

 You Tube/Discover Kalispell

#discoverkalispell

Kalispell Visitor Information Center
 15 Depot Park, Kalispell
 406-758-2800 or 888-888-2308





Describe your destination. How does your destination align with Montana's brand pillars?

You know that point in the center of a compass? 360 degrees radiate outward from this hub, forming a perfect 'compass rose'. That center point could also be called "Kalispell".

If Northwest Montana were a sovereign territory, Kalispell would be its capital. Not just the population capital, although with 20,000-plus residents it is the largest community in the area; and not just the geographical capitol, even though it pretty much center-punches the region. Kalispell is the nexus of Montana's northwest because, like the center of a compass, nothing in this spectacular natural playground is farther than a short, straight line away.

North: alpine excitement

East: Crown of the Continent - Glacier National Park

South: a jewel of a lake – Flathead Lake

West: quiet discoveries within national forest lands, mountain lakes, biking trails

As you might expect, tracing these radial lines back to their center leads to a bustling hub of activities. Kalispell is a vibrant and engaged community, and visitors need not look far for evidence of its charms. Woodland Park, the oldest and largest of the city's 30 parks, features shaded walking trails, a playground, a skateboarding park and a full water park complete with slides. Every week, Kalispell's streets shut down for ThursdayFest!, an outdoor block party that runs from the end of June through the end of August, where locals and visitors enjoy food vendors, music, a craft fair and beer garden. As the seasons change so do the vacation-making events. Equestrians will circle the last week of July on their calendars as Kalispell plays host to the world-famous Event at Rebecca Farms, extravaganza of English-style horse riding highlighted by a heart-pounding cross-country competition. In the early fall dragons (dragon boats that is) are spotted on Flathead Lake as 70 teams ply the waters at the Montana Dragon Boat Festival. Spring is kicked into gear when thousands of runners endure rugged terrain and obstacles at the Montana Spartan Race. The beauty and magic of winter is celebrated on a natural lake with 60 plus team from across North America at the Montana Pond Hockey Classic.

Of course, these are only four directions, and the center from which they spring. Every point on this compass leads to some kind of Montana adventure, every one of them unforgettable. All you need to do is get to its center — Kalispell — and chart your own course from there.

FY2016 Opportunities

The National Park Centennial during 2016 provides a great opportunity for the KCVB to capitalize on our close location to Glacier National Park. We will leverage the NPS focus on engaging youth and GNP's focus on the Peace Park with Waterton/Canada.

Heritage tourism is experiencing the places and artifacts that authentically represent the areas' past and present. Kalispell is the location to learn about the history of northwest Montana and Glacier National Park. Our historic downtown Main Street and east side homes are popular with visitors. During FY'16

the KCVB will identify opportunities to showcase our heritage and enhance learning opportunities through social media, guided tours and public relations.

The farm to table trend is not new but it's a movement that's gaining speed as it relates to travel planning. Some travelers choose a destination based on availability of culinary activities while others seek out those activities once a destination is decided upon. Flathead Valley has multiple opportunities to promote, such as restaurants that serve locally raised Yak and Bison, locally grown hops used by our local brewers, and Flathead Lake cherries incorporated in whiskeys and other spirits.

Challenges

Seasonality: The Flathead Valley is a seasonal destination. Although the area's tourism industry is making strides in smoothing out the hotel occupancy levels between the height of summer and quiet of November and April, seasonality continues to be a challenge. Seasonality of workers and businesses add to that challenge as well as unstable weather trends precipitated by climate change during shoulder months.

Canadian Economy: Alberta has been the number one residency for visitations into northwest Montana over the past several years. Canadian travelers are a key component of our drive market visitations during shoulder and winter seasons. With the current state of the Canadian economy and fluctuation of the dollar, Flathead County is already seeing a decrease in visitations from our neighboring provinces. How long it will last and the overall impact it will have is yet to be determined.

Lack of infrastructure and cost of transportation: Costs and availability of air travel continue to be a barrier for Kalispell to effectively increase visitations from some geographic and psychographic markets. There is a local effort in place to capture more direct flights (Glacier AERO). New markets actualized to date include seasonal flights to Chicago, Portland, Los Angeles, San Francisco Bay Area. Amtrak passenger rail transportation has been negatively affected due to increasing oil freight on the line causing significant delays and cancellations. The Flathead Valley has minimal local transportation options and no options to go from Kalispell to Glacier Park.

