

# Wyoming Office of Tourism FY13 - FY14 Strategic Plan

## Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life Results:

The Wyoming Office of Tourism supports these Wyoming Quality of Life Results:

- Wyoming values the unique aspects of its western heritage, providing residents and visitors expanding access to cultural, historical and recreational experiences.
- Wyoming has a diverse economy that provides a livable income and ensures wage equality. Wyoming Office of Tourism supports these goals by promoting and facilitating increased travel to and within the state of Wyoming. A healthy tourism economy contributes to business sustainability and strengthens the industry's job and income generation capacity.

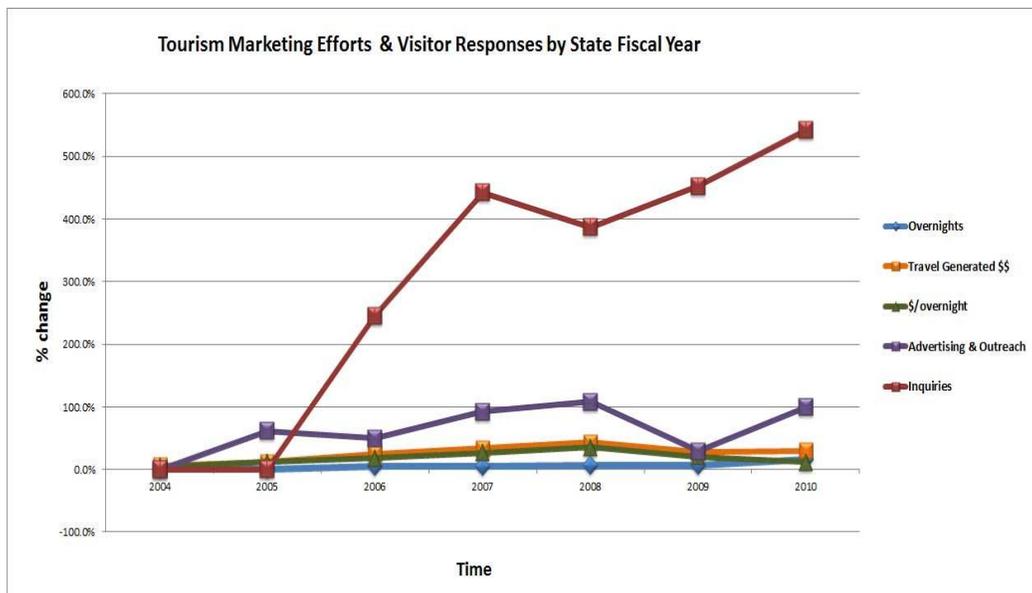
## Basic Facts:

The Wyoming Office of Tourism has twenty full-time staff positions and operates with a biennium budget of \$24,897,242. The funding sources for the budget are 100% general funds.

Programs include sales and marketing efforts in the following areas:

- Advertising, Web and Research
- Domestic Tourism Marketing
- Industry Services
- International Tourism Marketing
- Media and Public Relations
- Film, Arts & Entertainment

## Performance Measure #1:



## Story Behind the Performance #1:

Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) is the agency charged with bringing non-resident visitors to Wyoming by promoting the state as a vacation destination to both domestic and international audiences. The local tourism industry relies on

WOT to create an umbrella marketing campaign, promoting Wyoming as an ideal vacation destination and positioning Wyoming against competitive brands as the destination of choice.

Aware consumers are twice as likely to visit as non-aware consumers. Effective advertising and outreach efforts create brand awareness. Once deployed, potential visitors respond to marketing campaigns and are driven to explore Wyoming vacation planning information through the website, call center and publications (inquiries). As WOT's advertising and outreach efforts increase, so has the volume of inquiries as a result of those efforts. An increase in inquiries is a direct result of increased awareness which is a result of increased and consistent messaging in the marketplace. While advertising and outreach grew by 99% from FY04 to FY10, during that same time inquiries grew by five times that much.

Awareness about a destination leads to inquiries and in turn, inquiries lead to actual visits. Actual visits are measured in overnights (i.e., 10 overnights could be measured as one visitor staying for 10 nights, or 10 visitors staying for one night) which generates direct travel-generated sales on such things as shopping, accommodations, gasoline and fuel, food, entertainment and recreation, just to name a few. Increasing the number of visitors and/or extending their length of stay are both growth factors in a healthy, sustainable tourism economy.

