



3RD QUARTER MARKETING REPORT

July-September, 2018

MEETINGS

Annual Meeting October 23-25

- Meeting prep and facilitation
 - Conducted multiple teleconferences and communications with AR-MRPC
 - Confirmed speakers, meals, transportation, room logistics, etc.
 - Prepared awards accordingly
- Delegates Registration
 - Set pricing
 - Created registration form and agenda (hard copy and electronically)
 - Pulled contact info and created newsletter and mailing list for interpretive centers
 - Printed and mail form out to members
 - Emailed registration information
 - Collected payments
 - Sent invoices
 - Created shuttle request form
- Newsletters
 - Sent newsletters to remind members meeting registration, hotel reservations and other news (see newsletters section)
- Updated mrpcmembers.com
 - Created page for online registration
 - Uploaded materials under resources, meeting minutes and agendas

Conference Calls

- 07/13 – Board Teleconference Call
- 08/14 – NJ DOT (Lyn)

Relay of Voices

- Conversations by phone and email with Victoria Bradford to draft a MOA between both organizations

E-NEWSLETTERS



Tourism List

- 9/10 Drive the Great River Road e-newsletter
 - Subject line: Win \$500 for a trip on the Great River Road
 - Promoted Drive the Great River Road Month and giveaway
 - Open rate: 25.8% (industry average: 17.2%)
 - Click rate: 10.2% (industry average: 2.3%)

Member List

- August 6 – Annual Meeting registration, hotel reservations, agenda
- August 20 – Drive the Great River Road toolkit, 80th Anniversary/Follow the Pilot’s Wheel Campaign
- September 25 – Annual Early Bird Reminder

Interpretive Center List

- July 13 – 80th Anniversary/Follow the Pilot’s Wheel Campaign, keychain/postcard requests
- August 6 – Annual Meeting registration, hotel reservations, agenda

[View this email in your browser](#)
[Forward to a friend](#)

Enter to win \$500 for your Great River Road trip!

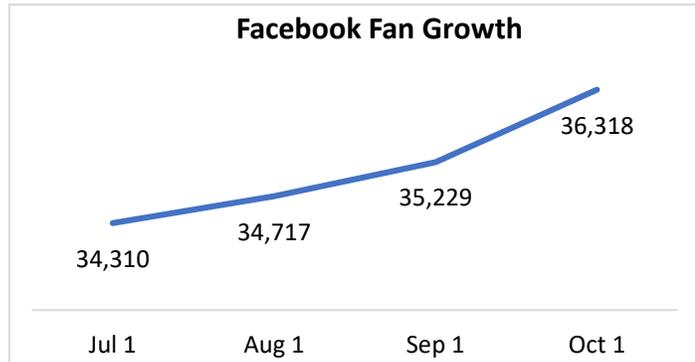
September is Drive the Great River Road Month, a celebration of America’s greatest drive. The Great River Road follows the Mississippi River from the wilds of northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico, taking drivers on a scenic tour through the heart of America.

Now, you could win \$500 to spend on a trip to explore one of the country’s longest and oldest National Scenic Byways! Enter the Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes before September 30 for your chance to win!

Enter now!

Mississippi River Parkway Commission
 701 E. Washington Ave. Ste. 202
 Madison, WI 53703
experiencemississippiriver.com • 866.763.8310

