

Agency 066
Wyoming Travel & Tourism Annual Report
FY 08

General Information

Agency name:

Wyoming Travel & Tourism

Director's name and official title:

Diane Shober, Director

Agency Contact person:

Diane Shober

Agency Contact phone:

307-777-7777; 307-777-2808 (Director's direct line)

Mailing address:

1520 Etchepare Circle
Cheyenne, WY 82007

Web address (URL):

www.wyomingtourism.org (consumer site)
www.wyomingbusiness.org/toursim and www.wyotravel.org

Other Locations (Street addresses not required.):

none

Statutory References:

W.S. 9-12-1001 thru 1002 Wyoming Tourism Board
W.S. 9-12-402 thru 406 Film and Video Promotion

Clients Served:

Vacationing public; Wyoming tourism-related businesses and services.

Budget Information (Expenditures for FY08):

\$11,744,264

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Name of Department/Division/Program: Wyoming Travel & Tourism

Report Period: FY 08 (July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008)

Wyoming Quality of Life Result:

- 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.

Contribution to Wyoming Quality of Life:

Wyoming Travel & 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.

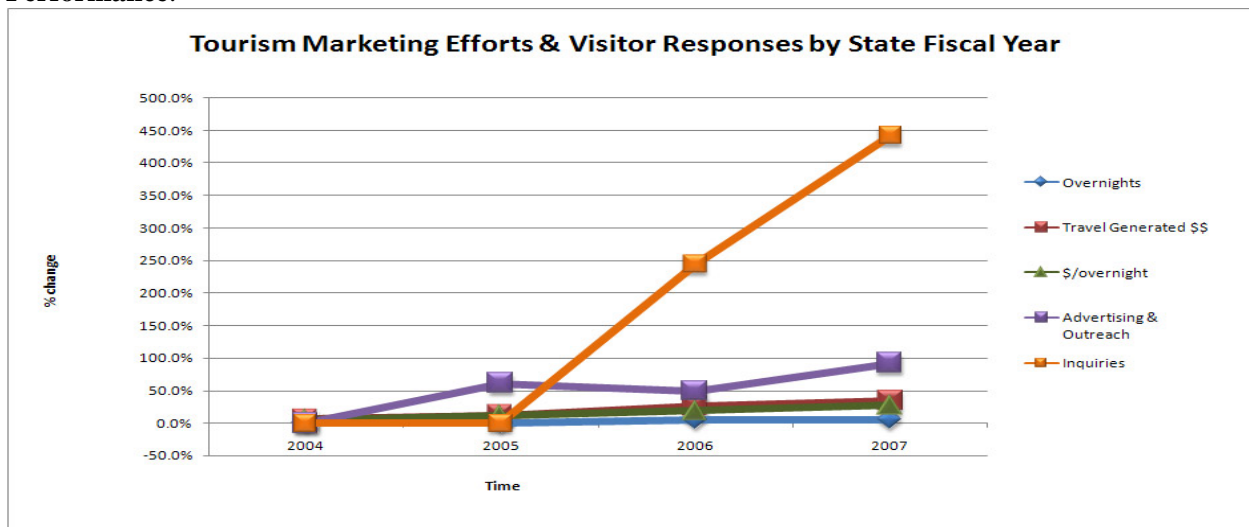
Basic Facts:

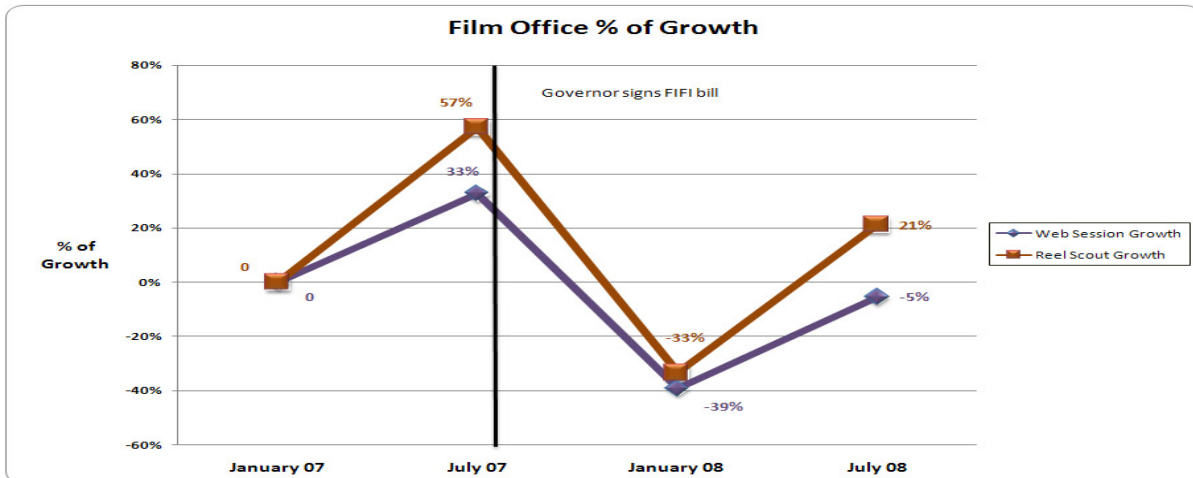
Wyoming Travel & Tourism has twenty full-time staff positions and operates with a biennium budget of \$22,588,528. The funding sources for the budget are 100% general funds.

