

General Information:**Wyoming Office of Tourism (Wyoming Tourism Board)****Diane Shober, Executive Director****Contact Person:**

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Websites:

www.travelwyoming.com (consumer site)
www.travelwyoming.com/industry (industry site)
www.travelwyoming.com/film (film site)

Statutory References:

W.S. 9-12-1001 through 1002 - Wyoming Tourism Board

Clients Served:

Vacationing Public; Travel Trade; Wyoming Tourism-Related Businesses and Services;
Film Production Trade Professionals and Organizations.

Budget Information/Expenditures for FY19:

The Wyoming Office of Tourism has a Fiscal Year 2019 Budget of \$12,598,758.

Board:

Wyoming Tourism Board
Nine (9) Members
Bi-Monthly Meetings

Performance Highlights/Major Accomplishments of FY19 (These goals were established for the biennium FY19-FY20 though this report reflects only FY19.)

Wyoming Tourism Board:

1. Grow Wyoming's visitor economy.

- a. Increase total campaign influenced trips by 10%** Total campaign influenced trips increased 24% during the 2018 summer campaign to over 1,250,000 influenced trips. This was largely due to successful marketing to core audiences.

- b. Increase tourism-related campaign return on investment (ROI) tax collections by 10%**

Tourism-related tax ROI in 2018 equaled \$11.54 per marketing dollar spent, an increase of 12% over 2017.

- c. Increase travel generated direct spending by 3%** Economic impact of direct travel-related spending increased 6.8% in 2018 to \$3.8 billion. Travel spending increased in accommodations, food service, gas and other measured visitor commodities.

Overall hotel/motel occupancy was 56% for FY19, an increase of 9% compared to the prior fiscal year. Total statewide hotel room demand increased 7.7% compared to FY18, as reported by Smith Travel Research (STR), Inc.

Strategic initiatives to impact these objectives included:

i. Market all regions to support the growth of the visitor economy statewide:

- Conducted content audit and wrote 35 new articles featuring locations across Wyoming. In addition to articles that feature a variety of locations, such as 6 Ways to Connect with the Family in the Cowboy State; and Have a True Grain-to-Glass Experience at these Wyoming Breweries, Distilleries & Wineries, Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) published pieces highlighting specific parts of the state, including Why Thermopolis Needs to be on Your Wyoming Bucket List, 12 Things to do in Star Valley, 72 Hours in Casper, Wyoming and more. Altogether, articles on WOT's website drew in 484,000+ pageviews;
- Created story pitches and themed itineraries for all regions. Themes and ideas included road trips on all scenic byways, wildlife viewing, winter recreation, state parks and many other hidden gems;
- Optimized the itinerary section of TravelWyoming.com which resulted in a 64% increase in itinerary pageviews;
- Created a Continental Divide Trail (CDT) landing page and several related articles, including Top Stops Along Wyoming's CDT, in honor of the trail's 40th anniversary. Partnered with the CDT Coalition on a CDT photo contest, which generated over 15,000 views;
- Used spot radio to deliver radio messaging on top ranking stations in the Denver and Salt Lake City markets, running eight ads with local event tags from July 9 – September 2. Events promoted included Cheyenne Frontier Days, Don King Days, Oyster Ridge Music Festival and Mountain Man Rendezvous, among others. These radio ads received 21,826,900 impression;
- Updated route itinerary pages to make them more engaging; implemented new route hashtags (#salttostonewy, #rockiestotetonswy, #parktoparkwy #blacktoyellowwy) to showcase route imagery through social media. Published several itineraries designed to move travelers across the state, including Must-See Stops off I-25; 10 Days in Wyoming's Wind River Country; and 3 Days in Wyoming: Getaways for Any Type of Traveler; and
- Supported Southwest Wyoming by developing several initiatives to promote the region, including:

