

## 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:** 207-216-7235  
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**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 a new layout to improve the flow of the magazine, updated photographs and visitor information such as getting married in the region, new listings for family fun & recreation, updated information on local beaches, etc.).

MBA Website: The website continues to see an increase in unique visitors, up 22% from last year. The MBA developed and added 20+ pages of new content and new links have been added to the site as well.

Travel/Trade Shows: The MBA has attended 7 travel shows to date and more than 5,000 bags of materials (more than 20,000 pieces of regional and local collateral) have been distributed. The MBA will attend two more shows this grant year.

Advertising: The MBA has purchased and participated in several advertising programs this year. They include a print and companion on-line ad with AAA Horizons Magazine, a full page ad in East Coast Traveler Magazine and a full page ad in Camp Maine. The MBA is also currently working with the Boston Herald on a two page "takeover" ad promoting Memorial Day travel, scheduled for print on May 10th that will include editorial content, photos and the MBA logo.

2). Building Regional Collaborations: The MBA continues to work with the Board to promote collaborative marketing of the region. In May 2012 the MBA will host "Breakfast with the Office of Tourism", allowing industry members the opportunity to hear from and interact with MOT staff. The Board also saw the addition of representatives from the Sanford area, which is something the organization has been striving to do for several years.

3). Branding: Carrying forward work done last year, the MBA has spent a great deal of time developing a consistent look and feel for advertising and has adopted a new tag line.

## **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 2012-2013 include:

- 1). Continue to promote a coordinated, collaborative approach to **MARKETING** the Maine Beaches Region as a premier 4-season vacation destination.
- 2). Increasing utilization of technology and social media to promote the region, specifically targeting certain geographic and demographic markets.
- 3). Conducting research in the areas of Consumer Trends and Marketing Effectiveness.

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.

Utilizing technology and social media reflects the trends being established by the Maine Office of Tourism. With a shift in how individuals, particularly first time vacationers, receive information and plan vacations to more and more technological outlets, designing programs that address that shift will lead to more interest and eventually an increase in first time visitors.

Finally, conducting research and developing outreach and marketing plans based on data leads to better qualified leads, more effective advertising and providing motivating and useful tools for planning a Maine Beaches vacation. By being able to design and target advertising in a way that reflects what the consumer tells us is important can lead to more first time visitation, an increased length of stay and participation in more diverse activities while in the region, which all leads to an increase in tourism revenue.

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

Below is a summary of the MBA's overall strategies for achieving stated goals, which are expanded on significantly throughout the remainder of this proposal.

1). Continue to promote a coordinated, collaborative approach to **MARKETING** the Maine Beaches Region as a premier 4-season vacation destination:

- \*Production and distribution of 50,000 2013 MBA visitor guides

- \*Improve and expand website presence/experience

- \*Expand Facebook and Twitter presence via a targeted social media campaign

- \*Targeted on-line and print advertising

- \*Participate in BVK's Regional Co-Op Pilot Program

- \*Attend strategically selected trade and travel shows

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

- \*Increase outreach programs with local hospitality businesses to create a line of communication between the industry and the MOT in light of the elimination of the Maine Tourism Commission

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

- \*Improve and expand website presence/experience

- \*Expand Facebook and Twitter presence via a targeted social media campaign

- \*Targeted on-line and print advertising with on-line components

- \*Explore other technological options such as Pinterist and Four-Square to engage social network users

3). Conducting research in the areas of Consumer Trends and Marketing Effectiveness.

- \*Integrate website, social media campaign, the Maine Beaches Visitor Guide, printed and on-line advertising, and participation in trade shows to evaluate current advertising effectiveness

- \*Work with local Chambers of Commerce and other MBA members to collect and analyze consumer trends among visitors to the Maine Beaches region in 2012

## **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 outlines 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.**

The Maine Beaches Association will utilize the web site to gather information on individuals in a variety of ways. Several surveys will be developed to assist us in measuring the effectiveness of our advertising, the usefulness of our fulfillment piece and to gain insight on people who actually visit the area.

Visitors to the web site will be invited to take a short survey providing feedback on the web site itself.

All advertising and collateral will point to a specific landing page that will include a short survey on the usefulness of the materials/advertising and will ask survey respondents whether they will actually travel to the area.