FACEBOOK



Facebook fans	New Facebook fans	Facebook updates
36,318	2,008	82

Top posts

- 7/20/2018– [“Pizza along the Great River Road? Sign us up!” w/link Chicago Tribune story]
 - Drove traffic to chicagotribune.com
 - 9,573 people reached, 202 reactions, 25 comments, 49 shares, 746 post clicks
 - 9,573 people reached organically
- 9/1/2018– [“It’s the start of Drive the Great River Road Month! Here are a few reasons to discover America’s greatest drive this September” w/link to website]
 - Drove traffic to experiencemississippiriver.com
 - 15,344 people reached, 374 reactions, 23 comments, 81 shares, 670 post clicks
 - 11,574 people reached organically; 3,770 reached via paid ad
- 9/9/2018– [“To celebrate Drive the Great River Road Month, we’re taking a closer look at the states along the route. Next up is Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Great River Road, which traverses 250 miles through 33 river towns” w/link to website]
 - Drove traffic to experiencemississippiriver.com
 - 13,065 people reached, 349 reactions, 17 comments, 61 shares, 533 post clicks
 - 10,552 people reached organically; 2,780 reached via paid ad
- 9/12/2018– [“To celebrate Drive the Great River Road Month, we’re taking a closer look at the states along the route. Next up is Iowa, home to beautiful bluffs and charming small towns along the Mississippi River” w/link to website]
 - Drove traffic to experiencemississippiriver.com
 - 9,777 people reached, 199 reactions, 11 comments, 40 shares, 336 post clicks
 - 6,341 people reached organically; 3,678 reached via paid ad
- 9/2/2018– [“Win \$500 to spend on your next Great River Road trip!” w/link to website]
 - Drove traffic to experiencemississippiriver.com
 - 17,093 people reached, 215 reactions, 2 comments, 25 shares, 844 post clicks
 - 5,123 people reached organically; 13,004 reached via paid ad

Advertising

Page likes 2018

- Page likes campaign; runs continuously throughout year
- 23,744 impressions
- 725 clicks
- 3.05% click-through rate
- Added 551 fans

Post engagement 2018

- Post engagement on various Facebook posts; runs continuously throughout year
- 17,515 impressions
- 815 clicks
- 4.65% click-through rate
- Received 595 post engagements

Clicks to website – Share Great River Road Flavors

- Post engagement on post about Flavors of the Great River Road campaign; ran 6/5-8/24/18 (full stats)
- 148,114 impressions
- 3,740 clicks
- 2.53% click-through rate

Suggested Page

 **The Great River Road**
Sponsored

Celebrate the 80th anniversary the Great River Road, which follows the Mississippi River through 10 states through the heart of America.



The Great River Road
Landmark & Historical Place
36,387 people like this

 **The Great River Road**
Sponsored · 

Did you know you can order a FREE 10-state Great River Road map (as well as other state-specific information) on our website?



experiencemississippiriver.com
Order a FREE Great River Road 10-state map - Experience Mississippi River

 **The Great River Road**
Sponsored · 

"Best. Ribs. In. The. World" --bbqfan
Share your favorite flavors of the Great River Road with us today!



www.experiencemississippiriver...
Flavors of the Great River Road [LEARN MORE](#)

Clicks to website – *Flavors of the Great River Road Giveaway*

- Post engagement on post about Flavors of the Great River Road giveaway; ran 8/16-8/24/18
- 32,409 impressions
- 513 clicks
- 1.58% click-through rate



The Great River Road
Sponsored · 🌐

Enter today for your chance to win \$500 to spend sampling the delicious flavors you'll find up and down the Mississippi River.

Win \$500 for your next road trip! [Learn More](#)

Win \$500 next road

Post Engagement – *Drive the Great River Road Month*

- Post engagement on various posts about Drive the Great River Road Month; ran 9/7-9/30/18
- 65,661 impressions
- 1,648 clicks
- 2.51% click-through rate
- Received 1,453 post engagements



The Great River Road
Sponsored · 🌐

Find all the info you need on how to make the most of Drive the Great River Road Month.

experiencemississippiriver.com
Celebrate Drive the Great River Road Month in September - Experience Mississippi River

Post Engagement – *Drive the Great River Road Month Giveaway*

- Post engagement on post about Drive the Great River Road Month Giveaway; ran 9/7-9/30/18
- 132,028 impressions
- 2,128 clicks
- 1.61% click-through rate
- Received 1,899 post engagements



The Great River Road
Sponsored · 🌐

Win \$500 to spend on your next Great River Road trip!

experiencemississippiriver.com
Win \$500 for your Great River Road trip!
Enter today, and you could win \$500 to spend on a ro...

