

# **ANNUAL REPORT ON STATE EXPENDITURES TO PROMOTE TOURISM**

FISCAL YEAR 2021

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## **ABOUT THE MASSACHUSETTS OFFICE OF TRAVEL & TOURISM**

The Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism (MOTT) is the state agency dedicated to promoting Massachusetts as a business and leisure-travel destination.

The COVID19 pandemic, which began in March 2020, has caused major disruptions in all travel-related industries. MOTT travel industry research statistics are measured by calendar year. For calendar year 2020, there was a 60% reduction in travel activity in the Commonwealth resulting in only \$10 billion in travel related expenditures generating \$0.9 billion in state and local taxes and supporting 102,000 in-state jobs. Calendar year 2021 travel industry research statistics will be available mid-2022.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To promote Massachusetts as a tourism destination for domestic and international markets and to contribute to the growth of the Commonwealth's economy.

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

**GENERAL LAWS**

**Chapter 23A. Section 13T Department of Economic Development**

Section 13T. (a) There shall be a Massachusetts Tourism Trust Fund which shall be administered by the Massachusetts marketing partnership established in section 13A and held by the partnership separate and apart from its other funds. There shall be credited to the fund \$10,000,000 from the room occupancy excise imposed by section 3 of chapter 64G and section 22 of chapter 546 of the acts of 1969.

(b) There shall also be credited to the fund all revenue as designated under the Gaming Revenue Fund pursuant to sub clause (b) of clause (2) of section 59 of chapter 23K.

(c) All available money in the fund that is unexpended at the end of each fiscal year shall not revert to the General Fund and shall be available for expenditure by the fund in the subsequent fiscal year.

(d) Money in the fund shall be applied as follows:

(i) 40 per cent to the Massachusetts marketing partnership; and

(ii) 60 per cent to regional tourism councils.

(e) The partnership shall submit an annual report to the clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives and the Joint Committee on Tourism, Arts and Cultural Development not later than December 31 on the cost-effectiveness of the fund. The report shall be made available on the office of travel and tourism's website. The report shall include: (i) expenditures made by the partnership from money out of the fund to promote tourism; (ii) expenditures made by the partnership for administrative costs; (iii) expenditures made by the regional tourism councils to promote tourism; and (iv) expenditures made by the regional tourism councils for administrative costs.

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(i) Expenditures made by the partnership from money out of the fund to promote tourism

## PART A: MARKETING PROGRAMS

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**Overview:** Promote Massachusetts as a destination to domestic and international travelers

**Objective:** Develop, implement, and measure results of programs in key consumer and trade markets

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### **Section 1. International Marketing**

MOTT promotes Massachusetts to traveler markets throughout the world. Prior to the COVID19 pandemic and FY2021, MOTT's international activity had representation in 11 source markets to international travelers, either directly or through work with Brand USA and/or Discover New England. These travelers tend to stay longer and spend more than domestic travelers. For major source markets, MOTT had representatives with demonstrated and effective relationships in market with key decision makers. MOTT's international marketing programs were focused on business-to-business marketing, targeting travel media and major tour operators to ensure Massachusetts was well-represented as an appealing four-season travel destination. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, MOTT ended international marketing in nine of 11 markets in June 2020. UK and Canadian marketing were greatly reduced and ended in November 2020. Primary international marketing activity programs for MOTT were in partnership with Brand USA and Discover New England.

#### **International Marketing Representation -Key International Markets**

MOTT held contracts for representation with two key international markets through November 2020:

- Canada, represented by VoX International
- United Kingdom, represented by Travel & Tourism Marketing, Ltd.

MOTT had representation in key international markets for the rest of Fy2021 through agreements with major regional destination marketing organizations Brand USA and Discover New England:

- UK/Ireland, through Discover New England
- Germany, through Discover New England

#### **Overview of International Marketing Activity Public Relations**

##### **Public Relations**

- During the Covid19 pandemic, MOTT's international activity to promote Massachusetts as a destination to major international media outlets, as well as key travel and trade publications, and high-value new media targets was limited to the extent of keeping Massachusetts a front of mind destination for once the international air bridge re-opened. MOTT was reactive to any international media inquiries through Discover New England and Brand USA.

