



Destination Marketing
Accreditation Program

Domains, Standards & Essential Elements:

Revised January 2014

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1.0 GOVERNANCE	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
1.1 The DMO or its parent organization has articles of incorporation (or similar legal documentation) filed with its government jurisdiction.	Copy of current articles of incorporation or governing body approved document.
1.2 The DMO or its parent organization has bylaws.	Current bylaws or similar legal documentation approved by DMO's governing body (with approval date).
1.3 The DMO publishes an approved Vision and Mission statement.	Vision and mission statement.
1.4 The DMO's governing body or its parent organization shall approve a budget on an annual basis.	A copy of the portion of the minutes indicating approval of the most recent budget.
1.5 The DMO's governing body or the designated authority in a parent organization shall conduct an annual evaluation of the chief executive (CE) or executive director (ED) of the DMO.	Blank template or description of the evaluation process signed by the board chair or the designated authority.
1.6 The DMO shall follow the recommended DMAP organizational Code of Ethics.	Sign off in Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) application.
1.7 The DMO shall develop and follow conflict-of-interest policy(ies) in governance and administration.	Copy of approved policy(ies).
1.8 The DMO shall develop and maintain a current strategic plan.	Copy of current strategic plan to include a <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ vision statement ▪ formal mission statement ▪ long term strategies, goals and objectives for multiple years. ▪ provide evidence the governing body of the DMO has adopted and monitors the strategic plan. ▪ evidence that the strategic plan is connected to operational outcomes. (e.g. budget, marketing plan, sales plan, performance measures).
1.9 The DMO's governing body or its parent organization receives and reviews periodic financial reports	Copy of agenda and portion of board minutes indicating review of financial reports

	including income and expense statements and a balance sheet.	
1.10	The DMO employs or contracts with a chief executive (CE) or executive director (ED) with management experience/credentials and/or a background in destination marketing/management.	Copy of CV or resume of CE or ED, credentials are optional
1.11	The DMO shall utilize a formal (documented) process for the orientation of new governing body members.	Outline and table of contents for orientation process
1.12	The DMO shall follow an approved Board/governance policy manual.	Copy of approved policy manual
1.13	The DMO's governing body or its parent organization shall conduct a formal (documented) and periodic self-evaluation process. This process shall include a review of individual and collective governing body performances.	Evidence the self-evaluation was accomplished or a template of the process.
1.14	The DMO shall utilize a formal (documented) process for the orientation of new committee chairs.	Copy of orientation manual and/or table of contents.

2.0 FINANCE		
	Standard	Essential Element(s)
2.1	The DMO has established and follows policies and procedures for the control of the financial operation of the organization.	Copy of the financial policies and procedures.
2.2	A formal annual audit is conducted by an independent auditor (a certified public accountant - CPA or a review of financial documents by a CPA may also qualify).	Most recent audit and management letter (if available) and DMO's response to management letter.
2.3	The DMO maintains insurance coverage to cover the potential estimated liabilities of its operations and services.	Cover sheet from the insurance company summarizing all policies and amounts of coverage
2.4	The DMO's annual budget is linked to the goals of the strategic plan as	Explanation of this process or other written evidence of compliance. Highlight the sections

approved by the DMO's governing body or its parent organization.	of the budget that reflect strategic plan objectives.
2.5 The DMO has appropriate avenues to report and document the misuse of funds to the proper level of management, volunteer leadership or outside sources.	Policy and/or procedure
2.6 The DMO adopts and utilizes the DMAI Uniform System of Accounting and Uniform Chart of Accounts.	Applicant Chart of Accounts incorporating DMAI Uniform System of Accounting and related accounts.
2.7 The DMO maintains a reserve/contingency fund.	Reserve/contingency fund policy and statement of fund balance.
2.8 The DMO develops and follows a capital equipment replacement policy.	Policy and/or plan.

