



## 2<sup>ND</sup> QUARTER MARKETING SUMMARY

April-June 2018

## MEETINGS

### Semi-Annual Meeting April 19-21

- Meeting planning
  - Finalized transportation
  - Finalized agenda and speakers
  - Finalized meals, beverages and snacks
  - Finalized hotel-related needs
  - Communicated with attendees prior to meeting
  - Created, copied and distributed attendee packets, nametags and supporting onsite materials
  - Created powerpoint slides and assisted speakers
  - Drove to/from with meeting materials
- Registration
  - Updated online registration form to regular pricing
  - Collected registration forms and entered into database
  - Sent invoices/receipts
- Enewsletters
  - Collected meeting minutes, wrote wrap-up newsletter

### Annual Meeting October 23-25

- Finalized hotel registration

## ADMIN

### Fulfillments

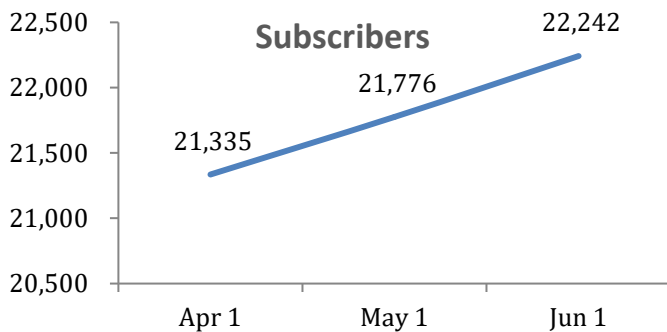
- Nearly 2,000 requests in 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter
  - Includes online requests, phone requests
- Mailing materials: print envelopes and letters
- Corresponded to emails, followed up on phone calls/voice messages, research

### Financial

- Collected, filed and organized cash and check donations, meeting registration and dues
- Monthly check reconciliation
- Paid related expenses

- Review fund statements and include in reconciliations

## E-NEWSLETTERS



### June 4<sup>th</sup> Tourism E-newsletter

- Open rate: 25% (industry average: 17.3%)
- Click-through rate: 10% (industry average: 2.3%)
- Subject line: Discover the flavors of America along the Mississippi River
- Promoted: The Flavors of the GRR Giveaway

### Members E-newsletters

- **May 28<sup>th</sup>** Semi-Annual Enewsletter – meeting wrap-up, Flavors promotion, nomination deadlines, marketing updates, annual meeting date and location, 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Year of events, GRR in the news, National Park Service project application
- **June 1<sup>st</sup>** Flavors of the Great River Road – promotion page, toolkit, encourage IC to help participate
- **June 4<sup>th</sup>** Promotion enewsletter – same as tourism enewsletter
- **June 28<sup>th</sup>** Annual Meeting enewsletter – hotel info and rate, Flavors promotion update, 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary/Follow the Pilot’s Wheel campaign details, deadlines, Drive the Great River Road toolkit, Lonely Planet, 10-State CMP, GRR in the news

### Interpretive Centers E-newsletters

- **May 18<sup>th</sup>** Flavors of the Great River Road – promotion page, toolkit, link to order cards, instructions on how to display cards
- **June 1<sup>st</sup>** Flavors of the Great River Road – promotion info and reminder

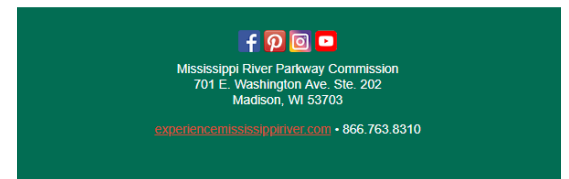


### Enter to win \$500 for a trip along the Great River Road

Discover the flavors of the Mississippi River along the Great River Road! From northern Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico, explore the rich culinary heritage of the heart of America.

Now, we're giving you a chance to win \$500 for a foodie road trip along the Great River Road. Plus, we'll be sharing some of our fans' favorite Great River Road flavors on our website all summer long!

