

Profile

Applicant: Regional Application
Grant Manager: Gary Edwards
Name of Organization: DownEast & Acadia Regional Tourism
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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. Maine Invites You, Cooperative Advertising - In 2009 DART Sponsored a cooperative advertising section in Maine Invites you for the third consecutive year. DownEast & Acadia was the frontmost region in the publication, so DART increased it's subsidy to the subregion to maximize the exposure. This project helped organizations and businesses in the DART region afford advertising among people interested in traveling to Maine. It also continued to foster a spirit of cooperation among the chambers and tourism stakeholders while increasing awareness of what DART is doing for the region.
2. Nature Based Tourism Launch/Workshop - DART together with the Vacationland Resources Committee held a workshop on nature based tourism initiatives in the region. The workshop also promoted ways in which businesses can market themselves better. It was a very successful, day-long workshop on November 13 and was well received by tourism stakeholders in the region.
3. Travel Shows for Canadian Markets - DART was successful in developing trade show display panels to take to trade shows or for PR at events it attends independently from the Maine Office of Tourism. This was developed primarily for shows planned in Canada, but has already proven useful at several local venues as well. Additionally, in collaboration with the Maine Highlands, DART will be attending the Saltscapes Travel show at the end of April to tap into the Canadian market, an important geographic area for travel to our region.

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.

DART's goals for 2010 are to have visitors stay longer, visit more of the region and spend more money. At the same time we want to emphasize our natural resources through the promotion of sustainable tourism practices.

Our proposal for 2010 has the following key components:

1. Product development - focussing on our competitive advantages and promoting them region-wide will bring people to the region and will foster collaboration.
2. Marketing, Advertising, PR - These efforts are the basics for reaching the traveling public. The board believes that through a combination of advertising, travel shows, PR and the website, we can reach the broadest spectrum of visitors through their preferred medium. Tracking for advertising will be done through dedicated toll free numbers; website statistics will track the usage of the site; some dedicated urls will help with tracking as well. The number of articles and press coverage we receive will show the effectiveness of the PR efforts.
3. Education - sharing information on tourism initiatives in the region and creating ways for stakeholders to work together will ultimately provide a better product/experience for our visitors.

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

Our proposed strategy is to target the primary "drive" market, including in-state and Canadian markets due to proximity and

budget issues that many travelers may be facing. We will work with the press and industry associations to build on brand recognition. At the same time we will work to develop capacity among stakeholders in the region and develop new products for visitors' enjoyment and economic development to the region. We will also be working proactively to move people around the region by focussing on our competitive advantages. For instance, we are focusing on lighthouses this year to move folks around to our area's 24 lights, and we'll be developing the "historical assets" of our region by fostering collaboration among our subregions' historical sites and societies. Similarly, the Night Sky Festival, a sub grant for 2010, is focussing on promotion of one of our unique natural assets, the starry skies, which can attract people in the shoulder season to explore all around the DownEast & Acadia region.

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 to "encourage the development of sustainable travel products" (i.e. the Night Sky Festival and Nature Based Tourism efforts in general), to "support tourism marketing efforts from the region", to "foster and promote a collective spirit of collaboration among businesses within the region", to "develop promotional programming to support regional tourism interests" (i.e. through offering coop advertising and coordination of promotions such as the lighthouse passport and the history project), and "to serve as the principal in-region information conduit for the tourism industry and its business communities".

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

Grant and financial management will be performed by Down East Resource Conservation and Development (DERC&D). DE RC&D is an established 501(c)(3) operating in Cherryfield and is involved in resource conservation and economic development in the same region as DART (Hancock and Washington Counties). DERC&D also undergoes an external financial review every year.

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.

DART is supporting a research project by UMM to collect data from Washington County Touris using a visitor-intercept survey coupled with a mail or internet survey. Results and analysis will be distributed to stakeholders with the help of collaborating partners.

