

Profile

Applicant: Regional Application

Grant Manager: Gary Edwards

Name of Organization: DownEast & Acadia Regional Tourism

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Cherryfield, ME 04622

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Telephone Number: 207 546-3600

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Date of Incorporation: February 7th, 1994

EIN: 01-0369337

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

1. Web Upgrades & interactive mapping
2. Cooperative Advertising
3. Travel Shows

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.

1. Moving visitors through region
2. Getting Visitors to Stay Longer
3. Attracting New Customers

Our recent (March 2013) conversion study confirmed that most of our visitors come to see Acadia National Park and Mount Desert Island. If we can work to move these visitors through the region, the subregions will benefit from increased visitation (and therefore increased revenues, even if just for day trips). If we get visitors to stay longer it will increase what they spend overall in the region as well. The same study shows that our demographic is largely the 35-year-old plus traveler. We want to reach out to a younger demographic via increased online advertising, mobile web applications (via new techshare), and asset development (videos), while still employing our traditional advertising and travel shows to maintain the older demographic as well.

81% of our visitors go to Mount Desert Island. By moving visitors around the region, it will encourage longer stays (more to see, more area to cover). The study also shows that 19% of our visitors spend more than \$2000.00 during their stay. We would like to increase this to 25%.

47% of our visitors stay more than 4 nights. We would like to increase this to 55%, meaning more nights lodging, more restaurant visits, more sites visited, all of which means more revenue for the area.

We also hope to increase the number of first time overnight visitors by 3% and first time day visitors by 4%. This will be measured by DPA Research.

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

1. Reach younger demographic via new media (mobile, social, etc.) and outdoor nature themes, while keeping up with drive market and traditional media
2. Focus on variety of themes that move people through the region
3. Collaboration and Awareness - build on and encourage working together in the region and create awareness of the "authentic" and "true maine" brand of our region both internally among stakeholders and externally among our visitors.

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

- Authenticity - True Maine has been our theme and fits in with the state's campaign of originality and uniqueness.
- Attract new visitors to the region -- this has been and remains our goal for the region and fits in with the State's focus on attracting first time visitors
- Attract a younger demographic, while maintaining the attraction for older visitors as well - this coincides with the acquisition and retention goal of the state.

Additionally we work to "foster and promote a collective spirit of collaboration among businesses with in the region" (via regular meetings, travel shows) and to "serve as the in-region information conduit for the tourism industry and its business communities" (meetings, email).

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

Grant Manager (Treasurer of our Fiscal Agent) will do the bookkeeping/checkwriting. Administrative Assistant and the Grant Manager will see that the projects are on track with goals of the organization and the approved plan. Quarterly reports are given to the board of directors with monthly reports run as well. Regular updates to the grant reporting system. Independent financial review of our funds are conducted annually.

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.

We are working hard to increase the trackability of all our efforts. We are participating in the DPA research project and may run small conversion studies for specific projects such as for the trade shows we do on our own as well. All our data is saved so that we are able to run surveys or questionnaires at any time and our advertising has dedicated toll free numbers and dedicated urls to try to better track its effectiveness as well.

Public Relations

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

Company: Risteen Bahr
Address: 287 Godfrey Boulevard
Bangor, ME 04401
Phone: (207) 992-4610
Email Address: rbahr@flybangor.com

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:

We use the list provided by and vetted by Nancy Marshall Communications.

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

Culinary Tourism and the drive market including the whole U.S., but specifically the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic States and Canada (particularly the Maritime Provinces).

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:

1. The local community (chambers and businesses) supports our efforts and provides funding toward the cash-match and contributes to the in-kind match as well. Maine Invites You is a prime example of successful local cooperation that brings the entire region together.
2. DART works with regional and local organizations with similar goals and objectives such as the recent expansion/development of the Down East Fisheries Trail.
3. We collaborate with other regions when practicable (i.e. with The Maine Highlands at Saltscapes).

Website Development & Maintenance

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

URL: www.downeastacadia.com

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

The goal of our website is to provide a user-friendly, informative mechanism for potential visitors to see what we have in the area and to help them plan their trips.

The over-riding goal for the site is to be a tool to bring more visitors, who stay longer and spend more money in our region and to provide the information and functionality needed to help plan a trip in the way that best serves the customers' needs. Access to as much information as possible, in as user-friendly and interactive a manner as possible, is key to this goal.