Another survey will be developed to gather information on current visitors. Postcards will be printed and distributed at various outlets (i.e. area visitor centers) and questions will include purpose of travel to the area, length of stay, travel party information, lodging & activities, demographics and overall satisfaction with the trip.

### **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:** 207-216-7235

**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.

Additionally, MBA Board Chambers each engage in public relations promoting specific assets/activities/events within individual communities. The MBA will begin monitoring PR throughout the region by Chambers in order to best augment those efforts.

## **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  
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 has partnered with other regions on specific projects and programs and will continue to do so throughout 2012/2013. Specific projects have included collateral development, hospitality training and trade shows. In 2012/2013 through the MBA's participation in the BVK Regional Co-Op Pilot, the MBA will be working with other regions from around the state on ad development and implementation.

State: The MBA continues to set aside \$10,000 in MTMPP funding to support statewide marketing initiatives, which for 2013, is designated to support the further development of the Maine Sports Commission.

## 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:**

While the MBA has developed more than 20 pages of new content on the website over the past few months, the organization will continue to expand pages and the information available to potential visitors.

The website will also function as a central hub for research efforts described throughout this proposal, both on Consumer Trends as well as Marketing Effectiveness. New landing pages will be developed that correlate to specific advertising campaigns so in addition to market research surveys hosted on the site, traffic to those landing pages will assist with evaluating the effectiveness of those ads.

Finally, the MBA will integrate the website with social media campaigns creating mutually promotional opportunities.

## 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:**

Currently the MBA collects lead information via the website and through giveaway sign ups at various trade shows. Over the past year, more than 1000 leads have been collected. Names and contact information are shared with MBA members and the MBA tracks the use of those leads for solicitation purposes.

## Budget Summary

## Current Projects

### Project 1: Administrative Costs

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

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

### Project 2: Maine Beaches Visitor Guide-2013

**Project Type:** Fulfillment: Brochures, Guides, Maps & Distribution

**Description:** The annual MBA Maine Beaches Visitor Guide is the signature piece of collateral for promoting the region as a 4-season vacation destination. MTMPP funds will be used to update our 48-page color magazine, integrating elements that forward our goals of promoting the use of technology and social media, and research.

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 2013, and will be distributed through trade shows and sales missions, via information centers throughout Maine, the Northeast and Canada.

#### Element 1: Design & Production

**Project:** Maine Beaches Visitor Guide-2013

**Element Description:** The 2013 MBA magazine will include sections on how to travel to the area, what to do while here, a calendar of events, a section for Canadian visitors and information about each of the communities making up the Southern Maine region. Furthering our goals of promoting technology and research, new additions in 2013 will include the use of QR codes, driving users to the website for the purpose of increasing web traffic, gathering information on the effectiveness of the guide, likelihood of travel and research on active visitors.

50,000 copies will be printed and distributed via consumer travel shows, media events and at visitor centers throughout the state, region and Canada. Additionally the fulfillment piece will be sent in response to inquiries and will be available on our website in .pdf format.

**Timeline:** August 2012: Solicit 3-5 bids for design/printing

September 2012: Develop Co-Op ad for MIY

November 2012: Forward MIY to graphic designer

December 2012: Proof magazine

January 2013: Magazine to print

February 2013: Magazine printed and shipped

February-June 2013: Magazine distributed at trade shows

February 2013: Magazine added to website as PDF file

**Tracking:** # 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 survey respondents and positive responses regarding effectiveness of magazine for trip planning

**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
- Women
- Gay and Lesbian travelers
- Hobbyists
- Recreationalists
- Corporate travel
- Canadian & International travelers

High target geographic audiences include:

- Massachusetts (Boston & Western)
- New York
- Connecticut
- Montreal

Secondary geographic audiences include:

- Pennsylvania
- New Hampshire
- Rhode Island
- Maine
- Halifax

**Rationale:** The MBA Visitor Guide is designed to promote the region as a highly desired 4-season vacation destination. It is geared toward both first time or considering travelers as well as seasoned and repeat vacationers to the region. Information has been developed over time to provide a comprehensive picture of a Maine Beaches vacation including geography of the region, traveling to and around, lodging, dining, things to do and events.

This year, with a focus on better utilizing technology and research, the guide presents a great opportunity to further these things. Promoting and motivating readers to visit the web site and assist us with information gathering will increase and enhance the reader experience, improve conversions and will provide us with critical information on best marketing the region.