3.0 HUMAN RESOURCES	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
3.1 The DMO complies with international/national, state/provincial and local/municipal government labor and employment laws.	Statement from applicant verifying compliance.
3.2 The DMO conducts periodic formal performance reviews of all regular staff.	Performance review policy or procedure.
3.3 The DMO offers a specified program of benefits for employees and these benefits are reviewed by management on a periodic basis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ List of current employees' benefits, policies and plans. ▪ A description of process utilized to periodically review and update the employee benefits. ▪ A description of the frequency of the benefit review.
3.4 The DMO maintains a human resources (personnel) manual	Copy of table of contents page (chapter headings) from current human resources (personnel) manual.
3.5 The DMO maintains current job descriptions for all paid positions.	Samples of job descriptions representing management and support staff positions (regular and part-time) and a statement verifying the existence of current job descriptions for all paid positions.

3.6 The DMO conducts an orientation program for all new employees.	Copy of orientation materials, a table of contents or other documentation of the process and tools used.
3.7 The DMO has: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ appropriate avenues for employees to report, and document prohibited activities; ▪ The DMO also has a policy that prohibits retaliation against any employee who files a complaint of such or participation in any investigation. 	Provide a copy of the policy and procedure incorporating these two concepts
3.8 One (1) or more of the management staff has active (current) credentials in DMO management, association management, closely related disciplines and/or their particular profession.	List of management staff with current credentials and identification of these credentials.
3.9 The DMO provides formal training and professional development for regular staff.	Insert a description of the types of training and professional development opportunities provided.
3.10 The DMO conducts or participates in periodic compensation studies to determine the competitiveness of salaries.	Description of the process used to determine competitiveness of salaries.
3.11 The DMO maintains employee relations and communications through regular department/staff meetings, employee recognition and activities.	Description of process/policy.

4.0 TECHNOLOGY	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
4.1 The DMO follows an information technology/network security policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Copy of policy and description of secure transactions offered ▪ Copy of current internet usage policy ▪ Copy of current email usage policy ▪ Statement of how data is backed up, the frequency of backups and where the data is stored
4.2 The DMO has a technology plan.	Copy of technology plan

4.3 The DMO is developing an integrated database system.	Statement of the integration capabilities and status of the database system.
5.0 MARKETING	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
5.1 The DMO has a comprehensive marketing plan that is consistent with its budget cycle. The marketing plan includes strategies and goals for key market segments and is updated on a regular basis.	Highlight the sections and provide the pages that identifies strategies and goals for key market segments.
5.2 The DMO maintains a comprehensive Web site with content aligned with identified requirements of key market segments and a statement demonstrating the alignment of the content.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identification of Web address ▪ Statement demonstrating the alignment of content with requirements of key market segments
5.3 The DMO provides updated collateral materials to meet the needs of visitors and/or meeting professional/travel trade.	A link to written or digital samples including: Visitor Guide and other materials may also include samples of advertising.
5.4 The DMO complies with applicable DMAI Performance Reporting Marketing definitions.	Copy of the applicant reports incorporating use of 2 or more DMAI Performance Reporting Marketing definitions.
5.5 The DMO has a policy which offers its customers the option to opt out of online communication (e.g. newsletters, news blasts, faxes) from the DMO.	Provide written policy and/or procedures and example of its use.
5.6 The DMO provides destination information formatted for a mobile platform.	A screen shot of an application or mobile optimized website.

6.0 VISITOR SERVICES (INDIVIDUAL/LEISURE MARKET)	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
6.1 The DMO plans and has procedures to respond to visitor inquiries in a timely manner.	Copy of written procedures for responding to visitor inquiries.
6.2 The DMO provides trained staff with destination and customer service expertise to meet the needs of the leisure market.	Identification of one (1) or more staff serving the leisure market and their respective training/expertise.

6.3 The DMO offers visitor reservations services.	Written description of reservations services and/or name of company or product providing the service.
6.4 The DMO offers access to staff and/or resources with multiple language speaking capabilities.	List of current language speaking staff and resources offered for the leisure market.
6.5 The DMO has an official Visitors Information Center(s), or mobile Visitor Information Vehicles, Kiosk or Ambassadors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Address(es) of Visitor Information Center(s), Kiosks, or Ambassadors ▪ Description of services offered. ▪ Rules and operating procedures for any of the above Visitor Information Services.
6.6 The DMO provides training for Volunteers.	Provide at least one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Table of contents or description of Volunteer training ▪ Review/evaluation of process of volunteer training.

