



www.DiscoverKalispell.com

Kalispell Convention & Visitor Bureau
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FY 2014 Marketing Plan
July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

PURPOSE

The Kalispell CVB is dedicated to enhancing the economic vitality of our community by promoting Kalispell as a year-round leisure travel and meeting and convention destination by efficiently marketing our attributes and amenities while encouraging continued respect for our outstanding natural environment and quality of life. The KCVB marketing plan 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 Tourism Business Improvement District funds.

IDENTITY

Kalispell's brand aligns with the Montana Brand, offering a cohesive voice when marketing our state:

- More spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48.
 - Kalispell is surrounded by Montana's iconic natural wonders of Glacier National Park and Flathead Lake.
- Vibrant and charming small towns that serve as gateways to our natural wonders.
 - Kalispell is a mix of proximity, city comfort and discovery. When visitors make Kalispell part of their Montana vacation, they will discover something fun, exciting, unexpected or remarkable no matter the direction they head.
- Breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality at night.
 - In Kalispell we are welcoming tour guides and genuine people who care about the visitor experience. We provide lodging, dining and entertainment with a sense of Montana sophistication and affordability that our visitors find both surprising and comfortable.

Kalispell is:

- We are in the MIDDLE of what people come to Montana for: iconic natural wonders of Glacier National Park and Flathead Lake and a variety of recreation opportunities.
- We are nonstop DISCOVERY: there's something new to see and do in every direction
- We are BALANCE for an outdoor-centric trip: from national brand stores to fun boutiques, from symphony concerts to farmers' markets, from blue plate specials to four-star gourmet
- We are GENUINE hospitality: Kalispell is a real town with community events and warm, welcoming people who are enthusiastic about sharing the place they live
- Kalispell is the location of larger meeting and convention space and event facilities and more guest rooms than other locals in the Valley
- The regional trade center for retail, health care, business and education
- A cooperation of numerous associations and organizations all with the common goal of improving our economy and creating a vibrant community
- A travel destination for southern Alberta and eastern British Columbia, Canada
- Accessed by Glacier Park Int'l Airport and Amtrak's Empire Builder

Opportunities:

- Increase awareness of Kalispell as a travel destination, not a pass through to the Park and other areas in the Flathead Valley.
- Create signature events during the winter and shoulder seasons to create a measurable impact on year-round visitations.
- Work with community leaders and public officials to find opportunities to improve our public assembly venues which are limited due to size and condition.
- Increase awareness of year-round activities in Kalispell, Glacier Park and the Flathead Valley to decrease the impact on the local economy due to the opening and closing of the Going To The Sun Road.
- Work with the airport and other community leaders to identify opportunities to increase flights and seat capacity.
- Communicate effectively with travelers and local businesses to minimize the negative perceptions around the federal government sequestration cuts. Those impacts include: 1) the closure of the Glacier Park Intl Airport control tower, 2) the decrease in hours of the custom office which impacts private air traffic from Canada by diverting them to other airports such as Great Falls or Spokane, 3) decrease in availability of services at Glacier National Park and 4) decreased hours of operation at border ports of entry.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Our audience consists of adventure travelers and Geotravellers who like to mix their outdoor adventure with culture, history and a charming small town experience. Kalispell's audience is not united by age or demographic or by their reason for visiting (vacation vs. business). What our visitors share is that they're looking for a taste of outdoor adventure – hiking, boating, rafting, wildlife viewing, skiing, fishing, hockey – with the opportunity to experience culture, history and an affordable variety of lodging, dining and shopping.

The 2012 Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research non-resident survey provides the following information on travelers spending at least one night in Flathead County:

28% of groups have all first time visitors	53% of groups with all repeat visitors
25% flew on a portion of their trip	66% used auto/truck as their travel mode to enter MT
89% visited Glacier National Park	

Top activities include: scenic driving (81%), nature photography (58%), day hiking (56%), wildlife watching (50%) and recreational shopping (39%).

The leisure traveler visiting our area for the first time is primarily here for Glacier National Park, and specifically to experience the Going To The Sun Road. Visitors 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.

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. The KCVB signature events are designed to attract participants and spectators from Canada. This market is a strong segment of the repeat visitor during the shoulder and winter months.

Kalispell will support and leverage the brand awareness that the Montana Office of Tourism has achieved in the key markets of Seattle, Chicago and Minneapolis through participation in coop online and print advertising campaigns. The KCVB will direct other consumer marketing funds to the neighboring Canadian provinces of Alberta and southeastern British Columbia and the drive, direct flight and Amtrak markets which include Spokane/eastern Washington, Coeur D'Alene Idaho, Seattle, Portland, and northern California.