Programs include sales and marketing efforts in the following areas:

- Advertising, Web and Research
- Domestic Tourism Marketing
- Customer Service, Welcome Centers and Fulfillment
- International Tourism Marketing
- Media and Public Relations
- Film, Arts & Entertainment

Performance:





Story behind the last year of performance:

Wyoming Travel & Tourism (WTT) 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 WTT 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 WTT's advertising and outreach efforts increase, so has the volume of inquiries as a result of those efforts. While advertising and outreach grew by 91.2% from FY 04 to FY 07, during that same time inquiries are up 442.2%! An increase in inquiries is a direct result of increased awareness which is a result of increased and consistent messaging in the marketplace. The results of this increased interest in Wyoming should be reflected in actual travel in FY 08 (figures available January 2009) and beyond.

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, WTT 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 three year trend analysis indicates that it's working. While the number of overnights has grown by nearly 6 percent, the expenditures per overnight have grown at five 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. As is evidenced in some industry and market segments during the summer of 2008, the fluctuations in the national economy is having an effect on the travel industry. Because tourism is an

aggregate number, what that impact actually means for the 2008 season won't be evident until early January 2009.

The purpose of the Wyoming Film Industry Financial Incentive (FIFI) program is to promote economic development at the city, town and county level in order to create additional economic health and a diversified state economy, to provide promotion and public visibility of Wyoming as a tourist or business destination, to provide new employment opportunities within Wyoming for Wyoming workers, to create the entertainment industry financial incentives program and to authorize incentives for qualified film productions.

The Film Office website serves as the primary marketing tool listing production, support and crew services throughout Wyoming along with hundreds of digital location images. The Film Office looks for increased website activity in conjunction with marketing efforts directing production decision-makers to the online resource guide.

What has been accomplished?

1. Expand research requirements on all levels

- Continued to measure consumer awareness of Wyoming advertisements in key markets. Achieved a 67.9% awareness level across all markets, up from 53% in '07.
- Continued to utilize Omniture, a web analytical tool, to develop a per capita measure of market penetration from web traffic to www.wyomngtourism.org.
- Implemented a research co-op program to allow industry partners access to research they might not otherwise be able to afford. Research co-op components include a conversion study, an advertising effectiveness study, collateral and website analysis through focus groups and an inquiry/market analysis.
- Continued to measure the effectiveness and usability of the Wyoming Travelers Journal with over 90% of inquirers finding all aspects useful, up from 85% over the previous year's Journal.
- Enhanced the WTT internal dashboard, wyonet.org, by redesigning the interface and enhancing the navigation to make it more intuitive. Redesigned and added seven new reports.

2. Enhance consistency and distribution of advertising message

- Increased the number of aware households in key markets by 27.4% to more than 7.5 million in '08, up from 5.9 million in '07.
- Increased efficiencies in advertising by reducing costs to reach an aware household by 17% in '08 to \$0.55/household, down from \$0.66 in '07.
- Increased overall media spending by 14.7% in FY 08 resulting in an overall increase in inquiries of 43%.
- Increased spending on print media by 12.9% which increased the number of print ad insertions by 15.6%. Overall awareness of Wyoming print ads improved 13% over FY 07.
- Increased online media purchase by 2.9% over FY 07. Total number of web user sessions grew 44% over FY 07.
- Increased Search Engine Marketing expenditures by 15.5% over FY 07. Results showed overall clicks up 8% and the average monthly click-through rate up 45% from 4.01% in FY 07 to 5.82% FY 08.
- Achieved a 17% added-value to the media buy, representing approximately \$591,000 in no cost media placement.
- Overall inquiry in response to the FY 08 advertising efforts increased 43% over FY 07.
- Added one new winter-focused print ad to the Forever West Campaign.