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

In addition to maintaining our participation in the state's techshare program (to keep up with new technology and to maintain a user-friendly platform for our area's businesses to market themselves), we are also committing funds to do outreach on the new techshare and its capabilities & to encourage businesses to enter their organizations, packages and events to our site.

The mobile capability of the new techshare is also critical for us to reach a younger demographic and to meet the needs of the increasingly tech-savvy traveler.

We are steadily adding more points to the interactive mapping system as well.

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 database is structured using Microsoft Access for use in fulfillment and follow-up (evaluation).

Budget Summary

Current Projects

Project 1: Administrative Costs

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

MTMPP Award: \$23,000.00

Project 2: Advertising

Project Type: Paid Advertising: Print, Broadcast, Online

Description: A combination of Print and Online advertising.

Element 1: DART's Print Media Campaign

Project: Advertising

Element Description: To reach our customer base through traditional print advertising.

Timeline: Sept. 2013 - June 2014

Tracking: All ads will have dedicated toll free numbers/urls for tracking purposes

Target Market: Traveling public.

Rationale: We have had success with our ads in Yankee, Downeast, Ride Maine and Maine Invites You.

Media Type: Print

Co-op Opportunity: Maine Invites You is a regional coop with good buy-in from the subregions. We do not make money from the coop, but it helps unify our presence in the publication and build a team on the ground as well.

Budget Description: Yankee - \$6000.00 - 1/2 page
Ride Maine - \$500.00 - 1/2 page
Downeast - 2000.00 1/3 page
Maine Invites You - \$13,700.00 (one full page plus 6 regional subsidies)
In-kind - \$5000
Cash match - \$36000

MTMPP Award: \$22,200.00

Cash Match: \$36,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$5,000.00

Element 2: DART's Online Advertising

Project: Advertising

Element Description: To run targeted ads in online media to reach out to new clientele.

Timeline: July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014

Tracking: Online tracking of leads that come from the campaign.

Target Market: The traveling public

Rationale: Using online media directing people to our website will help them with planning and will increase the attractiveness/accessibility of our region among those using the internet to plan their trips. This in turn will serve to increase visitation as well.

Media Type: Online
Co-op Opportunity: No
Budget Description: Boston.com \$9800.00
Yankee online - \$2000.00
Tripadvisor \$10,000.00
MTMPP Award: \$21,800.00
Cash Match: \$0.00
In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 3: Travel Shows

Project Type: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows: Registration, Operation, Exhibit Design & Upgrade
Description: Attending travel shows in Maine, New England and Maritime Canada.

Element 3: Attendance at Travel Shows

Project: Travel Shows
Element Description: Attend travel shows/events on our own or in cooperation with other regions. Planned are the Portland Camping Show, Saltscapes, AAA Foxboro, Portland Garden Show, Discover New England and local events.
Timeline: Summer 2013 and Spring 2014
Tracking: Via the number of requests for information from these regions and/or the number of brochures given out.
Target Market: New England and Maritime Provinces, international visitors and attendees of local events.
Rationale: Reaching out to local and international travelers to bring new visitors to the region.
Partners: We partner with The Maine Highlands for Saltscapes.
Budget Description: Camping Show Booth & Travel costs - \$1000.00, in-kind \$500.00
DNE registration and Travel costs - \$1500.00, in kind \$500.00
Saltscapes booth and travel costs - 1500.00, in-kind \$500.00
AAA Foxboro - \$1500.00, in kind \$500
Portland Garden Show - \$1000., in-kind \$500.00.
Local events such as Machias Wild Blueberry Festival, Winter Harbor Lobster Festival, Pirate Festival - \$250.00, in-kind \$500.00
MTMPP Award: \$6,750.00
Cash Match: \$0.00
In-Kind Match: \$2,500.00

Element 4: Shows with MOT Pavilion

Project: Travel Shows
Element Description: Attend shows with Maine Office of Tourism's pavilion in Boston, NY and Ottawa.
Timeline: January - March 2014
Tracking: We will cooperate with the state in its efforts to track effectiveness, such as helping to obtain prize packages used in tracking programs.
Target Market: The traveling public in our prime market areas (NY, Boston and Canada)
Rationale: Our studies show that Boston, NY and Canada are among our prime markets -- we need to be present at shows to continue to serve these areas and retain our market share.
Partners: Our board members partner with us by representing the DART region at the shows.
Budget Description: Participation fee for 3 shows - \$750

Travel Costs - \$4500.00
 In-kind - \$2000.00

MTMPP Award: \$5,250.00
Cash Match: \$0.00
In-Kind Match: \$1,500.00

Element 5: Travel Show Display

Project: Travel Shows

Element Description: Purchase a new display with our "True Maine" Brand for travel shows.