The KCVB signature events provide a strong incentive to drive visitations from our target markets during specific months that historically have demonstrated lower occupancy.

- Montana Dragon Boat Festival - September: key markets include Calgary, Lethbridge, Edmonton, British Columbia, Portland, Tacoma/Seattle, and San Francisco.
- Montana Pond Hockey Classic - February: key markets include Alberta and British Columbia, Minneapolis, eastern Washington and northeast U.S. through collaboration with our promoter Pond Hockey Classic.
- Montana Spartan Race - May: during FY'14 Spartan Race Inc. is proposing to offer one of their upper level races in Montana which will serve as a strong destination race bringing participants from all areas of the U.S.

The meetings and conventions, group and incentive target market includes groups that are 80+ in size interested in a locale which provides their attendees recreational opportunities and iconic vacation attractions such as Glacier National Park. During FY'14 the KCVB will focus on meeting planners in the Pacific Northwest, primarily Seattle and Portland.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY TRENDS

Today's traveler is more social, more adventurous and looking for a meaningful vacation. Specifically what they are looking for are unique experiences that connect them with the destination in a way that is authentic. Adventure should not be assumed to just mean a daring bungee jump off a bridge into a deep ravine; adventure includes both relaxing and active experiences that takes a traveler out of their normal routine. Glacier National Park, Flathead Lake, and the vast availability of outdoor recreation found in northwest Montana offers unlimited adventure. In the center of it all lies Kalispell, a friendly community with historic charm, affordable adventure and soul-stirring beauty.

Today's traveler is attracted to a destination that speaks in a voice that is frank and honest, while conveying expertise. They are attracted to a destination that celebrates and supports sustainability. Kalispell's story is told through imagery and messaging that is authentic and celebrates the character of our area and sustainability such as the availability of local products and the role of local community volunteers in creating and maintaining many of the trails and parks that visitors enjoy.

87% of travelers use the internet for the bulk of their trip planning. Specifically the websites used to make travel decisions are social media and consumer reviews. 88% of travelers consult reviews before making a booking and half say reviews are the greatest influence on booking choices. (Eye For Travel, DigitalVisitor.com) This "earned media" is what consumers trust above other forms of advertising. Nielsen Global Survey reported that 92% of consumers trust word-of-mouth and recommendations from friends and family above more traditional media, an 18% increase since 2007. Kalispell's social presence includes Facebook, Twitter and a sponsorship of Kalispell's Trip Advisor site. Additionally we connect consumers to DiscoverKalispell.com through live feeds of those social media sites.

A Michigan State University study shows that people using smart phones have tripled. The study also revealed that wireless use was higher on vacation (40%) than at home (25%) and that people use the web more to plan vacations (80%) than for work (70%). Since Wi-Fi is available at most locations travelers check local weather, restaurant recommendations, fishing reports, trail maps and much more during their visit. Destination Marketing Organizations don't get to decide which platform or device is used to access that information, the visitor decides. With the increase in use of mobile devices Kalispell is retrofitting DiscoverKalispell.com to responsive web design to provide travelers with the most comprehensive and user-friendly access to internet connectivity and information regardless of their device of choice.

During 2011 and 2012 hotel occupancy in Kalispell increased a total of 12.3%. July and August trend well above 90% while occupancy during November through February historically has averaged around 35%. Kalispell saw a 7% increase in occupancy for the months of Nov 2012 – Feb 2013. In speaking with local Kalispell restaurants and retail outlets several stated that they saw a 30% increase in business during the late fall and winter months. The key strategies for FY'14 are designed to continue to make a measurable impact on visitations during the shoulder and winter months.



HOW THE MARKETING PLAN SUPPORTS THE 5-YEAR STATEWIDE TOURISM STRATEGIC PLAN

The Kalispell Convention & Visitor Bureau supports the Montana Tourism and Recreation Strategic Plan 2013-2018.