- A new region landing page on TravelWyoming.com, which has received over 6,000 pageviews since its launch in July 2018;
- Regional content in WOT's winter insert campaign, which received over 1 million impressions and 7,598 leads for regional partners. This campaign included region-specific highlights in the integrated newspaper insert program and a winter-themed content story on TravelWyoming.com, which received over 4,600 pageviews;
- A dedicated, full-page ad in the *2019 Official Travel Guide* (OTG), as well as a direct mail insert;
- Radio ads on Cowboy State News Network; and
- A search engine marketing campaign and a digital remarketing campaign, which both ran between December 1, 2018, and April 30, 2019. The search engine marketing campaign received over 10,000 clicks, and the remarketing campaign received over 1 million impressions.

ii. Grow visitation during the winter season:

- Increased winter occupancy (November to March) to 43.7%, which is up from FY18's winter occupancy of 37.6%. This was largely due to increases in demand of lodging accommodations;
- Executed national integrated media partnership with Men's Journal as a continuation of successful efforts the year prior to highlight Wyoming as a premiere winter travel destination; delivered over 12 million impressions and 13,517 qualified leads;
- Produced an integrated newspaper insert program consisting of high-impact print and digital components. The print and online program featured WOT and 35 participating statewide partners advertising in cooperation to promote visitation to the state. The printed insert had a circulation of 340,000 in seven key markets. Digitally, a microsite was developed and housed at adventure.travelwyoming.com with the following media mix delivering branding and targeted traffic: 21 million+ content impressions, 34,000+ content clicks, 7,500+ leads, and 367,000+ social media engagements;
- Produced radio ads with Cowboy State News Network to promote the Pinedale Fishing Tournament, Evanston Winter Gala, and Afton Hillclimb to encourage in-state travel to winter events in the region. Estimated reach was 112,300 listeners;
- Hosted a winter familiarization tour (FAM) for six tour operators from France. Partners in Jackson and Yellowstone National Park assisted with lodging, activities and various meals. In-kind value was \$12,688.50; and
- Hosted an influencer and a writer with *Freeskier Magazine* for a winter FAM who captured assets and content from Hogadon Ski Area, Meadow Lake Ski Resort, Sleeping Giant Ski Resort and Pine Creek Ski Resort.

iii. Grow length of stay from 2.8 nights to 2.9 nights:

- The average length of stay for all trips was 2.9 nights according to the Wyoming Travel Impacts report, an increase of 3.6% over calendar year 2017;
- Combined visitation to the Northeast and Southeast Wyoming Welcome Centers dropped 5.6% to 212,735 visitors in comparison to 225,412 visitors in FY18. The Sheridan, Summit, Jackson, Pine Bluffs, Bear River and Cody visitor centers had a cumulative visitation of 703,442, a decrease of 1.5% compared to FY18;

- OTG circulation is 400,000 each year, and each copy is read by 2.3 readers on average. The OTG also has a digital version, which received over 56,000 visits in 2018;
- Continued the road trip campaign and partner program to entice visitors to extend length of stay along four road trip routes through Wyoming. Stickers and a map of all sticker distribution points were given out at state and local visitor centers. A new sticker was created to celebrate the anniversary of the CDT and was distributed by three State Parks and Historic Sites along the trail. There was a total of 24 sticker distribution points throughout the state; and
- Introduced My WY Road-Trip Guide as a supplementary print piece with the 2019 OTG. This in-state marketing piece features four themed road trips and a list of Wyoming's scenic byways. Distributed 25,574 road-trip guides with 2019 OTGs through online orders and sent 174,426 guides to Wyoming Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) and visitor centers for in-state distribution.

iv. Expand Wyoming product offerings through travel trade:

