

## **Profile**

**Applicant:** Regional Application

**Grant Manager:** Paige Farmer

**Name of Organization:** Maine Beaches Association

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 388  
York, ME 03909

**Physical Address:** 1 Stonewall Ave.  
York, ME 03909

**Office Hours:** Available as needed

**Telephone Number:** 207-748-3203

**Fax Number:** 207-363-7320

**Date of Incorporation:** January 19th, 2000

**EIN:** 01-0523313

## **What were the top three highlights from the previous fiscal year?**

1). Marketing: With funding from the MTMPP program the Maine Beaches Association (MBA) completed several successful marketing projects. They include:

MBA Visitor Guide: 50,000 48-page color magazines were printed and updates included revamping the entire layout, adding local editorial, updating graphics and a redesign of pages highlighting activities in the area.

MBA Website: The website continues to see an increase in unique visitors, up 30% from last year. New content is being developed, but as is indicated later in this proposal, the MBA will be seeking 2012 funds to buy into the Tech Share program, which will include a major redesign of the site.

Travel/Trade Shows: The MBA has attended 5 travel shows to date and more than 5,000 bags of collateral, including the MBA travel guide, have been distributed. The MBA will attend two more shows this grant year.

On-line advertising: The MBA will run a large ad from May 15-June 15 on Boston.com designed to engage last minute travelers and to increase overnight stays during Memorial Day weekend. The ad will appear on the travel and weather pages for over 200,000 impressions.

Videography: The MBA contracted with Dan Hickman of Glance Studios to develop a video library with at least 60 minutes of high definition footage. The MBA will own the footage, which can be used to produce video spots on the region.

2). Building Regional Collaborations: The MBA will be hosting a second annual Hospitality Training & Attractions Expo in June 2011. The theme of the event is "You CAN Get There From Here" and will focus on getting to and around the region. Additionally, the MBA will be sending a mailing out to 3500 tourism businesses in the region highlighting opportunities to work collaboratively in marketing the area.

3). Branding: The MBA has scheduled a branding workshop for June to create a cohesive, consistent and relevant brand for all regional marketing initiatives produced by the group.

## **Please state your three primary goals for the next year and how you expect them to increase tourism revenue for the region with cooperative funds.**

The Maine Beaches Association's three primary goals for 2011-2012 include:

1). Continuing to promote a coordinated, collaborative approach to marketing the Maine Beaches Region as a premier 4-season vacation destination.

2). Increasing utilization of technology to promote the region, specifically targeting certain geographic and demographic markets.

3). Expanding our public relations work to increase visibility of the region in travel publications, both printed and electronic.

By coordinating our efforts and emphasizing travel to the area during the shoulder season (specifically Memorial Day and Labor Day), we anticipate filling beds that would otherwise be empty, and increasing dollars spent in the region during those times. Additionally, our strategies allow us the opportunity to promote quick getaways as well as longer, planned vacations, and will highlight activities in the region, driving additional revenues into the local economy.

## **Please describe the overall strategy you will implement to achieve these goals.**

### 1). Mobilizing the tourism industry:

\*Continued outreach to hospitality industry in the region

\*Regular communication regarding cooperative marketing opportunities (including travel shows)

\*Host annual hospitality training and attractions expo

### 2). Marketing:

\*Production and distribution of 50,000 2012 MBA visitor guides

\*Migration of current website to Tech Share (includes a significant redesign)

\*Expand Facebook presence; Create Twitter account

\*Identify and utilize existing travel websites that could be used to promote the region (i.e. Trip Advisor, etc.)

\*Create on-line advertising campaign on Boston.com to promote fall travel to the region

\*Attend strategically selected trade and travel shows

\*Work with Nancy Marshall Communications to identify editorial opportunities to promote the region

### 3). Working with the Office of Tourism

\*Advise Office of Tourism regarding the needs of the regional hospitality industry

\*Maintain representation on the Regional Advisory Committee and the Maine Tourism Commission

\*Serve as conduit for information regarding tourism and tourism marketing opportunities between the Office of Tourism and the regional hospitality industry

## **How do these goals and strategies fit with the Office of Tourism's?**

The MBA has developed goals and strategies that mirror and augment the 8 primary goals outlined by the Office of Tourism in the 5-year marketing plan.

Additionally, the role of the MBA reflects the values and direction described in the 5-year plan as it relates to how regional partners should function.