By creating and implementing a fully integrated marketing campaign, WOT builds business potential for Wyoming constituents who operate tourism-related businesses and services, adding strength to the Wyoming travel industry . . . an industry predominantly made up of small, independent businesses. The six year trend analysis indicates that it's working. While the number of overnights has grown by nearly 16%, the expenditures per overnight have grown at two times that rate.

It is important to note that Wyoming's tourism industry is subject to outside influences over which the division has no control. Natural catastrophes (fires; floods) and global issues (terrorism; housing market; presidential elections; gas prices) can have a profound impact on people's ability and willingness to travel. The shift in the national economy in 2008 clearly affected consumers' confidence which is evidenced by the drop in inquiries in FY08 over FY07. The fluctuating national economy and fuel prices may continue to effect consumers' travel and in turn, travel to Wyoming.

### **Improving the Performance #1:**

Over the next two years, the Wyoming Office of Tourism proposes the following to grow Wyoming's tourism industry:

1. Deepen the use of research for strategic decisions:

- Utilize the brand development index (BDI), both web and fulfilled leads, to measure Wyoming's message infiltration in the marketplace and determine market performance.
- Conduct intermittent behavioral based research to determine mind-set and motivations for driving consumers' travel decisions as well as conversion.
- Expand the use of the WOT research co-op by 50% (specifically intercept studies and lodging studies) through destinations yet to take advantage of the program.
- Expand web analytics to include Quantcast and other relevant demographic-based analytic tools to garner demographic information about the WOT web visitor to provide better targeting information.
- Conduct a web conversion study to determine the percentage of web users who convert into actual visitors. The study will also provide insights into the type of content that is valuable for improving conversion.
- Perform a consumer research study to gauge the effectiveness of the WOT regional road trip campaign.

No additional cost outside standard budget.

2. Enhance consistency and distribution of advertising message:

- Expand number of ad aware households by 3% by being more efficient in existing markets and adding new markets of opportunity.
- Strategically add 1 new market and make market adjustments as supported by the BDI research. Currently the next market for expansion is Seattle/Tacoma. Create multi-media campaigns in this new market by using the successful launch model used in other markets (Chicago, Portland).

- Leverage paid media buys by 20% for value-added enhancements, such as access to consumer databases, web links, cross-promotional opportunities, etc.
- Maintain a minimum of 60% ad effectiveness rating.
- Deepen and strengthen the entire advertising schedule – TV, print, online, out-of-home, and ambient marketing.
  - Increase total impressions across all mediums by 43.7%, up from 2.03 billion impressions to 2.92 billion.
  - Increase TV market reach by 13%, up from 12.58% of total US households to 14.19%.
  - Decrease the cost per thousand impressions by 9%, down from \$2.91 cost per thousand to \$2.65.
- Continue to focus on regional marketing campaigns during the main travel season of summer with a continued focus on road trips/itineraries to offset what is perceived as a slow climb out of the current economic slump.
- Explore the expansion of the mediums used in regional marketing campaigns including, mobile/SMS, ambient and social media efforts.
- Achieve an increase of 20% in total number of inquiries.
- Expand Wyoming’s online communications by increasing the e-newsletter subscriber database by 20% through annual e-append, database cleansing and predictive modeling efforts.
- Produce 1-2 new TV spots to expand the current Roam Free campaign.
- Expand out-of-home (outdoor) in existing markets and new markets as they come online. Implement ambient/event-based marketing efforts in new markets as they come online to provide additional awareness in conjunction with campaigns running in new markets.
- Develop an integrated social media strategy to provide additional lift and exposure to paid media campaigns with the specific goal of growing non-resident followers/fans.
- Create a consistent, in-state social media awareness campaign to tout the power of integrating local business and destination’s social media networks with the WOT social media network and to provide better lift of the collective social media messaging being implemented across Wyoming by various tourism industry partners.
- Expand the WOT social media network by engaging in location-based networks (i.e. Gowalla, Foursquare) when it fits with the overall campaign strategy. Encourage local tourism businesses and destinations to engage in these networks for increased on-the-ground messaging to visitors.
- Continue to seek out and integrate the WOT message into newly developed social media networks (i.e. pinterest.com) that fit within the WOT strategy.
- Capitalize on the growing use of mobile messaging (SMS) to provide visitors with real-time tools to access necessary information while planning or on the ground in Wyoming.
- Increase web sessions by 20%.
- Increase establishment referrals (click-throughs from the WOT website to a Wyoming tourism-related business website) by 20%.

Additional ongoing funding request of \$5.4 million for deepening advertising efforts in existing markets (\$2.4 million) and new market expansion (\$3 million).

