

Profile

Applicant: Regional Application

Grant Manager: Tanya Bentley

Name of Organization: Kennebec Valley Tourism Council

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Physical Address: 77 Sewall Street
Augusta, Me 04330

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Date of Incorporation: September 14th, 1990

EIN: 01-0458264

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

1. Freshen up and add content to our regional magazine, The Explorer.
2. Increased our conversion rate for guide request by 50% from our website.
3. Helped local businesses with their own marketing plan with our regional marketing sub grants.

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.

- Goal 1. Stay the course with our marketing efforts relative to Social Media (ie; Facebook, Twitter, Pinterst and You Tube).
- Goal 2. Increase our advertising budget and outreach to include in state and out of state advertising to enhance what MOT is already doing.
- Goal 3. Co Op with Maine Trail Finder to enhance, grow and produce an interactive map with new a Kennebec and Moose River Trail system. This system will be added to our website.

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

The Council's overall strategy to achieve our goals is to attract more visitors from our target market such as New England states and parts of Canada.

We will do this by:

1. Advertising
2. Public Relations
3. Regional Sub Grants
4. Travel and Trade Show
5. Social Media

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

The Council will work in partnership with the State to encourage the development of quality sustainable travel products to support tourism marketing efforts from the region and the Maine Office of Tourism. The use of social media, press releases, trade shows and advertising will be used to accomplish our goals

They will also serve as the principal in-region informational conduit for the tourism industry and its business communities

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

The Council will contract services with Eaton Peabody. Tanya Bentley will serve at the Grant Manager/Executive Director. Monthly board meetings will take place and ED to report budget monthly.

Primary Analysis

Research

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

No

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

(No Response)

Public Relations

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

Company: Thalo Blue Design

Address: 114 Lake Street
Auburn, Maine 04210

Phone: 207-400-4699

Email Address: matthew@thaloblue.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:

Bangor Daily News
Kennebec Journal
Morning Sentinel
Mainebiz
Maine News Direct

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

Facebook.com
Maine Invites You
Boston.com
Mainethingstodo.com
wchs6.com
USA Today

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.

Please describe in further detail your co-op efforts:

Regional Sub grants- Help local area business market themselves as a destination.

Maine Sports Commission- Work with 6 other regions to bring sports to Maine

Trade Shows- Support MOT and their efforts

Website Development & Maintenance

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

URL: www.kennebecvalley.org

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

The website is to enhance, teach and experience the Kennebec and Moose River regions. Visitors to the site will find information, events, lodging and more. Visitors will be able to plan a trip, make reservations and experience local events.

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

KVTC will focus on driving traffic to the website, build out new pages and re-freshen the current content for SEO optimization.

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:

KVTC collects emails and address from our e-newsletter sign up on our website. Brochure requests are gathered and stored for future email marketing efforts.

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: Photography

Project Type: Asset Development: Professional Photography, Video

Description: Photography Asset

Element 1: Assets

Project: Photography

Element Description: To collect and gain rights to use photography on our website, Facebook, pinterest and regional guidebook.

Timeline: Ongoing throughout FY 14

Tracking: N/A

Target Market: Potential visitors to our region and to the State.

Rationale: It's important to have photography assets of our region that is fresh and current. It give visitors and idea of what our region represents. Your website is often the first impression potential customers or clients have of your business. Photography can reinforce a brand identity.

Image Categories: Snowmobiling
Hiking
Rafting
ATVing
Downtown's
Main Streets

Budget Description: \$1000 paid by MTMPP. \$1000 for inkind donations from local photographers.

MTMPP Award: \$500.00

Cash Match: \$500.00

In-Kind Match: \$1,000.00

Project 3: Regional Brochure

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

Description: Regional Brochure, the Explorer

Element 2: Explorer

Project: Regional Brochure

- Element Description:** The Explorer is the Kennebec and Moose River Valleys response piece to brochure request online, travel centers and at trade shows. This is used to promote local businesses within our region and help visitors learn about what our region has to offer. We will also create a digital flip book on our webpage.
- Timeline:** This publication is expected to print in May to be on the available for distribution by the holiday weekend. Our flip book will also be available before the holiday's.
- Tracking:** Tracking will be provided by MTA for trade shows and travel centers. Our fulfillment distribution personal will track where and how many are were distributed through online request. We will also distribute and track within our region via our marketing firm.
- Target Market:** People wanting to visit and learn more about Maine and the Kennebec and Moose River Valleys region.
- Rationale:** It's critical that KVTC has a response piece for travel and trade shows, requests online and travel centers.
- Budget Description:** \$10,600 for the production of the Explorer and \$13,000 for printing cost. \$1000 paid for print distribution. \$3,150 paid for Advertising commissions.
- MTMPP Award:** \$6,750.00
- Cash Match:** \$21,000.00
- In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