- Achieved a 23% increase in leads over FY 07 associated with the WTT spring print co-op. Also had a 10% increase in the number of advertisers.
 - Increased the total number of markets for the WTT spring print co-op by 13% (five new markets).
 - Consolidated the WTT co-op calendar into one easy-to-read document posted online and covering all programs.
 - Added a winter co-op opportunity using the Denver Post to promote winter vacation packages assembled by destinations across Wyoming.
3. Enhance the planning tools to meet/exceed the expectations of the today's consumer
- Added over 100 new pages to the WTT website focusing on cities and towns of Wyoming, enhancing the presence of these destinations.
 - Entered into partnership with the University of Wyoming Geographic Information Science Center (WyGIS) to assist in GIS data collection from state, federal and private agencies and partners for future use in offering maps to consumers through the redesigned Wyoming Tourism website. Data will also serve to populate a backend management tool to track projects in-house.
 - Created a new Road Trips micro-site to directly address feedback received from focus groups in Denver and Salt Lake City.
 - Implemented a new interactive calendar of events which allows Wyoming industry partners to enter the events through a password protected interface. New calendar is much more robust for consumers and easily searchable.
 - Completed an RFP process to select a new web designer to provide a more robust website as well as a backend management tool to integrate WTT office systems and procedures.
 - Completed an RFP process to select a new fulfillment company.
 - Engaged a new image asset management system (Extensis) providing a one-stop resource for storing, distributing and managing the WTT image library.
 - Launched a partnership with National Geographic and the states of Idaho and Montana, and the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service for a large scale geotourism map and guide project centered on the greater Yellowstone ecosystem.
4. Expand media relationships and product offerings
- Expand media relationships by attracting five regional and national travel/outdoor media contacts for return trips to Wyoming. Employed email, phone and personal visits. Results included positive responses from the travel editor at the Denver Post (Kyle Wagner) resulting in full-section coverage of a winter trip to Yellowstone (March 2008) valued at \$100,000 had it been purchased as advertising; and a four-page Teton climbing feature in National Geographic Traveler magazine written by Tony Perrottet (June 2008) worth an advertising equivalency of \$200,000.
 - Assist local/niche tourism development by creating work product devoted to specific areas. Produced news features (print & broadcast) for regional/national distribution regarding the 20th anniversary of the Yellowstone fires netting cover stories in Via and Home & Away magazines (Feb. & March 2008) valued at \$250,000 in advertising equivalency.
 - Increase service offerings to encompass a variety of media marketing opportunities. Implemented and managed Gap West radio advertising and promotions related to rodeo in Omaha (Sept. 2007); and Wyoming winter activities in Minneapolis (November 2007). Total value: \$80,000.
 - Contracted with Vocus, an online public relations software program that maximizes PR efforts through an online media database, press release distribution, newswire services and news on demand, offering quantitative ROI. Results over the past 10 months include:
 - Number of articles = 6,412
 - Total circulation = 442,953,000

– Ad value = \$51,792,632.90.

