

Profile

Applicant: Regional Application

Grant Manager: Gary Edwards

Name of Organization: DownEast & Acadia Regional Tourism

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Date of Incorporation: August 2nd, 2002

EIN: 04-3350778

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

1. Fam Trip held in Fall of 2004 brought 1 travel writer to the area and yielded an article in the Christian Science Monitor and the writer is working on additional articles. A second trip planned for June 2005 will highlight watchable nature, focussing on the wealth of nature our area has to offer. To date 5 travel writers have committed to participating.
2. Web site enhancements - Conducted focus groups to determine what would be most effective. Upon the recommendations of these focus groups, we changed the look of the website, put in a banner and added the what's new and calendar of events features to offer more of what travelers are looking for.
3. Regional brochure to highlight the entire DART region, gives an overview of each of our subregions to maximize awareness of all that is available here for visitors.

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.

Our goals are to have visitors stay longer, visit more of the region and spend more money while emphasizing our natural resources through the promotion of sustainable tourism practices

Our proposal consists of three essential components: Advertising/Marketing, Education/Training and Downeast Heritage Center.

1. Advertising/Marketing - to broaden the scope of awareness and visitation to our region through trade shows, increased print advertising and building on our established brand recognition.

- A. Advertising in print media
- B. Trade Shows
- C. Lighthouses and Lobsters Brochure

2. Hospitality Training: Ensuring that local communities are equipped to provide excellent customer service and regional knowledge to enhance the stay of our visitors in a meaningful way across the DART area.

3. Downeast Heritage Center: Support of DownEast Heritage Center's efforts to brand itself as a gateway for the Downeast & Acadia Region

We will also support the Maine Tourism Commission's Public Relations efforts through its Public Service Announcements with the overriding goal of increasing public awareness into the economic benefits of tourism statewide

We will look at the state's economic indicators (sales tax revenues) for 2005 and compare them with the 2006 figures. Our goal is to achieve an incremental and sustainable increase from year to year.

For each of our goals, we have specific, quantifiable methods to measure the effectiveness/success rates (detailed in each element description).

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

Our proposed strategy is for more widespread promotion of our Region through a presence at key travel shows, increased advertising in target markets, enhancing DART's advertising/marketing campaign to focus on increasing vacation and marketable trips to our region and sponsoring a training program for tourism workers, enabling them to better assist visitors with regional knowledge and improved customer service thus increasing visitor satisfaction and by extension, word of mouth recommendations. We are also supporting Cruise Maine in its initiative to promote the coast of Maine for cruise ship port calls. We will support the DownEast Heritage Center in its efforts to brand itself as a gateway to the entire DownEast & Acadia Region (contingent upon their providing a plan in compliance with MTMPP's regulations by October 1, 2005).

This strategy builds upon the DART projects of the last few years that have been featuring the attractions of the region and building the brand identity.

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

Our goals specifically support the Maine Office of Tourism's Five Year Plan "expansion of existing program initiatives" and providing "education and hospitality training".

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

Grant and financial management will be performed by Down East RC&D. Down East RC&D is an established agency operating in Cherryfield. The Down East RC&D is also responsible for both Hancock and Washington counties which fits well with DART. DART has worked with the Vacationland Resources Committee of the Down East RC&D over the years and will continue to do so.

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.

Through cooperation with the Vacationland Resources Committee of Down East RC& D, we have worked out several possible research projects for interns.

One project is for the intern to research package tours in the DownEast & Acadia region, both existing and potential and to determine interest levels of the hospitality suppliers into participating and cooperating in such tours.

A second research project is to use interns to assemble and update email addresses and websites from businesses in the DART area. The goal is to build up and update our database of suppliers in the region and to ease communications and increase the involvement of local businesses in tourism, as the programs in our region continue to expand and evolve.

Public Relations

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

Company: Risteen Masters

Address: c/o Bay Ferries
121 Eden Street
Bar Harbor, Maine 04609

Phone: (207) 288-1171

Email Address: info@downeastacadia.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 Nancy Marshall, the state's Public Relations firm.

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

All U.S., Northeast Regional and Atlantic Province publications and broadcast outlets.

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:

The local community (Chambers of Commerce) as well as local industries support our efforts and provide funding toward the cash match for our efforts.