- Developed monthly itineraries to highlight route opportunities, including destination and activities based upon a theme. These were emailed to 285 travel trade contacts who opted in to receive them and were available on the website;
- Developed What's New sheets for each trade show to highlight new products and opportunities relevant to the travel trade industry;
- Participated in seven international and three domestic/motor coach trade shows allowing for expanded product knowledge and offerings to Wyoming, generating 308 leads with interested and high-level tour operators;
- Hosted the 2019 Travel Alliance Partners Conference in Cheyenne, consisting of 26 tour operator companies and 138 travel professionals. A conference post-FAM of communities in the Eastern Wyoming counties of Crook, Weston, Campbell, Goshen and Laramie had 15 participants;
- Participated in five sales missions organized through Brand USA and Rocky Mountain International. 45 Leads were generated in Japan, Korea and Mexico and more than 300 travel professionals and media were trained. 233 travel professionals were trained in the Germany and France markets and numerous media presentations were conducted;
- Hosted 11 familiarization tours, educating more than 40 international tour operators from eight markets (UK, Ireland, Japan, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nordic and Germany) on Wyoming products and destinations;
- Updated learning badges, state pages, and promotional offers with targeted markets of China, UK/Ireland, Mexico and France through the USA Discovery Program with Brand USA. Content focused distribution to targeted tour operators through the Tour Operator Program;
- Distributed content with Outbrain Traffic Generation which created guaranteed traffic and clicks of VisitTheUSA.com. Content and themes driven by partners included: Cheyenne - France, Germany, UK, Canada, Mexico and China; Park County - Canada; Sweetwater County - Canada, China, France, Germany, Mexico and the UK;
- Leveraged video creation, editorials, social engagement, print inserts, and calls to action via Expedia to Mexico, Japan and Canada West;
- Created thematic content via road trip themes and drive friendly destinations; guaranteed 125,000 views in each market on all Brand USA language sites, YouTube channels and one month of

guaranteed promotions. Videos and pages will live online, as well as allow WOT to repurpose footage for campaigns; and

- Created a dedicated subsite in seven languages and 14 markets on VisitTheUSA.com, with new experience pages, content refresh, resource pages and traffic generation of 37,000.

2. Maximize the impact of our partnerships.

a. Grow industry partner engagement by 10%

Industry partner participation was up 15% with 107 different partners engaging in opportunities across cooperation opportunities (co-ops) and WOT-sponsored programs.

b. Achieve 4.25 or better out of 5-star overall partner satisfaction rating

The partner satisfaction survey was distributed to key industry partners, with a weighted satisfaction rating of 4.03 out of 5-stars, down 4.3% compared to previous year.

To support continual partner education, WOT hosted 8 webinars over the course of 2018. Topics included economic impact, creative assets, co-ops, and PR and social media best practices.

WOT created six toolkits throughout the year to inspire partners to leverage and support WOT campaigns and program efforts in their own marketing efforts.

Strategic initiatives to impact these objectives included:

i. Commit to an industry outreach strategy that provides support to partners across Wyoming:

- Salt to Stone - Traveled to Rock Springs to visit with Southwest region partners to discuss the Southwest Wyoming promotion initiative;
- Rockies to Tetons - Visited with Wind River Visitors Council, Visit Laramie, Carbon County Visitors Council, Wind River Hotel & Casino, Shoshone Rose Hotel & Casino, and various other local tourism businesses. Advised partners on WOT opportunities and collected partner feedback on WOT's current co-op programming;
- Park to Park - Visited Goshen County to meet with representatives from Torrington, Lingle, Fort Laramie, Hawk Springs, Yoder, and La Grange. Checked in with Hot Springs County in Thermopolis. Worked with Casper and Cheyenne on ongoing initiatives including FAMs, WOT resources, and tourism advocacy; and
- Black to Yellow - Visited with Weston, Crook, Campbell, Buffalo, Sheridan, Big Horn, and Park counties to discuss current needs and promotional concepts for each area. Spoke with more than 25 partners and local business owners and held one international marketing focused seminar. Visited 9 major tourist destinations and toured more than 30 lodging properties, restaurants, cultural attractions, and businesses.