Public Assembly venues: Kalispell CVB will continue to work with community leaders and public officials to find opportunities to improve our public assembly venues which are limited due to size and condition.

Glacier National Park: KCVB will continue to increase awareness of year-round activities in Glacier Park to decrease the impact on the local economy due to the opening and closing of the Going To The Sun Road. As the major road reconstruction winds down, the Kalispell CVB will work with Xanterra, the National Park Service and other community leaders to push for an extended season at the park.

How will your marketing plan address the three-phase travel decision process of Inspiration, Orientation and Facilitation?

The **Inspiration phase** is one in which the traveler is made aware of the general product and develops a desire to visit the destination. Kalispell's marketing plan and initiatives leverage the Montana brand awareness achieved by MTOT then connects with our target markets to provide inspiration about our

destination through compelling imagery, engaging text and strong incentives to travel. Potential visitors connect with Kalispell's iconic natural resources (Glacier National Park and Flathead Lake) while gaining a sense of the welcoming small town and lifestyle. It's important to connect with those that already love you and talk about you, which includes the locals, as they can be your best spokespersons. That's where social media plays an important role. The media primarily used during this stage is DiscoverKalispell.com, print and online advertising, video, social media, emarketing, collateral, travel shows, signature events and publicity.

In the **Orientation phase** travelers begin to figure out the details of the trip. This phase focuses on the route the traveler will take, stops to make along the way, and what activities and attractions best fit their lifestyle and travel group. Media used to help orient the visitors to the offerings of our destination include DiscoverKalispell.com, Trip Advisor, social media, online advertising that points to associated landing pages, collateral, PR, and emarketing targeted to specific interests and other demographic factors. At this stage we offer suggested day trips and tours, consumer reviews, niche brochures such as Brews, Wines and Spirits, story pitches and lodging packages.

In the **Facilitation phase** travelers drill down and select specific activities and make reservations for transportation, lodging and activities. This would include looking at day trips and tours outside of the primary trip purpose (i.e. Glacier Park vacation: what are other activities for days outside of the park). The resources Kalispell provides to the visitor at this phase of the planning cycle is DiscoverKalispell.com – including superior mobile compatibility, visitor information center, wayfinding signage, maps, lodging packages, Trip Advisor for dining and activity suggestions.

Who is your market?

a. Primary Market

Geographic: Drive markets: Alberta and Southeastern British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, Montana
Direct Flight Markets: Seattle, Portland, Minneapolis, Chicago, Denver, Los Angeles area, San Francisco area

Demographics: 35-64 years old; couples and younger families; business travelers

Trip Type: Shoulder and winter seasons - business, groups, leisure short getaway/extended weekend
Summer - base camp and/or pre-post stay for Glacier National Park week-long summer/early fall vacations.

The first time visitor is primarily here for Glacier National Park, and specifically to experience the Going To The Sun Road. Travelers will choose Kalispell as the base camp for their trip because we offer a central location to a number of activities and provide affordable vacation options, particularly for families. The repeat visitor is less dependent on availability of all areas of Glacier Park and branches out to the other attractions such as Jewel Basin, Lone Pine State Park, and partakes in local culture such as the historic walking tour of downtown Kalispell. Kalispell also supports a strong business and group repeat market.

The Canadian market predominantly visits for shopping, particularly around Canadian holiday weekends. They also participate in sports such as skiing and golf as the prices are lower than similar venues in Canada and are regular participants in our signature events.

Kalispell supports and leverages the brand awareness that the Montana Office of Tourism has achieved in the key markets of Seattle, Chicago and Minneapolis through participation in co-op campaigns and social media campaigns. The KCVB directs consumer marketing funds to the Provinces of Alberta and southeastern British Columbia and Kalispell's drive, direct flight and Amtrak markets.

b. Emerging markets

Geographic: Markets identified through our signature event participants; new direct flight markets

Demographic: 30-45 years old; business travelers, couples, girls weekends, man-cations, multi-generational groups

Trip Type: Extended weekend, 5-7 days centered around events and meetings (shoulder and winter)

Business Travelers: The line between business and leisure is blurred. These travelers want the productivity and opportunity expected with a business trip but also seek new experiences and enjoyment. KCVB has an opportunity to engage with business and meeting/convention travelers on the ground stimulating them to talk about their experience in Kalispell on social media.