3. Enhance the planning tools to meet/exceed the expectations of the today’s consumer:
  - WOT website(s):
    - Continue to incorporate new and emerging technologies into wyomingtourism.org, wyoming4kids.org and filmwyoming.com so as to maximize the online user experience, resulting in increased visitation, filming or learning about Wyoming.
    - Build a new front end to the WOT website to correspond to the new Roam Free campaign launched in FY11. The new front end should include more efficient navigation, more functional search capability, better user experience, efficient content integration, integrated mapping and updated look and feel.
    - Integrate and enhance the current back-end systems to accommodate new front-end functionality.
    - Integrate the various stand-alone websites currently being utilized into one comprehensive back end system for ease of administration, consistent branding and enhanced usability (i.e. industry site, master plan site, governor’s conference site, road trip site, roam free mobile site).

- Develop a strategy for the WOT to engage consumers in the mobile platforms that are quickly evolving (smart phones, tablets, etc.). This will include development of a mobile website.
- Continually collect user feedback (both industry and consumer) to determine site improvements to make the site more navigable and attractive to consumers.
- Continue to improve WOT’s electronic communications capabilities, through annual database cleansing and an e-append process to grow the database organically.
- Expand the WOT content plan to include additional videos, photos, itineraries, articles about specific attractions or events, blogs, social media posts, top 10 lists, feature stories and audio narrations.
- Expand current co-op efforts and provide more targeted fulfillment efforts with the addition of a co-op fulfillment program for destinations and businesses to access fulfillment leads generated through the WOT website.
- Enhance the offerings from lodging and convention facilities through the addition of a Meetings and Conventions module on the WOT website.
- Publications:
  - Conduct a complete publication audit to review all publications produced through the WOT for efficiency, brand consistency, innovativeness, technological advancements and recommended changes to format or distribution model.
  - Continue to increase the usefulness of the Wyoming Travelers Journal by providing more information on “what to do after you are here.”
  - Integrate the Wyoming Travelers Journal content and design with the new WOT website resulting in seamless functionality between the two planning tools.
  - Ensure a tablet/electronic version of the Wyoming Travelers Journal is readily available on all platforms (iPad, Android, Blackberry) as consumers’ media consumption habits continue to evolve.

Additional one-time funding request of \$400,000 for website front-end redesign and back-end intergration/enhancement. Additional ongoing funding request of \$153,400 per biennium for ongoing web development/enhancements and website hosting and maintenance.

4. Expand Wyoming media coverage and increase advertising equivalency while enhancing media relationships:
  - Increase number of news clips and advertising equivalency by 25% by distributing online press releases, highlighting Wyoming story ideas, monthly to national media using PRWeb distribution service.
  - Using social media outlets such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogger and YouTube, pitch multimedia stories to travel writers. Increase followers, more specifically travel writers, across all social mediums by 10%.
  - Increase online video coverage of Wyoming by 10% by offering high definition downloadable video via YouTube and Sorenson 360 to media outlets for instant broadcast.
  - Review HD video ancillary equipment inventory and invest in appropriate lens and editing packages that provide the greatest quality of video footage to both television stations and online news networks.
  - Partner with the tourism industry to host travel writers and conduct press trips, providing journalists the opportunity to experience Wyoming first hand. Increase the number of writers hosted by 5%.
  - Conduct a minimum of 10 sales calls and host media receptions in major markets such as New York, Chicago and Los Angeles to promote Wyoming story ideas and nurture media relationships with major outlets and travel writers in those markets.
  - Minimize the impact of natural disasters, economic worries and other outside influences by implementing our crisis communication plan that focuses on the positive attributes of travelling in Wyoming.

No additional cost outside standard budget.

5. Strengthen Wyoming’s competitive position in the International marketplace:
  - Expand the “Real America” brand by participating in projects with Rocky Mountain International (RMI); grow Australian marketing efforts by adding New Zealand to the current mix of targeted countries; and continue Wyoming’s Scandinavian trade efforts in Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland.
  - Participate in sales and training missions; educate international tour operators about niche tourism product and unique visitor opportunities outside of the traditional visitor destinations.