## **Please describe how the financial resources will be monitored by your organization.**

The Maine Beaches Association contracts with Paige Farmer for administrative and project management. Ms. Farmer works under the direction of the MBA Board of Directors, which reviews financial and program activity on a monthly basis.

A budget is created annually and monthly financial reports, which are reviewed by the Treasurer prior to the meeting, include a statement of Profit & Loss, Cash Flow, Budget v. Actual, Balance Sheet and Grant Financial Activities. Finances are recorded using an accrual system that allows us to track income and expenses within the year/month they are generated.

In addition to ongoing monitoring provided by the Grant Project Manager and Board of Directors, the MBA has an annual form 990 prepared by Yorke Associates, which includes a review of related financial statements and other supporting documentation.

## Primary Analysis

### Research

**Is your region or event conducting any research initiatives this year?**

Yes

**If you have Research Initiatives, please state the purpose and give a brief description of each.**

With the redevelopment of the MBA website and the migration to Tech Share, we will be in a better position technologically to collect consumer information via the site. While the MBA has always had a survey on the site, because of system limitations, promoting and encouraging the survey has been difficult. With Tech Share, we anticipate being able to highlight the survey and will explore the idea of offering an annual giveaway as incentive for completing the survey.

### Public Relations

**Who is the person/company that is responsible for your PR program?**

**Company:** Maine Beaches Association (Paige Farmer)

**Address:** PO Box 388  
York, ME 03909

**Phone:** 207-748-3203

**Email Address:** paige814@comcast.net

**Would you be interested in participating in a two-hour public relations workshop?**

Yes

**Would you like to be contacted regarding PR efforts?**

Yes

**Please provide a list of editorial contacts:**

To date we have utilized Nancy Marshall Communications for editorial guidance. We recognize that NMC is working on behalf of all the regions to promote the state in a coordinated way. The MBA supports those efforts by providing information on an as needed basis to the public relations firm as they pitch and respond to requests for story ideas profiling the region.

**Please provide a list of publications and/or broadcast outlets you would most like to target:**

Boston Globe/Boston.com  
Boston Herald  
NECN  
New York Times  
Hartford Courant  
Worcester Telegram  
Providence Journal  
Family Fun Magazine  
Family Circle  
Women's World  
AARP Magazine  
AAA Horizons  
Bike Magazine  
Prevention  
Modern Bride  
Reader's Digest

Gay Maine  
NE Travel  
Country Living  
Cottage Home  
Yankee Magazine  
Downeast Magazine

## Co-Op Efforts

### In what type(s) of co-op effort, if any, is your group participating?

Internal, e.g. A local matching program with hotels and inns., External, e.g. Partnerships with other groups., State-wide, e.g. Coordinated intra-state vacation effort in partnership with the MOT, participate in MOT/PSA

### Please describe in further detail your co-op efforts:

Internal: The MBA visitor guide is based on a cooperative ad placed in Maine Invites You and includes nearly 100 advertisers from the region. Additionally, the MBA provides opportunities for cooperative advertising to regional hospitality businesses via trade shows.

External: The MBA is working with other regions to identify potential opportunities to collaborate on shared marketing.

State: The MBA continues to set aside \$10,000 in MTMPP funding to support statewide marketing initiatives.

## Website Development & Maintenance

### If you currently have a website, please provide us with your URL:

URL: [www.mainebeachesassociation.com](http://www.mainebeachesassociation.com)

### Please provide a brief description of the overall goal of your site and the functionality that the site offers to its visitors:

The MBA website serves as a portal to the region for potential visitors and travel professionals seeking more information on a Maine Beaches visit.

The website includes basic information on visiting the region, information on local communities, listings of places to stay, dine and play, a media room and a section for local hospitality partners.

### Please provide a brief description of the intended strategy for improvement over the next one to two years:

As we move into 2011/2012, the site will undergo a major transformation as we migrate to Tech Share. This will dramatically change the look, feel and navigation of the site and will provide a myriad of opportunities for local hospitality businesses to benefit as well.

Key additions to the site via Tech Share will include promoting packages in the local area, regional mapping and consumer research.

## Visitor Database

**Do you collect and compile information on your visitors (names, addresses, areas of interest, etc.)?**

Yes

**If so, please describe how the database is currently structured and how it is used for marketing and communication initiatives:**

The MBA has an on-line survey linked to our website for gathering basic contact information from website visitors. As we implement Tech Share and can improve the collection of this data, it will be then used for regular communications with potential travelers, alerting them to targeted opportunities for planning their visit. These may include packages, hot deals and weather related opportunities.