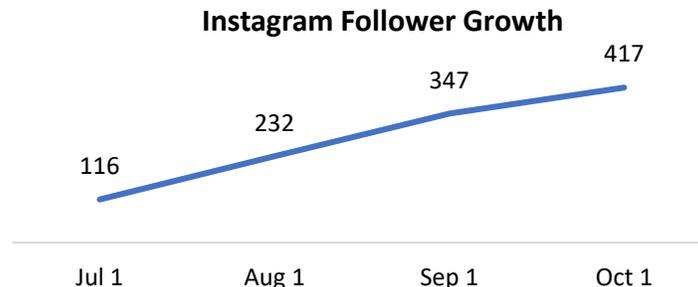
Engaged fans (those who are liking, commenting and sharing)

- 68% women (21% ages 55-64), 31% men (9% of which are ages 55-64)
- Top engaged cities (in order): St. Louis, Chicago, Dubuque, Alton (IL), Minneapolis

Takeaways

- Drive the Great River Road Month content performed very well on the MPRC Facebook page in Q3, as it accounted for four of the top five posts in terms of engagement in the quarter. We shared many different types of educational posts about the Great River Road and Great River Road states during the campaign in September, including blogs, links to state pages and more.
- External links about the Great River Road and specific Great River Road states also continue to perform well, as evidenced by the Chicago Tribune story about pizza farms along the Great River Road that we shared in July. We try to share most if not all the media mentions we see about the Great River Road on our Facebook page, and it seems to be something our fans are interested in.

INSTAGRAM



Instagram followers	New Instagram followers	Instagram updates
417	301	21

Top posts

- 8/31/2018– Photo of barge on Mississippi River in Memphis w/caption “It’s time to say goodbye to #summer!”
 - 219 people reached, 37 engagements

Takeaways

- We received good interaction on our Instagram account in Q2 as we posted about food and restaurants (related to the Flavors of the Great River Road campaign), as well as general Great River Road travel.

PINTEREST

- Added pins to state boards, Drive the Great River Road Month board
- Highlighted interpretive centers across all Mississippi River states

WEBSITE POSTS

Researched and wrote blog articles that appeared on experiencemississippi.com homepage

- July
 - Flavors of the Great River Road: Kentucky (7/10)
 - Flavors of the Great River Road: Arkansas (7/18)
 - Flavors of the Great River Road: Missouri (7/24)
- August:
 - Flavors of the Great River Road: Mississippi (8/1)
 - Flavors of the Great River Road: Illinois (8/6)
 - Flavors of the Great River Road: Louisiana (8/13)
 - Enjoy the flavors of the Great River Road (8/23)
 - 4 reasons to celebrate Drive the Great River Road Month (8/31)

PR/PUBLICITY

- On-air radio interviews with Greg Taylor, Program Director – Host of AM 1230 KWNO, Winona, MN:
 - July: Great River Road wineries
 - September: Drive the Great River Road Month

PROMOTIONS

Flavors of the Great River Road Giveaway

Summary

- This promotion is a campaign designed to highlight the culinary heritage of the states along the Great River Road, as well as obtain fan-generated recommendations for restaurants, wineries and more along the Mississippi River. The campaign included both a sweepstakes component (share info for a chance to win a \$500 prize) and a user-generated content component (fill out a form to share fans' favorite flavors of the Great River Road). In addition to these elements, we also created business cards for distribution at Interpretive Centers and worked with ICs to figure out quantities and distribution.