Timeline: Summer/Fall 2013

Tracking: Tracking the number of visitors who come to our booth at travel shows.

Target Market: To present an attractive booth to potential visitors at travel shows we do on our own.

Rationale: We need a fresh, updated booth to coincide with our new web look and updated brochures to attract visitors to us when at trade shows/travel shows/ local events so that we may entice them to visit our region.

Partners: *(No Response)*

Budget Description: Design - \$1500.00
 Production - \$1500.00

MTMPP Award: \$3,000.00
Cash Match: \$0.00
In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 4: Cruise Maine

Project Type: Special Projects

Description: Support of Cruise Maine's efforts to increase ports of call in Maine and to encourage cruisers to return to Maine.

Element 6: Cruise Maine Support

Project: Cruise Maine

Element Description: Support of Cruise Maine's efforts to increase cruise ships choosing Maine ports of call and encouraging their passengers to make return trips to Maine.

Timeline: Sea Trade will take place in March 2014. Promotion is year round.

Tracking: We will track the number of cruise ships to our local ports (Bucksport, Har Harbor and Eastport) to see how cruise traffic has increased.

Target Market: Cruise Ship passengers

Rationale: Cruise Maine promotes Maine's ports of call among cruise lines and encourages return trips to Maine among the passengers. Our region has 4 ports of call for cruise ships and this is an important way to reach potential visitors.

30% of cruise passengers come back to a region they have visited as part of a cruise, so the ROI is potentially very high in this market segment.

Budget Description: \$2000.00 to Cruise Maine for its efforts.

MTMPP Award: \$2,000.00
Cash Match: \$1,000.00
In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 5: Website Upgrades

Project Type: Website Development: Design, Upgrades, Mobilization

Description: Hiring a contractor to work with local businesses to demonstrate the new techshare and to get new businesses on the sites as well. This will improve the site and will also increase awareness in the region of the benefits of DART and MOT to the stakeholders. It will also encourage collaboration (indirectly, via the packaging component of the techshare program).

Element 7: Website Outreach via Contractor

Project: Website Upgrades

Element Description: Contractor will meet with individual businesses and/or conduct a workshop(s) to explain new techshare and promote it to businesses who may not yet be aware of the site(s).

Timeline: Begin work after new techshare is up and running -- estimated fall 2013 and/or winter/spring 2014

Tracking: Increase in number of listings on website by 20%

Target Market: The traveling public, ultimately, but also our stakeholders in the region

Rationale: Our web site is a key vehicle for getting information out on our region, as it is usually the first stop for people looking for information. Getting it to be as comprehensive as possible, benefits both the user and the local tourism providers. It will also serve to move people around our region based on what interests them.

Budget Description: Fees for contracted services. Proposals will be sought prior to contracting.

MTMPP Award: \$7,500.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 6: Taste of Maine Marketplace

Project Type: Public & Media Relations: Familiarization Tours, Media Events

Description: Participating in PR Event in NY with MOT

Element 8: Registration and Travel Costs

Project: Taste of Maine Marketplace

Element Description: Attending the Taste of Maine Marketplace with the state to promote our region to travel writers in NY.

Timeline: Spring 2014

Tracking: We will follow up with travel writers and track the coverage we get from them.

Additionally, we will track the number of writers who follow up by requesting familiarization tours of the area to refine the stories or story ideas they wish to develop.

Target Market: Travel Writers

Rationale: We feel it is important to reach out to journalists to spread the word on all that our region has to offer. By working with Nancy Marshall and participating in this established and anticipated event, we can meet key players, develop relationships with them and give them ideas for articles.

We did this event in the past and were happy with the results. We believe it is a good way to proceed with our PR efforts.

Budget Description: The budget for this element includes preparation, registration and travel costs.

In kind is the time spent by DART board representative(s) to the event.

MTMPP Award: \$2,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00
In-Kind Match: \$1,000.00

Project 7: Outsiders Video Project

Project Type: Asset Development: Professional Photography, Video

Description: Record brief videos (30-60 seconds) of people right as they are finishing an activity (i.e. as they come in off a sightseeing/whalewatching cruise, at the end of a hike or after a day of kayaking). Visitors will be asked "What did you do today?" or "Tell us about your experience". We will then post these on the website for the real traveler's perspective.