ii. Continue to develop scalable partner programs and co-ops to support partner objectives with regional and national marketing opportunities:

- Offered co-op programs, in which Industry partners participated 270 times. These programs included newspaper inserts, search engine marketing, e-Newsletter, OTG advertising, national print, lead generation and radio. WOT's continued support and development of these programs creates affordable exposure opportunities for partners;

- Provided opportunities to showcase Wyoming's hidden gems in online and print publications through the Media Leads Program. Many leads allowed partners to share events, stories and ideas of their destinations, attractions, restaurants and experiences throughout the Equality State;
- Hosted a spring media mission in New York City. Four industry partners participated including Jackson Hole Chamber of Commerce; Yellowstone National Park Lodges; Visit Cheyenne; and Sweetwater County Joint Travel and Tourism. The media mission resulted in 50+ media engagements and several online placements;
- Sent a monthly media report highlighting Public Relations successes from partner involvement, including articles as a result of FAMs, media missions and the media leads program;
- Engaged with 198 partners for FAM participation, media missions and media leads;
- Produced and executed 25 product mailers including partner products from Chugwater Chili, Hi Mountain Seasoning, Café Genevieve Pig Candy, and Donells Candies. Mailers were sent to top food and lifestyle publications, including *Martha Stewart Living*, *Good Housekeeping*, and *Food Network Magazine*; and
- Hosted 19 staff members from welcome centers across the state for a visitor services FAM in the Big Horn Basin. FAM featured Lovell, Big Horn National Recreation Area, Greybull and Medicine Lodge State Park (Big Horn County); Ten Sleep, Worland, Gooseberry Badlands (Washakie County); and Legend Rock State Park, Hot Springs State Park and Thermopolis (Hot Springs County).

3. Champion the Destination and the Brand.

a. Increase intent to travel metrics by 20%

Intent to travel in FY19 was up by 52% to 634,969. Intent to travel metrics is an aggregate measure of ways people engage with WOT that is indicative of travel. This includes events such as phone calls and mail requests, reader service lead generation and co-op programming, digital and mail guide requests, email signups and partner referrals from travelwyoming.com. Successful marketing on programs such as Madden adventure co-op, lead generation and digital guide requests drove annual growth.

b. Increase destination familiarity to 45%

Destination familiarity is a slower growing measure. It increased from 29% in summer 2017 to 30% in summer 2018 as measured in the annual Advertising Effectiveness report.

Awareness drives familiarity, and the That's WY campaign continued to generate strong awareness at 36% in calendar year 2018. This is a net decrease of about four percentage points from the calendar year 2017 campaign which was at 40%. Calendar year 2018 campaign spending decreased in Portland, OR and Kansas City, MO reaching three million fewer households than in calendar year 2017, which is likely the cause for the decrease in awareness.

c. Establish a baseline to measure consumer conversion paths across the trip planning cycle

Leveraging arrival technology, WOT was able to measure the relationship between advertising and visitor arrivals in Wyoming. During calendar year 2018, WOT identified 14,373 arrivals to the state. The average time to arrival after first viewing advertising was 50 days, and the average arrival traveled 594 miles to visit.

Over 30% of arrivals engage with the WOT website or digital media two or more times before arriving in Wyoming.

Over 40% of OTG requestors visit Wyoming after receiving the guide. They use the guide to plan their vacations, review general information about Wyoming and find trip inspiration.