Additionally, the way the magazine is designed (using the Maine Beaches advertising section from Maine Invites You) results in a cost effective way to promote the region for advertisers as well as the Association.

Finally, the MBA is able to utilize this magazine to target a variety of different markets in the regional, national and international marketplace.

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

- MBA member chambers
- Local lodging and restaurants
- Local recreational and activity associations

**Budget Description:** The Budget amount listed below includes the development, printing, and distribution of the MBA magazine.

MTMPP funds will be used to design the piece post Maine Invites You (\$3,000) and printing (\$22,000).

The cash match is based on the design and placement of the original "Maine Invites You" advertisement (\$2,500).

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

**MTMPP Award:** \$25,000.00  
**Cash Match:** \$2,500.00  
**In-Kind Match:** \$1,250.00

## Project 3: Travel, Trade & Consumer Shows

**Project Type:** Travel Trade & Consumer Shows: Registration, Operation, Exhibit Design & Upgrade

**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: Trade Show Participation

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

**Element Description:** The MBA will use MTMPP funds to attend and distribute materials at 3-5 consumer travel shows. Each year the MBA undertakes a comprehensive evaluation of all trade shows, measuring the impact of participation and the quality of shows in high target demographic and geographic areas. Other considerations when selecting shows include cost (participation, travel & materials handling), foot traffic, timing and organization. Examples of high quality shows the MBA has participated in the past are the AAA Travel Marketplace (Foxboro, MA), the Boston Globe Travel Show and the WZID Women's Expo (Manchester, NH).

While at shows, the MBA will distribute more than 5,000 bags of collateral. In addition, the MBA will utilize QR codes that will allow trade show attendees to use their smart phones and be directed to a specific landing page on the MBA website for the purposes of evaluating the MBA presence at these shows.

**Timeline:** August 2012: Develop and finalize slate of 2013 trade shows

September 2012-June 2013: Attend shows

May-July 2013: Evaluate effectiveness of shows

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

**Target Market:** Target markets include both high priority demographic and geographic areas. Travel show opportunities in MA, CT, NY & Montreal will be given significant consideration. The MBA tries to select a slate of shows that reflects a wide variety of demographic markets including those geared toward women, families and seniors.

**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). For about the same cost per contact as mailing one MBA magazine, organization representatives are able to connect personally as well as getting materials into the hands of potential travelers.

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 5-7 trade shows (\$20,000).

The cash match is derived from costs associated with participation in at least one additional show (\$4,000).

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

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

**Cash Match:** \$4,000.00

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

## Project 4: Print and On-Line Advertising

**Project Type:** Paid Advertising: Print, Broadcast, Online

**Description:** The MBA will use MTMPP funds to promote the region via Print and On-Line Advertising Programs, including buying into BVK's Regional Co-Pilot Program.

In addition to BVK's program, the MBA will seek 3-5 print and/or advertising programs throughout FY 2012/2013.

### Element 3: BVK Regional Co-Op Pilot Program

**Project:** Print and On-Line Advertising

**Element Description:** The MBA will use MTMPP funds to partner with BVK's Regional Co-Op Pilot Program.

As described by BVK, the program will focus on 5 advertising outlets, including the Boston Red Sox Radio Network, Trip Advisor, Consumer On-Line Advertising, Major Annual Contest Promotion and MOT Consumer E-mail.

Red Sox Radio Network: 2100 regional spots to air during Red Sox games throughout the season.

Trip Advisor: Tourism sponsor of Maine page on tripadvisor.com

Consumer on-line Advertising: I.e. Boston.com, Downeast.com, Yankee.com, etc.

Major Annual Contest: Enter to win program designed to generate qualified leads

MOT Consumer E-mail: E-newsletter sent 10 times per year to 140,000 MOT contacts

Each ad will be designed to drive traffic to the MBA website. Specific landing pages will be designed to measure traffic to the site, the effectiveness of the ad and to promote regional research.

**Timeline:** June/July 2012: Work with BVK to develop regional ad for Boston Red Sox program.

July-October 2012: Ads air on Boston Red Sox Radio Network.

July-August 2012: Work with BVK to develop sponsorship ad for Trip Advisor.

July-August 2012: Work with BVK to develop regional trip package as prize for MOT on-line contest.