## Budget Summary

### Current Projects

#### **Project 1: Cooperative Regional Advertising**

**Description:** Regional Representatives chose to support Public Service Announcements to inform Maine residents about the role tourism plays in the Maine economy and to promote vacationing in Maine.

**MTMPP Award:** \$10,000.00

#### **Project 2: Administrative Costs**

**Description:** The Administrative fee is 20% of the regional grant allocation and does not require a match.

**MTMPP Award:** \$19,200.00

#### **Project 3: Maine Beaches Magazine-2012**

**Project Type:** Fulfillment

**Description:** MTMPP funds will be used to redesign our 48-page color magazine. The advertising section is derived from our cooperative ad buy in "Maine Invites You", which provides significant value added and incentive for local businesses to place an ad in the state's fulfillment piece.

50,000 copies of the magazine will be produced in 2012, and they will be distributed through trade shows and sales missions, via information and visitor centers in Maine and through CTM Media Group's Corporate Canadian Program.

While "Maine Invites You" is seen as an extremely beneficial program for the Southern Maine Coast, the size and scope of the book can overwhelm the Maine Beaches section. Creating a stand-alone piece provides an economical opportunity for the region to showcase itself to potential visitors.

#### **Element 1: Redesign of 2011 MBA Magazine**

**Project:** Maine Beaches Magazine-2012

**Element Description:** The 2011 MBA magazine will be a 48 page 4-color brochure that includes sections on how to travel to the

area, what to do while here, a regional calendar of events for vacation planning, a section for Canadian visitors and information about each of the communities making up the Southern Maine region. New additions in 2012 will include more editorial and the creation of "children's pages". Children's pages might include things like puzzles, coloring, games and the like and will be designed to keep the magazine "active" in the hands of users.

50,000 copies will be printed and distributed via consumer and tour professional trade shows, visitor centers throughout the state and region, and through CTM Brochure Display's Canadian Corporate Program. Additionally the fulfillment piece will be sent in response to inquiries and will be available on our website in .pdf format.

**Timeline:** August 2011: Solicit 3-5 bids for design/printing  
September 2011: Develop Co-Op ad for MIY  
November 2011: Forward MIY to graphic designer  
December 2011: Proof magazine  
January 2012: Magazine to print  
February 2012: Magazine printed and shipped  
February-June 2012: Magazine distributed at trade shows  
February 2012: Magazine added to website as PDF file  
March 2012: CTM distribution begins

**Tracking:** Tracking Methods:  
# of new advertisers  
# total advertisers  
# type of distribution  
# of visitors to website from magazine URL  
# of downloads of magazine from website  
# of magazines distributed at trade events  
# of magazines distributed through CTM

**Target Market:** While the fulfillment piece is primarily distributed to the drive market, it is also used to fulfill requests from any individual both nationally and internationally who is looking for information on the South Coast region.

Specific target audiences include:

- Seniors
- Couples
- Families
- Gay and Lesbian travelers
- Hobbyists
- Recreationalists
- Corporate travel
- Canadian & International travelers

The magazine is designed with these markets in mind and contains images and content created to resonate with each.

**Rationale:** The magazine is a broad, far reaching piece that gives the end user the ability to learn about the diversity of the region. It will highlight the affordability and will allow the reader to plan a vacation based on activities, places to go, areas to eat and stay.

Production and distribution of the magazine is a cost effective way to promote the region in direct mailing, trade shows, and brochure distribution methods. The MBA is able to utilize this magazine to target a variety of different markets in the regional, national and international marketplace.

Chambers of commerce, participating members businesses, and direct advertisers in "Maine Invites You" all directly benefit from the creation and distribution of the magazine.

The MBA itself benefits from the sale of space to organizations and allows the MBA to reinvest revenue from the project into further development of the piece and to other similar marketing efforts which compliment the magazine.

**Partners:** Anticipated partners on this project include:

MBA member chambers

Local lodging and restaurants

Local recreational and activity associations

Downeaster/NNEPRA

Shoreline Explorer Trolley System

**Budget Description:** The Budget amount listed below includes the development, printing, and distribution of the MBA magazine. It has been reduced this year to reflect more creative funding of the piece, thus reducing some of our dependence on the MTMPP program.

MTMPP funds will be used to design the piece post Maine Invites You (\$2,500), printing (\$22,000), and distribution via CTM Brochure Distribution (\$2,500), inquiry response (\$500) and via state and regional visitor centers (\$1,000).

