

The Montana District Office (MDO) Monthly Focus is our opportunity to explore and highlight different elements that contribute to Montana's economy. MDO Monthly Focus is intended to highlight small businesses and our partners to inspire and encourage small business development and growth in different areas of the economy.

For more information about SBA and the Montana District Office Team, please visit: [Montana District Office](#)



Montana's Outdoor Recreation Economy Stats:

**\$7.1 billion in
consumer spending
(which greater then
50% came from
Montana residents)**

**Accounts 10% of all
jobs in Montana**

**2nd largest sector of
state's economy**

Outdoor Recreation Economy

June has been recognized as the Great Outdoors Month and is celebrated all over the US. During the Great Outdoors Month it is encouraged to explore America's diverse landscapes from the rocky mountain peaks to the prairies that showcase our forests, rivers, lakes, grasslands, wildlife and more. While it is great to have a month dedicated to the great outdoors, for Montanans it is a lifestyle that is celebrated year round. 98% of Montanans say outdoor recreation is important to their quality of life (Dept. of Commerce). This outdoor lifestyle fosters an outdoor recreation economy that has been a vibrant and growing contributor to Montana's GDP.

According the SBA Advocacy Office, 99.3% of all businesses in Montana meet the US Small Business Administration's threshold of a small business. It is safe to assume that Montana's outdoor recreation economy (2nd largest economic sector in the state) is being supported by small business directly and/or indirectly. Small business opportunities that support this economy range from retailers, manufacturers, hospitality, service providers and the list goes on.

Cycling

Cycling in Montana is about as diverse as the state's terrain; Mountain Biking, Road Biking & Touring, Fat Biking. From the everyday commuter to the adventurer on a one to multiday excursion, cycling is very much part of the Montana outdoor economy. According to Bureau of Economic Analysis, Cycling has added approximately \$6.5 million of value to Montana's gross domestic product consistently for the last three years.

Cyclists from just about every state and over 18 countries have ventured to Montana on a multi-day cycling excursion. Bicycle tourism is an expanding market with many tourists spending 8 or more nights in Montana. Cyclists are on the move making just about any community a potential overnight location for these enthusiasts.



U.S. Small Business Administration

Great Divide Cyclery



Business: Great Divide Cyclery (GDC)

Website: www.greatdividecyclery.com

Owner: Daniel Barry

Description: Great Divide Cyclery (GDC) has been serving the Helena area for over 30 years in all things cyclery. Dan Berry, who purchased the business in 2014, has worked in bike shops nearly his entire life and has great enthusiasm for connecting people of all ages (but especially kids) with their next bicycle. In 2016, GDC merged with The Garage and has been providing a complete customer experience ever since.

Five Questions:

1. What does your business mean to you?

Dan has worked in a bike shop since 1996 and really enjoys introducing biking to the community (especially our youngest riders). As one of the longest running retail stores in downtown Helena (38 years), GDC is part of the community and they appreciate that. GDC's goal is to not become a concept store, but to keep it a unique and individual shop for the cycling community.

2. What happened in the last twelve months that changed your business?

GDC did not escape the pandemic unscathed. For the last 12 months, the service center has kept things going (typically retail is the larger portion of the business), which illustrated the power of being diversified in their revenue streams. The local community has provided great support over the last twelve months bringing their bicycles to be serviced during the pandemic. GDC implemented touchless delivery and service which was a success.

3. How did the SBA impact your business?

GDC did utilize the Payment Protection Program (PPP) over the course of the last year. The program provided the backstop they needed to alleviate some fears of potentially failing during such a difficult time. GDC was able to maintain 100% of their staff during the pandemic as a result. Ascent Bank was a great resource and partner in assisting with the PPP process.

4. What does the future hold?

GDC's outlook is longevity within the community they belong to. GDC doesn't want to become a concept store, but remain a local cyclery shop that is perfectly sized to provide the best service and products for their customer base.

5. What piece of wisdom would you give someone getting ready to start up a business in this industry?

"You need to be committed. You are always on the clock and your business becomes synonymous to you. It's a great experience and only you can hold yourself back."

"It is great to be a partner with Great Divide Cyclery and we are really pleased to see the business highlighted!"

- Tom McGree, Ascent Bank