##### **Familiarization Trips**

- Familiarization Trips are traditionally an important component of the international program at MOTT. A familiarization trip (FAM) enables journalists and travel agents to experience a destination firsthand. For media FAM participants, the goal of the visit is to generate features on Massachusetts in major international publications, including magazines, travel sections of newspapers, and social media channels. For international tour operators who participate in FAMs, the goal is to experience and promote the destination to the operator's consumers through packaged tours and promotions. Familiarization tours promote lodging venues, attractions, events, restaurants and thematic programs unique to the Commonwealth. MOTT did not host international media or travel trade in FY2021.

### **Sales Calls, Sales Mission, Workshops, and Trainings**

- MOTT's international representatives maintain relationships with tour operators and travel planners. This work increases MOTT's understanding of travel trends and traveler demands. Additionally, strong relationships increase tour operators' / travel planners' understanding of the product: Massachusetts, the destination. MOTT's representatives visit frequently with decision makers and host workshops, webinars, and trainings for tour operator staff to ensure they have the latest news on attractions, events, and what to do in Massachusetts. In FY2021, most of this work was through Discover New England and Brand USA, and many previously organized in-person trainings in key markets to connect regions and businesses with key decision makers, including travel media and tour operators, took on a virtual approach.
- In FY 2021, trainings and/or sales missions included:
  - March 15-18, 2021 – 1:1 Meetings - Global Brand USA Marketplace with Discover New England (Virtual)
  - April 22, 2021 – What's New in US: Great Outdoors - Focus on UK & Ireland Travel Trade Training Day Massachusetts Presentation, Global Brand USA Marketplace

### **Microsites and Social Media**

- Prior to the COVID19 pandemic, MOTT's international representatives maintained localized microsites translated into the primary language of the market. In FY2021, for English-speaking countries, MOTT adapted its international strategy and made visitma.com the primary site for visitation for all markets. For non-English speaking visitors by origin market in key countries, a welcome page was developed in language on the visitma.com website with a flag denoting the page language. For markets that had maintained localized social media profiles on key platforms prior to the COVID19 pandemic, messages were posted referring visitors to our main Visit Massachusetts platforms on social media.

### **International Trade Shows**

- Massachusetts is traditionally represented at key consumer and trade shows by MOTT's international representatives, to ensure broad coverage of target audiences, as well as to minimize international travel costs by MOTT staff. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, in-person international trade shows in FY2021 were cancelled.

### **Marketing Associations**

- Discover New England: Regional marketing consortium of the five New England states; Maintains representation in key international markets, participates in major international trade shows, and hosts a New England trade show for international buyers each year
- Brand USA: National destination marketing organization for the United States; organizes cooperative advertising programs, trade shows, sales missions, and educational events for domestic destinations to collaboratively promote to international audiences

### **International Marketing Expenditures in FY 2021: \$ 118,000**

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### **Section 2. Domestic Marketing**

In FY2021, MOTT promoted Massachusetts as an intra-state destination for Massachusetts residents. With a focus on niche and thematic assets, MOTT took a multi-channel approach to marketing. Programs were designed to generate awareness, inspiration, and engagement with local MA residents and businesses. Partnerships and collaborations with the Regional Tourism Councils and other tourism stakeholders to leverage resources and amplify efforts bolstered the impact of MOTT's initiatives in FY 2021.

### **Travel and Tourism Recovery Marketing**

\$4,200,000 in CARES ACT funding to promote restaurant recovery in MA, and legislative funding to promote recovery of the state's tourism industry.

### **Campaigns**

- MY LOCAL MA CAMPAIGN
  - Overview: Local campaign focusing on driving MA residents to buy, stay, eat local.
  - Objective: To create awareness and inspire behavioral changes emphasizing small business recovery; reminding residents of MA to support the neighborhoods and communities they love the most.
  - Run Time: August 2020 – June 2021
  - Components/Tactics: Television, Radio, OOH, Social Media, Print, Connected TV, Microsite, Digital Advertising, Industry Communication
  - Cost: \$2.3 million
  
- LET'S GO OUT CAMPAIGN – MY LOCAL MA CAMPAIGN RESTAURANT FOCUS
  - Overview: Advertising campaign to support local restaurant recovery.
  - Objective: Support of Massachusetts restaurants by encouraging in-person dining.
  - Run Time: May-September 2021
  - Component/Tactics: Television, Radio, OOH, Social Media, Print, Microsite, Digital Advertising, Industry Communication
  - Cost: \$1.9 million
  