Project 4: Fulfillment

- Project Type:** Fulfillment: Brochures, Guides, Maps & Distribution
- Description:** Fulfillment for the Explorer

Element 3: Phone and Mail Fulfillment for the Explorer

Project: Fulfillment

- Element Description:** This project is vital to the distribution of our regional brochure Explorer.
- This is one way we track conversion through the website via brochure request.
- Timeline:** KVTC has contracted the Eaton Peabody for fulfillment services. This is on going throughout the year. Requests are sent out each week.
- Tracking:** The number of brochures requested are tracked and reported each month to the Board.
- Target Market:** The target market is anyone wishing to learn more or visit the Kennebec and Moose River Valley.
- Rationale:** Fulfillment is vital to our region. KVTC produces a regional guide and this is one way to get it into the hands of interested parties.
- Partners:** Eaton Peabody
- Budget Description:** \$2500 paid to EPCG
- MTMPP Award:** \$500.00
- Cash Match:** \$2,000.00
- In-Kind Match:** \$0.00

Project 5: Maine Sports Commission

- Project Type:** Special Projects
- Description:** Maine Sports Commission

Element 4: Maine Sports Commission

Project: Maine Sports Commission

Element Description: KVTC has agreed to support the Maine Sports Commission for three years. This will be year three. In hopes of luring more sporting events to the Pine Tree State, tourism officials this month created the Maine Sports Commission to lobby on the state's behalf

Timeline: KVTC will contribute \$10,000 per year to the endeavor, and the Maine Office of Tourism has agreed to match that with \$70,000 per year in resources. Both the private and public sides have made a three-year commitment.

Tracking: Receive updates from the Sports Commission

Target Market: From professional golf tournaments to youth soccer competitions and Olympic trials, the commission hopes to attract national and regional sporting events, both big and small.

Rationale: The goal is not only to attract new events, but also to expand events currently in Maine. This is important to our region because we are known for our outdoor recreation.

Budget Description: 10000

MTMPP Award: \$10,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$10,000.00

Project 6: Webiste Development

Project Type: Website Development: Design, Upgrades, Mobilization

Description: Website Development, Design and Mobilization

Element 5: Website Design and Mobilization

Project: Webiste Development

Element Description: Continue to advance our website with the Techsharing program with Techshare 2.0.

Timeline: Ongoing

Tracking: Tracking will be provided by Google Analytics.

Target Market: Visitors to www.kennebecvalley.org. People who are interested in learning more about our region and what it has to offer.

Rationale: Our website is the key to our region. Most people use the web for planning vacations. It's important to have a website that highlights our region and is easy to use from any device.

Budget Description: Total cost will be \$11,900. \$4000 will be used to maintenance and updates.

\$7900 will be used to update calendar and content with new and fresh pages.

MTMPP Award: \$11,400.00

Cash Match: \$500.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 7: E-Marketing

Project Type: Paid Advertising: Print, Broadcast, Online

Description: Eclub Email Blast

Element 6: Eclub Email Blast

Project: E-Marketing

Element Description: Execute bi-monthly blasts based on an approved strategic media plan/calendar, promoting our regional and what's happening.

Programming, copywriting, content creation, distribution and analysis of between 18-24 emails.

Timeline: Bi-Monthly

Tracking: Tracking will be done through Constant Contact. We will be able to track the open rate, unique click thru rates, bounce rates, and social media sharing. Monthly reports to the Board.

Target Market: Consumers wanting to learn more about Maine and our region and what we have to offer such as events, lodging and things to do around our region.

Rationale: Driving traffic to website for more info and Facebook for the purpose of supporting any promotions or major events in region.

Budget Description: \$5400 to be paid for 24 bi-monthly eblast. \$650 to be paid to Constant Contact for hosting eblast.

MTMPP Award: \$6,050.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 8: Maine Invites You

Project Type: Paid Advertising: Print, Broadcast, Online

Description: Maine Invites You ad

Element 7: Maine Invites You

Project: Maine Invites You

Element Description: The goal of this project is to support the Maine Office of Tourism official vacation planner with a 1/2 page print ad and a banner ad. Size and placement to be determined based on FY14 rates and specs provided by MTA

Timeline: MOT and MTA to drive schedule.