Public Relations

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

Company: Risteen Masters

Address: Bangor International Airport
287 Godfrey Boulevard
Bangor, ME 04401

Phone: (207) 992-4610

Email Address: rmasters@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 Nancy Marshall Communications

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

All U.S., Northeast and Canada (particularly the Maritimes).

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 of the cash-match and contributes to the in-kind match as well. Maine Invites You is a prime example of successful local cooperation to bring the entire region together.
2. DART works with regional and local organizations with similar goals and objectives:
 - A. Vacationland Resources Committee of the DERC&D is working as an advisor to the State's nature based tourism consultant in the DownEast & Acadia pilot region.
 - B. WHCA's Downeast Business Alliance works with tourism businesses through its "Incubator without Walls" program to develop new businesses.
3. We support the MTC's In-state Advertising Program and MOT's travel show participation. We also are doing some travel shows with the Highlands to market to our neighbors in Canada.

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.

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. Access to as much information as possible, in as user-friendly and interactive a ways 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:

We are committing funds toward customization and maintenance of our site as needed.

We believe that our site will help with inventorying facilities and events in the region and increase the spirit of cooperation among sub regions and businesses and increase its effectiveness for the user.

We also hope to implement a content management feature so that changes to the static content of the site can be easily made with relatively little cost, keeping the information as relevant and up to the minute as possible.

We are also using the site to directly market some of our initiatives, such as the lighthouse passport promotion. "Stamping" organizations will be designated and lighthouse chasers will be led to our lighthouse page via a dedicated url in our advertising of the program.

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).

We also keep information on which clients would like updates, so that in the future we can send them newsletters or targeted emails on the region, specifically geared to their interests.

Budget Summary

Current Projects

Project 1: In-State Advertising and Public Service Announcements

Description: Regional Representatives chose to support Public Service Announcements to inform Maine residents about the role tourism plays in the Maine economy and to promote vacationing in Maine.

MTMPP Award: \$10,000.00

Project 2: Administrative Costs

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

MTMPP Award: \$19,269.00

Project 3: Travel Shows without MOT

Project Type: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Description: Attending non-pavilion travel shows in Canada (to take advantage of the strong Canadian dollar and the increased interest in travel to the U.S.) and in Maine.

Element 1: Attendance at Shows

Project: Travel Shows without MOT

Element Description: Booth space at Saltscapes, Montreal Outdoor Festival and the Portland RV Camping Show.

Timeline: Fall 2009 reservation for booth space at Saltscapes (for April 2010) and the Montreal Outdoor Show (for May 2010) and the Camping/RV Show in Portland in Feb.

Tracking: We will track the number of contacts made at the shows and the number of calls coming from these locales requesting information on the DART area.

Target Market: Traveling Public in Canada and in Maine

Rationale: We want to reach the Canadian and the in-state market.

Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program



Partners: We will participate with the Maine Highlands for Saltscapes and Montreal and with local partners for the RV/Camping show.

Budget Description: Booth at Saltscapes \$1250.00
Booth at Montreal \$1250.00
Booth at Portland Show \$500
Travel to Halifax - \$1250.00
Travel to Montreal - \$1000.00
Travel to Portland - \$500.00

MTMPP Award: \$5,477.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$6,500.00

Project 4: Cruise Maine

Project Type: Tourism Product Development

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

Element 2: 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 2010.

Promotion is year round.

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

Target Market: Cruise ship passengers

Rationale: Cruise Maine promotes Maine Ports of call among cruise lines and encourages return trips to Maine among the passengers. Our region has 3 ports of call for cruise ships and this is an important way to reach potential visitors.

30% of cruise passengers come back so the ROI is potentially very high in this market segment.

Budget Description: \$5000 to Cruise Maine for its efforts

MTMPP Award: \$5,000.00

Cash Match: \$2,500.00

In-Kind Match: \$0.00

Project 5: Maine Media Marketplace - A Taste of Maine

Project Type: Public Relations

Description: This event brings the regions together with a targeted group of travel media professionals for a networking event.