July-June 2013: Work with BVK to develop and place regional ads in targeted on-line programs.

July-June 2013: Work with BVK and MOT staff to develop content for e-newsletters.

September 2012-June 2013: Trip Advisor sponsorship in place.

- Tracking:**
- # ads placed
  - # impressions
  - # visitors to specific landing pages on website
  - # research survey respondents
  - # positive responses to ad effectiveness
  - # conversions (based on likelihood of visit)

**Target Market:** These programs, designed and researched by BVK, result in hundreds of thousands of impressions in high target geographic and demographic markets.

Listenership of the Red Sox Radio Network Program is concentrated in the New England market and has a broad demographic market. Trip Advisor appeals to a larger national market but is refined by search engines on the site so that individuals viewing the Maine page and subsequently visiting the MBA website have been qualified to some degree. Participants in the MOT giveaway and the MOT e-newsletter have self selected the Maine Beaches region as an area of interest. And finally, all on-line co-op ads designed with BVK will be selected based on desirability of market.

Because all programs are technologically oriented, participation in them helps to support the MBA's goal of increasing utilization of electronic media and research during 2012/2013.

**Rationale:** Participation in these co-op programs is a highly cost effective way for the MBA to purchase advertising in high target geographic and demographic areas. Many of the outlets indicated reflect those desired outlets described earlier in this proposal under PR (i.e. Boston.com, Downeast.com, Yankee.com).

All programs are being coordinated by BVK , which will lend to cohesiveness in look and feel when marketing the region as part of the state. Additionally, participation in these programs assist the MBA in the goals of better utilizing technology and research.

- Media Type:**
- Radio
  - On-line
  - Print
  - E-mail

**Co-op Opportunity:** By design, this program is a co-op opportunity for all 8 MTMPP funded regions.

**Budget Description:** As was presented to regions by BVK, purchase of a Gold Membership (inclusion in all programs described above) is \$8200. The MBA is including an additional \$800 for ad design by the organization's graphic designer.

Matching funds include the participation of at least one other region (cash-\$8200) and in-kind support for the development of the ad, corresponding landing pages on the web site and monitoring/evaluating the effectiveness of the ads (60 hours @ \$25 per hour-\$1500).

**MTMPP Award:** \$9,000.00

**Cash Match:** \$8,200.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$1,500.00

## Element 4: Other Print & On-Line Advertising

**Project:** Print and On-Line Advertising

**Element Description:** In addition to the participation in BVK's Regional Co-Op Pilot, the MBA will use MTMPP funds to purchase 3-5 additional print and/or on-line advertising spots in the fall and spring. Ads will focus on promoting shoulder season traffic and will be directed toward high target geographic and demographic audiences. The actual media outlets will be determined as work evolves with BVK on the Regional Co-Op in order to best compliment ad placement included in that initiative. Past print and on-line advertising programs have included (for illustrative purposes) Boston.com, Boston Globe, Downeast Magazine, Camp Maine and the Boston Herald. Emphasis will be given when considering programs that have both a print and on-line component. Each ad will drive readers to specifically designated landing

pages on the web site to evaluate the effectiveness of the campaign.

**Timeline:** Summer 2012: Begin compiling a list of potential ad programs

Fall 2012: Create and place 1-2 ad campaigns

Spring 2014: Create and place 1-2 ad campaigns

**Tracking:** # of impressions  
# of hits on MBA website from ad  
Length of time on site  
# positive responses to ad evaluation on website  
# potential conversions based on survey responses

**Target Market:** As with all MBA advertising, emphasis will be put on reaching high target geographic and demographic audiences. Publications that reach the Boston, NY, CT and Montreal areas, as well as those reaching households with families, seniors and those with annual incomes above \$70k will be most preferred.

**Rationale:** While the MBA is focusing on increasing and improving the use of technology to promote the region, well designed and well placed ads with a focus on driving traffic to the website and other social media outlets compliments the work the organization is doing in this area. Additionally, the partnership with BVK's Regional Co-Op broadens the selection of media outlets the MBA can and will consider for this project element.

**Media Type:** Print  
Web

**Co-op Opportunity:** Although the advertising outlets have yet to be determined, in the past some ads have included calendars of events for the region provided by each of the MBA member chambers. If co-op opportunities present themselves as related to any of the ads purchased, the MBA will certainly consider and include them.