**Enter now!**



## FACEBOOK



Facebook fans	New Facebook fans	Facebook updates
34,310	1,152	62

### Top posts

- 4/18/2018– [“There’s no better time to travel the Great River Road—we’re celebrating our 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year” w/link to blog]
  - Drove traffic to [experiencemississippiriver.com](http://experiencemississippiriver.com)
  - 4,434 people reached, 168 reactions, 17 comments, 26 shares, 199 post clicks
  - 4,434 people reached organically
- 5/14/2018– [“Did you know you can order a FREE 10-state Great River Road map (as well as other state-specific information) on our website?” w/link to website]
  - Drove traffic to [experiencemississippiriver.com](http://experiencemississippiriver.com)
  - 8,936 people reached, 142 reactions, 7 comments, 38 shares, 463 post clicks
  - 5,309 people reached organically; 3,745 reached via paid ad
- 5/28/2018– [“Happy Memorial Day! If you’re planning a summer road trip, might we suggest the Great River Road? Visit our website to order a map, download our app and find lots of other useful information for your trip” w/link to website]
  - Drove traffic to [experiencemississippiriver.com](http://experiencemississippiriver.com)
  - 5,692 people reached, 208 reactions, 9 comments, 25 shares, 311 post clicks
  - 5,692 people reached organically
- 6/18/2018– [“From wild rice to walleye, you’ll find delicious food, historic cultural traditions and much more on the northern section of the Great River Road” w/link to blog]
  - Drove traffic to [experiencemississippiriver.com](http://experiencemississippiriver.com)
  - 15,684 people reached, 72 reactions, 1 comment, 8 shares, 309 post clicks
  - 15,684 people reached organically
- 6/21/2018– [“Happy first day of summer! If you’re planning a summer road trip along the Great River Road, we’ve got some great resources for you, including our 10-state map” w/link to website]
  - Drove traffic to website
  - 4,374 people reached, 119 reactions, 4 comments, 16 shares, 261 post clicks
  - 4,374 people reached organically

## Advertising

### Page likes 2018

- Page likes campaign; runs continuously throughout year
- 19,507 impressions
- 724 clicks
- 3.71% click-through rate
- Added 606 fans

### Post engagement 2018

- Post engagement on various Facebook posts; runs continuously throughout year
- 30,042 impressions
- 1,404 clicks
- 4.67% click-through rate
- Received 1,113 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 (stats through 6/30/18)
- 34,956 impressions
- 1,296 clicks
- 3.71% click-through rate


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

- 68% women (21% ages 55-64), 32% men (9% of which are ages 55-64)
- Top engaged cities (in order): St. Louis, Chicago, Dubuque IA, Alton IL, Davenport IA


## Takeaways

- Fans and people who visited our page in Q2 of 2018 seemed very interested in spring/summer travel, as three of our top posts from the quarter directed people toward Great River Road resources like our 10-state travel map or the Drive the Great River Road app. Other popular content included links to our Flavors of the Great River Road blogs and information about the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great River Road.
- Facebook ads also continued to perform well in the second quarter, whether our goal was page likes, post engagement or website clicks. The click-through rates for our Facebook ads were all 3.71% or higher (by comparison, the average for the tourism industry is 0.263%), so that shows that people are interested in the content we're sharing with them.


**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  
35,227 people like this


 **The Great River Road**  
Sponsored · 🌐

Need some travel inspiration?




experiencemississippiriver.com  
18 reasons to travel the Great River Road in 2018 - Experience Mississippi River

👍❤️ 159    12 Comments    55 Shares

 **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.com  
Flavors of the Great River Road [LEARN MORE](#)

👍❤️👤 Ben Jones and 177 others  
14 Comments    47 Shares

## INSTAGRAM

- Launched account on 5/21/18
- Posted general Great River Road travel info, info about Flavors of the Great River Road promotion (which launched in June)
- 112 followers as of 6/30/18

## PINTEREST

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

## WEBSITE POSTS

Researched and wrote blog articles that appeared on [experiencemississippi.com](http://experiencemississippi.com) homepage

- April: Exploring the Magnolia State (4/25)
- May: Traveling the Great River Road in Minnesota (5/24)
- June:
  - 6/4: Sample the flavors of the Great River Road
  - 6/11: Flavors of the Great River Road: Wisconsin
  - 6/18: Experience the flavors of Minnesota's Great River Road
  - 6/26: Flavors of the Great River Road: Tennessee

## PR/PUBLICITY

- On-air radio interviews with Greg Taylor, Program Director – Host of AM 1230 KWNO, Winona, MN:
  - 4/18: Spring birding along the GRR
  - 5/22: Flavors of the Great River Road
  - 6/14: Ice cream stops along the Great River Road
- Lonely Planet series of communications
  - Corresponded with editor to set up article/photo shoot in May

## 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

- 1,860 (as of 6/30/18)

#### Total "share your favorite GRR flavors" entries

- 56 (as of 6/30/18)

A full promotion report will appear in the 2018 Q3 report.

