

# HTA CEO REPORT

AUGUST 2024

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) provides this report as a resource to the Board and the public to better understand the activities and actions taken by the team in the month of July 2024 in support of the organization's overall mission, its strategic plan, and the community-led Destination Management Action Plans.

Office of the President & CEO: Recruitment for vacant positions was ongoing while continuing to process the proposed reorganization plan through DBEDT and DHRD.

Destination Stewardship: July was another bustling month with major events like the Prince Lot Hula Festival as well as other Signature and Community Enrichment events. It also marked the beginning of the new fiscal year and the associated tasks with transitioning from one fiscal year to the next. HTA staff also worked closely with Kilohana on the Community Tourism Collaboratives and Foundational Technical Assistance Programs. Finally we also finalized the 2024 Term 1 'Umeke RFPs that will cover programs from January to June 2025 as we transition those programs from calendar year to fiscal year.

Brand and Marketing: The Brand team has been working on change orders and procurement plan worksheets for new supplemental contract execution due to the 10% restriction in the FY25 budget. So far, CON20007 Korea MMA, CON21013 Cruise Consultant Services, CON22011 Campaign Effectiveness Study, CON 23016 Canada MMA, and CON24004 Europe MMA, have been fully executed. The HTA RFP 25-05 Hawai'i Tourism Destination Brand Marketing Services for the Korea Major Market Area is on track, with proposals due on August 19, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. HST. This month, the Brand staff helped coordinate tourism meetings for LG's Korea Mission, with HTA's interim president and CEO joining the trip. Additionally, two brand members along with the director of planning attended the 2024 U.S. Travel Association's ESTO in Columbus, Ohio.

## II. OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & CEO

**Functional Statement:** The Office of CEO is responsible for implementing the policies and instructions of HTA's Board of Directors and administering the activities of HTA by planning, organizing, directing, coordinating and reporting its work.

- Leads relationship with Governor, Legislature, Board and state agencies

- Leads relationship with national tourism policy and strategy, Congressional offices, and national and international industry organizations
- Oversees HTA's strategic direction and performance
- Oversees HTA's administration, resource allocation, vision, and culture

### ***Maui Wildfires Recovery***

One year following the August 8, 2023 wildfires, HTA staff continues to focus on tourism's support for Maui's overall recovery. Pursuant to HRS §201B-9, a gubernatorially-declared tourism emergency is in effect until September 17, 2024 by order of the 16th Proclamation Relating to Wildfires.

Reporting on communications relating to the Maui wildfires will be reintegrated into the Public Affairs section of this report going forward.

### ***Proposed Reorganization***

The HTA organization continued to transition into the structure presented and approved by the HTA Board at its July 2023 meeting. The objectives of this structure were to strengthen island-based management, increase resources for destination stewardship, and have dedicated leadership for branding and marketing. The Request to Reorganize documents were submitted to DBEDT and are currently under review by DBEDT staff. The Request to Establish and Fill Exempt Positions document was signed by DBEDT Director and now moves to the Governor for the Destination Managers positions. Since the positions are now funded through general funds, all requests to fill or establish positions must go through the Governor. Previously only the DBEDT Director was required for authorization. Of the 30 positions, 2 are in the recruitment process (Admins Assistant and Account Clerk III), seven have been approved by DBEDT Director but need Governor's approval and three are in some stage of review by DBEDT.

### ***Public Affairs***

#### **News Releases/Reports/Announcements**

- News Release: Hawai'i Tourism Authority Announces Cohorts To Develop Community Stewardship and Regenerative Experience Programs (July 1)
- News Release: Hawai'i Tourism Authority Work Wise Program Provides Jobs for Public High School Graduates and Students (July 2)
- News Release: Hawai'i Tourism Authority Welcomes New Board Members Roy Pfund and Chris West (July 8)