Run dates

- 6/4-8/24/18

Goals

- To promote the culinary heritage and dining options along the Great River Road
- To increase fan numbers and interaction on the Great River Road social media channels
- Encourage organic/social dialog about food options on the Great River Road
- Entries: 2,000
- User suggestions: 500

Prizes offered

- \$500 prepaid credit card

Total entries

- 2,350
- User suggestions: 76

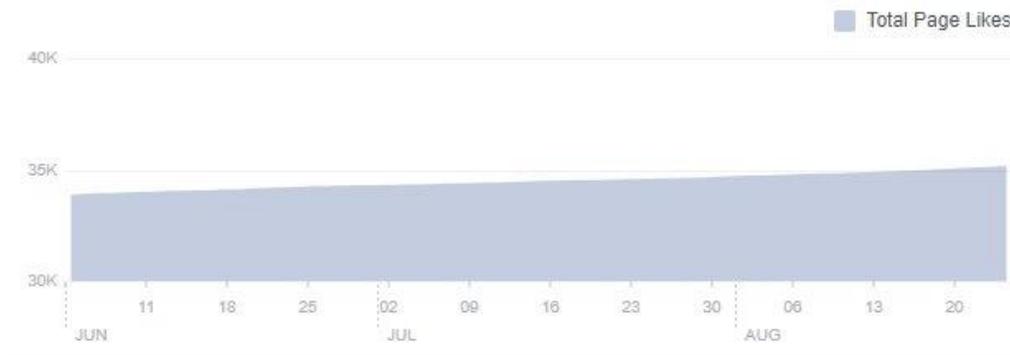
Means of advertising

- E-newsletters
- Press releases
- Facebook ads

The winner was

- Sue Markworth, Farmington, MN

Facebook Growth



Contest start	Contest end	New fans
33,866	35,165	1,299

E-newsletter Growth

E-newsletter Subscribers



Contest start	Contest end	New subscribers
22,301	24,109	1,808

Takeaways

- The Flavors of the Great River Road campaign was very successful in generating more content on the Great River Road website and social media channels about the restaurants, wineries, farmers’ markets and more travelers can find along the Mississippi River. There was also good response to the giveaway overall, as we received about 17% more entries than expected.
- While we did receive dozens of user suggestions (and some very good ones at that), we fell short of our goal in that aspect of the promotion. This could be attributed to several different factors, including multiple barriers to entry (people had to have traveled the Great River Road and been familiar enough with restaurants, etc. to make a recommendation; people may have felt uncomfortable having to write so much, etc.). However, there were some state MPRC representative and individual DMOs that contributed reviews and recommendations—this might be something to encourage as we move forward with the promotion in the future.

Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes

Summary

- The 2018 Drive the Great River Road Sweepstakes was tied into the ongoing promotion of September as Drive the Great River Road Month. The campaign focused on traveling the Great River Road in fall, highlighting hotspots to visit, events and more. We also focused on Interpretive Centers, highlighting them in blogs and social media content.



Run dates

- 9/1-9/30/18

Goals

- To continue the promotion of September as Drive the Great River Road Month
- To publicize the Interpretive Centers as places to visit along the Great River Road
- To increase fan numbers and interaction on the Great River Road social media channels
- Entries: 3,000

Prizes offered

- \$500 prepaid credit card

Total entries

- 3,178

Means of advertising

- E-newsletters
- Press releases
- Facebook ads

The winner was

- Donna Blankenship, Edwardsville, IL

Production

- **Promotion Toolkit:**
 - Wrote and uploaded toolkit which included
 - Promotion overview/goals
 - Social media/PR samples
 - Logo files
 - Website graphic files
- **Tourism and Members Enewsletters** (see newsletters section above)