#### Production

- **Promotion Toolkit:**
  - Wrote and uploaded toolkit which included
    - Promotion overview/goals
    - Social media/PR samples
    - Logo files
    - Website graphic files

- **Business/promotion cards**

- Created business card request form
- Called each interpretive center, left voicemails, returned messages to confirm participation
- Collected quantities from ICs
- Created business cards and placed near 60 orders for each participating ICs
- Sent instruction letters how to display cards



- **State blogs/itineraries**

- Created social media editorial calendar highlighting each state
- Wrote featured state blogs and post weekly
- See blog section above

- **Share Your Favorite**

- Created share page & form
  - Pull instagram hashtag feed
  - Coded and stylized posts with categories, state, photos and description
- Created hashtag
- Review submissions/approve to go live
  - Over 50 approved submissions

- **Enewsletters** (see newsletters section above)

- Interpretive Centers (x2)
- Tourism
- Members





**Share your favorite flavors of the Great River Road**

We're looking for your favorite flavor along the Great River Road—it can be a recipe, a photo from a winery along the Mississippi River, your favorite dining spot or anything else. Submit your entry below and we'll share some of our favorite flavors [here!](#)

Name (as it will appear on your entry) \*

E-mail address \*

Share your favorite flavor of the Great River Road—a fantastic restaurant, your favorite regional recipe, the best winery—it's up to you!

Title

Description

Category

What state is your favorite flavor from?

Upload a photo

By submitting, I agree to the [Photo Release](#) and acknowledge that the Mississippi River Parkway Commission may contact me via e-mail.

**Submit**

You can also share your flavors on Instagram—just use the hashtag **#GRRFlavors** and be sure to tag us **@greatriverroad!** Discover more flavors of the Great River Road [here.](#)

**Plan your Route**  
Start by picking a state

**Drive the GREAT RIVER ROAD APP**  
DOWNLOAD NOW!

**SHOP THE GREAT RIVER ROAD**

**Sign up for the e-newsletter**

Email Address

**Subscribe**

**The Great River Road**  
June 12 at 2:43pm

Savor the flavors of the Dairy State. (They've got beer, too!)