The cash match is based on the design and placement of the original "Maine Invites You" advertisement (\$6,500).

The in-kind match includes time devoted by the MBA board and staff to oversee the development of the magazine (\$1,250).

**MTMPP Award:** \$28,500.00

**Cash Match:** \$6,500.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$1,250.00

## Project 4: Travel, Trade & Consumer Shows

**Project Type:** Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

**Description:** The MBA will participate in or send materials to 5-7 strategically selected travel, trade and consumer shows around New England, the greater Northeast Region and Canada.

### Element 2: Attendance and participation

**Project:** Travel, Trade & Consumer Shows

**Element Description:** Through travel and trade shows, with a combined attendance of over 100,000 visitors, the MBA is able to market directly to potential visitors. Face to face inquiries and responses can often times help the consumer envision a trip to the region and generate enthusiasm.

In addition to attending these shows, the MBA is requesting funding to update our trade show presence with a new portable kiosk. Our current banners are dated and do not lend to as professional an appearance as needed to compete with other destinations at the various shows. Purchasing a new trade show booth will improve portability and increase visibility at these very crowded venues. While we had hoped to complete this last year, the MBA will be undertaking a branding strategic planning session in

June 2011 and wanted to wait until our new brand was in place before investing in something this important.

**Timeline:** October 2011-Develop and finalize slate of 2012 trade shows

October 2011-Purchase new trade show kiosk

January-June 2012-Attend trade shows (known shows include The Big E; Women's Expo in Manchester, NH; Boston Globe; AAA Travel Marketplace in Foxboro, MA)

**Tracking:** # trade show attendees  
# materials distributed  
# of professional travel contacts made  
# of attendee surveys completed  
# of website hits

**Target Market:** The target market is a combination of travel professionals and potential consumers in high priority markets.

The MBA is able to secure face time with professionals through participation in various media events and sales missions, giving us an opportunity to provide compelling information on visiting the region.

Consumers at the various shows range in demographics, but include several high priority audiences such as baby boomers, the drive market and families with children.

**Rationale:** Direct to consumer marketing has been, and continues to be, one of the most effective ways to promote travel to the Maine Beaches region. Using the MBA magazine as collateral, participation in strategically selected shows allows us to customize information for the traveler and highlight next steps for trip planning (i.e. visiting the MBA or VisitME websites).

Attending selected trade shows allows us to achieve progress toward our outcomes of increasing perception among potential travelers of the value, variety and quality of a Maine Beaches visit, as well as providing visitors with tools to take advantage of special opportunities and packages.

Through face to face contact, MBA representatives are in a position to generate enthusiasm and provide ideas for vacations to the Maine Beaches region.

Although trade shows are generally outside of the region, MBA representatives attending these shows become the face of the region, particularly for those who've never been. The MBA pays particular attention to staffing at these shows and works with representatives to insure that consumers have a great first impression of our area.

**Partners:** Maine Office of Tourism  
Other regions  
MBA Members

**Budget Description:** MTMPP funds are being requested to support costs associated with attending, or sending materials to 3-5 trade shows (\$12,000). An additional amount of \$1500 is being requested for the purposes of updating our trade show presence with the purchase of a new kiosk.

The cash match is derived from costs associated with participation in an additional 1-2 shows (\$6,000).

In-kind includes time dedicated to staffing the shows (\$7,000).

**MTMPP Award:** \$13,500.00

**Cash Match:** \$6,000.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$7,000.00

## Project 5: Tech Share

**Project Type:** Website Development

**Description:** The MBA will utilize funds from the MTMPP program to contract with Portland Web Works for the

purposes of redesigning our website and implementing the Tech Share program.

The MBA understands that the majority of people making vacation plans utilize the internet in some capacity. We have maintained a website that functions as a portal to the region, directing potential visitors to specific communities and businesses.

After several meetings with Portland Web Works, the MBA has determined that the look, feel and functionality of Tech Share will bring our region's web presence to a new level.

### Element 3: Tech Share

**Project:** Tech Share

**Element Description:** The MBA will utilize funds from the MTMPP program to contract with Portland Web Works for a complete redesign and implementation of Tech Share for our website.

Changes will include a complete revamp of the look and feel. Functionality improvements will include the ability to populate the site with package information from visitmaine.com, mapping functions, and comprehensive search features.