In an effort to be as effective as possible, as a regional entity, DART will continue to work jointly with other regional or local organizations having similar goals and objectives. Most notably among those is the Vacationland Resources Committee of the Down East Resource Conservation and Development Council, which released its Destiny 2010 plan in January 2005 and is currently working to enhance networking among the sustainable tourism stakeholders in the region. Through our association with such economic development organizations, we will encourage local entrepreneurs by helping to raise their awareness of available resources for business and financial assistance.

We also support the Maine Tourism Commission's Public Service Announcements.

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 providing a user-friendly mechanism for potential visitors. They can easily get an overview into each of DART's subregions and do searches to identify lodging, campgrounds, dining, and services in each of the regions. Additionally we have a calendar of events that is searchable by date so visitors can inform themselves about what is happening. The site also provides a way to directly email questions and requests for information to DART.

The over-riding goal for our site both now and in the future is to use it as a tool to bring more visitors, who stay longer and spend more money in our region, as outlined in the Maine Office of Tourism's 5 year Strategic Plan.

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

We are working with our web designer to continue to improve the site through Administrative Enhancements (key word sorts on Business listings, for ease of entry and avoidance of duplications), Site enhancements (captions added to photos, dynamic footer with all of DART's contact information) and developing a mechanism to automate the Business listing updates in the future.

Additionally we are enhancing the Calendar of Events on the site to be searchable by sub-region, so it is more useful for travelers.

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 and is used for fulfillment, follow-up (evaluation) and conversion studies.

We also keep information on which clients would like updates, so that in the future we can send out breaking news or newsletters on what is happening in the DART region to them.

Budget Summary

Current Projects

Project 1: Media Plan

Project Type: Advertising
Description: Print advertising in regional and niche market publications.

Element 1: List of Insertions

Project: Media Plan

Element Description: Placement of Advertisements for DART

- Timeline:**
1. AAA Northern New England - Mar/Apr 2006
 2. Yankee Travel Guide - Annual 2006 Edition
 3. Maine Invites You - Annual 2006 Edition
 4. Natural New England - Mar/Apr 2006 and June/July 2006
 5. Out & About - 5 issues 2006

Tracking: The effectiveness of this advertising campaign will be measured by dedicated toll-free numbers for each advertisement run and a conversion study will be done to determine how many visitors traveled to the region as a result of each of the ads.

Target Market: Traveling Public in targeted regions/market niches.

- Rationale:**
1. AAA Northern New England - circulation 440,000, among travelers from Northern New England
 2. Yankee Travel Guide - 250,000 circulation among travelers interested in New England
 3. Maine Invites You - 265,000 circulation among travelers interested in Maine
 4. Natural New England - 17,000 Circulation among nature and outdoor travelers
 5. Out & About - 18,000 Circulation among locals and tourists in the area.

- Media Type:**
1. AAA Northern New England - Magazine 1/2 page, 4 color
 2. Yankee Travel Guide - Annual Magazine supplement, 1/2 page 4 color
 3. Maine Invites You - Annual Tourism Guidebook, full page, 4 color
 4. Natural New England - Mar/Apr 2006 and June/July 2006, both full page, 4-color
 5. Out & About - 5 issues 2006 - 16 column inches, B&W

Co-op Opportunity: *(No Response)*

- Budget Description:**
1. AAA Northern New England - \$5500.00
 2. Yankee Travel Guide - \$7000.00
 3. Maine Invites You - \$6450.00
 4. Natural New England - \$1600.00
 5. Out & About - \$1110.00
 6. Design and Production - \$1340.00

Grand Total: \$23,000

MTMPP Award: \$23,000.00

Cash Match: \$1,050.00

In-Kind Match: \$9,550.00

Project 2: Sea Trade Show

Project Type: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Description: Support the Sea Trade Show through Cruise Maine to increase awareness and build upon established contacts in the lucrative cruise travel market.

Element 2: Support of Cruise Maine Initiative

Project: Sea Trade Show

Element Description: Goal is to increase the number of cruise ships calling on our region.

Timeline: Event to take place March 13-16, 2006. Cruise Maine will organize the show and make all the arrangements in late 2005, early 2006.

Tracking: We will measure whether there is an increase in the number of cruise ships calling on our region.