GOALS

- I. Achieve increased inquiries and visitations through a targeted consumer marketing campaign
- II. Increase publicity placement of Kalispell in travel media in key markets
- III. Improve the visitor experience and available resources
- IV. Play an active role as a voice for tourism and in the planning and evolution of community enhancements
- V. Generate qualified meeting and convention leads
- VI. Recruit regional sports tournaments
- VII. Secure events that have long-term potential during shoulder and winter seasons

OBJECTIVES

Consumer Travel

- a. Increase Kalispell CVB opt-in subscriber base by 1,000 individuals
- b. Increase unique visitors to DiscoverKalispell.com by 10% over FY'13
- c. Generate 4 media stories in target markets through increased public relations efforts
- d. Promote Kalispell at 3 consumer travel shows in key markets
- e. Generate 3 FAM trips to Kalispell (travel media, press trips, tour operators, promoters, planners)

Groups/Sports/Events

- a. Achieve 1,000 unique room nights between September and June in the groups and meeting market
- b. Achieve 3,000 unique room nights between September and June in the special event and tournament market
- c. Secure 3 events during target seasons

MARKETING STRATEGIES

To reach the FY14 marketing plan goals the key strategies are designed to build upon successes realized in FY13 and look to new opportunities to connect with potential travelers and build the awareness of Kalispell as a travel and meeting destination. The initiatives are designed to reach the visitor during the three-phase travel decision process of inspiration, orientation and facilitation through utilization of the media and technology that reach today's travelers.

Strategies:

Rationale / Expected Outcome:

Funding:

Travel Decision:

GOAL I	Achieve increased inquiries and visitations through targeted consumer marketing campaign		
DiscoverKalispell	Continue to enhance and refine the website to create an exceptional planning tool for visitors. This will include a retrofit of the site in Responsive Web Design to augment the content, look and functionality based on the user's screen size (i.e. which device they are using) with a goal of increasing site duration by mobile devices. Continue to monitor website analytics to decrease overall site bounce rate, increase site duration and pages per visit. Engage consumers through a feed of reviews from Trip Advisor, Facebook and other social media.	TBID	Inspiration Orientation Facilitation



Advertising and Social Media	The advertising strategy will focus on increasing visitations between September and June through highly trackable media that builds awareness of Kalispell as a travel destination: Online marketing through banner advertising Trip Advisor sponsorship MTOT Coops and other sources Print, radio and broadcast opportunities that demonstrate strong ROI in our target markets.	TBID / Bed Tax	Inspiration
	Promoting the fall, winter and spring experiences available in Kalispell and surrounding area and identifying Kalispell as an adventure sports destination through promotion of signature events and activities.	TBID / Bed Tax	
E-Direct Marketing	KCVB will send subject-specific communications quarterly and as applicable to promote special events and create incentives for travel through promotion of packages, sample itineraries and signature events.	Bed Tax	Inspiration Orientation Facilitation
KCVB Database	Increase opt-in KCVB database through trade and travel shows, online and social media advertising and promotional campaigns.	TBID / Bed Tax	
Collateral	The Kalispell visitor guide will be used as a fulfillment piece. Annual redesign of the guide will take into consideration the findings from MTOT's visitor guide study and include Region/CVB design standards on cover to identify as "official" state travel guide. Increase the number of distribution points in our target markets.	TBID / Bed Tax	Inspiration Orientation
	Niche publications will be produced in cooperation with local businesses and organizations. Examples include regional birding brochure and a brochure promoting local wineries, breweries and distilleries.	TBID	Inspiration Orientation
Travel Shows	KCVB will promote Kalispell at three consumer shows per year which include Calgary and targeted demographics such as Sportsman Expos, Winter Sports Expo, and Travel and Adventure shows held in identified target markets.	TBID / Bed Tax	Inspiration Orientation
GOAL II	Increase publicity placement of Kalispell in travel media in key markets		
Public Relations/Publicity	The KCVB will invest in publicity efforts to position Kalispell as a travel destination. Media coverage and endorsement of Kalispell will continue to drive discovery of our destination to an audience that we could not afford to reach with traditional advertising. This will be achieved through hosting travel writers, generation of story pitches and press releases highlighting specific activities and to promote our signature events.	TBID	Inspiration Orientation
GOAL III	Improve the visitor experience and resources		
Traveler Resources	The KCVB seeks to create brand ambassadors in the local community by promoting Super Host and Sustainable Business training.	TBID / Bed Tax	Facilitation
	Expanding available visitor services through participation in MTOT's VIC Program.	Bed Tax	Facilitation
	Continued implementation of the downtown and city-wide Wayfinding system.	TBID / Bed Tax	Facilitation