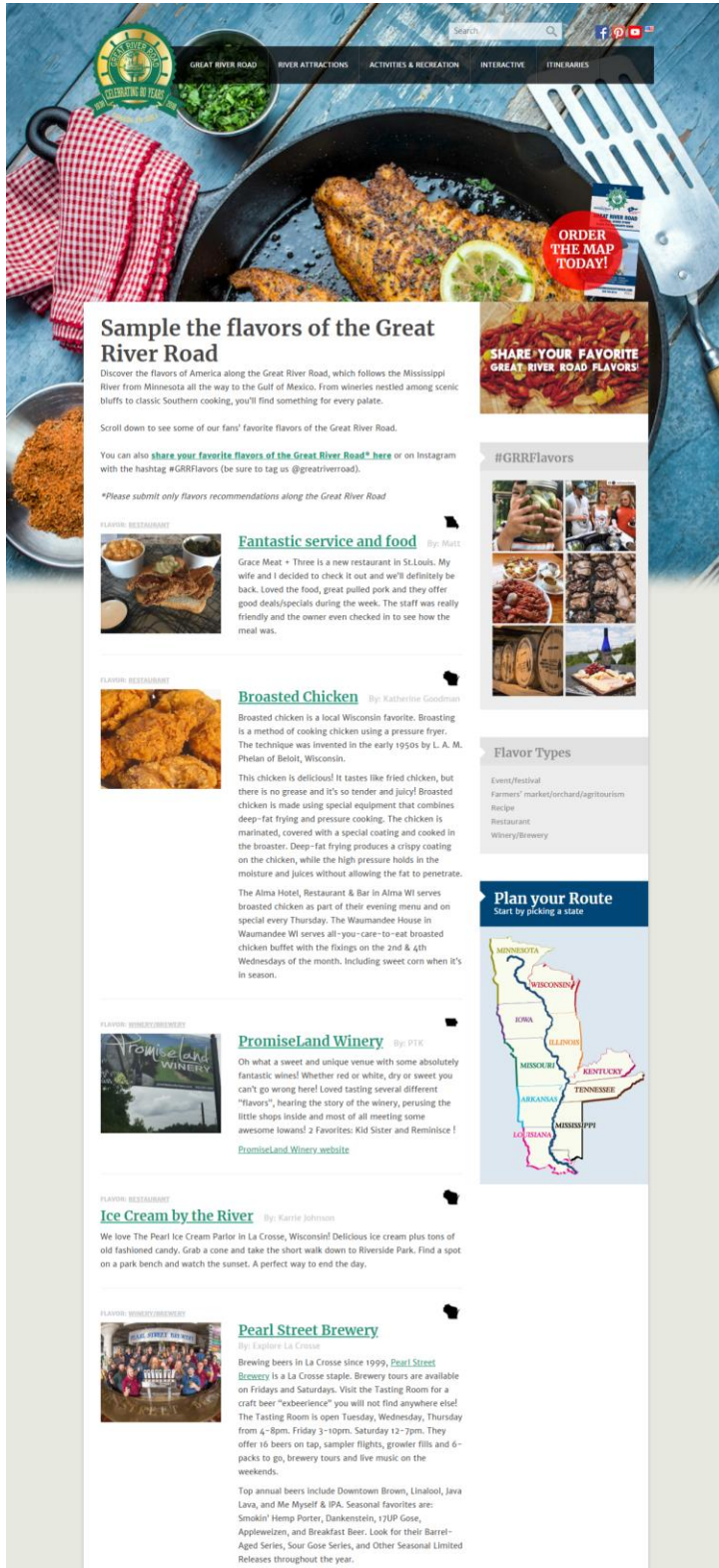
EXPERIENCMISSISSIPPIRIVER.COM

**Flavors of the Great River Road: Wisconsin - Experience Mississippi River**

Like Comment Share

**SHARE YOUR FAVORITE GREAT RIVER ROAD FLAVORS!**

CELEBRATING 80 YEARS  
1938 - 2018  
MISSISSIPPI RIVER PARKWAY COMMISSION



Visit <https://experiencemississippiriver.com/flavors/> to see all the flavors submitted.

## 80<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY/FOLLOW THE PILOT'S WHEEL CAMPAIGN

### **Toolkit included:**

- Campaign outline/instructions
- Enewsletter sign-up sheet (for keychain distribution)
- Logo files
- Style guide
- Letterhead
- Talking Points
- Fun Facts

### **Keychains/postcards/sign-up sheet**

- Created request from
- Created/Ordered keychains and postcards
- Created sign-up sheet (for keychain distribution) and uploaded to Resources page

## DRIVE THE GREAT RIVER ROAD CAMPAIGN

- Promotion will run throughout September
- Updated promotional toolkit is available on Forms & Resources page of [mrpcmembers.com](http://mrpcmembers.com)

## WEBSITE

### www.experiencemississippiriver.com

2018-04-01 to 2018-06-30

Total Pageviews	126,309
Total Unique Pageviews	95,586
Total sessions	52,361
Unique users	42,789
New users	79.50%
Returning users	20.50%
Pages viewed per session	2.4
Time spent per page visited	0:60
Avg. session duration	2:24

#### Top 10 most visited pages

	pageviews	avg. time on page
/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/	14,405	1:33
homepage	10,485	1:17
/river-attractions/	9,528	2:35
/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/	7,484	1:59
/flavors/enter/	6,717	0:58
/itineraries/	4,916	1:08
/interactive-tools/maps/	4,488	2:01
/interactive-tools/fun-facts/	4,073	3:33
/app/	3,235	3:46
/states/wisconsin/	2,816	1:43

#### Top 10 Referring Sites

	sessions	avg. session duration
facebook.com	3,610	1:37
drivethegreatriverroad.com	436	1:43
pinterest.com	295	0:26
thrillist.com	232	2:27
duckduckgo.com	181	2:15
foxnews.com	158	1:07
justfreestuff.com	122	1:38
doityourselfrv.com	104	3:41
kiddle.co	101	1:25
www-thrillist-com.cdn.ampproject.org	94	1:44

<b>Top 10 Metro Areas</b>		
	sessions	avg. session duration
Chicago IL	5,129	2:13
Minneapolis-St. Paul MN	4,684	2:18
Madison WI	1,907	3:50
St. Louis MO	1,711	1:56
Milwaukee WI	1,426	2:43
Atlanta GA	1,076	2:16
La Crosse-Eau Claire WI	1,064	2:39
New York NY	1,029	1:54
Dallas-Ft. Worth TX	996	1:50
New Orleans LA	842	2:01