Target Market: Cruise Ship Companies and their clientele.

Rationale: This is part of our overall goal of broadening our visibility by using the cruise ships as the vehicle to bring in more tourists. This show will also re-inforce the desirability of our region as a coastal destination. It is hoped that once travelers get a taste of our region via the port call, they will come back for a complete vacation in DownEast & Acadia.

Partners: Cruise Maine

Budget Description: To cover booth fees and exhibit related expenses

MTMPP Award: \$1,500.00

Cash Match: \$1,500.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 3: Adventures in Travel Show

Project Type: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Description: Travel Trade and Consumer Show focusing on the Adventure Travel Market

Element 3: Travel Trade Show Participation/Exhibit

Project: Adventures in Travel Show

Element Description: Exhibiting at Adventures in Travel Show.

Timeline: Show will take place early in 2006. DART will attend either NY (Jan) OR Washington (Feb). Show arrangements for exhibit space, booth display and personnel will be made in Fall of 2005.

Tracking: The effectiveness of this travel show will be measured by collecting names through a contest/giveaway at the show and a conversion study which will be conducted on that list. Additionally, in the section on our website where information is requested, there is a question on how the tourist found out about us. There will be an "Adventures in Travel" option added to this pull-down menu and a conversion study conducted on these contacts as well.

Target Market: Adventure travelers and travel service providers

Rationale: Because of the wealth of natural resources and beauty in the DART region, it is a natural attraction for adventure travelers wishing to experience the unspoiled nature in the area. Capitalizing on this asset, DART wishes to expand the awareness of this segment of the traveling public to the attractions our region.

Partners: (No Response)

Budget Description: (No Response)

MTMPP Award: \$2,500.00

Cash Match: \$300.00

In-Kind Match: \$3,530.00

Project 4: Lighthouses and Lobsters

Project Type: Brochures
Description: Update and print "Lighthouses and Lobsters" brochure.

Element 4: Lighthouses and Lobsters Brochure

Project: Lighthouses and Lobsters

Element Description: Updating and printing of Lighthouses and Lobsters brochure

Timeline: Printing to take place early July 2005

Tracking: The effectiveness will be measured by the evaluations sent to all those requesting information from DART, as to whether they came to the region after receiving the Lighthouses and Lobsters brochure. We will also have the brochure promoted on our website and will do a conversion study on those who request it directly from the site.

Target Market: General Public

Rationale: Building on the success of our Lighthouses and Lobsters brochure, DART will reprint 100,000 copies of this ever-popular marketing piece, to maintain the effective branding it has helped to achieve for the region. With the updated Calendar of Events, the reprint of this brochure will effectively use two very popular themes to move visitors through the entire region. This brochure continues to be requested directly by travelers, chambers of commerce, visitors centers and by other distribution channels (i.e. LL Bean) as well.

Distribution Plan: To be distributed by DART, MTA, Local chambers, L.L. Bean, etc.

Budget Description: *(No Response)*

MTMPP Award: \$9,000.00

Cash Match: \$925.00

In-Kind Match: \$4,875.00

Project 5: Hospitality Training

Project Type: Hospitality Training

Description: Educating the public in customer service and in what the region has to offer travelers.

Element 5: Scholarships

Project: Hospitality Training

Element Description: The training project will include 20 scholarships to the training program, "Maine Hospitality Training" using the Highlands training model, customized for the DownEast and Acadia Region.

Timeline: The training will be held late spring 2006 in time for the 2006 tourist season.

Tracking: The effectiveness of these training efforts will be tabulated through evaluation forms returned by those completing the formal program.

Target Market: Hospitality service providers in the DART region.

Rationale: To increase the service-mindedness of hospitality workers, thus enhancing the stay of visitors and encouraging them to stay longer in the region due to the warm and professional welcome they receive here.

Partners: Bangor Convention and Visitors Bureau which first piloted the "Maine Hospitality Training Model" will tailor the program for our needs.

Budget Description: *(No Response)*

MTMPP Award: \$3,000.00

Cash Match: \$225.00

In-Kind Match: \$1,325.00

Element 6: Customer Service Handout

Project: Hospitality Training

Element Description: Handout to be given to area businesses serving tourists in tandem with DART's region-wide brochure.