Tracking: MTA will report tracking of MIY distributed.

Target Market: People wanting to learn or visit Maine and Kennebec and Moose River Valley.

Rationale: KVTC believes that the Maine Invites You is a premiere publication and the State's response to online brochure request. It's important that every region is represented in this guide book.

Media Type: Print Ad

Co-op Opportunity: N/A

Budget Description: 4300 paid to MTA

MTMPP Award: \$3,300.00

Cash Match: \$1,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$1,400.00

Project 9: Online Banner Ad

Project Type: Paid Advertising: Print, Broadcast, Online

Description: Online Banner Ad

Element 8: Online Banner Ad and Design

Project: Online Banner Ad

Element Description: To promote the Kennebec and Moose River Valleys with online banner ad placement. Current site include, Facebook, Maine Things to Do, Maine.info and Google Ad Words. Combination of strategically placed online digital paid media and print paid media. Media plan will be presented by June 1 for FY14.

Timeline: The will be on going throughout the year

Tracking: Google analytics will be used to track clicks- throughs.

Target Market: Residents and non residents looking to visit Maine and our region.

Rationale: The ad will invite visitors to come Explore our part of Maine by our website. Each message placed will be encouraging them to further explore content that provides access to our regions resources.

Media Type: Online webpage banner ads, varies sizes.

Co-op Opportunity: NA

Budget Description: \$5000 to be paid for advertising online.

MTMPP Award: \$5,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 10: Social Media

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

Description: Social Media Management

Element 9: Social Media Management/PR

Project: Social Media

Element Description: General oversight of all KVTC social media including Facbook, Twitter, You Tube, Vimeo and Pinterst.

Coordination, research, content generation, implementation and analytics across SM platforms to increase awareness and engagement towards the conversion goal of guide request, email subscription, website traffic for planning visit and searching events and ultimately a visit to the KV region.

Timeline: Ongoing

Tracking: Increase communication and engagement with consumers. We will track fans, likes and page views and report to the board monthly.

Target Market: Interested persons who want to learn more about Maine and our region, travel bloggers and in state media.

Rationale: Rich media is developed into the most popular formats of engaging, responding and informing consumers. This is the quickest and fastest way to communicate information NOW.

Partners: NA

Budget Description: \$12000 to be paid for Facebook, Twitter, Pintest, Vimeo and You Tube creation, support and management.

MTMPP Award: \$12,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 11: Project Oversight

Project Type: Website Development: Design, Upgrades, Mobilization

Description: Project Oversight

Element 10: Project Oversight

Project: Project Oversight

Element Description: This element is for Project Oversight for our marketing firm, Thao Blue.

Meetings, reporting, phone calls or e-mails with KVTC Executive Director, Board, or outside vendors not directly billable to a specific line item or project.

Timeline: Ongoing

Tracking: Monthly budgets will be created and reviewed by the Board.

Target Market: NA

Rationale: This element is important for the overall marketing projects that KVTC will be doing this year. This is to help project oversight for all marketing elements.

Budget Description: \$9900 to be paid to Thao Blue.

MTMPP Award: \$9,900.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 12: Regional Grants

Project Type: Special Projects

Description: Regional Grants for local tourism related businesses

Element 11: Regional Grants

Project: Regional Grants

Element Description: The Kennebec Valley Tourism Council (KVTC) has established a program to support local tourism promotional initiatives that will enhance the potential of making the KVTC region a destination.

Timeline: Applications are available in February. Applications will be reviewed by the Board in March. Monies are distributed in April.

Tracking: All awardee's must provide financial backup. Each awardee must provide a 2 to 1 cash match similar to the MTMPP grant. Each business must recognize KVTC and MOT in their literature.

Within 60-days of the completion of the project the applicant must meet specific reporting requirements which include:

a. Financial reports which indicate how the funds were expended.

b. Details of the delivered project along with a post campaign summary of the project to demonstrate the visitor impact of the event or project.

Target Market: Eligible organizations include Chambers of Commerce; non-profit tourism facilities; boards of trade; and other non-profits that engage in the business of tourism or tourism attraction.

Rationale: The element put money into the hands of local businesses giving them a boost in their own marketing plan.