- HTA Message: Hawai'i Tourism Authority Provides 32 Culinary Scholarships to Support Kama'āina Workforce Development (July 8)
- HTA Message: Haleakalā Crater Road Fire Update #1 (July 11)
- HTA Message: Epic Swim Maui Honors Legacy of Duke Kahanamoku (July 12)
- News Release: Hawai'i Tourism Authority Launches Foundational Technical Assistance Program and Workshops for Businesses and Non-Profit Organizations (July 15)
- HTA Message: Travel Advisory for Air Travel (July 19)
- Report: Hawai'i Hotel Performance Report for June 2024 (July 23)
- Report: Hawai'i Vacation Rental Performance Report for June 2024 (July 25)
- News Release: Hawai'i Tourism Authority Seeks Community Partners In Support Of Natural Resources, Culture, Festivals and Signature Events (July 30)

### News Bureau

- Coordinated and/or assisted with the following interviews and statements, including:
  - Julie Fernandez: Drafted IG responses on why The Hawaiian Islands are a great place to visit in the winter. (July 3)
  - Elizabeth 'Ufi: IG responses on Regenerative Tourism Bill and Qurator program. (July 3)
  - Javier, Newsweek: DN interview on innovation and technology, with an emphasis on how the visitor industry and HTA is embracing these advancements. Drafted talking points. (July 18)
  - Elaine Glusac, The New York Times: Kalani Ka'anā'anā (KK) interview on Mālama Hawai'i and sustainable travel. (July 18)
  - Aaron Kirsch, GreenUp Wealth Management Podcast: IG interview on The Hawaiian Islands and what travelers should know. (July 18)
  - Shane Nelson, TravelAge West: KK interview on Qurator program. (July 19)
  - Lily Girma, Bloomberg: IG responses on conscious tourism, Mālama Hawai'i and "The People. The Place. The Hawaiian Islands.", "Beautiful Hawai'i" and "Yappari Hawai'i" campaigns. Provided information on voluntourism and visitor sentiment metrics. (July 29)
- Coordinated and/or assisted with the following media relations, including:

- Megan Indoe, BoboAndChichi.com: Liaised with blogger after meeting with her at IPW and connected her to HTUSA PR regarding interest in O‘ahu and Maui. (July 8)
- Stephen Florino, KHON: Reviewed inquiry on possible danger of Rapid Onset Pulmonary Edema (ROPE) and passed on comment. (July 8)
- Carolyn Scott, Healthy Voyager: Liaised with blogger and travel author after meeting with her at IPW and connected her to HTUSA PR regarding interest in Kaua‘i and Maui. (July 9)
- Larry Heath, The AU Review (Australia) Liaised with writer after meeting with him at IPW and connected with HTO for his upcoming trip to Kaua‘i and O‘ahu this December. (July 18)
- Margo Rosenbaum, National Geographic Books: Reviewed inquiry on visitor birding trends and shared with HTUSA that HTA and DBEDT does not track this information. (July 29)

### **HTA’s Social Media**

- Managed social media calendar, drafted copy, sourced images, and scheduled posts on HTA’s Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts. Also monitored and responded to direct messages and post comments.
- Phasing LinkedIn and Threads into our social media presence and will begin reporting once established.

### **Community Initiatives and Public Outreach**

- Hawai‘i AI & Cloud Innovation Summit
  - Drafted e-blast message encouraging the public to attend the summit. (July 9)
  - The People. The Place. The Hawaiian Islands
    - Replaced hero image and link on HTA website with campaign. (July 11)
    - NaHHA Workforce Development Opportunities
      - Drafted e-blast message encouraging visitor industry professionals and the public to attend cultural trainings rooted in Hawaiian culture. (July 12)
      - HTA Foundational Technical Assistance Program Workshops
        - Posted workshops to the Events page of HTA’s website. (July 15)
        - HTA Honolulu Star-Advertiser Op-Ed
          - Provided edits to op-ed on HTA evolving and adapting to thrive. (July 16)
          - HTA Community Programs for January to June 2024
            - Posted informational sessions to the Events page of HTA’s website. (July 30)