- Continue utilizing ads that are effective in the international markets and support advertising in the US Travel Association endorsed USA travel guide published in seven languages and distributed in 40 countries.
- Utilize electronic mediums to allow greater and more effective distribution of Wyoming's images to international media and travel trade.
- Work with new and existing research vendors and other stakeholders to identify and implement collection methods to measure international visitation; establish benchmarks. Take advantage of CTP research opportunities.
- Continue educating Wyoming suppliers on how to successfully work with international tour operators and the potential benefits in growing the market sector for their business.
- Strive to maintain current international visitor numbers and work to grow length of stay by promoting activities and attractions in and around Wyoming communities.
- Take advantage of cooperative marketing programs, with the Corporation for Travel Promotion, to further penetrate existing international markets and develop new markets of opportunity.
- Enhance marketing programs in Canada, United Kingdom (UK) and Germany (rated 1, 3, and 5 respectively on the 2010 list of inbound markets to the US) to keep pace with the growing number of global destinations competing for these same markets.

Additional ongoing funding request of \$624,000 to expand international efforts and participate in CTP co-op programs.

6. Maximize return-on-investment from participation in travel trade and direct marketing programs:
  - Respond to the changing demands of the group travel industry with innovative ways in which to package and present Wyoming product.
  - Continue educating domestic tour operators on the latest Wyoming product offerings.
  - Conduct domestic trade Fams and assist with operator's needs while they are scouting Wyoming product for tours. Continue educating AAA offices in the United States and CAA office in Canada by directing the AAA/CAA educational program to areas that haven't participated in the Wyoming training previously or haven't done so in the recent past. Having a strong Wyoming presence at shows split between travel agents training days and consumer training days will both educate and drive traffic to Wyoming.
  - Reach domestic motorcoach operators through prescheduled meetings at trade shows by continuing to attend the two largest domestic motorcoach shows in the US; American Bus Association (ABA) Annual Convention and National Tour Association (NTA) Annual Convention.
  - Upload all trade show leads to website for easy access and follow up by Wyoming businesses and destinations.
  - Secure Wyoming's position as a premier destination for group tour business through growing involvement with NTA; and ensure that Wyoming businesses, and WOT, receive the greatest possible return on investment as members, and as participants at the Annual Convention.
  - Assist domestic operators with their itineraries by providing educational trips throughout WY or by matching WY products with their client's needs.
  - Strive to maintain current domestic visitor numbers, even in tough economic times, and work to grow length of stay by promoting activities and attractions in and around Wyoming communities.
  - Increase Wyoming's exposure in the meetings, incentive, and convention markets by attending highly regarded trade shows specifically focusing on these markets.
  - Continually evaluate markets of opportunity for expansion of consumer show presence while maintaining a strong presence in current markets through a redesigned and more interactive booth configuration.

No additional cost outside standard budget.

7. Make Wyoming more visitor-friendly and easily accessible by providing interpretive travel information and quality service:
  - Continue to develop Welcome Center personnel through annual training and familiarization tour (Fam) including training newly hired staff for the new SE Wyoming Welcome Center.

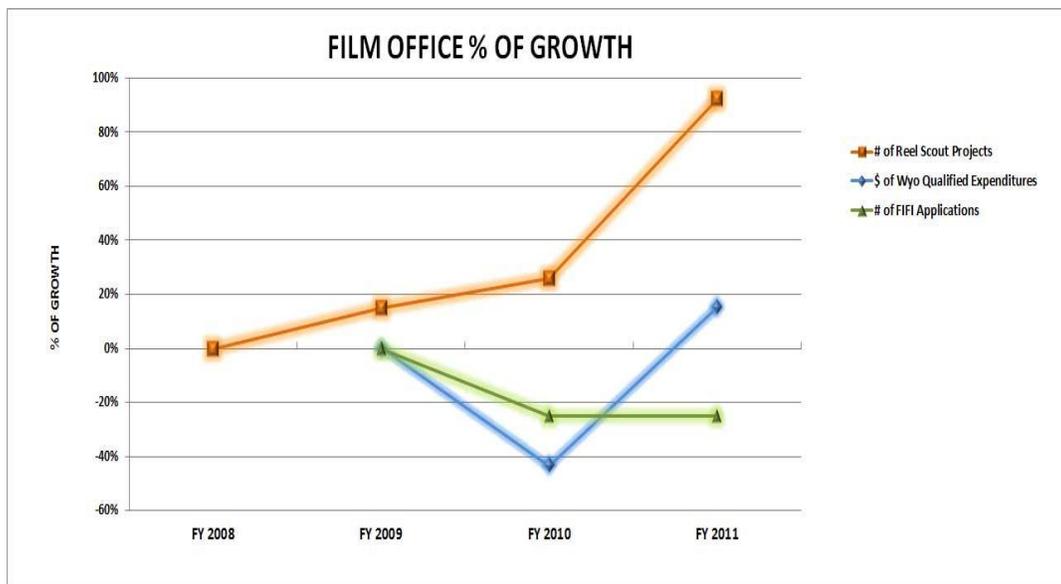
- Continue to work with Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) to add directional and interpretive signage and pullout improvements along Wyoming highways.
- Continue in-state tourism marketing education through annual workshops, webinars, and the online certification program for frontline employees.
- Partner with Wyoming Community Colleges and coordinate curricula to expand the offerings of the Wyoming Forever Friendly customer service training program. Expanded offerings could include contract trainers to take the program to communities in which there is no community college for ease of training access by tourism industry partners.
- Partner with Rural Development Council Community Assessment Program to support and market the Certified Tourism Community Program to communities that have identified tourism as a major economic driver. Certify two additional communities.
- Expand the Destination Marketing Specialist Program to an online testing environment, in addition to on-site testing opportunities throughout the year. Increase the number of DMS certified frontline personnel by 100%.
- Work with A&I Capital Construction Division and WYDOT for the transition of welcome center operations to the newly built SE Wyoming Welcome Center.
- Develop and enhance Welcome Center programs through increased participation of federal, state and local entities in the Destination Showcase program and annual FAM tour, and work with the Travel Trade Department to develop a “Wyoming Welcome” reception program for large tour groups coming into the state and stopping at the Welcome Centers.

