



## Trade Show Report

### Small Market Meetings – Ontario, CA

September 23 - 25, 2018

#### Montana Representation:

- + Glacier Country – Debbie Picard
- + Discover Kalispell – Dawn Jackson
- + Destination Missoula – Mimi Gustafson
- + Grouse Mountain Lodge – Corrina Ceballos
- + Billings CVB – Stefan Cattarin
- + Great Falls CVB – Jake Bash

#### Overview:

- + Small Market Meetings is a hosted buyer, appointment-only, reverse trade show. They worked to bring in the most active corporate and association planners, that are looking for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> tier cities for smaller groups. A total of 105 planners were there.
- + Glacier Country Tourism was matched with 37 buyers for 6-minute appointments which wasn't nearly enough time to learn about what they needed and tell them about Glacier Country. More of a meet/greet and follow up later type of trade show.
- + There were additional times in the 2 days to network and speak to planners you connected with and meet some of those you weren't matched with.
- + We increased our database with **32** new meeting planners.
- + Next Small Market Meetings will be held in Green Bay, WI September 24 – 26, 2019.

#### Appointments and projected ROI:

It was wonderful to have such a large Montana presence at this show. Along with Wyoming, I think we were able to put Montana and the region on the map for these meeting planners. I connected with them on their corporate incentive needs with our luxury guest ranches, while Kalispell and Missoula connected for more association business. Several appointments had meetings in the 50-100 people range which is perfect for most of our convention hotels in our three hub cities. Several were looking for retreat locations as well. I did not leave with any RFP's. I have followed up with all of the planners via email and will have to see about ROI.

#### Recommendations for 2019:

It takes consistency and continued exposure to build relationships with meeting planners. I feel we need to participate at least 2 years to see the ROI. It gives Western Montana great exposure to quality meeting that are looking for smaller destinations. Our direct flights from hub cities were well received. There are plenty of corporate and association planners at the show. I recommend we attend again next year to build on the relationships developed this year and meet new planners.