## **Crisis Communications**

- Overhauled HTA holding statements in the HTA Emergency Operations Plan. (July 8)
  - Recommended retitling the section to “News Release and Message Templates” given HTA's current outreach strategy beyond providing media statements.
  - Adjusted the “statements” to news release format and added draft HTA message copy based on the potential situation.
  - Drafted new copy for situations, including fires, airport closures, monk seal pupping, boat/ship incidents.
- Crater Road Fire
  - Monitored evolving situation and drafted HTA message. (July 11)
  - Kathleen Wong, USA TODAY: IG provided response with update on Crater Road fire status and its limited effect on travelers as Haleakalā National Park’s summit was closed. (July 12)
- Kōke‘e Fire
  - Drafted a message informing the public of the brush fire on Kaua‘i near Kōke‘e road. (July 19)
- Global Technology Outage
  - Drafted travel advisory informing the public of the global technology outage affecting communications systems at airports and air travel. (July 19)

## **Internal Communications**

- Managed 2024 Communications Calendar on an ongoing basis.
- Conducted weekly communications coordination calls with HTA leadership and Anthology.

## **Administrative**

- Working to streamline Public Affairs activities as we prepare to rescope and procure contracted support for Communications & Public Affairs Support Services, HTA Website Services, and production support for the Hawai‘i Tourism Conference and Spring Tourism Update in the coming months.

## [Government Affairs](#)

The Public Affairs Office continues to monitor the impacts of newly enacted legislation from the 2024 Legislative Session, as well as proceedings at our county councils.

### III. DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP BRANCH

**Functional Statement:** The Destination Stewardship Branch is responsible for implementing projects and programs that seek to balance and meet the economic, environmental, and social/cultural needs of Hawai'i while working in close partnership with the visitor industry and residents.

#### *Natural Resources Initiative*

**Overview:** Support programs that protect, maintain and enhance Hawai'i's natural resources and cultural sites to improve the quality of life for all of Hawai'i's residents and to enhance the visitor experience in alignment with the Authority's mission to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs. The [HTA's Five-Year Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#) lays out the Natural Resources Pillar objectives to "encourage and support sustainable and responsible tourism; engage and encourage active natural and cultural resource management strategies in areas frequented by visitors; and to promote visitor industry alignment with the Aloha+ Challenge, Hawai'i's recognized model to achieve the UN's SDGs, especially for energy and water."

There are no significant updates for July.

#### *Hawaiian Culture Initiative*

**Overview:** Support programs that perpetuate and recognize the uniqueness and integrity of the Hawaiian culture and community and their significance in differentiating the Hawaiian Islands through unique and genuine visitor experiences.

#### *Ma'ema'e Program*

In the Hawaiian Culture pillar of the current Hawai'i Tourism Authority Strategic Plan, one of the Milestone Measures for Objective 4 calls for the establishment of a system for measuring and reporting the number of lodging industry entities with on-site cultural practice programs and practitioners. HTA recently awarded contract PON 24025, to the Native Hawaiian Hospitality Association (NaHHA) for the professional services of developing a comprehensive database to accurately identify and update contact information for Native Hawaiian Cultural Practitioners, Organizations and Visitor

Industry Partners. This Hawaiian Culture Database will be owned and managed by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority with results to be tracked and reported annually. The contract was fully executed on June 4, and a kick-off meeting between the contractor and HTA staff was held on July 9. No significant updates for the month of July.

### *Kūkulu Ola Program*

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority's Kūkulu Ola Program, consistent with Chapter 201B-7(a) of the Hawai'i Revised Statutes ("HRS") which allows HTA to "enter into agreements that include product development and diversification issues focused on visitors"; and Chapter 201B-7(5), which gives the HTA responsibility for "perpetuating the uniqueness of the native Hawaiian culture and community, and their importance to the quality of the visitor experience, by ensuring that Hawaiian cultural practitioners and cultural sites that give value to Hawai'i's heritage are supported, nurtured, and engaged in sustaining the visitor industry"; and Chapter 201B-3(a)(20) which states that HTA "may coordinate the development of products with the counties and other persons in the public and private sector, including the development of sports, culture, health and wellness, education, technology, agriculture, and nature tourism. In addition, the HTA Five-Year Strategic Plan 2020-2025 lays out HTA's plan to support Hawaiian Culture as stated above.

There are no significant updates for July.