- Hosted 22 press trips.
 - Enhanced the Blogging Bullfighter and Charlie's Cowboy Blog by adding video, links and meta tags for search engine optimization. Added new blog – Wyoming's Miss Congeniality written by Susan Kanode who writes through the eyes of a world champion saddle bronc.
5. Strengthen Wyoming's competitive position in the International marketplace
- Participated in Discover America Australian Expos, February 24-28. Conducted presentations in Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne with 297, 468 and 211 travel agents in attendance, respectively. Also sponsored travel media luncheon (41 media) and B2B Event (30 reps from 18 major tour operators) in Sydney, generating 46 solid industry leads overall in Australia.
 - 2008 Reiseliv and Oslo Sales Mission – January 9-12. Presented to two Tour Operator offices in Norway (19 people). Distributed information at Reiseliv (four day show). In attendance were: Trade-9,110; Consumer – 22,697; Media – 467; Total 32,274.
 - Sales Mission in Sweden and Discover America Event – January 12-14. Presented to Jambo Tours, who then sent a rep to the RMI Roundup to design new Wyoming tours. Hosted a media luncheon (9 journalists) in Stockholm. Presented to over 200 travel agents in Stockholm at the Discover America Event. Received 29 solid leads.
 - Sales and training mission in France, March 10-13, included focus on small town Wyoming, as well as attractions not normally included in international itineraries. The mission yielded 31 leads. Destinations and attractions featured included Casper's National Historic Trails Interpretive Center, Devils Tower, Meteteetsee's Cowboy Chocolatier, Medicine Wheel, Bighorn Canyon NRA, Flaming Gorge NRA, ranches in the Buffalo area and historic hotels including the Occidental Hotel and the Sheridan Inn.
 - Hosted 28 international familiarization tours included lesser known routes including Banner, Big Horn, Buffalo, Carlile, Casper, Cheyenne, Dayton, Devils Tower Junction, Dubois, Edgerton, Fort Laramie, Gillette, Greybull, Lander, Medicine Bow, Meteteetsee, Midwest, Ranchester, Riverton, Rock Springs, Shell, Sheridan, Shoshoni, Story, Sundance, Ten Sleep, Ucross, Worland and Wright.
 - Participated in World Travel Market in London, England (November 12-15), ITB in Berlin, Germany (March 5-9), and the Italy Visit USA Showcase (November 15-17). The three shows produced 92, 79, and 17 leads respectively.
 - Doubled exposure to international consumers in the primary US promotional publication, *Discover America*, with purchase of a full page ad and coordinating a one page co-op of quarter page ads purchased by Cheyenne, Cody, Jackson and Laramie. *Discover America's* circulation increased to 1.25 mil, a 25% increase over last year, and added Japanese and Spanish languages to the previous French, German, Italian, and English versions.
 - Increased ad buys in consumer publications in Germany and UK by 30%, and committed to three consumer show co-ops with tour operators in Germany and the UK.
 - Created a new CD of 189 images for use in developing hardcopy brochures and all aspects of e-marketing/sales programs, including an internet marketing campaign in Germany.
 - Initiated Google ad word campaign in UK for RMI regional website. Updated and improved regional in-market websites in Benelux and Italy.
 - Joined Receptive Services Association (RSA) to further relationships with receptive tour operators booking international visitations.
 - Fielded market development ideas, designed to extend visibility in India, Taiwan and China, and other emerging Asian markets at international shows and conferences including RSA. In pursuit of these markets, met with 8 Chinese, 4 Malaysian, 1 Korean and 1 Indian tour and 4 Hong Kong operators at Go West Summit, January 21-24, and met with 5 Chinese, 2 Taiwanese, 1 Singapore, and 1 Indian tour operator at International Pow Wow, June 1-4.

- Participated in joint promotions with ID and MT at two Chinese shows: China International Travel Mart (CITM Nov 1-4) and the Taipei Int'l Travel Fair ITF (Dec. 14-17). ITF had 172,200 visitors while CITM had 4,100 travel agents from around the world and more than 100,000 consumers.
 - Coordinated a Chinese governmental officials familiarization tour, and worked with Western Leisure on two Chinese group tours. Created itineraries into gateway communities, hosted receptions and meals, and arranged shopping excursions.
6. Maximize return-on-investment from participation in travel trade and direct marketing programs
- Actively pursuing new domestic package travel markets. Participated in the Student Youth Travel Association convention which yielded 27 appointments and 19 lead follow ups. The African American Travel Conference led to 48 appointments and 15 strong leads.
 - A list of 12 solid itineraries with multiple additional options based for student travel has been compiled from sources such as the BLM, Wyoming State Parks, and National Parks.
 - Wyoming's presence at consumer shows has been bolstered to increase visibility and draw more consumers to the Wyoming booth. The main trail town piece is the backdrop, surrounded by split rail fencing, multiple TVs featuring WY video, and WY flags and tent. New banners featuring the ad campaign also line the booth. The new booth is being transported in a wrapped WY trailer for added visual promotion. Four communities were in a co-op with the WTT at the Denver International Sportsman's Expo, while 6 communities partnered at the Salt Lake City International Sportsman's Expo.
 - Implemented an online registration for consumer show prize registration. Also offers the opportunity to view wyomingtourism.org and signup for the e-zine. The number of consumers registered was up on average 32% (50 registrations).
 - Participation in the Sno-Barons Hay Days to expand winter product exposure. 30,000 people visit the event each year.
7. Expand Wyoming film-friendly offerings
- Marketed the Film Industry Financial Incentive (FIFI) program through attendance at the Association of Film Commissioners International (AFCI) Locations trade show in Los Angeles and at Film the West sponsored reception at the Sundance Film Festival.
 - Partnered with Jackson Hole Film Institute to provide grip/electric course training that expanded the key area of Wyoming production crew base by 133% in the electrician category and 120% in the grip category.
 - Promoted a Wyoming Short Film contest to attract independent filmmakers with Wyoming storyline projects. The winning film premiered at the Jackson Hole Film Festival and was posted on the tourism and film office websites.
 - Purchased advertising in trade publications such as Production Update (P3) magazine, Kemps directory and Locations magazine.
 - Distributed promotional piece about film incentive and short film contest at an L.A. based film financing workshop and SXSW independent film festival.
 - Travel Spike email blast - sent to 15,000 "A List" film industry contacts at Variety.com delivered to 11,584 with 22% open rate and 7% click thru rate; sent twice for 282 email impressions to NY film production associations yielding 55% open rate with a 24% click thru rate; sent twice to AFCI Locations attendance list for a total of 4,438 impressions with 31% open rate and 17% click thru rate.
 - Reel-Scout project inquiries increased 15% from 54 assisted productions in '07 to 62 assisted productions in '08.