Additional ongoing funding request of \$300,000 for operations and maintenance of the SE Wyoming Welcome Center. Additional one-time funding request of \$210,000 for furnishings, equipment and commercial mover for the SE Wyoming Welcome Center.

8. Support efforts to create an environment friendly to sustainable growth and responsible product development:
  - Continue to implement recommendations in the Tourism Master Plan.

No additional cost outside the standard budget.

**Performance Measure #2:**



## **Story Behind the Performance #2:**

The purpose of the Wyoming Film Office is to promote Wyoming locations as settings for film production. When production companies film in Wyoming, they contribute to the economic vitality of that local community and to the state as a whole. Production companies purchase goods and services from local businesses, including everything from accommodations, food and beverage, hardware and lumber supplies, equipment rental and more. They also employ local crews ranging from just a few to hundreds. Film production also contributes significantly to Wyoming's tourism economy by enhancing the public visibility through television, DVD and motion picture distribution.

The Wyoming Film Industry Financial Incentive (FIFI) program was developed to provide the entertainment industry a financial incentive and make Wyoming more competitive in bringing the jobs, economic impact and tourism promotion that on-location filming contributes to a state. FIFI legislation was passed by Wyoming's 57<sup>th</sup> Legislature and enacted into law in February 2007.

Through marketing and promotion efforts, awareness about location opportunities, the incentive program and the increased number of qualified work force has expanded interest in filming in Wyoming. Film Office inquiries are fulfilled through an online packaging system called "Reel Scout." The software combines a comprehensive contact management system, digital photography library and a local crew database to better showcase Wyoming's production resources. By utilizing the web-based Reel-Scout database, the Film Office can increase the number of digital images and location packages offered to production companies. The system allows the Film Office to track requests from production companies including the status of projects, locations scouted and city or county statistics to measure usage. From FY08 to FY11, the number of Reel Scout location packages distributed has increased by 93%.

In FY09, the FIFI program began to show concrete production activity so it serves as the performance benchmark for FIFI activity including the number of applications as well as total economic value of productions while filming in Wyoming. Since the inception of the program, ten FIFI projects have been approved, representing just under \$ 4 million in Wyoming expenditures for the purchase of in-state goods and services associated with film production.

## **Improving the Performance #2:**

### 1. Strengthen Wyoming's film-friendly offerings:

- Market the Film Industry Financial Incentive (FIFI) program through effective advertising strategies targeting mid-level and larger budget film projects that can meet the \$200,000 minimum spend requirement.
- Participate in face-to-face networking at trade shows, film festivals and conferences, as well as event sponsorship and hosting familiarization (FAM) tours for film industry professionals.
- Continue to promote the Wyoming Short Film Contest to independent and smaller budget filmmakers to increase submissions by 25%.
- Develop crew/equipment resources through partnerships with the Film Production program at Central Wyoming College, local production companies and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services.
- Expand Film Office social media channel marketing efforts and increase industry followers by 45%.
- Utilize Reel-Scout and Reel-Crew databases to grow the digital location images by 15% and production resource options offered online.
- Increase film location inquiries by 25% and recruit projects to utilize FIFI funds and Wyoming locations.
- Leverage the high visibility of the "Modern Family" season three premier episode filming in Wyoming to attract other production companies and projects to the state.

No additional cost outside standard budget.