Timeline: Spring 2006

Tracking: Element will be tracked by the number of inquiries made into of future training programs from the businesses that will have received the DART handouts.

Target Market: Local businesses and their workers

Rationale: In order to reach the broad base of workers who serve tourists, DART will develop a customer service hand-out to distribute in the community in tandem with DART's new region-wide brochure, to both give some guidelines as well as make businesses aware of the kind of training and regional knowledge that is needed to best serve the traveling public.

Partners: *(No Response)*

Budget Description: *(No Response)*

MTMPP Award: \$2,000.00

Cash Match: \$200.00

In-Kind Match: \$2,875.00

Project 6: Downeast Heritage Center

Project Type: Brochures

Description: Support of Downeast Heritage Center for promotional brochures.

Element 7: Downeast Heritage Center Regional Brochures

Project: Downeast Heritage Center

Element Description: Contingent upon the Downeast Heritage Center providing a plan demonstrating the regionality of their brochures by October 1, 2005, we will support them in the amount of \$9000.00 toward production of these brochures.

Timeline: October 1, 2005

Tracking: To be determined with Downeast Heritage Center (DEHC) - Must meet MTMPP requirements.

If DEHC fails to comply by October 1, 2005, DART will revert to its original advertising plan and these dedicated \$9000. will be used for additional print advertising for DART, using dedicated toll-free numbers as the tracking method.

Target Market: Traveling public

Rationale: Downeast Heritage Center (DEHC) wishes to brand itself as a gateway to the entire DownEast & Acadia Region and we feel this brochure will help with our goals in promoting the whole region.

If DEHC fails to comply by October 1, 2005, DART will revert to its original advertising plan and these \$9000 will be used for DART's print advertising.

Distribution Plan: To be handed out to visitors at the Downeast Heritage Center and visitor centers around the state. Brochure will also be used as a fulfillment piece.

Budget Description: If Downeast Heritage Center fails to comply by October 1, 2005, DART will revert to its original advertising plan and these \$9000. will be used for DART's print advertising in the following publications:

1. AAA Northern New England - circulation 440,000, May/June 2006 - \$5500 - 1/2 page, 4 color
2. Downeast Magazine - circulation 106,000, May 2006 - \$3100 - 1/2 page, 4 color
3. Design and production costs - \$400.

Total: \$9000.00

Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program



MTMPP Award: \$9,000.00
Cash Match: \$4,500.00
In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 7: Public Service Announcements

Project Type: Public Relations
Description: Support of the Maine Tourism Commission's Public Service Announcements

Element 8: Participation in Supporting Maine Public Service Announcements

Project: Public Service Announcements

Element Description: PSA's for in-state marketing of the benefits of the tourism industry.

Timeline: To be determined by Maine Tourism Commission

Tracking: To be developed by Maine Tourism Commission

Target Market: Maine Citizens

Rationale: The Public Relations project will consist of DART's Support of the Maine Tourism Commission's Public Service Announcements (PSA's) to increase the awareness among Maine's citizens of the important economic benefits the tourism industry provides. This is an integral component of educating the public with awareness on why it is in their interest to support the tourism industry.

Budget Description: (No Response)

MTMPP Award: \$10,000.00
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>
Media Plan			
List of Insertions	\$23,000.00	\$1,050.00	\$9,550.00
Sea Trade Show			
Support of Cruise Maine Initiative	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
Adventures in Travel Show			
Travel Trade Show Participation/Exhibit	\$2,500.00	\$300.00	\$3,530.00
Lighthouses and Lobsters			
Lighthouses and Lobsters Brochure	\$9,000.00	\$925.00	\$4,875.00
Hospitality Training			
Scholarships	\$3,000.00	\$225.00	\$1,325.00
Customer Service Handout	\$2,000.00	\$200.00	\$2,875.00
Downeast Heritage Center			
Downeast Heritage Center Regional Brochures	\$9,000.00	\$4,500.00	\$0.00
Public Service Announcements			
Participation in Supporting Maine Public Service Announcements	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

Budget Summary

Proposed MTMPP Award:	\$60,000.00
Administrative Costs:	\$15,000.00
Cash Match:	\$8,700.00
In-Kind Match:	\$22,155.00
Total Match:	\$30,855.00
Total Proposed Budget:	\$90,855.00