



Mississippi River Parkway Commission 2017 Marketing Highlights

FACEBOOK
32,564
fans
5,358
fans gained
20%
increase in fans
203
posts
237,779
ad impressions



The Great River Road
@GreatRiverRoad

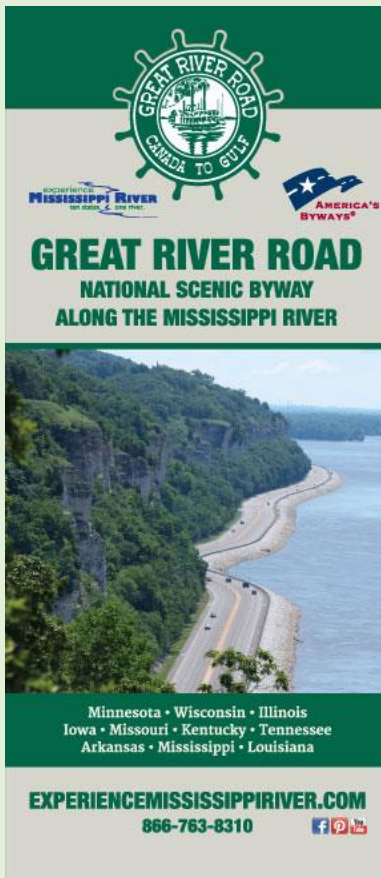
Home
Posts
Photos



Liked Following Recommend ...

Send Message

GREAT RIVER ROAD TRAVEL MAP



collected
\$7,313.22
in map donations
8,000+
map fulfillments



DRIVE THE GRR APP
13,293
total apps downloaded
over 8,000
downloads
160% increase

PROMOTIONS
5,969
total entries
46%
increase



WEB STATS
196,585 visits
162,345 unique users
435,125 pageviews

NYTIMES ARTICLE
3million+
unique daily viewers
300
facebook
engagements

"Along the Mississippi"
appeared on the front page of
NYTimes.com 10/13/17

Mentioned many stops along
Great River Road and 10-state
map



www.nytimes.com/2017/10/13/travel/along-the-mississippi.html



4TH QUARTER MARKETING REPORT

October-December, 2017

MEETINGS

Annual Meeting September 19-21

- Sent invoices and receipts via email and mail
- Collected payment

Conference calls

- 11/16 Marketing meeting
- 11/20 Board sub-committee meeting
- 12/8 Board meeting
- 12/8 Call with AR MRPC - Kim Re: 2018 Annual Meeting
- 12/14 Marketing meeting

ADMIN

Fulfillments

- Near 1,500 requests in 4th quarter
 - Totaling near 8,000 maps sent in 2017. Includes online requests, phone requests.
- Mailing materials: print envelopes and letters
- Corresponded to emails, followed up phone calls/voice messages, research

Financial

- Collect, file and organize cash and check donations, meeting registration and dues
- Monthly check reconciliation
- Pay related expenses
- Review fund statements and include in reconciliations

MISCELLANEOUS

State Benefit Document

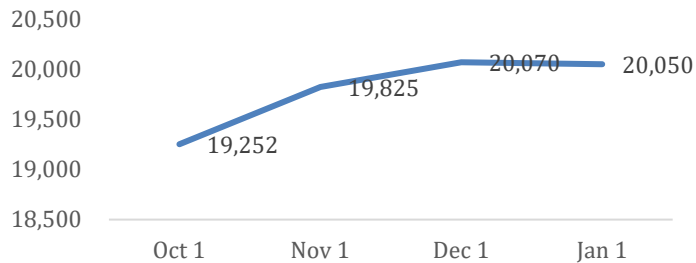
- Created draft document
- 11/20 – teleconference with board sub-committee
- Updated doc based on meeting
- Included doc in December Board meeting

Letter of Support

- Drafted letter per board's request
- Distributed letter of support for Bellevue, Iowa – Young Family Museum

E-NEWSLETTERS

Subscribers



Tourism Results

- Average open rate: 25% (industry average: 17.3%)
- Average click rate: 4% (industry average: 2.3%)

Tourism E-newsletters [12/8/17]

- Subject line: Discover the story of the Great River Road
- Wrote article about: The history, music, wildlife and geology along the GRR
- Promoted: MRPC endowment
- Open rate: 25%
- Click rate: 4%

Members Results

- Average open rate: 31%
- Average click rate: 9.5%

Members E-newsletters

- 10/13 – Annual meeting wrap up, meeting minutes, IC signage, updates

Explore the network of Interpretive Centers
[View this email in your browser](#)
[Forward to a Friend](#)

Uncover America's story

The [Great River Road National Scenic Byway](#) is more than an iconic driving destination. It's a route that will help you explore America's rich story. The pilot's wheel signs along the road will guide you along this journey, leading you to a network of [Interpretive Centers](#), where you'll learn about the important people and places along the Mississippi River. As you plan your next trip on the Great River Road, make plans to visit some of these centers.