GOAL IV	Play an active role as a voice for tourism and the planning and evolution of community enhancements		
Tourism Industry Relations	The KCVB will continue to work cooperatively with Voice of Montana Tourism and Tourism Matters to Montana, to educate Flathead Valley residents, business leaders and legislators on the economic benefits of tourism and importance of tourism funding.	TBID	
GOAL V	Generate qualified meeting and convention leads and receive RFP's		
Meetings and Conventions	DMAI Membership and EPowerMINT subscription	Bed Tax	Facilitation
	Meeting Planner Trade Shows and familiarization tours	TBID	Inspiration Orientation
	Assist member lodging properties to develop effective reporting program to help TBID gauge room pickup through TBID initiatives	TBID	
	Build through the CRM a consistent message to planners interested in Kalispell. Push out through online and print advertising and emarketing.	TBID / Bed Tax	Inspiration
GOAL VI	Recruit sports tournaments		
Sports Tournaments	Create incentives for state and regional sporting events to relocate to Kalispell that will drive room nights during the winter and shoulder season.	TBID	Inspiration Facilitation
GOAL VII	Secure events that have long-term potential during shoulder and winter seasons		
Event Recruitment	The KCVB will continue to identify events that have national appeal and reinforce the destinations key attributes. The events will be strategically placed in the shoulder and winter seasons to minimize regional date conflicts and meet strict criteria for long-term growth. The KCVB will continue to build out of market participation and identify growth expectations for Dragon Boat, Spartan Race and Pond Hockey events. Create a national brand that Kalispell is the place for adventure sports and enthusiasts. Identify opportunities to reinforce that message through local partners and places.	TBID	Inspiration Facilitation

BUDGET

The KCVB combined budgets of bed tax and TBID total \$593,546 with 60% of that total directed at the key marketing strategies described above. In addition to the TBID funds KCVB utilizes a private account to manage the signature events which is comprised of revenues and expenses directly related to the administration and marketing of Dragon Boat and Pond Hockey. Revenues include grant funds, event sponsorships, participant registrations, and vendor fees. Expenses charged against those revenues include advertising and marketing expenses, promoter fees, safety and insurance expenses and outside services utilized for event production.



TBID Marketing Plan Budget FY'14							
		TBID Projected Revenue	\$ 475,000				
		Rollover from FY'13	\$ 20,000				
		Total	\$ 495,000				
Program Description	Project	Program Total	% of Total Budget	Other Event Revenues	Total Event Revenues	Total Event Expenses	Net to TBID
Staffing - wages and benefits		\$ 146,918	30%				
Operations		\$ 31,400	6%				
Rent	\$6,780						
Phone	\$2,520						
Office Supplies	\$900						
Postage & copies	\$2,400						
Audit	\$6,000						
Bookkeeping	\$2,400						
Tax Prep	\$200						
City of Kalispell Assessment Fee	\$5,000						
Travel & entertainment expenses	\$2,500						
Tech support	\$500						
Equipment & Furniture	\$2,200						
Research, Education, Memberships		\$ 8,800	2%				
Smith Travel Reports	\$4,800						
Training and Education	\$500						
Memberships (TMMT, Voices of MT Tourism, KDA, Calgary CVB)	\$3,500						
Website		\$ 25,000	5%				
Maintenance and enhancements	\$15,000						
SEO & SEM	\$10,000						
Publications		\$ 12,000	2%				
Visitor guide and niche brochures							
Consumer Marketing		\$ 87,150	18%				
Build photo and video library	\$15,000						
Social Media administration (Trip Advisor, Facebook, Twitter)	\$20,000						
Creative services: creative for online, print, broadcast	\$8,000						
Media buy: placement for online, print, broadcast	\$25,000						
Travel show attendance	\$8,000						
Trade show booth	\$400						
Airport VIC maintenance	\$750						
Wayfinding signage	\$10,000						
Event Marketing		\$ 85,000	17%				
Montana Dragon Boat Festival	\$25,000			\$89,300	\$114,300	(\$114,950)	(\$650)
Glacier Series Spartan Race	\$20,000			\$0	\$20,000	(\$20,000)	\$0
Pond Hockey	\$20,000			\$66,500	\$86,500	(\$69,800)	\$16,700
Other event sponsorship	\$10,000						
Event Promoter Recruitment	\$10,000						
Group Marketing		\$ 79,000	16%				
Trade shows	\$20,000						
Meeting Planner FAM	\$10,000						
Incentive program to generate leads from meeting planners	\$5,000						
Group photo and video library	\$6,000						
Online advertising - banner ads, social media	\$10,000						
Print advertising - meeting planner publications	\$8,000						
Customer Relationship Management System (CRM)	\$5,000						
Sports Tournament Recruitment	\$15,000						
Public Relations/Publicity		\$ 19,732	4%				
Hosting travel media	\$7,300						
Press releases, story pitches, reactive requests, press room	\$10,000						
Visitor hospitality training, volunteer appreciation	\$500						
Kalispell branded merchandise	\$1,932						
Total		\$495,000	100%				