Multi-Generational Travel: According to a summer 2014 AAA poll, 36% of American families planned to take a multi-generational trip by mid-2015, up 4% from the year before. Baby boomers have money and a love for meaningful experiences and they are more able-bodied than their predecessors. "In the last couple of years we've seen almost 90% of multigenerational trips have an emphasis on, 'I'm going to be the global guide for my grandchild.'" Melissa Biggs Bradley, Indagare.

Volunteerism: Not a new trend but one that is supported by our target market, geotravellers. Why just go on a vacation when you can create a deeper connection to the world and give back – and learn something in the process. Northwest Montana has ample opportunities to engage both leisure and group travel in volunteerism. DMO Outlook calls it Conscious Travel, those interested in environmental sustainability and cultural rejuvenation.

Research that supports marketing initiatives

According to ITRR Nonresident Traveler Expenditure report for Flathead County visitors spend an average of \$518 million annually. The largest expenditure sector is retail sales followed by restaurant/bar, gasoline, grocery/snacks, hotel/motel.

Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research non-resident survey on travelers spending at least one night in Flathead County during Q1-Q4 2014:

28% of groups have all first time visitors	43% stayed in hotel/motel
55% of groups with all repeat visitors	Average group size: 2.24
21% flew on a portion of their trip	Average age: 56
71% used auto/truck as travel mode to enter MT	

Top 5 residency of origin: WA, Alberta, OR, CA, ID, MN, British Columbia
64% gave Vacation/recreation/pleasure as primary reason for visiting the area
Top activities include: scenic driving (77%), day hiking (54%), nature photography (50%), recreational shopping (42%), wildlife watching (40%) and visiting other historical sites (29%).

Business Travel: U.S. business travel is projected to top \$310 billion this year, a record 6.2% increase on top of a record-breaking 2014. A record number of business travelers are taking a record number of trips and spending record amounts on sales calls, training meetings and corporate events, said Joe Bates, vice president of research at the Global Business Travel Association Foundation. (Travel Market Report)
Business travelers are spending more time engaging with a travel destination, using business travel as an excuse to explore something new and expand their horizons. Six out of ten respondents are more likely to mix business and pleasure on trips than they were five years ago. They want to positively impact not only their careers but also their lives. (Skift)

Impact of Mobile and Social Media: Travel in 2015 will be planned and executed online and on mobile devices. How to join the existing conversation in a manageable way? A brand that connects to travelers' ideals of themselves and the world will be more successful in building long-term meaningful relationships with customers. (Skift)

As a DMO we need to focus on building quality engagement versus working to build numbers of followers (reach). Two methods to achieve that are by using quality lifestyle posts that accurately portray our destination and identify and build influencer relationships – who is talking about us and using the voice we want.

Although content is king, visuals reign (Skift). Our destination and all of the surrounding beautiful scenery lends itself well for Instagram, Facebook and video on our You Tube channel.

The following trends for social media give direction on where to focus efforts during FY'16:

- Twitter and Facebook will be used as a real time concierge in answering visitors' queries, or promoting specific events and attractions.
- 3 out of every 4 people post photos to social networking sites from a trip.
- 92% of consumers say they trust word of mouth and recommendations from friends and family above all other forms of advertising.
- 52% of Facebook users said their friends' photos inspired their holiday choice and travel plans.

(Social Media Today, Skift and Four Pillars)

Meetings-Groups: 67% of professional meeting planners are searching online before they contact a destination (Tom Martin). Next generation attendees crave collaboration and experiences to deliver more meaning and context. They are looking for productivity, opportunity and new experiences. Meeting planners are interested in unique venues and experiences to increase the appeal and productivity of their events. As travel costs and headaches related to travel continue to rise, more planners will be looking closer to home. Also the growing concerns for sustainability will increase the importance of going local in both location of meetings and food options.

According to DMO Outlooks, Associations are diminishing in size due to generational shifts but the total number of Associations is increasing. This leads to more meetings with fewer attendees which is a good fit for Kalispell. Meeting planning companies such as CVent are seeing a 33% increase from non-professional planners (Executive Assistants, Brides planning their own weddings etc.) versus professional planners (Conference Direct, Helms Briscoe). 2013-2014 RFP's submitted = 35.5 % (non-professional) 62% (professional). 2014-2015 RFP's submitted = 50% (non-professional) 50% (professional). (CVent)

DMO's interested in growing the M&C market need to expand their reach to non-professional meeting planners and be creative to grow business. To take full advantage of the meeting audience, DMO's should use technology to extend the lifecycle of the meeting by soliciting engagement through social channels and apps before and after the meeting.