[Learn more](#)

Sustain the Legacy of the Great River Road

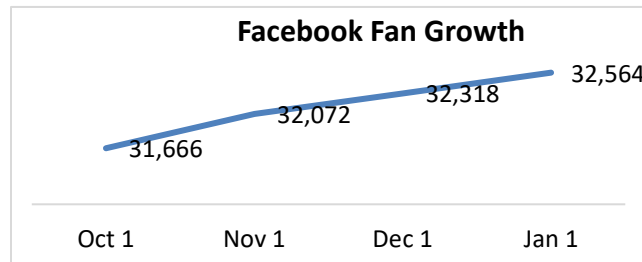
As you consider your charitable gifts this holiday season, please consider a gift to the MRPC Endowment Fund, an endowment that helps protect, preserve and enhance the Great River Road.

[Learn more](#)

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FACEBOOK



Facebook fans	New Facebook fans	Facebook updates
32,564	898	45

Top posts

- 12/13/2017– [“Here’s an interesting story about the Cassville Ferry...” w/link to Quad City Times article]
 - Drove traffic to qctimes.com
 - Included photo of Cassville Ferry
 - 26,828 people reached, 937 reactions, 98 comments, 209 shares, 1,684 post clicks
 - 26,828 people reached organically
- 10/26/2017– [“Did you know there are more than two dozen locks and dams on the Upper Mississippi River between St. Paul and St. Louis?” w/photo and link]
 - Drove traffic to experiencemississippiriver.com
 - Included photo of lock and dam
 - 7,986 people reached, 235 reactions, 21 comments, 44 shares, 421 post clicks
 - 7,986 people reached organically
- 10/12/2017– [“Looking for a fall drive in the Midwest? The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel suggests a drip along the Wisconsin Great River Road to catch the fall colors” w/link to article]
 - Drove traffic to jsonline.com
 - 9,423 people reached, 190 reactions, 6 comments, 53 shares, 355 post clicks
 - 9,423 people reached organically
- 11/21/2017– [“Interpretive Center Tuesday: Cahokia Mounds World Heritage Site” w/link]
 - Drove traffic to cahokiamounds.org
 - 6,043 people reached, 169 reactions, 15 comments, 38 shares, 296 post clicks
 - 6,043 people reached organically
- 10/15/2017– [“Where’s your favorite spot to see fall color on the northern section of the Great River Road?” w/link]
 - Drove traffic to experiencemississippiriver.com
 - 7,430 people reached, 167 reactions, 7 comments, 32 shares, 311 post clicks
 - 7,430 people reached organically

Advertising

Page likes

- Drove traffic to Great River Road Facebook page
- 20,593 impressions
- 1,339 clicks
- 6.50% click-through rate
- Added 823 fans

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

- 68% women (22% ages 55-64), 31% men (9% of which are ages 55-64)
- Top engaged cities (in order): St. Louis, Chicago, Dubuque, Alton (IL), Davenport (IA)

Takeaways

- Winter is usually a slower time for engagement and interaction with the Great River Road account, but we did see some successful posts (the Cassville Ferry post in particular) and were still able to grow our fanbase by nearly 900 people to top 13,000 fans by the end of 2017.
- Our page likes ad continues to perform exceptionally well, with our click-through rate for the fourth quarter sitting at 6.50%, more than six times the average performance for the travel & hospitality industry. Moving into 2018, we may look at other types of ads, including promoted posts and retargeted advertising aimed at people who have visited the Great River Road website.



PINTEREST

Summary

- Added pins to state boards
- Highlighted interpretive centers across all Mississippi River states

PR/PUBLICITY

- Wrote/distributed release announcing winner of Drive the Great River Road Month Sweepstakes
- Drafted and distributed releases on:
 - Newly approved interpretive centers
 - Stewardship award recipients
 - State Pilot's Award
- On Air Radio Interviews with Greg:
 - 10/17
 - 11/17
 - 12/19
- Began communication with Lonely Planet Magazine regarding a 2018 spring trip on the GRR and feature story.