<b>Top 5 Channels</b>		
	% sessions	avg. session duration
Organic Search	62.50%	2:30
Direct	18.20%	2:25
Social	7.60%	1:31
Referral	6.80%	2:26
Email	4.90%	2:14

<b>User demographics</b>			
	age	% sessions	avg. session duration
	55-64	24.20%	2:48
	45-54	18.20%	2:25
	65+	17.40%	2:55
	25-34	17%	2:42
	35-44	16.20%	2:07
	18-24	7%	1:45
	gender	% sessions	avg. session duration
	female	52.50%	2:22
	male	47.50%	2:42

<b>Device usage</b>		
	% sessions	avg. session duration
Mobile + Tablet	55.20%	2:14
Desktop	44.80%	2:56

## Takeaways

Pageviews increased by 9.42% compared to last year. There was a spike on June 4<sup>th</sup> where 5,998 pageviews generated mainly through the Flavors of the Great River Road Giveaway enewsletter blast. Pages per session and average session duration also improved by about 10%.

87% of the sessions were by new users. Organic search was once again the main source of new traffic this quarter and Google was the top search engine (63.9% of organic users). The top landing pages for new users were: the Great River Road – The Best Drive in America blog post, the homepage and the Fun Facts page.

The number one way returning visitors reached the site was also via organic search (58.4% of returning users). 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, 47.8% were male and 52.2% were female. The top two age groups that visited the site were 55-64 and 45-54.

74% of the site's users were on the Chrome and Safari browsers.

Mobile & tablet visits made close to 55% of the sessions this quarter. The session duration on these devices is around 2 minutes, which indicates users are having an okay mobile experience.

Facebook referrals increased by 439% from last year and it was still the top referrer this quarter, bringing in 2,820 users. The top landing page for Facebook referrals was: [/interactive-tools/order-a-free-great-river-road-10-state-map/](#).

The top exit pages on the site were:

- [/the-great-river-road-the-best-drive-in-america/](#)
- [/river-attractions/](#)
- homepage
- [/interactive-tools/fun-facts](#)
- [/interactive-tools/maps](#)

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.

The Flavors of the Great River Road Giveaway is has received a lot of traffic, 10,150 pageviews overall. 100% of the users that landed on the contest landing page were new to the site. Almost 2,000 visitors have entered the promo so far.

## **MRPCmembers.com**

- CMP webpage
  - Create resource page for CMP materials only
    - Added to menu tab under mrpcmembers.com
    - Uploaded existing materials, forms, documents, etc.
- Toolkits (Flavors of the GRR, 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary/Follow the Pilot's Wheel, Drive the GRR)
- Upload forms, meeting minutes, agendas, meeting info and materials

## **experiencemississippiriver.com**

- Flipped site to spring
- Updated MRC logos
- Blogs (wrote/post monthly and shared on social media; see social media section for details)

## **MOBILE APP**

Total downloads to date: 16,259

- iOS
  - # of downloads in Q2 quarter: 1,067
  - # of downloads to date: 11,128
- Android
  - # of downloads in Q2 quarter: 781
  - # of downloads to date: 5,131

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

- Sponsorship PPT



## MRCC

- **Year of Events**
  - Created submission form, events page and moderator access
    - Coded for ability to auto-populate page once approved from moderators
  - Created moderator user manual
    - Step-by-step instructions how to approve content for event to go live

## MRC

- **California Trade Mission** April 17-18 Torrance, CA
  - Lyn attended
  - Created webpage and registration form
  - Materials included:
    - PPT (drafted, reviewed and sent for translation)
    - Profile Sheets for each state and organization (drafted, reviewed and sent for translation)
    - Podium signs, table tents, welcome foam core board
  - Profile Sheets
- **IPW** May 19-23 Denver, CO
  - Lyn hosted IPW session with Connect Worldwide May 19<sup>th</sup> for representatives from partner destinations to hold a presentation on reaching the Japanese travel market and partnership opportunities
  - Materials included:
    - Evite and correspondence
    - Stakeholder Handout
    - Profile Sheets updated with map
    - PPT (drafted, reviewed and sent for translation)
    - Online registration form
- **Japanese Enewsletter**
  - Redesigned to fit new brand
  - Wrote, drafted and submitted June enewsletter
- **Wisconsin Report**
  - Drafted May 2017-June 2018 report for Wisconsin on ROI from FAM tours, travel trade and more