**Budget Description:** The MBA will use \$11,250 in MTMPP funds to purchase 3-5 paid ads. An additional \$1000 in MTMPP funds will be used for the development of these ads. In-kind matching funds in the amount of \$1250 will be derived from Board time devoted to the research and development of ads (20 hours @ \$25 per hour) and for development of landing pages and evaluation of ad campaigns (30 hours @ \$25 per hour).

**MTMPP Award:** \$12,250.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

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

## Project 5: Web site updates and Maintenance

**Project Type:** Website Development: Design, Upgrades, Mobilization

**Description:** The MBA will utilize funds from the MTMPP program to enhance its regional website, [www.mainebeachesassociation.com](http://www.mainebeachesassociation.com). For FY 2013, in addition to providing comprehensive information for those planning or thinking about a Maine Beaches vacation, the MBA will utilize the website in a significant way for research.

### Element 5: Web-Site Maintenance

**Project:** Web site updates and Maintenance

**Element Description:** The MBA will utilize funds from the MTMPP program to enhance the regional website, [www.mainebeachesassociation.com](http://www.mainebeachesassociation.com).

In addition to refreshing graphics and content, the MBA will be adding landing pages tied to specific advertising programs to both measure the effectiveness of any given campaign, as well as to invite website visitors to participate in providing the organization with critical information on who and why people come to the area.

Tied to the research will be a giveaway program in order to motivate individuals to complete surveys.

**Timeline:** July 2012: Develop and link research surveys  
July-June 2013: Develop campaign specific landing pages  
July-June 2013: Continually update graphics and content

**Tracking:** # of unique visitors to website/landing pages  
# of page views per visitor  
# of return visitors  
Amount of time spent on website  
Bounce rate  
Point of origin for IP addresses  
# research surveys completed

**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 directly affects our outcomes of creating the perception of value, variety and quality of a Maine Beaches visit and that visitors are utilizing 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 2012/2013 that rely heavily on utilizing the web site as a place for research as well as 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 \$2,000 for the continued development and implementation of the website.

In kind support is derived from staff and board time as the site is monitored and upgraded, new landing pages developed and the development and data collection/analysis of research surveys(\$2,500).

**MTMPP Award:** \$2,000.00

**Cash Match:** \$0.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$2,500.00

## Project 6: Maine Sports Commission

**Project Type:** Special Projects

**Description:** The MBA, in partnership with 6 other regions around the state, will partner together to develop and launch the Maine Sports Commission. The purpose of the Commission is to promote sports related tourism around the state.

### Element 6: Sports Commission Launch

**Project:** Maine Sports Commission

**Element Description:** The Sports Commission plans to have staffing and/or management in place by the beginning of the 2013 FY year. Additionally, a companion Sports Foundation is being developed to assist with raising revenues long term that will support both the functions of the Sports Commission as well as to fund sporting related tourism opportunities as they arise.

**Timeline:** Information to be provided by the Board of the Sports Commission.

**Tracking:** Information to be provided by the Board of the Sports Commission.

**Target Market:** Information to be provided by the Board of the Sports Commission.

- Rationale:** Information to be provided by the Board of the Sports Commission.
- Budget Description:** The MBA will allocate \$10,000 in MTMPP funds to support this initiative. Matching funds are leveraged by the Office of Tourism.
- MTMPP Award:** \$10,000.00
- Cash Match:** \$0.00
- In-Kind Match:** \$10,000.00

## Project 7: Social Media Marketing

- Project Type:** Special Projects
- Description:** The Maine Beaches Association will use MTMPP funds to create a social media campaign based on the tag line "Unpack the Kid in You".

### Element 7: Unpack the Kid in You Social Media Campaign

**Project:** Social Media Marketing

**Element Description:** After going through a long branding process last year, as part of tag line development, the MBA identified several campaign opportunities. Among them was the tag line "Unpack the Kid in You", and while the organization settled on a different tag line (Lighthouses, Lobsters & Long Sandy Beaches) for standard use, the former stood out as a potential ad campaign, which we will pursue this year as part of a social media project.

Unpack the Kid in You will be designed to encourage individuals to share their Maine Beaches experiences and memories via social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter, and to promote "play" at any age. The campaign will invite users to share pictures and stories, both old and new, of adults and children at play in the region.