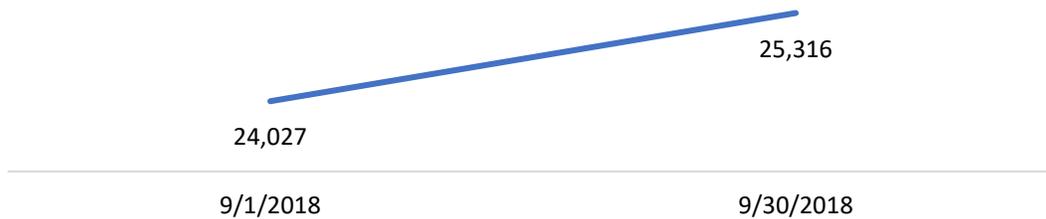
Facebook Growth



Contest start	Contest end	Growth percentage
35,229	36,312	3.07%

E-newsletter Growth

E-newsletter Subscribers



Contest start	Contest end	Growth percentage
24,047	25,316	5.3%

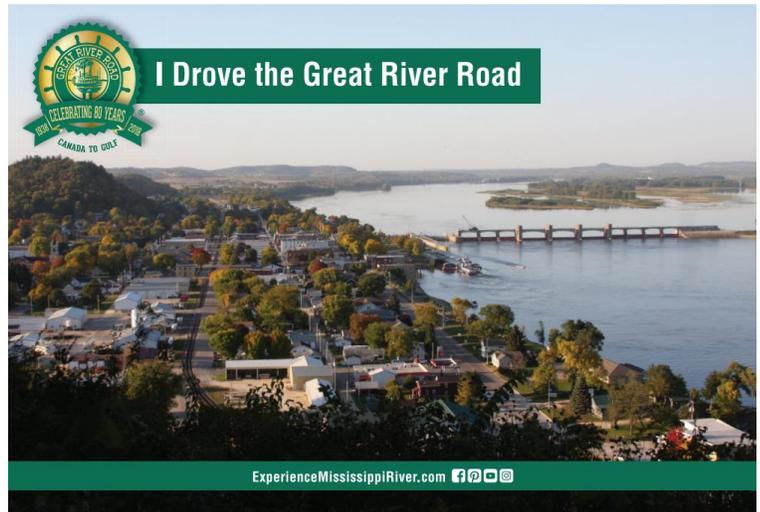
Takeaways

- We were able to meet our goal of 3,000 entries, as we received 3,178 entries in this year’s promotion. That’s more than 300 entries than we received in 2017; in fact, we have averaged more than 2,100 entries annually in this promotion since we launched it in 2013, with the two highest entry totals coming in the last two years. This promotion is popular, and the high entry numbers show that we are getting the word out about Drive the Great River Road Month.
- We tried kind of a different strategy this year with our Facebook advertising—while we used most of the Facebook ad budget to promote entries to the giveaway, we did use some money to promote post engagement on posts about different aspects of Drive the Great River Road Giveaway, including state information. These ads performed well, receiving 66,000+ impressions and a 2.51% click-through rate, which is about 10 times higher than the industry standard (see Facebook section for more details).

80TH ANNIVERSARY/FOLLOW THE PILOT'S WHEEL CAMPAIGN

Keychains/postcards

- Admin
 - Collected/called IC/followed up on keychains/postcards requests from ICs
 - Talled up all requests and prepped post office boxes with proper sized; included print-copies of keychain sign-up sheets)
 - Broke down requests, fulfilled keychains and postcard and shipped orders:
 - 51 locations, 6,400 keychains, 22,500 postcards



Keychains & postcards orders by state

State	Keychains	Postcards
AR	650	2000
IA	950	3250
IL	950	3500
KY	250	500
LA	100	500
MN	950	4250
MO	750	2500
MS	1050	3750
TN	100	500
WI	650	2000

- Design
 - Searched/collected photos for postcard options
 - Wrote copy and designed postcards
 - Finalized and ordered postcards
- Email sign ups submitted:
 - Over 200 emails



WEBSITE

www.experiencemississippiriver.com/

2018-07-01 to 2018-09-30

Total Pageviews	162,958
Total Unique Pageviews	127,051
Total sessions	72,543
Unique users	55,250
New users	83.40%
Returning users	16.60%
Pages viewed per session	2.2
Time spent per page visited	0:55
Avg. session duration	2:04

Top 10 most visited pages

	pageviews	avg. time on page
/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/	20,831	1:31
/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/	12,410	1:52
/river-attractions/	11,613	2:19
homepage	11,304	1:14
/contests/drive-the-grr-month-2018/	6,844	1:27
/itineraries/	6,333	1:10
/interactive-tools/maps/	5,463	2:02
/states/wisconsin/	4,364	1:48
/interactive-tools/fun-facts/	4,163	3:51
/states/minnesota/	3,889	2:00