Element 3: Participation at media event

Project: Maine Media Marketplace - A Taste of Maine

Element Description: DART will send a representative to the event to meet the travel writers and provide information to them on the DART region and its attractions.

Timeline: The marketplace will take place in March or April 2010.

Tracking: We will follow up with travel writers and track the coverage we get via their publications.

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 by participating in this established event, we can meet key players, develop relationships with them and give them ideas for articles.

We did this event in 2008 and 2009 and were happy with the results to date. We believe it is a good way to proceed with our PR efforts.

Budget Description: The budget for this element includes preparation and exhibiting at the event.

MTMPP Award: \$1,500.00

Cash Match: \$150.00

In-Kind Match: \$2,000.00

Project 6: Media Plan

Project Type: Advertising

Description: Advertising plan (list of insertions) for niche and geographic advertising.

Element 4: List of insertions

Project: Media Plan

Element Description: Placement of Advertisements for DART

Timeline:

1. Yankee Magazine - May/June 2010 (deadline March 2010)- \$5500
2. Maine Invites You - 2010 (deadline October 2009) - \$15000
3. Ride Maine/Cruise Maine - 2010 (deadline - Fall 2009) - \$2500.00
4. Wildbird Online - 2010 (deadline Feb 2010) - \$2000
5. National Geographic Adventure - 2010 (deadline spring 2010) -\$2000.00
6. The Montrealer - 2010 (deadline Spring 2010) - \$2000.00
7. Lighthouse Digest 2010 (deadline Spring 2010)- \$2000.00
8. Production of ads \$2985

Tracking: The effectiveness of this advertising campaign will be measured by surveying respondents as well as by dedicated toll free numbers, unique to each publication/site, so we can evaluate the number and quality of the responses.

Target Market: Traveling public in targeted regions (New England or Maine interest), the "drive" market (including Canada) and niche markets such as the nature based market and lighthouse market.

Rationale:

1. Yankee Magazine - circulation 380,000, excellent response to our 2008 ad (2009 results not yet available)
2. Maine Invites You - 2010 excellent response to our ad in 2009 and the cooperation was well-received by our local chambers/businesses.
3. Ride Maine/Cruise Maine - 2010 - reaches the drive market and features our scenic byways.
4. Wild Bird Online - ad focusses on reaching birders and leads respondents to information on our birding festivals and attractions.
5. National Geographic Adventure - reaches travelers interested in the abundant nature in our area.
6. The Montrealer - reaches an important geographic and demographic target for us. Publisher also supports us with complementary editorial.
7. Lighthouse Digest - supports our Lighthouse promotional efforts throughout the region

- Media Type:**
1. Yankee Magazine - Magazine
 2. Maine Invites You - Travel Guide
 3. Ride Maine/Cruise Maine - Travel Guide
 4. Wild Bird - Online
 5. National Geographic Adventure - Magazine
 6. The Montrealer - Newspaper
 7. Lighthouse Digest - Magazine

Co-op Opportunity: For all publications we will advise our members and local stakeholders of our plans, so if they are advertising in the same publications we can leverage better positioning or pricing cooperatively. Maine Invites You is a cooperative section for us.

- Budget Description:**
1. Yankee Magazine - May/June 2010 - \$5500
 2. Maine Invites You - 2010 \$15,000
 3. Ride Maine/Cruise Maine - Summer 2010 - \$2500
 4. Wild Bird Online Spring 2010 - \$2000
 5. National Geographic Adventure Spring and Summer 2010 - \$2000
 6. The Montrealer - Spring 2010 - \$2000
 7. Lighthouse Digest - 2010 - \$ 2000
 8. Production costs \$2985.00

Total: \$33985

MTMPP Award: \$33,985.00

Cash Match: \$15,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$1,500.00

Project 7: Web Site Maintenance

Project Type: Website Development

Description: Maintenance and customization of web site

Element 5: Web Site Improvement

Project: Web Site Maintenance

Element Description: Refining and customizing the web site.