### ***Visitor Experiences Initiative***

**Overview:** The primary objective is to enhance the visitor experience while also preserving and promoting Native Hawaiian culture in addition to Hawai'i's multi-ethnic cultures and communities. This is achieved by fostering genuine, respectful, and accurate visitor activities and programs that connect tourists with the rich heritage of Hawai'i, all while supporting local cultural practitioners, artists, and craftsmen to ensure the preservation and perpetuation of Hawaiian culture and the local culture of Hawai'i.

### *Signature Events Program (SEP)*

The HTA's Signature Events program supports major events that have broad appeal and align with Hawai'i's destination's image and brand. These world-class events help Hawai'i to remain competitive, generate media exposure for Hawai'i, increase economic benefits and ensure tourism and communities enrich each other. Signature Events aim to attract attendees and participants from outside the state of Hawai'i with extensive national and international marketing and have a significant economic impact as



measured by the number of out-of-state participants. The program seeks to support and strengthen existing events and create new events for both residents and visitors.

No significant updates for the month of July.

Community Enrichment Program (CEP)

The Community Enrichment Program fosters community-based tourism projects that improve and enrich Hawai'i's product offerings. These projects provide unique, authentic, and highly valued visitor experiences and represent activities developed by our community, for our community, and that the community wants to share with our visitors.

No significant updates for July.

Visitor Assistance Program (VAP)

**Overview:** HTA's Visitor Assistance Program (VAP) provides support, resources and guidance to visitors who are victims of crime and other adversities while traveling in Hawai'i. Services include providing phone cards, transportation, meals, hospital visits and moral support, replacing lost IDs, assisting with hotel and airline bookings, and more. Under HRS 237D-6.5(b)(2), HTA, at a minimum, is required to spend 0.5 percent of the Tourism Special Fund on safety and security initiatives.

**July Stats:**

| County   | No. of Cases Handled | No. of visitors served | Primary Visitor Market(s) Served | Industry \$\$ Contributions                |
|----------|----------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Hawai'i  | 21                   | 70                     | US East & West                   | \$8,446.00 (In-Kind)                       |
| Honolulu | 44                   | 94                     | US East & West                   | \$11,500.00 (cash)<br>\$8,175.78 (In-Kind) |
| Kaua'i   | 7                    | 15                     | US West                          | \$1,675.00 (In-Kind)                       |
| Maui     | 11                   | 17                     | US West & Canada                 | \$5,600.00 (In-Kind)                       |

Ho'okipa Malihini Program

Ho'okipa malihini means to welcome guests and as its name suggests, this program will enhance the visitor experience and resident-visitor interaction. Programming includes cultural programs and entertainment in various resort and visitor areas statewide that support Hawaiian programs and cultural practitioners, craftsmen, musicians, linguists and/or other artists to help preserve and perpetuate Hawaiian culture in a way that is respectful and accurate, inviting, and educational. The program will directly support the

Hawaiian community and cultural practitioners by creating opportunities to involve them in the industry with industry partners and visitors. While some resort/hotel areas have cultural directors this program helps to reinforce our collective kuleana to Mālama Hawai‘i.

**Resort Area Hawaiian Cultural Initiative (RAHCI)**

HTA’s Resort Area Hawaiian Culture Initiative provides support to cultural practitioners and musicians who present Hawaiian experiences, entertainment, and music in resort areas.

No significant updates for the month of July.

**Kāhea Greetings Program (Airports And Harbors)**

Programming includes regularly scheduled, free, year-round entertainment to create a Hawaiian sense of place for the millions of visitors entering Hawai‘i through our airports and harbors statewide.

Entertainment is regularly scheduled at airports. Below is the programming schedule at each airport for July:

| Airport         | HNL                               | OGG                           | KOA  | LIH                            | ITO                         |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Schedule</b> | Tues & Thurs<br>9:30am-<br>1:30pm | Sundays<br>10:00am-<br>2:00pm | None | Fridays<br>10:00am -<br>2:00pm | Mondays<br>11am –<br>3:00pm |

Greetings are provided at harbors as ships arrive. Below is the report on greetings in July:

| Harbor/Pier  | Hilo   | Kona   | Nāwiliwili |
|--|--------|--------|------------|
| <b>Ships Greeted</b>                               | 5      | 4      | 4          |
| <b>Passengers &amp; Crew Greeted</b>               | 16,814 | 11,019 | 9,200      |
| <b>Visitors Served</b>                             | 8,407  | 1,430  | 9,200      |
| <b>Paid Staff</b>                                  | 1      | 1      | 2          |
| <b>Paid Musicians &amp; Cultural Practitioners</b> | 3      | 8      | 16         |