Top 10 Referring Sites

	sessions	avg. session duration
facebook.com	7,407	1:01
pandbads.wufoo.com (contest)	3,495	0:56
drivethegreatriverroad.com	579	1:40
pinterest.com	306	0:24
thrillist.com	243	1:24
reddit.com	202	0:54
wigrr.com	179	2:15
travelandleisure.com	129	0:58
foxnews.com	116	1:45
traveliowa.com	92	1:57

Top 10 Metro Areas			
	sessions	avg. session duration	
Chicago IL	9,077	1:56	
Minneapolis-St. Paul MN	7,280	2:01	
Madison WI	3,000	2:13	
St. Louis MO	2,770	1:49	
Milwaukee WI	2,523	2:20	
La Crosse-Eau Claire WI	1,602	1:41	
Cedar Rapids-Waterloo-Iowa City & Dubuque IA	1,444	1:58	
Dallas-Ft. Worth TX	1,416	1:57	
Davenport IA-Rock Island-Moline IL	1,390	1:38	
Atlanta GA	1,303	1:31	

Top 5 Channels			
	% sessions	avg. session duration	
Organic Search	57.80%	2:26	
Direct	16.20%	2:11	
Social	11.20%	0:60	
Referral	10.60%	1:40	

User demographics			
	age	% sessions	avg. session duration
	55-64	24.90%	2:16
	65+	19.30%	2:30
	45-54	18.60%	1:57
	25-34	15.50%	1:51
	35-44	15.50%	1:54
	18-24	6.20%	1:38
	gender	% sessions	avg. session duration
	female	56.40%	2:03
	male	43.60%	2:08

Device usage			
	% sessions	avg. session duration	
	Mobile + Tablet	61.20%	
	Desktop	38.80%	
		2:08	2:34

Takeaways

The website saw improvements over the last quarter, from a year ago. Users were up by 3.6%, there was a 2.3% increase in new users. Sessions were up 11.7% and the number of sessions per user was up by 7.8%, which led to a 13.8% increase in pageviews.

83.4% of the sessions were by new users. Organic search was the number one way new users reached the site (63.3%), followed by referrals (15.8%). The top landing pages for new users were: the Great River Road – The Best Drive in America blog post, the homepage and the River Attractions page. The Best Drive in America blog post has been the top page for a few quarters now, perhaps we could add more content on that page or make it more of a hub to keep users exploring the site. The exit% and bounce rate are low on this page, but perhaps scattering more relevant info and links here could lower them even more.

The number one way returning visitors reached the site was also via organic search (42.3% of returning users). The top landing page for returning visitors was the Drive the Great River Road Month promotion (20% of returning visitors). The bounce rate for returning users on the promotion was 78.9%, which is high, but normal when dealing with promotions. Maybe if we included some copy on the thank you page that could pull these users back into the site once they've entered the promotion.

Of the people that visited the site, 44.8% were male and 55.2% were female. The top two age groups that visited the site were the same as last quarter, 55-64 and 45-54.

72% of the site's users were on the Chrome and Safari browsers, which means the majority of our users are getting the best possible browser experience.

Mobile & tablet visits made close to 60% of the sessions this quarter. The session duration on these devices is around 2 minutes, and the bounce rate is right around average.

Facebook was the top referrer this quarter, bringing 5,279 users to the site (a 16.8% increase from last year). The majority of the users it referred to the website were new. The top landing page for Facebook referrals was the Drive the Great River Road Month promotion (~20% of users).

The Drive the Great River Road Month promotion brought in 10,000 pageviews and contributed to nearly 6% of the website's traffic this quarter. On September 10th there was an enewsletter blast that linked to the contest; this newsletter was responsible for the largest spike in traffic throughout the quarter. It had 6,212 opens and 2,451 clicks. The promotion had 6,021 pageviews on this day alone.