Element 9: Videotaping

Project: Outsiders Video Project

Element Description: Students & interns from local colleges (WCCC, NESCOM, UMM or WCCC/St. Croix Tech, etc) will be paid a stipend to conduct interviews using their own equipment.

Local volunteers and businesses, such as inns and attractions, will also be asked/invited to record videos and submit them to us for this effort (in-kind).

Timeline: July 1, 2013 through October 15, 2013

Tracking: Through google analytics, we will see how popular these videos are with people visiting our website and our YouTube account. We will also work with attraction managers to see if their businesses have an increase in visitation after videos of their DownEast experience have been posted.

Target Market: The traveling public.

Rationale: This is our own interpretation of MOT's "insider" theme. The idea focusses especially on the outdoor activities in our area. It also shares the perspectives of other visitors, tapping into the idea of tripadvisor, where people are talking about their experiences directly to others who may enjoy similar activities. We believe that these real world testimonials will have a great impact on all our demographic groups and hopefully will appeal to the younger traveler as well.

Image Categories: *(No Response)*

Budget Description: Stipend for recording video clips.

MTMPP Award: \$3,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$3,000.00

Project 8: DART Regional Brochure

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

Description: Update of regional brochure, print and distribution.

Element 10: DART Regional Brochure

Project: DART Regional Brochure

Element Description: Update region-wide brochure

Timeline: Develop and print September 2013 - December 2013

Tracking: We track the number of requests for information, the number picked up at trade shows and the use at visitor centers.

- Target Market:** The traveling public.
- Rationale:** To maintain a compelling and current brochure to lure people to our region and to move them around, highlighting the themes that make our region unique.
- Partners:** Distribution will be through MTA visitor centers, requests for information to our office, local chambers' centers and travel shows.
- Budget Description:** Proposals for the design and printing will be obtained prior to contracting with the vendor(s).
 - Updating \$4000.00
 - Printing - \$6000.00
 - Distribution - \$3500.00
 - In-Kind - \$2500.00
- MTMPP Award:** \$13,500.00
- Cash Match:** \$0.00
- In-Kind Match:** \$2,500.00

Project 9: Culinary Familiarization Tour

- Project Type:** Public & Media Relations: Familiarization Tours, Media Events
- Description:** Because food ranked very high in our conversion study (both among those planning to come as well as among what people enjoyed most after having been here), we want to reach out to culinary writers by arranging a Familiarization trip.

Element 11: Culinary FAM Tour

- Project:** Culinary Familiarization Tour
- Element Description:** Fam tour for culinary travel writers.
- Timeline:** Fall 2013 or Spring 2014
- Tracking:** We will track the number of unpaid media articles are published as a result of this effort.
- Target Market:** The traveling public and in particular, "foodies".
- Rationale:** Lobster, fresh seafood, blueberries, farm fresh produce, farmers markets are all authentic attractions for our region as we learned from our conversion study. We would like to build on this theme and highlight our region for this important niche market.

We will request assistance from Nancy Marshall Communications in identifying writers who are most interested in our culinary attractions.
- Budget Description:** Organization, travel costs, food, hotels for culinary travel writers fam tour.

In kind includes donated services from local chambers, inns, etc. in organizing and carrying out the tour.
- MTMPP Award:** \$5,000.00
- Cash Match:** \$0.00
- In-Kind Match:** \$5,000.00

Project Quick Reference

	<u>MTMPP Award</u>	<u>Cash Match</u>	<u>In-Kind Match</u>
Administrative Costs			
Administrative Costs	\$23,000.00		
Advertising			
DART's Print Media Campaign	\$22,200.00	\$36,000.00	\$5,000.00
DART's Online Advertising	\$21,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Travel Shows			
Attendance at Travel Shows	\$6,750.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
Shows with MOT Pavilion	\$5,250.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
Travel Show Display	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Cruise Maine			
Cruise Maine Support	\$2,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Website Upgrades			
Website Outreach via Contractor	\$7,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Taste of Maine Marketplace			
Registration and Travel Costs	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Outsiders Video Project			
Videotaping	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$3,000.00
DART Regional Brochure			
DART Regional Brochure	\$13,500.00	\$0.00	\$2,500.00
Culinary Familiarization Tour			
Culinary FAM Tour	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00

Budget Summary

Proposed MTMPP Award:	\$115,000.00
Administrative Costs:	\$23,000.00
Cash Match:	\$37,000.00
In-Kind Match:	\$20,500.00
Total Match:	\$57,500.00
Total Proposed Budget:	\$172,500.00