7.0 GROUP SERVICES	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
7.1 The DMO offers meetings and/or convention services for meeting planners.	Description of meeting and/or convention services offered for meeting planners to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Menu of services offered ▪ Lead distribution ▪ Destination information ▪ Site inspections facilitation based on customer need ▪ Business referral services
7.2 The DMO provides trained staff with destination and customer service expertise to meet the needs of the group market.	List of staff serving the needs of the group market and their respective training/expertise.
7.3 The DMO offers housing capability.	Written description of reservations capability/services and/or name of company or product providing the service.
7.4 The DMO offers access to staff and/or resources with multiple language speaking capabilities.	List of current language speaking staff and resources offered by the DMO for the group market.
7.5 The DMO has or facilitates registration personnel.	Written description of registration services offered.

8.0 SALES	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
8.1 The DMO has a comprehensive sales plan with specific goals and strategies that is updated every two (2) years and is consistent with the budget cycle.	Copy of sales plan and description of goals and strategies.
8.2 The DMO has one (1) or more dedicated sales position(s).	Title and job description for dedicated sales position(s).
8.3 The DMO complies with applicable DMAI performance reporting definitions for convention sales and travel trade.	Copies of recent reports delineating use of 2 or more DMAI performance reporting definitions.
8.4 The DMO has a policy(ies) for and facilitates site/fam inspections, sales (pre-sale) and convention services (post-sale).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Copy of policy(ies). ▪ A sample itinerary.
8.5 The DMO conducts and/or facilitates a proposal/bid fulfillment process at no charge to the client.	Sample letter or table of contents of bid document.
8.6 The DMO maintains a qualified lead distribution and referral system and policy based on customer needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A sample of a lead. ▪ A written policy on the qualified lead and referral system.
8.7 The DMO provides its sales staff continual <u>destination</u> product training opportunities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Description of process. ▪ Identification of sales staff destination training opportunities.
8.8 The DMO must have a policy or procedure that offers any convention/event/travel/tour planners the choice to receive or not receive communication from the recipient of DMO leads.	Provide written policy and example of its use. (This would be a policy and/or procedure that ensures that this is followed throughout the DMOs operations).
8.9 The DMO solicits continual group/event planner feedback on its sales process.	Description of process used to collect customer feedback on the sales process.

9.0 COMMUNICATIONS	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
9.1 The DMO maintains an updated crisis communications plan.	Copy of crisis communications plan.
9.2 The DMO maintains an updated media/press kit.	Copy or description of contents of media/press kit.
9.3 The DMO complies with applicable DMAI Performance Reporting Public Relations definitions.	Copies of reports delineating use of 2 or more DMAI Performance Reporting definitions.
9.4. The DMO has a written communications strategy.	Copy of the documented communications strategy.
9.5 The DMO has a media protocol.	Copy of media protocol.

10.0 MEMBERSHIP/PARTNERSHIPS	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
10.1 The DMO establishes terms and conditions for membership and dues with specific categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Description of one or more of DMO membership/partnership categories. ▪ Published terms and conditions for membership/partnership which includes categories, fees (if applicable), and benefits.
10.2 The DMO maintains a statement of membership benefits.	Published statement of membership benefits for one or more of membership categories.
10.3 The DMO maintains a printed and/or electronic calendar of membership events.	Copy of calendar of events offered for the DMOs membership, e.g. networking events, membership mixers, annual meeting.
10.4 The DMO complies with applicable DMAI performance reporting membership definitions.	Copy of applicant reports delineating use of 2 or more DMAI performance reporting membership definitions.
10.5 The DMO solicits periodic member feedback.	Description of the process and frequency for soliciting member feedback.
10.6 The DMO has a written process for holding its membership/partnership to a code of ethics.	Copy of the membership code of ethics.

