



Hawai'i Tourism Authority

Hawai'i Convention Center, 1801 Kalākaua Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96815
Website: www.hawaii-tourism-authority.org

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
Governor

MIKE MCCARTNEY
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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: September 27, 2011
HTA Release (11-25)

HTA SELECTS A.LINK AS JAPAN MARKETING CONTRACTOR

HONOLULU—The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state's tourism agency, today announced the selection of a.link LLC as its marketing contractor for Japan. As HTA's Japan marketing contractor, a.link LLC will be responsible for developing and implementing an integrated marketing plan in Japan targeting both leisure and business travelers.

a.link LLC was formed solely to facilitate the needs of the state concerning Japan-Hawai'i tourism. The core members of the team, which include President/Project Manager Eric Takahata, Vice President, Marketing/Public Relations, Mitsue Varley, and Vice President, Sales/MIC, Toshiyuki Saegusa, represent more than 60 years of experience in various sectors of Japan-Hawai'i Tourism.

“We are very pleased to have a.link LLC join HTA to support our efforts in one of Hawai'i's primary markets,” said Mike McCartney, HTA president and CEO. “Japan is a mature market with a long relationship with Hawai'i. And in order to continue to grow and strengthen that relationship, we must develop new strategies and tactics to meet the changing needs of the visitor from Japan. To accomplish this, one of the goals of the RFP process was to develop a more integrated strategy which would strengthen our alliances with our industry partners, both in Japan and Hawai'i.”

“a.link LLC has a solid level of knowledge of Hawai'i as a destination, extensive experience in the visitor industry, both here and in Japan, and strong relationships with numerous industry segments such as entertainment, sports, airlines and meetings and conventions. This, along with their understanding and appreciation of our community and culture, will create a stronger, more integrated approach to our marketing programs, and greatly assist in HTA's efforts to leverage state tourism assets.”

“The world has changed and other destinations are becoming more aggressive. To better compete in the global marketplace, Hawai'i must be more creative in our sales and marketing efforts. We are confident that a.link LLC has the right combination of expertise, knowledge, creativity and strategic approach,” said McCartney.

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HTA SELECTS A.LINK AS JAPAN MARKETING CONTRACTOR

Add 1

HTA's Japan marketing program was formerly managed by JCompass which founded and ran the Hawai'i Tourism Japan (HTJ) office.

"We want to thank JCompass for all that they have done over the years to support our marketing efforts in Japan. During their tenure, they helped reposition Hawai'i and were very successful at maintaining our market share, especially during some very difficult economic times," said McCartney. "JCompass created a solid foundation that will help ensure our continued success in the Japan market."

Established in 1998, the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, the state's tourism agency, is responsible for strategically managing tourism to optimize benefits for Hawai'i that integrates the interest of visitors, the community and visitor industry. Tourism is our state's leading economic driver and largest employer and the HTA continually works to ensure its sustainability well into the future. For more information on the HTA, please visit www.hawaii tourism authority.org, find us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#) (@HawaiiHTA).

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