*Post-Arrival Messaging*

Finalized the Maui Recovery Visitor Education & Post-Arrival Marketing campaign as part of HTA’s larger recovery initiatives in response to the Maui Wildfires. All four channels of Visitor Education and Post-Arrival Marketing – Native Ads, Digital Display, Search Engine, Social Media – are tracking well to KPIs established by our Destination

Stewardship contract. The click-thru rate of social media is tracking higher than anticipated which is a favorable metric. We will be reporting specific KPIs for this quarterly. Please see the Destination Stewardship appendix for more details on this topic.

No significant updates for July.

### *Smart Tourism*

HTA staff has asked Kilohana to pause on this part of their work while HTA evaluates how to proceed given the Maui wildfire and other factors. HTA Staff worked with Kilohana to reach agreement that the contract will be reduced by \$1,200,000 since this work was paused and removed from the scope. A change order and supplemental contract will be done once everything is finalized.

### ***Destination Management***

HTA staff are working with the island destination managers on their close-out reporting on the first phase of the DMAPs. Further, the destination managers continue to meet with community organizations and stakeholders to share the work we have done and plan to move forward.

### ***Technical Assistance & Capacity Building***

HTA staff is working with Kilohana on digesting and using the data from the technical needs assessment to inform the development of the content and format for the three community tourism collaboratives. Initial plans for the programs were presented at the May Ho'okahua Committee meeting but were deferred at the full board meeting. Staff hopes that it will be approved at the June full board meeting. We anticipate they will launch in Q3 2024 and focus on Foundational Technical Assistance, Community Stewardship and Regenerative Experiences.

### ***Workforce Development Program***

Pursuant to HRS 201B-3(a)(22) HTA will address the industry's evolving needs in workforce training by working with educational institutions to make training available for the industry workforce to help enhance overall skills and quality of service. Sustaining tourism's success also depends on Hawai'i's youth helping to carry the industry forward and becoming the next generation of leaders. Encouraging Hawai'i's high school and college-age students to choose tourism as their career is another important part of

HTA's workforce development initiative in ensuring that there are career opportunities in the tourism industry for Hawai'i's own.

No major updates in this area for July.

### ***Tour Guide Certification***

HTA contracted Kilohana by CNHA to develop a curriculum for an online Tour Guide Certification training program, including modules on Hawaiian culture, Hawai'i's history, customer service, and safety issues. The HTA staff and Kilohana are working on meeting with UH and other critical stakeholders on the development of the curriculum. The timeline for the project has been adjusted from the original timeline in their proposal to have the draft curriculum submitted by 9/30/24.

## **VI. BRAND BRANCH**

**Functional Statement:** The purpose of the Brand Branch is to strengthen tourism's overall contribution to Hawai'i by taking the lead in protecting and enhancing Hawai'i's globally competitive brand in a way that is coordinated, authentic, and market appropriate. This includes the oversight of the implementation of annual brand marketing plans in select major market areas (USA, Japan, Canada, Oceania, Korea, China, and Europe), sales & marketing for single property and city-wide global meetings, conventions and incentives or MCI, Global Support Services which includes management of a digital assets library, social media tools, and the gohawaii.com consumer website, affiliate sites, and application, Island Destination Brand Management & Marketing with representation and expertise provided in each county of Hawai'i, and sports programs.

### ***Major Market Destination Brand Management***

**Overview:** This initiative focuses on destination brand marketing for leisure travel in seven major market areas with pre-arrival communications to educate visitors with information about safe, respectful, and mindful travel within the Hawaiian Islands. Another key emphasis of the initiative is to drive visitor spending into Hawai'i-based businesses to support a healthy economy, including supporting local businesses, purchasing Hawai'i-grown agricultural products, and promoting Hawai'i-made products in-market, in partnership with the state's Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) and the private sector.