Timeline: Work on customization and maintenance of site as needed through the year.

To include content management element and customized interactive features

Tracking: We will compare visits to our web site year to year, the length of visits on the site and the number of requests from the site.

Target Market: The traveling public

Rationale: This element is key to our goal of providing information to potential visitors. The website is very often the first impression of an area and we believe that making the site attractive and interactive will increase visitors to our area and get them to stay longer, once they can easily and quickly see all there is to do here.

Customization of our site will further solidify our DownEast & Acadia branding efforts and keep our information current.

Budget Description: Portland Web Works for technology upgrade.

MTMPP Award: \$5,099.00

Cash Match: \$600.00

In-Kind Match: \$5,800.00

Project 8: Night Sky Festival

Project Type: Tourism Product Development

Description: The goal of the Night Sky Festival is to celebrate the quality of DownEast & Acadia's pristine night sky as a cultural resource by inviting visitors to our area to experience it for themselves through nature, science and the arts.

Element 6: Planning, Promotion and Executing Event

Project: Night Sky Festival

Element Description: Spearheaded by the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce in cooperation with local towns and the Island Astronomy Institute, Friends of Acadia, Acadia National Park as well as other organizations, the event will encourage stewardship and foster appreciation of one of our valuable assets. Signature event to take place Spet 18 to 21, 2009, surrounding the new moon weekend.

Timeline: Planning and promotion to run throughout the summer with the main event taking place during the September shoulder season. This year's premier event coincides with the International Year of Astronomy 2009.

Tracking: Success would be indicated by the number of organizations and individuals participating in the coordinated events. Local assessment of the festival's success, plus recommendations for future improvements will be solicited.

Target Market: General public, within a day's drive of the region.

Rationale: When presented as a cultural activity, celebrating the night sky generates broad appeal. At this time 2/3 of the U.S. population cannot see the Milky Way at all --this makes it attractive for many people. Also the shoulder season is still relatively warm and bug free.

Budget Description: Research, planning, Branding - \$1250
Promotion - \$1750
Event Coordination - \$2000

MTMPP Award: \$5,000.00

Cash Match: \$2,000.00

In-Kind Match: \$3,000.00

Project 9: DownEast & Acadia History Project

Project Type: Tourism Product Development

Description: Promote DownEast & Acadia with an outreach program to our historical societies and museums. Improve coordination between historical organizations and help them make better use of available resources.

Element 7: Research, Update and Education

Project: DownEast & Acadia History Project

Element Description: To reinforce the ability of our existing local organizations to present and preserve the cultural lore of the area that is an important part of our tradition and legendary "sense of place". Enhance the region as a destination for historical tourism. Strengthen regional cooperation through promotion of our history and use of regional resources.

- 1) Contact all historical societies and museums to inform them of the project and update their information for our database and online.
- 2) Increase and maintain information on history on the DART website including increased connectivity to history sites.
- 3) Conduct two history promotion seminars using local suggestions and presenting "Touring Through Time" as one successful model.

Timeline: Project to begin in July of 2009 with contacting the stakeholders, updating information and gathering input.

Seminars to take place late fall 2009, after the busy summer season but while contacts are still here and planning for 2010.

Tracking: Number of participating organizations will be the prime way to measure the success.

Any organizations or group of organizations that attend the seminars and develop a collaborative program for their area will be another key indicator of the success of this project.

Target Market: Historical Societies and Museums

Rationale: So many of these societies and museums have limited resources and staff. By cooperating and thinking outside the box, by becoming pro-active in their promotional activities by using available free resources (i.e. DART's Website) and by cross marketing/collaborating, the impact of what each does individually can be increased exponentially with relatively little cost in time or money. But the mechanism for communication is currently missing.