The top exit pages on the site were:

- /contests/drive-the-grr-month-2018/
- /interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/
- /interactive-tools/fun-facts/
- /the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/
- homepage

Ongoing web checks & maintenance

- Monthly website checks
 - Tested and updated links as necessary
 - Checked copy and photos, ensured content was current
- Flipped social media and website content to fall on 9/5/2018

MOBILE APP

iOS

- # of downloads in Q3 quarter: 775
- # of downloads to date: 11,903

Android

- # of downloads in Q3 quarter: 791
- # of downloads to date: 5,922

Total (combined)

- # of downloads to date: 17,825

App update

- Made app updates based on issues with map load. We updated MapBox version and reimported KML library
- Resubmitted apps to app stores

ADMIN

Fulfillments

- Over 3,000 requests in 3rd quarter
 - Includes online requests, phone requests
- Mailing materials: print envelopes and letters
- Corresponded to emails, followed up on phone calls/voice messages, research

Financial

- Collected, filed and organized cash and check donations, meeting registration and dues
- Monthly check reconciliation
- Paid related expenses
- Reviewed fund statements and include in reconciliations

TRADEMARK

Trademark application

- Researched application
- Created images (web, sign, logo, keychain, map and letterhead) and uploaded files
- Submitted trademark application
- See attached for receipt

MISCELLANEOUS

Terri McCullough Business Cards

- Wrote copy and designed business cards
- Sent card for review, finalized and ordered cards
- Assembled mail package with keychains and business cards and shipped

**Filing Receipt for Trademark/Service Mark Application for Registration
on the Principal Register
and Next Steps in the Application Process**

Thank you for submitting your trademark application to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). This filing receipt confirms your mark and serial number, describes next steps in the application process, and includes the information submitted in your application. Please read this receipt carefully and keep a copy for your records.

For an overview of important things to know after filing your application, visit our website to read the [After You File](#) page and watch video number 9 "[After You File](#)."

1. Your mark. GREAT RIVER ROAD CANADA TO GULF (stylized and/or with design, MRK24196123154-120032607_-_LOGO-2.jpg)
The literal element of the mark consists of GREAT RIVER ROAD CANADA TO GULF. The color(s) green (pantone 3435 C), white is/are claimed as a feature of the mark. The mark consists of pilot's wheel that frames an image of a paddle wheel stream boat. The logo's color is green (pantone 3435 C) and white and it includes the words GREAT RIVER ROAD CANADA TO GULF.

2. Your serial number. Your application was assigned serial number '88117417'. You must refer to your serial number in all communications about your application.

3. What happens next—legal examination. Your mark will not be registered automatically. In approximately three months, your application will be assigned to a USPTO examining attorney for review. The attorney will determine if your application meets all applicable legal requirements, and if it doesn't you will be notified in an email with a link to the official Office action (official letter from the USPTO). Visit our website for an explanation of [application process timelines](#).

If your mark includes a design element, we will assign it one or more [design search codes](#). We will notify you of these codes within the next few weeks and you can suggest that we add or delete a design search code from your file.

4. Keep your addresses current in USPTO records. We do not extend filing deadlines if you do not receive USPTO mail or email. If your postal address or email address changes, you must update the correspondence or owner's address using the [address forms](#) on our website.

5. Check your application status in our database every three to four months. To be sure that you don't miss an important email from us, and to avoid the possible [abandonment](#) of your application, check your application status and review your documents in our database, [Trademark Status and Document Retrieval \(TSDR\)](#), every three to four months.

6. Warning about private companies offering trademark-related services. Private companies may send you communications that resemble official USPTO communications. These private companies are not associated with the USPTO. All official correspondence will be from the "United States Patent and Trademark Office" in Alexandria, Virginia, and from emails with the domain "uspto.gov." If you are unsure about whether the correspondence is from us, check your records in our database, [TSDR](#). Visit our website for more information on trademark-related [communications that may resemble official USPTO communications](#).

7. Questions? Please visit our [website](#), [email us](#), or call us at 1-800-786-9199 and select option 1.

8. Application data. If you find an error in the data below, visit the [After You File](#) page on our website for information on correcting errors.