10.7 The DMO has a policy (ies) to ensure that it's providing its visitors full destination information, regardless of membership/partnership.	Provide written policy(ies).
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11.0 MANAGEMENT AND FACILITIES	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
11.1 The DMO has a management structure that shows clear lines of reporting responsibility.	Organizational staffing chart listing all current regular positions and the reporting responsibility.
11.2 The DMO demonstrates commitment to a process of continuous improvement in the management of the organization.	Descriptions of examples of achieving continuous improvement within last 12 months and the results of the examples.
11.3 The DMO maintains a Business Continuity/Emergency Operations Plan specifying how the organization will respond to emergency situations.	Copy of the Business Continuity/Emergency Operations Plan for continuing operations in the case of an emergency, e.g., earthquake, tornado, flood, etc.
11.4 The DMO has a privacy policy covering personal information gathered from consumers.	Copy of consumer privacy policy.
11.5 The DMO maintains a current policy and procedures manual specifying standard operating procedures for the various services and programs provided.	Provide a copy of table of contents from policy and procedures manual.
11.6 The DMO utilizes specific policies and procedures for the management and supervision of contractors or outsourced service providers.	Provide a highlighted copy of policies and procedures for the management and supervision of contractors or outsourced providers of services or a section of a contract which states the policies and procedures.
11.7 The DMO has rules and operating procedures for any satellite (separate from the DMO physical headquarters) office(s) or visitor center(s).	Copy of operating procedures for any satellite DMO office(s).

12.0 BRAND MANAGEMENT	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
12.1 The DMO demonstrates development of a brand strategy and a brand promise.	Copy of brand strategy and brand promise statement.
12.2 The DMO conducts a periodic brand assessment process.	Documentation of brand assessment process (date, scope, etc.).

13.0 DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
13.1 The DMO is actively engaged in leading and participating in the process to improve the destination through product development.	Including but not limited to assessing infrastructure, new opportunity markets and/or community needs.

14.0 RESEARCH/MARKETING INTELLIGENCE	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
14.1 The DMO demonstrates a commitment to customer research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evidence of customer research report (published or unpublished) including interpretation of findings. ▪ Evidence of a visitor tracking process, including a checklist. ▪ Evidence of inquiry tracking and analysis of tracking data.
14.2 The DMO maintains a dedicated research line item in its annual budget.	Highlight the section of the budget that reflects the research line item (e.g. title and job description of research staff member(s), section of the budget with the research line item highlighted, portion of a contractual arrangement for in kind research).
14.3 The DMO uses standard business return on investment (ROI) approaches or DMAI’s ROI form to quantify the financial impact on its local community for convention/group and/or leisure travel.	Copy/summary of findings and summary of process that quantifies the financial impact of the DMO on its local community for convention/group and/or leisure travel.

15.0 INNOVATION	
Standard	Essential Element(s)
15.1 The DMO demonstrates recent (within the past two (2) years) evidence of innovative practice(s) that improves the operation and/or performance of the organization.	Written description of innovative practice(s) and a discussion of the related impact(s)/benefit(s)
15.2 The DMO demonstrates evidence of leading the organization and/or destination in initiating programs that promote sustainable tourism practices.	Written description of innovative practices where the DMO has led the organization and/or destination in initiating programs that promote “sustainable tourism” practices.
15.3 The DMO creates opportunities for visitors and/or meeting planners and attendees to contribute to the destination through volunteer efforts in the destination.	Provide written evidence describing the volunteer information the DMO provides and/or volunteer program(s) the DMO recommends. *Examples include: Fundraiser golf tournament, match programs, lists of volunteer opportunities for meeting planners and/or leisure visitors, or participation with a voluntourism organization.

16.0 STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS	
16.1 The DMO demonstrates evidence of stakeholder relationships with critical community entities usually including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Government agency(ies) ▪ Business organization(s)/Chamber(s) of Commerce ▪ Economic development agency(ies) ▪ Airport authority(ies) ▪ Port authority(ies) ▪ Lodging association(s) ▪ Parks and recreation authority(ies) ▪ Media 	Written statement describing the nature of relationships with multiple key stakeholders in the applicant’s community.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community leadership organization(s) ▪ Convention center(s) ▪ Sports organization(s) ▪ Arts and cultural organization(s) ▪ Restaurant association(s) 	
<p>16.2 The DMO demonstrates evidence of active involvement that advances the profession including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Regional, state, national and international organizations. ▪ Education institutions ▪ Industry associations 	<p>A written statement discussing how the DMO actively participates in professional and industry associations. For example, participation in committees, boards, data sharing, education facilitation and mentoring.</p>