WEBSITE POSTS

- October:
 - Discover Mississippi's blues country
 - Fall color hotspots
 - See the Great River Road in the New York Times!
- November: Four reasons to be thankful about the Great River Road
- December: Uncover America's story

WEBSITE

www.experiencemississippiriver.com

4Q 2017-10-01 to 2017-12-31

Total sessions	35,633
Unique users	30,106
New users	82.40%
Returning users	17.60%
Pages viewed per session	2.2
Time spent per page visited	0:56
Avg. session duration	2:04

Top 10 most visited pages

	pageviews	avg. time on page
/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/	9,115	1:26
homepage	8,317	1:15
/river-attractions/	5,696	2:31
/interactive-tools/fun-facts/	5,614	4:11
/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/	5,412	1:56
/itineraries/	3,002	1:18
/interactive-tools/maps/	2,082	1:57
/app/	1,915	3:36
/states/minnesota/	1,827	2:07
/states/wisconsin/	1,754	1:57

Top 10 Referring Sites

	sessions	avg. session duration
facebook	1,102	1:22
drivethegreatriverroad.com	428	1:10
duckduckgo.com	146	2:23
msn.com	138	1:47
thrillist.com	100	1:02
justfreestuff.com	71	1:45
mommysavesbig.com	67	0:50
thebenjaminschool.myschoolapp.com	60	5:04
mrpcmembers.com	57	1:04
kidrex.org	53	1:02

Top 10 Metro Areas		sessions	avg. session duration
	Chicago IL	3,075	2:12
	Minneapolis-St. Paul MN	2,709	2:03
	St. Louis MO	1,223	1:57
	New York NY	983	1:35
	Madison WI	926	2:52
	Dallas-Ft. Worth TX	788	1:39
	Los Angeles CA	702	1:46
	Milwaukee WI	685	2:23
	Atlanta GA	638	1:20
	Memphis TN	567	1:52
Top 5 Channels		% sessions	avg. session duration
	Organic Search	70%	2:04
	Direct	16.40%	2:19
	Referral	7.70%	1:50
	Social	3.40%	1:04
	Email	2.60%	2:26
User demographics			
	age	% sessions	avg. session duration
	55-64	22.60%	2:21
	65+	20.50%	2:53
	45-54	16.50%	1:57
	25-34	16.20%	1:44
	35-44	15.70%	1:59
	18-24	8.50%	1:37
	gender	% sessions	avg. session duration
	female	51.60%	2:07
	male	48.40%	2:09
Device usage			
		% sessions	avg. session duration
	Mobile + Tablet	48.60%	2:02
	Desktop	51.40%	2:16
	Total Pageviews	78,688	
	Total Unique Pageviews	62,089	

Takeaways

Users and sessions were down slightly this quarter, both taking around a 5% drop. Pages per session, average session duration and the bounce rate all improved by about 2%.

82.4% of the sessions were by new users. The number one way new users reached the site was through Google (65%). The top search terms were: **great river road, Mississippi river, Mississippi river facts and the great river road**. The top landing page for new visitors was the blog post: [/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/](#) (16.9%) followed by the homepage (16.3%)

The number one way returning visitors reached the site was also via organic search. The top landing page for returning visitors was the blog post: [/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/](#)

Of the people that visited the site, it was about a 50/50 split between male and female. The top two age groups that visited the site were 55-64 and 65+.

Almost 77% of the site's sessions were done using the Chrome and Safari browsers. This is good news and means that the majority of users are getting the optimal web experience out of the site.

While facebook saw a slight decrease in referrals (-37%), it was still the top referrer this quarter and brought in 1,166 sessions. The top landing page for Facebook referrals was: [/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/](#).

The site saw spikes in traffic on October 13th, October 15th and December 8th. **December 8th was the result of blasting the newsletter**, which had close to 5,000 opens and 804 clicks. Between October 13th and 15th organic traffic to the site boosted by nearly 50%, it appears to be the result of a New York Times article and Journal Sentinal article that were published around this time. It was accompanied by a surge in map requests.

The top exit pages on the site were:

- [/interactive-tools/fun-facts/](#)
- [/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/](#)
- homepage
- [/river-attractions/](#)
- [/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/](#)

Many of these pages were also the top landing pages via organic search. This could mean that users are finding the content they are looking for on these pages and then leaving the site. But it could be useful to encourage more exploration beyond these pages.

Mobile & tablet visits made up 48.6% of the sessions this quarter.

Ongoing web checks & maintenance

- Monthly website checks
 - Tested and updated links as necessary
 - Checked copy and photos, ensured content was current
 - Removed expired packages
- Flipped social media and website content to winter on 11/8/2017

NATGEO Scrap

- Performed website scrap
- Added files to the cloud
- Reviewed
- Continued scrapping to get all fields

MOBILE APP

Total downloads to date: 13,293

- iOS
 - # of downloads in Q4 quarter: 690
 - # of downloads to date: 9,330
- Android
 - # of downloads in Q3 quarter: 370
 - # of downloads to date: 3,963

Total downloads to date: 13,293