The campaign will also include prizes awarded for the best photos, will be linked to our website and marketed in the 2013 magazine and in other collateral.

**Timeline:** May-July 2012: Develop campaign  
July-June 2013: Launch campaign

**Tracking:** # Facebook friends  
# Facebook entries/photos  
# Positive responses on campaign evaluation  
# Twitter shares/reshares

**Target Market:** Because of Facebook's national and international appeal, this campaign is targeted toward a very large demographic and geographic market. It will include both long time visitors as well as new visitors to the region.

**Rationale:** Utilizing social media to invite individuals to share their experiences when visiting the region will increase connectivity and fondness when recalling a Maine Beaches vacation. Appealing to a sense of nostalgia (a frequent word used when visitors recall a Maine Beaches vacation) and fostering the idea of "play" at any age supports the branding concepts identified by the MBA through strategic planning last year.

The idea of this particular campaign, building from the statement "Unpack the Kid in You" was also supported and validated by BVK staff when MBA representatives described it during a meeting in March.

Additionally, the organization is able to utilize primarily free services to reach a very wide audience and will expand access to photos and testimonials that promote the region.

**Budget Description:** The MBA is seeking \$250 in MTMPP funds to support the giveaway portion of this campaign (i.e. gift cards to local businesses, live lobsters, etc.).

In-kind support in the amount of \$5,000 includes time dedicated to developing, implementing and evaluating the campaign (200 hours @ \$25 per hour).

**MTMPP Award:** \$250.00  
**Cash Match:** \$0.00  
**In-Kind Match:** \$5,000.00

## Project 8: Research

**Project Type:** Special Projects

**Description:** The MBA will utilize MTMPP funds to support research in two key areas: Consumer Trends and Marketing Effectiveness.

In summer 2009 the MBA conducted research and gathered surveys from more than 500 individuals visiting the region at that time. The research provided a great deal of insight into key demographics of visitors including reason for trip, length of stay, activities while here, age, party size/make up, geographic origin and overall satisfaction with the trip. The MBA found the information extremely valuable in planning future marketing programs and determined that repeating such research every 3 years was appropriate.

Additionally, no current research allows us to evaluate the effectiveness of our advertising campaigns and so this year, the MBA will integrate strategies for gathering consumer feedback on collateral and campaign success.

### Element 8: Consumer Trends Research

**Project:** Research

**Element Description:** In order to gather data related to Consumer Trends, the MBA will take a multi-pronged approach.

The MBA will print and make available 2500 postcards that will describe the research project and invite consumers to take a brief on line survey. The postcard will include a QR code as well as a web address for a landing page specific to consumer research. Postcards will be distributed at visitor centers throughout the region from July-October.

The survey will include demographic questions such as gender, geographic origin, age, family structure and income levels. Trip specific questions will include length of stay, purpose of trip, party travel size and activities while here. Additionally, a few questions will be included to gather information on people's perceptions of what constitutes a good vacation and to measure their experience in the region against that.

The program will include a modest giveaway to motivate participation.

**Timeline:** July 2012: Design and distribute postcards

July-October 2012: Data collection

November-December 2012: Data analysis and presentation of results (which will be shared with the Maine Office of Tourism)

**Tracking:** # postcards distributed  
# surveys completed

**Target Market:** This project is geared toward gathering information from individuals visiting the region between July and October 2012 and because of the interregional distribution, pre-qualifies those leads. It is anticipated that a wide variety of respondents (age, gender, geographic origin) will participate.

**Rationale:** In order to best reach our target market, we need to understand who they are in the current economic environment. Our marketing programs are presumably strong, but need to be delivered precisely in order to get the best return on investment. Additionally, developing an ongoing relationship with visitors during the 2012 travel season will assess the likelihood of return visits, which has become a foundation for tourism in the region.

Additionally, by conducting the surveys on line via the MBA website (as opposed to written surveys used

in 2009), the MBA is supporting and furthering the goal of increasing and improving utilization of technology and electronic media.

**Budget Description:** The Maine Beaches Association is requesting \$1,000 from the MTMPP program to cover the cost of printing postcards. It is anticipated that we will share outcomes from the report at a meeting in early to mid-May 2013 for MBA chamber membership.

