



EXPLORE
CHRISTIAN COUNTY

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CHRISTIAN COUNTY

DMO CERTIFICATION: LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

We're not shifting focus — we're strengthening our impact.

WHAT IS A DMO?

A Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) is an officially recognized nonprofit that promotes a defined area to boost tourism, drive spending, and enhance community visibility.

WHAT WE'VE ALREADY BUILT

- Launched Explore Christian County in October 2024
- Featured in National Geographic Traveller UK
- Created ongoing visitor-focused blogs, videos, and event promotions
- Elevated local businesses, attractions, and tourism assets

WHY IT MATTERS...

Strategic Timing

Springfield CVB's recertification is coming. Missouri certifies DMOs every 5 years—this is our opportunity to step forward before boundaries are renewed.

Future Hotel Tax

Becoming a DMO is a foundational step toward implementing a hotel/lodging tax, even though hotels may still be 3–4 years out. Certification today sets us up for sustainable revenue in the future.

Christian County is Ready

We've already launched Explore Christian County, secured national attention, and created consistent tourism marketing. DMO certification scales what we're already doing.

If you build a place
people want to
visit, you build a
place where
people want to live.

If you build a place
where people want
to live, you'll build a
place where people
want to work.

Destination Management Cycle
by Maura Gast, FCDME

And if you build a
place where
business has to be,
you'll build a place
where people have
to visit.

If you build a
place where
people want to
work, you'll build
a place where
business needs
to be.

REVENUE STREAMS

Long-Term Revenue Potential

- Hotel/Lodging Tax (including short-term rentals like Airbnb)
- State Grants (MMG, MPD, SEM Partnership)
- Ad Revenue & Sponsored Content (as ExploreCCMO continues to grow)

BENEFIT

WHAT IT MEANS

Grant Access	Eligible for MMG, MPD, and SEM tourism funding programs through the State
Hotel/Lodging Tax Control	Future tax revenue reinvested locally—direct support for tourism efforts
Better Branding & Promotion	Spotlight Christian County on VisitMO.com, in ads, and co-branded state campaigns
Economic Development Alignment	Boosts small business, supports job creation, and strengthens placemaking
Local Control	Tells our unique story—no longer reliant on being a footnote under another DMO
Long-Term Value	Certification is valid for 5 years, with recurring access to programs and support

CHALLENGES

No Guaranteed Funding

Grants are competitive, but our team has experience writing and securing funding—and certification makes us eligible for new streams.

Ongoing Compliance

Re-certification happens every 5 years. With steady planning and engagement, this becomes a manageable rhythm.

Time-Intensive Process

Yes, certification requires metrics and coordination. That's why we're starting now—giving us the time to get it right.

Potential Pushback

This isn't a separation—it's about gaining ownership of Christian County's story and making sure our assets don't stay in the background.

Smaller Initial Reach

We won't match Springfield's scale overnight—but we're building focused, high-impact marketing that grows with our audience.

READINESS TO DATE

- 501(c)(3) determination (application submitted; operating in compliance)
- Built a digital tourism brochure and implemented ongoing website management for Explore Christian County
- Built an interactive digital tourism brochure
- Continue building tourism marketing track record

NEXT STEPS...

- Designate SMCC as official DMO (county resolution)
- Continue DMO application development for February 28 submission