Economy Services: Companies like Airbnb, HomeAway, VRBO, Luxury Retreats and other upcoming startups are driving the market. The industry defines this segment as Shared Economy, assets that are either rented or bartered (e.g., Airbnb and Uber) outside of traditional commercial arrangements. Traditional lodging properties (hotels and motels) need to use technology to speak to the economy and experiential traveler. KCVB needs to find ways to acknowledge that trend while continuing to highlight the affordable variety of lodging found in Kalispell.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES



Goals

1. Connect with potential and repeat visitors as demonstrated through increased usage of our key platforms (website, social media, and newsletter subscriptions).
2. Grow winter season visitations
3. Work cooperatively with other local organizations to promote local events calendar
4. Increase earned media placement for Kalispell in travel media
5. Expand and improve resources at the Visitor Information Center
6. Provide sponsorships to identified events and sports tournaments that have long term growth potential during shoulder and winter seasons.
7. Connect with active meeting planners in drive market
8. Play an active role as a voice for tourism in the state and the community through positive publicity and outreach.

Objectives

Consumer Travel

- a. Increase total unique visitors to website by 8% over FY'14
- b. Increase unique visits to website from mobile devices by 10%
- c. Increase occupancy at TBID hotels between November and February by 2%
- d. Generate 6 media stories in target markets through public relations efforts
- e. Expand VIC hours to 7 days a week between June 1 and Sept 1
- f. Identify method to coordinate event calendars with members and relevant local organizations

Events and Sports Tournaments

- a. Successfully produce established signature events: on budget and increased economic impact to community.
- b. Establish sponsorship for two other events or sports tournaments that have long term growth potential during off-season.

Meetings & Conventions

- a. Establish Customer Relationship Management program and Lead Generation Service to improve communication with identified meeting planners in drive market.
- b. Create marketing program for local and out of market use to promote Kalispell as meetings/convention destination.
- c. Create a comprehensive database and recruitment program of all active regional planners.
- d. Update and enhance promotional materials including photos

KCVB Combined Budgets FY'16

TBID Projected Revenue	\$ 525,000
FY'15 Carryover	\$ -
Total	\$ 525,000

Bed Tax Projected Revenue	\$ 124,326
FY'15 Carryover	\$ 6,000
Total	\$ 130,326

Program Description	Project	Program Total	Project	Program Total
Staffing & Operations		\$ 235,500	Administration	\$22,700
Marketing Support		\$ 8,000		\$41,000
Smith Travel Reports	\$5,500		TAC/Gov Conf	\$1,000
Memberships	\$2,500		VIC staff - year round	\$25,000
			seasonal	\$5,000
			Marketing/PR Staff	\$10,000
Website		\$ 18,000		\$ -
Maintenance and enhancements				
SEO & SEM				
Fulfillment		\$ -		\$2,450
			phone (800 line)	\$150
			postage	\$2,000
			supplies	\$300
Consumer Marketing		\$85,000		\$44,176
Photo and video library	\$5,000		Photo and video library	\$3,676
Social Media admin & advertising	\$8,000		Social Media admin & adv.	\$8,000
Creative services	\$15,000		Online Advertising	\$14,000
Media buy: print and online	\$30,000		Print Advertising	\$10,000
Travel show attendance	\$2,500		Travel show attendance	\$1,500
Trade show booth	\$500			
Airport displays	\$7,000		Visitor guide & niche brochures	\$2,000
EMarketing	\$7,000		Opportunity	\$5,000
Visitor guide and niche brochures	\$10,000			
Events and Sports -Operations and Promotion		\$108,500		\$15,000
Dragon Boat Festival	\$25,000			
Spartan Race	\$25,000			

Pond Hockey	\$25,000
Other event & sports sponsorships	\$5,000
Event Operations Management	\$28,500

Event Promotion	\$15,000
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Groups and M&C	\$40,000	\$ 5,000
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Meeting Planner Shows	\$5,000
Meeting Planner FAM	\$10,000
Meeting planner incentive program	\$9,000
Group photo and video library	\$6,000
M&C guide	\$3,000
Customer Relationship Mgmt System	\$2,000
Lead Generating Service	\$5,000

Cvent Subscription & Adv	\$5,000
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Publicity	\$30,000	\$ -
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Travel media press trips	\$13,000
Proactive & reactive PR	\$16,000
Kalispell branded merchandise	\$1,000

TOTAL TBID	\$ 525,000
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TOTAL Bed Tax	\$ 130,326
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