Budget Description: Each award must not exceed \$2500. \$11,500 will be spent on many businesses in our area.

MTMPP Award: \$6,500.00

Cash Match: \$5,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 13: Maine Trail Finder

Project Type: Special Projects

Description: Maine Trail Finder

Element 12: Maine Trail Finer

Project: Maine Trail Finder

Element Description: 1. Trail Finder routes onto the center page map featured in the regional Explorer Guide;
2. License a Maine Trail Finder web viewer that can be embedded into KVTC's web page; and
3. Augment CCGIS-led trail documentation efforts in the Kennebec Region by supporting the development and posting of at least 10 (out of 60) new trails.

Timeline: June 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

Tracking: Website traffic, viewing statistics, and user-submitted comments will be monitored, tracked, and analyzed through Maine Trail Finder's content management system and associated web diagnostics tools

Target Market: Folks looking for outdoor activities in the Kennebec Adn Moose River Valleys.

Rationale: In order to increase public awareness of, and access to, high quality information about Maine's vast non-motorized trail network.

Budget Description: Reinforcing the promotion and mapping of best regional trails within KVTC's regional guidebook. \$250

License one Maine Trail Finder trails viewer to be embedded on KVTC's website. \$750

Generate at least 10 new Maine Trail Finder postings within the Kennebec Region.\$2000

MTMPP Award: \$3,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$2,000.00

Project 14: Board Meetings

Project Type: Administrative Costs

Description: Board Meetings

Element 13: Board Meetings

Project: Board Meetings

Element Description: This element documents in-kind match provided by the KVTC Board of Directors for their attendance and services to attend 10 Regular monthly Board meetings.

It also provides in-kind match from our Regional rep, Russell Walters from the Forks, to attend RAC meetings which are held once a month in Augusta.

Also this match is for our Regional Rep, Russell Walters, to attend Maine Sport Commission meetings.

Also provides inkind donation for meeting space rental such as the Mid Maine Chamber, Silverton Sporting Ranch, Heritage House, EPCG, etc.

Timeline: Ongoing 10 throughout the year. Our meeting are the 4th Thursday of the month except August and November.

Rac meeting are the 3rd Thursday of the month in Augusta.

Maine Sports Commission, TBD.

Tracking: Monthly meeting minutes/reports from the Board of Directors, RAC and Sports Commission.

Target Market: NA

Rationale: The KVTC is comprised of 12 area business/chambers members throughout the region. These members take time away from their businesses and travel around the region for meetings.

Budget Description: *(No Response)*

MTMPP Award: \$0.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$8,000.00

Project 15: Maine Campground Association Advertising

Project Type: Paid Advertising: Print, Broadcast, Online

Description: Maine Campground Association Advertising

Element 14: MECOA Advertising

Project: Maine Campground Association Advertising

Element Description: Various online and full-page print advertising with the Maine Campground Owners Association.

Goal: Develop and grow the relationship with RV park and campground patrons in ways that they will include the Kennebec & Moose River Valleys as a destination when planning a Maine vacation.

Objective: Grow and include the growth of in-region campground (campgrounds, camp rentals, RV park) lodging as part of our year to year regional tax revenue growth for lodging.

Timeline: MECOA to run schedule

Tracking: Beginning with the launch of a new KennebecValley.org website in February of 2012 the inbound traffic from the MECOA website has consistently ranked at the top of all referring sites. This tracking of referrals to KennebecValley.org will continue.

Target Market: GEOGRAPHIC PROFILE:

It is important to make certain that we reach those within Maine as well as those in our traditional markets.

- Primary: Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania
- Secondary: Connecticut, Rhode Island, Delaware, New Hampshire, Vermont
- Emerging: Montreal and Toronto, Canada

PSYCHOGRAPHIC PROFILE:

- Muddy Boots: Family travelers, 25 to 54, with kids/teens seeking experiential vacations filled with affordable soft adventure and cultural experiences that build lasting impressions and the strong familial bonds.

- Golden Pondskippers: Empty-nesters 45+ seeking a relaxing "bucket list" Maine vacation filled with scenic drives, light-effort day trips, art, antiques, culture and tasty dining secrets to share with traveling friends.