- YANKEE MAGAZINE
  - Overview: Discover the Historic Women's Trailblazers
  - Objective: Support and promote the Commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1920 passage of the women's right to vote.
  - Components/Tactics: Ad: in Yankee Magazine's May/June 2021 issue; Website: Homepage carousel and tile features, events calendar listings, blog post; Social media: Organic messaging across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram; Consumer and Industry Newsletters
  - Awareness: Encourage participation from Regional Tourism Councils to spread the word and get involved in promotion. Share information with domestic media, tour operators, and consumers.
  - Cost: \$6,200

### **Associations and Memberships**

- National Tour Association: Business-building association for professionals serving customers traveling to and within North America
- American Bus Association: The leading domestic association of group tour buyers and sellers, connecting destinations and attractions with key tour operators
- United States Travel Association: The leading educational and advocacy organization for the tourism and hospitality industry in the United States; Hosts the major international trade show IPW each year
- New England Bus Association: The leading New England of group bus tour buyers and sellers, connecting destinations and attractions with key tour operators

### **Subscriptions**

- Libris: Photo-storage service which MOTT uses to store and catalog thousands of images of Massachusetts

## FY 2021 ANNUAL REPORT ON STATE EXPENDITURES TO PROMOTE TOURISM

- PhotoShelter, Inc.: Photo-storage service which MOTT uses to store and catalog thousands of images of Massachusetts. Transitioned out of PhotoShelter, Inc., and into Flickr in Q4 2020.
- Flickr: Photo-storage service which MOTT uses to store and catalog thousands of images of Massachusetts.

### Website, Social Media Channels, and Email Marketing

MOTT's digital marketing tools communicate everything from the fundamentals of traveling to Massachusetts to the latest events, attractions, and restaurant openings. These channels are updated regularly. Visitma.com serves as the foundation for MOTT promotions and, combined with social media, is a cost effective tool for generating earned media value.

#### Website

- Visitma.com: Over 618,749 sessions and 1,380,363 page views to the flagship marketing tool for MOTT in FY 2021. This site is continuously-updated with business listings and events throughout Massachusetts. Landing pages are developed for key promotions and holidays. This site is fed by a business listing database, where users can upload information about their business, including contact information, events, images, and promotional copy.
- Website refresh: Update of website and change of URL to VisitMA.com

#### Social Media Channels

- Facebook: Social networking website and service where users can post comments, share photographs and links to news or other interesting content online, play games, chat live, and even stream live video. Likes: 4,402 (new page likes)
- Instagram: Online mobile-only photo-sharing, video-sharing, and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures and videos, and share them either publicly or privately on the app, as well as through a variety of other social networking platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, and Flickr. Followers: 780 (new followers)
- Twitter: Social networking microblogging site where users broadcast short posts called tweets. Posts are restricted to 280 characters. MOTT uses twitter to promote events, share travel ideas, and interact directly with consumers through steady engagement. Followers: 960 (new followers)

#### Emails

- Consumer Emails: List of 40,000 subscribers who receive information 2-3 times per month regarding events, deals, and giveaways. Consumers opt in to receive these emails, and select which lists they want to receive. Emails are based on holidays, seasonal themes, and activity type.

#### Subscriptions

- Mail Chimp: email marketing platform used to send MOTT's consumer and industry emails.
- Jebbit: survey subscription to gather more information on MOTT's consumer database, including where and when they travel, where they stay, and their interests
- Visit Widget: Digital itinerary development tool, personalized to the user and linked to the back-end of the massvacation.com website

**Domestic Marketing Expenditures in FY 2021: \$ 4,407,700**

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**Section 3. Trade Shows**

Trade shows are a key mechanism for interacting with consumers, learning industry best practices, engaging with the Massachusetts and regional tourism industry, and interfacing with decision makers in the tourism industry. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, many trade shows were canceled or postponed.