**Timeline:** July 2011: Work with Portland Web Works on developing mock ups for the site

August 2011: Launch new site

Ongoing: Addition of new pages and content management

**Tracking:** Tracking will include the following:

# of unique visitors to website

# of page views per visitor

# of return visitors

Amount of time spent on website

Bounce rate

Point of origin for IP addresses

**Target Market:** MBA will target individuals who either educate themselves or plan vacations by utilizing the Internet. MBA will maintain a website that is informative to the tourist, creates a unique "web surfing" experience and allows the tourist to obtain information needed on the region or use the "gateway" to the individual chamber websites

**Rationale:** MBA's website is seen as a gateway to the region and the Chambers of Commerce and appears in the top ten Google Search of 'maine beaches'. Effective utilization of the web as a tool for marketing the region creates the perception of value, variety and quality of a Maine Beaches visit, and visitors will use planning tools to take advantage of special opportunities and packages. Additionally, the web site as a portal to planning a visit to the area is part of making a vacation to the region a great experience.

The MBA has developed several marketing approaches for 2011/2012 that rely heavily on utilizing the web site as a place for one-stop shopping for visitors to the Southern Maine Coast. Through a combination of web-based services and links to member Chambers of Commerce, the website continues to be a critical part of the MBA's marketing strategies.

**Budget Description:** MBA will utilize funds from the MTMPP award in the amount of \$20,000 to contract with Portland Web Works.

In kind support is derived from staff and board time as the site is developed(\$5,250) and for the ongoing maintenance on the site (\$6,000).

**MTMPP Award:** \$20,000.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$11,250.00

## Project 6: Fall on-line advertising campaign

**Project Type:** Advertising

**Description:** The MBA will use MTMPP funds to purchase a large ad on Boston.com to run from August 1-September 15 promoting fall tourism in the region.

### Element 4: Boston.com

**Project:** Fall on-line advertising campaign

**Element Description:** The MBA will utilize funds from the MTMPP program to run a fall advertising campaign on Boston.com. A large ad will be developed and will run from August 1-September 15 to specifically promote fall getaways to the region.

The ad will display on both the travel and weather pages and over 200,000 impressions are anticipated.

**Timeline:** July 2011: Work with Boston.com and graphic designer to create the ad

August 1-September 15: Run ad

Ongoing: Measure success of ad via click throughs and traffic on MBA website

**Tracking:** # of impressions

# of hits on MBA website from ad

Length of time on site

**Target Market:** Geographically, the Boston market is the number one market for the Maine Beaches Region. The market for Boston.com also reaches higher income households and a younger demographic than traditional print media.

**Rationale:** The MBA understands the significance of the role the internet plays in researching and making travel plans. Additionally, we see an opportunity to utilize Boston.com to run a campaign specific to increasing tourism during the fall. Finally, the cost per impression for this campaign is likely to yield a very high return on investment.

**Media Type:** Web

**Co-op Opportunity:** Because of our implementation of Tech Share, the MBA will be able to highlight packages available in the region during the period of the campaign. Communication will be sent to members urging them to list packages on visitmaine.com, which can then be highlighted as part of this promotion.

**Budget Description:** The MBA is seeking to use \$4,800 in MTMPP funds to purchase the ad.

A cash match of \$1000 will be applied to this project.

In-kind support of \$1600 will be derived from time and oversight to develop the ad campaign as well as to monitor results.

**MTMPP Award:** \$4,800.00

**Cash Match:** \$1,000.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$1,600.00

**Project Quick Reference**

	<b><u>MTMPP Award</u></b>	<b><u>Cash Match</u></b>	<b><u>In-Kind Match</u></b>
<b>Cooperative Regional Advertising</b>			
Cooperative Regional Advertising	\$10,000.00		
<b>Administrative Costs</b>			
Administrative Costs	\$19,200.00		
<b>Maine Beaches Magazine-2012</b>			
Redesign of 2011 MBA Magazine	\$28,500.00	\$6,500.00	\$1,250.00
<b>Travel, Trade &amp; Consumer Shows</b>			
Attendance and participation	\$13,500.00	\$6,000.00	\$7,000.00
<b>Tech Share</b>			
Tech Share	\$20,000.00	\$0.00	\$11,250.00
<b>Fall on-line advertising campaign</b>			
Boston.com	\$4,800.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,600.00

**Budget Summary**

<b>Proposed MTMPP Award:</b>	\$96,000.00
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>	\$19,200.00
<b>Cash Match:</b>	\$13,500.00
<b>In-Kind Match:</b>	\$21,100.00
<b>Total Match:</b>	\$34,600.00
<b>Total Proposed Budget:</b>	\$130,600.00