Strategic initiatives to impact these objectives included:

i. All campaigns have a paid media, earned media, and partnership component to ensure full integration:

- Executed national integrated media partnership with Meredith Media to amplify the broader Summer 2018 campaign theme of Female Empowerment while driving awareness of Wyoming as a destination where you can boldly unleash your uninhibited spirit of adventure. Program reached a highly relevant travel/female-leaning audience via print, digital and social media across *Travel + Leisure*, *Real Simple* and *Sunset Magazine* media channels. Overall, the program delivered over 38 million impressions;
- Leveraged TravelWyoming.com as a “call to action” (CTA) for some brand-related creative, encouraging consumers to visit the site for all trip-planning information and needs. Total website sessions on TravelWyoming.com were 4,658,692 in FY19;
- Leveraged TravelWyoming Email Signup as a CTA for some brand-related creative, encouraging consumers to sign up for email to receive articles about great places to visit, exciting things to do, and current happenings around the state;
- Leveraged *Men’s Journal* as an integrated media partner through a giveaway and promotional posts. The posts were promoted on a variety of *Men’s Journal* and *Men’s Fitness* digital channels, including email blasts, E-newsletters and all social channels to ensure there would be a post deployed every one to two days on at least one platform. The *Men’s Journal* promotional social campaign was executed to drive leads, delivering over 2.4 million impressions;
- Executed national, integrated partnership with *Travel Channel* to amplify trailblazing women in Wyoming, which included the state’s most intriguing female entrepreneurs, adventurers or artists who have left their corporate jobs behind to pursue their travel-related passions;
- Distributed 25,000 women’s suffrage stickers to partners around the state. WOT also engages with partners monthly regarding women’s suffrage anniversary activities/events and will be attending partner events throughout the state in 2019;
- Created a women’s suffrage landing page and three articles related to female travel and empowerment in Wyoming, including where to discover female historical figures, local female entrepreneurs and women-focused retreats in Wyoming;
- Began promoting women’s suffrage and female empowerment on Wyoming’s social media channels. Created the hashtag #ThatsWYwomen to be used in conjunction with women’s suffrage campaign;
- Reached more than 730,000 readers/potential travelers through the Wyoming women’s suffrage campaign, resulting in a total editorial value of more than \$12,000,000;
- Participated in spring media mission and deskside appointments in New York City, one of the largest media hubs in the world. WOT, Wyoming partners and Wyoming female representatives including Affie Ellis, Wyoming Senator; Clarene Law, Wyoming business

mogul; Hillary Walrath, Green River Fly-fishing guide; and Lu Harlow, Xanterra's Food and Beverage Director, pitched story ideas and events related to the 150th anniversary of Wyoming women's suffrage;

- Placed 65 mentions in the top 100 media publications, including *The New York Times*, *Fodor's Travel*, *Reader's Digest*, *Forbes* and the *Travel Channel*;
- Produced and executed a variety of earned media campaigns, including 25 media culinary mailers, one media mission and two group press trips;
- Executed 13 group and individual press trips with a total of 38 domestic and international writers, influencers and editors in attendance; and
- Reached more than one billion readers and potential travelers, with a total editorial value of more than \$28,000,000.

ii. Utilize advanced marketing technology to execute personalized and predictive marketing:

- Received 86% of Guide Requests and Email Sign-Ups through Winter Site Retargeting. Segmented audiences drove the highest click through rates and were built from various data segments that qualify users based on hotel, flight, and other online travel indicators;
- Launched four digital Travel Guides using content from the 2019 OTG. Digital guides (Regions & Road Trips Guide, Adventure Guide, Family Travel Guide, Western Wonders Guide) were based on defined audience segments and road-trip planning and made available to view from highly-trafficked landing pages on TravelWyoming.com, resulting in 1,000+ views; and
- Leveraged targeting refinement tactics in campaign-wide digital and social media targeting to deliver the most relevant message to highly targeted audiences throughout the travel planning process. Tactics included geofencing relevant travel/outdoors locations to intercept outdoor enthusiasts with a specific message (i.e. REI, state parks, etc.), destination conquering (i.e. targeting consumers researching other western states), audience segmentation by interest (Western Culture, Family Travel, Adventure) and by location (targeting Denver and Salt Lake City with unique road trip message).

iii. Execute dynamic post-trip sharing campaigns to capitalize on word of mouth:

- Leveraged social media channels to engage with consumers across all stages of trip planning. WOT's social media channels grew by over 27,000 followers, with 519,777 total followers across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter;
- Implemented #FlyYourWY campaign on Instagram and Facebook channels to engage locals and visitors in promoting Wyoming through a state-wide, grassroots social media marketing campaign. WOT distributed 98,000 flags to 70+ businesses, state parks and chambers in 37 Wyoming communities. In and out-of-state visitors took photos with the flags and shared them on social media, resulting in 5.1 million impressions, 1,921 uses of #FlyYourWY, 136,685 likes and a reach of 561,800; and
- Gathered 300+ user-generated images, which prove to be highly engaging content when shared across social media channels. By continuing to gather and share user-generated content, WOT capitalizes on images taken by visitors and encourages visitors to share post-trip photos with their social media networks.

iv. Broaden brand reach to other travel-related content channels to deepen brand awareness:

- Strategically aligned the That's WY brand with highly relevant travel-related outlets by natively inserting the Wyoming message to build awareness of the destination among most lucrative consumers. Examples of this include, Meredith Media (*Travel + Leisure*, *Real Simple* and *Sunset Magazine*), *Men's Journal*, Expedia, Trip Advisor and *Travel Channel*; and
- Shared educational flyers at the Wyoming Governor's Hospitality and Tourism Conference including Google My Business, Google 360 Camera Loan program and Google Guides program. Also had a hands-on training session from the Wyoming Small Business development center.

4. Ensure organizational excellence.

a. Establish a consistent strategy for employee engagement

WOT invested in management training through manager and supervisor attendance at Employer's Council and Timberline Training sessions.

Office-wide employee engagement was facilitated by the creation of four committees, each leading quarterly events in: professional development, wellness, celebrations/social and recognition.

b. Establish organization-wide use of data to track and inform our decisions

WOT's accounting staff worked with managers to create a fiscal strategy that aligns with the goals of the organization.

Good stewardship of state assets was promoted through tracking, monitoring and evaluating all tasks and activities.

Dashboards and research were used to forecast travel trends.

Strategic initiatives to impact these objectives included:

i. Cultivate a work environment that inspires collaboration and leadership principles among all team members to foster engagement:

- Support WOT Squad leadership initiatives for professional development, team building, recognition, wellness, and fostering a positive organizational culture;
- Integrate Strength Finders insights and individual contributions into project management;
- Invest in skill-set and leadership advancements through workshops, conferences, board/committee participation;
- Invest in management training with FranklinCovey consultant, focusing on team development through the Speed of Trust principles; and
- Ensure employees have clear expectations and goals that align with strategic initiatives. Expectations were defined, and goals were written and evaluated in Performance Management Instrument (PMI). Conducted leadership training and development through comprehensive practices of realizing individual potential and influence in every position within the organization. This included monthly professional development for staff, attendance at various conferences and trainings, management training with Franklin Covey through the Speed of Trust Principles and individual StrengthsFinder assessments.