Budget Description: Inventory/update - \$3400.00
2 Workshops - \$1600.00

MTMPP Award: \$5,000.00

Cash Match: \$625.00

In-Kind Match: \$1,875.00

Project 10: Travel Shows with MOT

Project Type: Travel Trade & Consumer Shows

Description: Attendance at at least 2 of the MOT Pavilion Shows 2010

Element 8: MOT Pavilion

Project: Travel Shows with MOT

Element Description: DART will attend a minimum of 2 travel shows with MOT.

Timeline: Feb. and March 2010

Tracking: DART's show brochures have dedicated 800 numbers on them so we can tell who calls based on attendance at which show. We also email the contacts made and track how many request more information.

Target Market: Traveling Public in the Northeast primarily.

Rationale: Independently we cannot afford to attend the big shows. This is an ideal opportunity for us to simultaneously support (with staffing) the MOT pavilion while gaining reasonably priced exposure for our region.

Partners: MOT and other regional reps.

Budget Description: \$5000 for travel costs.

MTMPP Award: \$5,000.00

Cash Match: \$0.00

In-Kind Match: \$2,000.00

Project 11: Lighthouse Passport Project

Project Type: Tourism Product Development

Description: Local areas will identify organizations who will "stamp" U.S. Lighthouse Society Passports for the 24 (+)

lighthouses in the DART region. These organizations will be identified as Passport stampers on the DART website. Interactive map will also be built into the site on the lighthouse page (DART will also promote the effort through its ads in LH Digest).

Element 9: Passport Project

Project: Lighthouse Passport Project

Element Description: Goal is to promote travel throughout the region through our lighthouses.

Businesses will purchase the "stamps" and passports, if they wish to have some on hand.

Visitors will be encouraged to get "passports" stamped at designated businesses or organizations. Promotion will be online and through advertising.

Timeline: We hope to implement the website promotion in July of 2009 and the interactive map shortly thereafter.

Tracking: We are asking all participating businesses to track how many people request a stamp in their lighthouse passports. This will give us an indication of how widely (and well) received the promotion was and a comparison of the numbers throughout the region will indicate how effectively we moved people around the region based on this.

Target Market: Traveling public in general and lighthouse enthusiasts in particular.

Rationale: Based on the response to the locally run "Lighthouse Challenge" last year, it was confirmed that lighthouse enthusiasts want to add as many lighthouses to their life lists as they can. Giving businesses and/or organizations the increased promotion as Lighthouse stampers, will not only encourage people to visit their shops/use their services, but will also encourage visitation all around the region as tourists try to see as many of our lighthouses as possible.

Budget Description: Research and web site upgrades - \$1000.00

MTMPP Award: \$1,000.00

Cash Match: \$600.00

In-Kind Match: \$1,955.00

Project Quick Reference

	<u>MTMPP Award</u>	<u>Cash Match</u>	<u>In-Kind Match</u>
In-State Advertising and Public Service Announcements			
In-State Advertising and Public Service Announcements	\$10,000.00		
Administrative Costs			
Administrative Costs	\$19,269.00		
Travel Shows without MOT			
Attendance at Shows	\$5,477.00	\$0.00	\$6,500.00
Cruise Maine			
Cruise Maine Support	\$5,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
Maine Media Marketplace - A Taste of Maine			
Participation at media event	\$1,500.00	\$150.00	\$2,000.00
Media Plan			
List of insertions	\$33,985.00	\$15,000.00	\$1,500.00
Web Site Maintenance			
Web Site Improvement	\$5,099.00	\$600.00	\$5,800.00
Night Sky Festival			
Planning, Promotion and Executing Event	\$5,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00
DownEast & Acadia History Project			
Research, Update and Education	\$5,000.00	\$625.00	\$1,875.00

Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program



Travel Shows with MOT

MOT Pavilion	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
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Lighthouse Passport Project

Passport Project	\$1,000.00	\$600.00	\$1,955.00
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Budget Summary

Proposed MTMPP Award:	\$96,330.00
Administrative Costs:	\$19,269.00
Cash Match:	\$21,475.00
In-Kind Match:	\$24,630.00
Total Match:	\$46,105.00
Total Proposed Budget:	\$142,435.00