### ***US Major Market Area***

- As a result from HTUSA's FestPAC Mini Press Trip in June, Imani Bashir produced Travel + Leisure story, "This Festival Celebrates Indigenous Pacific Islanders and Maps Out How Visitors to Hawai'i Can Do the Same." The story provides insights on how visitors to Hawai'i can engage respectfully and meaningfully with local communities, promoting cultural appreciation and sustainable tourism practices.
- In July, HTUSA continued to roll out "The People. The Place" content across multiple social media platforms, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, and TikTok, generated over 20 million impressions. There were no paid digital media flighted this month.
- On July 25, HTUSA hosted a webinar for Travel Leaders Network on showcasing the new marketing campaign: The People, The Place, The Hawaiian Islands. This one-hour session also included an in-depth island overview, voluntourism opportunities, travel advisor resources, and a Q&A.
- From July 29 to August 1, HTUSA attended Avoya Travel Million Dollar Showcase in Orlando, FL. This invite-only event is exclusively for the top 1+ Million Dollar producers in the Avoya Travel Network. HTUSA conducted 33 one-on-one appointments and included private networking time with all 84 attendees.

### Canada Major Market Area

- On June 20, HTCAN was honored to receive an AGENT'S CHOICE award as Canada's Favourite Tourist Board – Asia Pacific. The AGENT'S CHOICE awards are voted on annually by Travel Agents across Canada and awarded at a gala event attended by all the leading travel companies in Canada. HTCAN sees this as strong validation of efforts to engage, inform, and support Canada's Travel Agent community.
- The Air Canada Airline Co-op Campaign (Expedia) will run September 9 - October 31, to entice an increase in bookings.
- The Air Canada Vacations Co-op Campaign (Phase 2) will run September 16 - November 21, 2024. (Phase 1 was successfully executed from April - May, 2024). The campaign overall is anticipated to increase consumer bookings and achieve 2mm+ impressions.

### *Japan Major Market Area*

- In July, HTJ continued its advertising efforts for the Yappari Hawai'i campaign across out-of-home, digital, and print platforms, aiming to promote Hawai'i as a premier overseas travel destination. The campaign garnered over 67 million impressions this month, with notable contributions from taxi signage (1.28 million), social media (7.35 million), YouTube (1.78 million), Yahoo Web Banner (52.5 million), TRACY/Web Media (253K), Tver & Abema/Online TV (3.4 million), and Print (350,000). Additionally, HTJ has maintained ongoing communication with stakeholders, and as of July, campaign information from 29 Hawai'i partners has been posted.
- HTJ, in collaboration with Tabippo, hosted a FAM tour for four influential writers and photographers from July 6 to 10 on Maui. They explored 'Īao Valley, Pā'ia town, Makawao town, Haleakalā National Park, Kapalua Beach, and Honolua Bay, and participated in tours of Pineapple Farm, Ocean Vodka Organic Farm, and Molokini snorkeling. Their experiences have reached over 1 million people on social media. Additionally, from July 20 to 24, HTJ conducted a discovery learning FAM tour with MEXT for 12 teachers who explored Hawai'i's history and culture. An online seminar will follow in August to continue the program.
- Takashimaya department store in Osaka (July 24-29) and Kyoto (July 31-August 5) hosted the Hawai'i Fair "Fresh! Fun! Hawai'i." The Osaka event featured 35 businesses from Hawai'i, and on July 27 and 28, there were talk shows and live ukulele performances in collaboration with HTJ and BS12, a TV station known for its Hawai'i ni Koi Shite program. The event attracted 800 customers, and HTJ provided updates on Hawaiian Islands and flight information from KIX as part of promotional efforts for the Kansai region.
- ZIPAIR is at a crucial juncture regarding its winter flight schedule, with a strong likelihood of extending the suspension through the end of March. The airline is grappling with a shortage of crew members and increasingly difficult local airport operations. Consequently, HTJ's co-op program, which aims to sustain operations and expand flights and seating, is now on hold and promotional strategies will be reassessed based on future developments and opportunities.