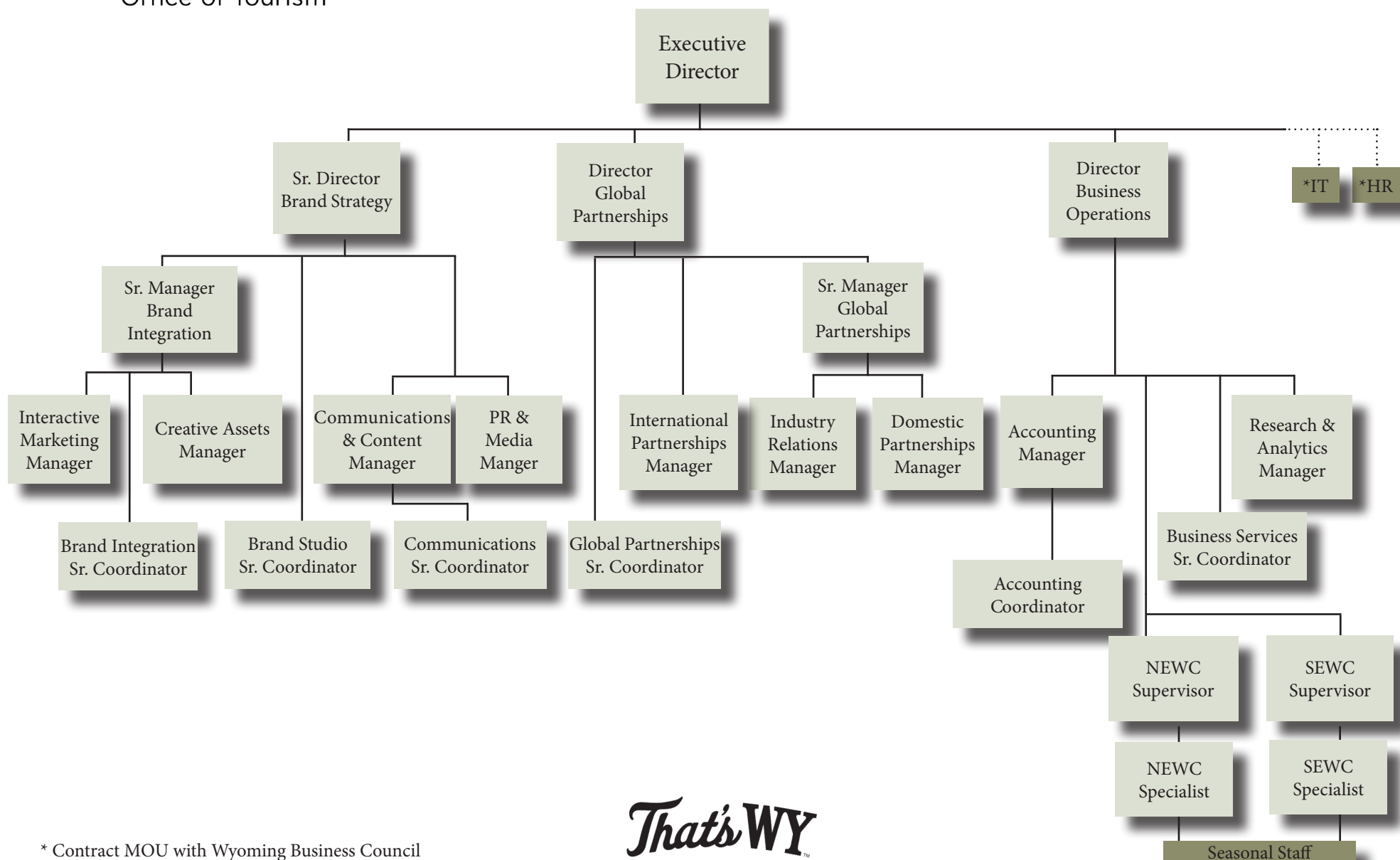
ii. Improve operational and organizational efficiencies:

- Adopt common approaches to using data tools for better decision making;
- Include privacy policy in future maintenance and hosting Request for Proposal (RFP);
- Continue to evolve meeting structure to facilitate more collaboration and thought-provoking discussion;
- Establish systematic approach to Human Resources (HR) practices that impact employee communication, roles and responsibilities, and professional development;
- Completed an interagency RFP working with Wyoming Department of State Parks and Cultural Resources, Outdoor Recreation Office; and Wyoming Game and Fish Department to collaborate and share data infrastructures for the benefit of the three agencies;
- Purchased 10 licenses through LinkedIn Learning to enhance employees' skills in a variety of more than 13,000 expert-led, online video tutorials; and
- Continue improvement throughout the office in an ongoing effort to identify opportunities for integrating work and minimizing inefficiencies.



Office of Tourism

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART - FY19



* Contract MOU with Wyoming Business Council

That's WY