A cash match of \$500 will be used for the giveaway element of this project (of which respondents to the Marketing Evaluation surveys will also be eligible).

In-kind support of \$750 will be derived from time contributed to the project design and analysis.

**MTMPP Award:** \$1,000.00

**Cash Match:** \$250.00

**In-Kind Match:** \$750.00

## Element 9: Marketing Effectiveness Research

**Project:** Research

**Element Description:** While limited MTMPP funds will be used for this purpose, much of the work involved supports our overall research initiative as well as evaluating many MTMPP funded projects described in this proposal. These projects include the Maine Beaches Visitor Guide, trade shows, the website and print/on-line advertising.

The MBA will develop a new page on the website dedicated to asking the consumer their opinions as it relates to MBA marketing programs. A description of the research and a link to a survey will be provided. The survey will be designed so that the consumer can identify each and all marketing programs they've heard of, seen or participated in (in the case of trade shows) and provide the MBA with key feedback on things like aesthetics, emotional appeal, quality of information and influence on trip planning. Additionally some demographic information will be collected.

All survey respondents will be entered into a drawing for a modest giveaway.

**Timeline:** June-July 2012: Develop survey intro page and landing pages for each marketing project to be evaluated (trade shows, MBA Visitor Guide, Print/On-line Advertising and Website); Develop surveys for each program to be evaluated; Link to website

July 2012-April 2013: Collect and analyze data

May 2013: Present data to MBA Board and Office of Tourism

**Tracking:** # of surveys completed  
# of unique visitors to landing pages  
Origin of survey respondents  
Time spent on website  
Meaningful data collected

**Target Market:** Unique to this particular project element, the target market for this research is as diverse as the people who utilize MBA marketing resources for trip planning. It is anticipated that a diverse array of respondents will participate varying in age, gender, demographic origin and income levels. It is anticipated those accessing landing pages via QR codes will be a younger consumer.

**Rationale:** To date, the effectiveness of MBA marketing campaigns and appeal to the consumer have been difficult to measure in any quantifiable way. Hard numbers have been traditionally used to evaluate these programs (i.e. numbers distributed, impressions, number of contacts, website traffic), but there has been no measure of usefulness, emotional appeal or ability to convert potential travelers to actual visitors (or impact the length of stay or other trip qualities).

The MBA is committed to using MTMPP funds in the most effective ways and this research project will allow us to design marketing campaigns that truly impact visitation to the region.

**Budget Description:** The MBA is seeking \$500 in MTMPP funds for the purposes of printing postcards to be distributed at trade and travel shows to measure the effectiveness of an MBA presence at selected shows (as well as gathering feedback on the look and feel of the MBA booth, staff professionalism, etc.)

In kind support of \$500 will be leveraged by MBA Board time in developing and analyzing research

results.

**MTMPP Award:** \$500.00  
**Cash Match:** \$0.00  
**In-Kind Match:** \$500.00

**Project Quick Reference**

	<u>MTMPP Award</u>	<u>Cash Match</u>	<u>In-Kind Match</u>
<b>Administrative Costs</b>			
Administrative Costs	\$20,000.00		
<b>Maine Beaches Visitor Guide-2013</b>			
Design & Production	\$25,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$1,250.00
<b>Travel, Trade &amp; Consumer Shows</b>			
Trade Show Participation	\$20,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$7,000.00
<b>Print and On-Line Advertising</b>			
BVK Regional Co-Op Pilot Program	\$9,000.00	\$8,200.00	\$1,500.00
Other Print & On-Line Advertising	\$12,250.00	\$0.00	\$1,250.00
<b>Web site updates and Maintenance</b>			
Web-Site Maintenance	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
<b>Maine Sports Commission</b>			
Sports Commission Launch	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
<b>Social Media Marketing</b>			
Unpack the Kid in You Social Media Campaign	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
<b>Research</b>			
Consumer Trends Research	\$1,000.00	\$250.00	\$750.00
Marketing Effectiveness Research	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00

**Budget Summary**

<b>Proposed MTMPP Award:</b>	\$100,000.00
<b>Administrative Costs:</b>	\$20,000.00
<b>Cash Match:</b>	\$14,950.00
<b>In-Kind Match:</b>	\$29,750.00
<b>Total Match:</b>	\$44,700.00
<b>Total Proposed Budget:</b>	\$144,700.00