**Trade Shows in FY 2021**

- The Big E: Virtual Marketplace, September 2020- \$150.00
- Other small trade show participations: \$750.00

**Trade Show Expenditures in FY 2021: \$ 900.00**

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**End of Part A. Marketing Programs**

## PART B. INDUSTRY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

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**Overview:** Support small business and local marketing efforts to promote tourism across Massachusetts

**Objective:** Communicate research, trends, and opportunities for growth to MA travel industry

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### **Section 1. Tourism Research**

#### **Subscriptions**

- Smith Travel Research: hotel and lodging data
- OmniTrak Travels America: Domestic visitor profile data
- US Department of Commerce: Overseas visitor arrivals data
- StatsCanada: Canadian arrivals and profile data
- United States Travel Association: Economic impact report by state and local tourism regions
- AirDNA: Aggregating shared accommodation data by MA and regions
- Arrivalist: Domestic travel activity by origin and destination

#### **Reports and Presentations**

- Regional Tourism Data Presentations: MOTT's research director met individually with the 16 Regional Tourism Councils (RTCs) to present and discuss tourism spending and volume reports, which is purchased annually by MOTT and the RTCs. These reports show traveler spending and demographics including traveler origin, spending by city/town, and type of spending/business, and places visited.

**Tourism Research Expenditures in FY 2021: \$ 64,000**

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### **Section 2. Tourism Industry Support**

#### **Quarterly Board Meetings**

- Governor's Advisory Commission on Travel & Tourism: Commission meetings
- Massachusetts Marketing Partnership: Board meetings
- Discover New England: Board meetings

#### **Travel and Tourism Recovery Grants**

- \$1,660,000 in awards to 59 tourism organizations, chambers of commerce, and municipalities dedicated to marketing projects that support the My Local MA campaign, enhance tourism recovery, and have the potential to increase non-resident visitation. The program's goal is to strengthen the Massachusetts economy through the development and enhancement of the state's tourism industry.

**Tourism Industry Expenditures in FY 2021: \$ 1,660,000**

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### **Section 3. Industry Communication**

#### **Programs**

- Monthly Newsletter: Distributed to an email list of over 5,000 industry professionals. The bulk of the list are users who have created business listings on visitma.com, as well as other members of the Massachusetts tourism industry. News is related to major MOTT activity, participation opportunities, grant opportunities, My Local MA campaign information, and major tourism developments in Massachusetts.
- Industry Portal: MOTT maintains a media and industry portal for use by inquiring media, grant recipients, and tourism industry members. Information on the portal is organized by industry and media assets, including research reports, industry presentations, press releases, imagery, and other digital assets.

**Industry Communication Expenditures in FY 2021: *included in Domestic Marketing budget***

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### **Section 4. Regional Tourism Council Grants**

MOTT administers a matching state grant for promotion of local tourist councils each fiscal year.

In FY 2021, the \$6,894,852 grant was distributed among the 16 legislatively-designated regional tourism councils by a performance-based grant formula. In addition revenue from gaming was distributed according to the performance based grant formula. For more information, please see the annual report on local tourism council assistance filed by MOTT on the media & industry portal on VisitMA.com.

**Regional Tourism Grant Expenditures in FY 2021: *funded through the Tourism Trust Fund and reported separately***

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**End of Part B. Industry Support Programs**

(ii) Expenditures made by the partnership for  
administrative costs

## PART A. ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURES

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**Overview:** Administrative Expenditures in FY 2021 are shared among the following Massachusetts Marketing Partnership (MMP) agencies- Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism (MOTT), Commonwealth Marketing Office (CMO), Massachusetts Office of International Trade and Investment (MOITI)

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### **Section 1. Staff**

#### **MOTT Staff: July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021**

- Executive Director
- Special Projects Manager
- Director of International Public Relations
- Director of Partnership Marketing
- Web Manager
- Research Director
- Massachusetts Film Office (3 employees)

#### **Additional MMP Staff: July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021**

- Massachusetts Office of International Trade & Investment (2 employees)
- Commonwealth Marketing Office (1 employee)

**Administrative Payroll Expenditures in FY 2021: \$ 2,034,844**

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### **Section 2. Operations Expenses**

**Overview:** Rent, office supplies, print, programmatic, MFO expenses

#### **MA Film Office**

- \$35,000 for Reel Scout, Baseline, Inc., Association of Film Commissioners International, Variety Insight, WebiNerd, Location scouts

### **Section 3. MOITI Expenses**

#### **MOITI**

- \$83,000 STEP Grant

**Operations Expenditures in FY 2021: \$ 364,000**

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**TOTAL MOTT/MMP EXPENDITURES IN FY2021: \$8,649,444**

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End of FY 2021 Annual Report on State Expenditures to Promote Tourism