8. Make Wyoming more visitor-friendly and easily accessible by providing interpretive travel information and quality service
 - In conjunction with the Department of Transportation, obligated funds for the following:
 - 18 interpretative signage projects totaling \$151,738
 - 62 directional signage projects totaling \$32,044
 - 13 free form signage projects totaling, \$70,182
 - Interpretive Sign Workshops: Developed in conjunction with State Historic Preservation Office, WYDOT, USFS, to teach local communities, organizations, and municipalities on how to develop interpretive signs projects from text development to fabrication to installation. A total of six workshops will be held throughout the state. The first workshop was held in Cody on June 24, 2008. A total of 10 individuals attended.
 - Summit Visitor Information Center and Exhibit: WTT is the lead agency of an inter-agency committee working to update the existing interpretive plan and interpretive panels for the exhibit area and solarium at the rest area. An RFP was issued in April 2008 and Roybal Corporation of Denver was selected as the contractor in May 2008.
 - Building Collaboration: Sheridan Visitor Information Center invited local daycares to weekly “Wyoming Wednesdays” in June 2008 where children were read books that had Wyoming storylines followed by a presentation on where to experience that story in real life, i.e. Who Pooped in the Park? & Yellowstone National Park presentation. There were a total of 111 in attendance not counting travelers dropping in.
 - A total of 49 travel related brochures were approved for distribution in the visitor centers.
 - Third annual training and FAM tour for state-run Welcome Center personnel held April 30-May 7, 2008, 2007 in Sheridan with travel to Buffalo, Worland, Cody and Yellowstone. Training included Interoffice Communication, Bozeman Trail, and National Park Showcase.
 - In-State Tourism Marketing Education: Completed 2nd and 3rd part series of “How to Conduct Market Research” workshop for local communities 2008. The following communities have conducted research studies as a result: Carbon County Visitors Council, Thermopolis Chamber, Big Horn County, Riverton Chamber, Wind River Visitors Council, Cheyenne CVB, Gillette-Campbell County Chamber, and Pryor Mountain Wild Mustang Center.
 - Launched Destination Marketing Specialist Program on April 19, 2008 with a total of eight individuals participating in Casper and a total of 13 participating in Sheridan April 30, 2008.
 - Continue to actively work on finalizing two hospitality training programs:
 - Certified tourism community program for local communities interested in tourism development
 - Customer service “train-the-trainer” program
 - Layout and design of the certified tourism community workbook is ongoing and the text for the customer service workbooks has been finalized.
 - Communities visited by Industry Services Manager and Visitor Information Center Supervisors: Newcastle, Gillette, Devil’s Tower, Powell, Thermopolis, Riverton, Moorcroft, Sundance, Sheridan, Cody, Yellowstone NP, Arapaho, Ethete, Ft. Washakie, Dubois, Arvada, Verona, Wyarno, Clearmont, Story, Big Horn, Ranchester, Dayton, Parkman, Sundance, Upton, Beulah, Aladdin, Hulett, Cheyenne, Pine Bluffs, Laramie, and Woods Landing.
 - Finalized land purchase agreement for 32.20 acres at I-90 exit 199 for the purpose of constructing a Northeast Wyoming Welcome Center at this major gateway entrance to Wyoming. Completed site surveys, began preliminary testing and design approval.

Wyoming Travel & Tourism