### *Oceania Major Market Area*

- As reported in last months' CEO Report, the Tagata Pasifika film crew visited both FestPAC and Maui, capturing compelling stories tailored for their New Zealand

audience. They dedicated a day on Maui to spotlight businesses affected by recent wildfires during their filming. This was featured on Tagata Pasifika's online platform that also aired on broadcast, free-to-air, nationwide in Aotearoa:

- Article 1: Tagata Pasifika Special | Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture 2024
  - Article 2: Community continues to rebuild and mourn those lost in devastating Lahaina Fire
- *"We Are Explorers" campaign* - Has gone live as reported on last months' CEO report for editorial content. The team is executing a promotion plan that includes a gradual rollout of the video within this month. This strategic approach is designed to optimize engagement and expand the campaign's reach, aiming for its overall success. In this "Act Local Campaign," the host met with local individuals dedicated to responsible tourism, environmental preservation, and the promotion of Hawaiian culture.
  - Aloha Freshie - Took place in Freshwater, Australia July 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Approximately 500 consumers said "Aloha Freshie" to a weekend-long Hawaiian Lū'au in Freshwater as Duke Kahanamoku's birth Month was celebrated as well as an opportunity to win a prize. Hawaiian food, drinks, music and entertainment were available, as the special link between Waikīkī and Freshwater was celebrated.

### Korea Major Market Area

- From July to August 7, HTK and Hawaiian Airlines are jointly promoting four Hawaiian Islands - O'ahu, Maui, Hawai'i Island, and Kaua'i, through Skyscanner, targeting mindful Korean travelers. The promotion channels included Skyscanner's homepage hero, city guide page, social ads, inline banners, and Hawaiian Airlines' promotion page. The goal is to capture demand for winter vacations and encourage Korean travelers to choose Hawai'i. According to Skyscanner, 5.3 million Koreans use its service, generating 63 million page views.
- From June 15 to July 15, HTK and Kyowon Tour effectively promoted Maui as a top romance destination, highlighting the 'Mālama Maui' message to honeymooners through dedicated promotional pages and KakaoTalk Push Ads. The campaign achieved 210 sales, surpassing the target of 200 by 5%. It generated 95,475 impressions and reached 62,355 people. Additionally, Kyowon Tour's press releases led to 17 media features.



- Following a media and influencer FAM tour, Hey! Travel published a 14-page advertorial titled "The Aloha Spirit of Hawai'i" in its July issue. The article highlighted cultural and historical experiences on Hawai'i Island and O'ahu, including the Merrie Monarch Festival, a lei-making workshop at Paiko, and tours of Lonohana Estate Chocolate, Polynesian Cultural Center, Battleship Missouri Memorial, Honolulu Museum of Art, and the Lū'au at Hilton Waikoloa Village. The article was also posted on Hey! Travel's website.

### *China Major Market Area*

- HTC attended the 4th of July Independence Networking Event at the US Embassy in Beijing, where over 800 industry stakeholders and travel representatives were present. The event, themed "America the Beautiful," was graced by Liu Zhenmin, the People's Republic of China Special Envoy for Climate Change, and other Chinese officials.
- HTC team has been assisting Hangzhou OTC Travel International to bring the Hangzhou XIOLIFT MICE group to Hawai'i in October 2024, which includes around 500 attendees. HTC/HTA provided a welcome letter to facilitate their visa applications, and HTC will keep monitoring and assisting with their visa progress.
- During the JTB 60th Anniversary on O'ahu, HTC met with Shirley Mao, Director of TPI Global (a JTB USA division serving Southeast Asia and China). HTC arranged site inspections at the new Renaissance Hotel and activities at USS Missouri and Kualoa Ranch. TPI Global, with teams based in LA and Vancouver, had recently organized a MICE group from the Philippines to Honolulu.

### *Europe Major Market Area*

- In July, HTE continued its "Discover Hawai'i" digital campaign across multiple platforms, aiming to boost destination brand recognition and drive engagement among affluent, responsible travelers in the UK, Germany, and Switzerland. The campaign, which promotes tour operators' websites for trip planning and bookings, achieved 1,128,139 interactions and 32,405 website visits to GoHawai'i and tour operator sites.
- HTE Germany, in collaboration with Outrigger Hotels and Resorts, conducted two educational webinars on July 5 and July 12, each highlighting two Hawaiian Islands. The webinars trained 45 agents on all Hawaiian Islands and Outrigger properties.