Rationale: Our history of limited paid media expense the high level of monthly inbound (to KVTC) traffic from the MECOA during the past 2 years without paid promotion

Media Type: Online/ Print

Co-op Opportunity: MECOA

Budget Description: *(No Response)*

MTMPP Award: \$1,800.00
Cash Match: \$700.00
In-Kind Match: \$500.00

Project 16: Travel Show Support

Project Type: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows: Registration, Operation, Exhibit Design & Upgrade
Description: Travel Show Support

Element 15: Travel Show Support

Project: Travel Show Support

Element Description: KVTC will support and attend local consumer travel and trade shows such as the Camper and RV show, Business to Business Trade Show (Lewiston), Business to Business Showcase (Waterville) Bangor Music Festival, the Governor's conference and more.

Timeline: TBD by June 1, 2013

Tracking: N/A

Target Market: Golden Pond skippers and families wanting to learn more about KVTC.

Rationale: Travel and trade shows are a great way to connect with local folks wanting to learn more about our region. We can hand out our response piece, The Explorer, talk one to one with folk.

Partners: MOT, Camp Maine, Mid Maine Chamber, etc.

Budget Description: KVTC has budgeted \$1500 for travel and registration for any local trade.

MTMPP Award: \$1,500.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 17: Online Advertising

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

Element 16: Online Banner Ad

Project: Online Advertising

Element Description: To promote the Kennebec and Moose River Valleys with online banner ad placement with a placement agency similar to Gannett.

Gannett develops customized marketing campaigns targeted to clients' specific needs. By integrating marketing solutions across our wide range of media platforms.

(Newspaper-USA Today and Television-WCSH6)

Timeline: The will be on going throughout the year

Tracking: Google analytics will be used to track clicks- throughs.

Target Market: Residents and non residents looking to visit Maine and our region.

Rationale: The ad with invite visitors to come Explore our part of Maine by our website. Each message placed will be encouraging them to further explore content that provides access to our regions resources.

Media Type: Online webpage banner ads, varies sizes.
Co-op Opportunity: NA
Budget Description: \$12000 to be paid to advertising agency like Gannett. \$1000 in-kind for advertising design.
MTMPP Award: \$12,000.00
Cash Match: \$0.00
In-Kind Match: \$1,000.00

Project 18: Public Relations

Project Type: Public & Media Relations: Familiarization Tours, Media Events
Description: Media Press Releases

Element 17: Media Press Releases

Project: Public Relations

Element Description: Creation and distribution of Press Releases, story pitches, and images to support media relations either independently or in coordination with NMC and MOT to expand awareness in media of the KV region.

Timeline: Ongoing throughout the year.

Increase awareness of the Kennebec and Moose River Valleys.

Increase traffic to our website

Increase our SEO

Tracking: Track increased traffic to website, brochure request, facebook and twitter when press releases are released.

Target Market: Anyone looking to learn more about Maine and the Kennebec and Moose River Valleys.

Rationale: The Kennebec and Moose River Valleys has events that bring in travelers from out of state. It's important to get the word out about the happenings in our region.

Budget Description: *(No Response)*

MTMPP Award: \$1,800.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project Quick Reference

	<u>MTMPP Award</u>	<u>Cash Match</u>	<u>In-Kind Match</u>
Administrative Costs			
Administrative Costs	\$23,000.00		
Photography			
Assets	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
Regional Brochure			
Explorer	\$6,750.00	\$21,000.00	\$0.00
Fullfilment			
Phone and Mail Fullfilment for the Explorer	\$500.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00
Maine Sports Commission			
Maine Sports Commission	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
Webiste Development			
Website Design and Mobilization	\$11,400.00	\$500.00	\$0.00
E-Marketing			
Eclub Email Blast	\$6,050.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Maine Invites You			
Maine Invites You	\$3,300.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,400.00
Online Banner Ad			
Online Banner Ad and Design	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Social Media			
Social Media Management/PR	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Project Oversight			
Project Oversight	\$9,900.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Regional Grants			
Regional Grants	\$6,500.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
Maine Trail Finder			
Maine Trail Finer	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
Board Meetings			
Board Meetings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$8,000.00
Maine Campground Association Advertising			
MECOA Advertisting	\$1,800.00	\$700.00	\$500.00
Travel Show Support			
Travel Show Support	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Online Advertisting			
Online Banner Ad	\$12,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Public Relations			
Media Press Releases	\$1,800.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Budget Summary

Proposed MTMPP Award:	\$115,000.00
Administrative Costs:	\$23,000.00
Cash Match:	\$30,700.00
In-Kind Match:	\$23,900.00
Total Match:	\$54,600.00
Total Proposed Budget:	\$169,600.00