- HTE is preparing for the Hawai'i Travel Mission from September 1 to 11, covering six major markets: Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Munich, Zurich, Manchester, and London. So far, six Hawai'i partners and three island visitor bureaus have signed up, and invitations have been extended to travel agents, product managers, and media representatives in Germany, Switzerland, and the UK.

### ***Global Meetings, Conventions & Incentives***

**Overview:** The MCI market can become a critical source of profitable “base” business booked years in advance. This base of business enables a higher yield of shorter-term leisure business. It can also help fill hotel occupancy gaps in future years by capitalizing on off-peak opportunities. To be competitive and thrive in the changing world of business tourism (MCI market), Hawai'i must capitalize on its strategic mid-Pacific location, which conveniently connects East and West, helping organizations create business events that are international, engaging and memorable experiences. Our location also contributes to a unique experience and the group setting of these meetings, conventions and incentives allows us to further educate our markets about Hawaiian culture and our precious resources by immersing attendees and stakeholders in these activities. Primary focus is on MCI sales and marketing in the United States, Japan, Canada, Oceania, Korea, and other Asia markets as appropriate.

### ***Sales & Marketing Efforts:***

- Strategic partnerships with integrated sales and marketing executions continued in July to promote MCI business on Maui and dispersed statewide. This primarily included HPN Global and Incentive Research Foundation (IRF), while ongoing sales tactics with conference and event sponsorship exposure continue with HelmsBriscoe.
- **Citywide:** For the first six months of 2024, the sales team turned definite three (3) new pieces of business that will for the first time utilize the HCC and seven (7) events for 2024 and 2025 which will contribute 19,600 total room nights and 102M in Economic Impact (EI). The team has been able to take advantage of the current short-term booking cycle, adding to the current record-breaking success of these two years. The citywide team finished off this half of the year -25 percent to YTD Goal and -27 percent YOY.
- **Single Property:** The retirement of a key West Coast team member presented unforeseen challenges. To ensure uninterrupted market coverage, the Midwest and East Coast Directors assumed additional responsibilities, managing both their

respective territories and the critical West Coast market for a six-month period. The team's structure was further stabilized with the addition of a Senior Director for Single Property in late February and a West Coast Director in late June.

- Despite these challenges, the team has achieved notable success in generating tentative bookings, surpassing the year-to-date goal by +19 percent. However, conversion to definite bookings has been impacted by a confluence of factors, including inflation-driven cost increases, the devastating Maui fires, and intensified competition from international destinations offering more competitive pricing and incentives. Industry reports corroborate the significant negative impact of the Maui fires on the overall Hawai'i market.
- While currently below target for definite room nights, the team's historical performance in the latter half of the year, marked by high conversion rates, instills confidence in achieving annual goals. The Single Property team has also shown resilience, exceeding year-over-year performance by +16 percent despite facing a -32 percent shortfall in definite room night goals.

**List of July Sales Activities:**

- Client promotional events
  - July 17, 2024 – Mana Up - South Shore Market Opening – O'ahu
  - July 22, 2024 – Presentation Urban MICE
  - July 23, 2024 – HPN Partner Presentation Featuring Maui – Maui
- Educational events and trade shows
  - July 1, 2024 – MPINE Networking event and concert – Massachusetts
  - July 26, 2024 – HSMIAI Industry Event: Golf Tournament Volunteer – O'ahu
  - July 29, 2024 – Suwon Province MICE Policy Forum
  - July 30, 2024 – Destination Reps Summer Meeting & Event – Chicago, IL
  - July 30, 2024 – Pacific Rim Concepts – O'ahu
  - July 31, 2024 – Marriott Hawai'i Lunch – Chicago, IL
  - July 31, 2024 – Aloha ASAE Meeting and Pau Hana – O'ahu
  - July 31-August 4, 2024 – IEEE Convene – Hawai'i Island
- Sales blitzes
  - None to report for this month.
- July site visits and familiarization (FAM) - O'ahu – 2

***Island Destination Brand Management and Marketing Services***

**Overview:** The Island Destination Brand Management and Marketing Services (IDBMMS) include the support from on-island representatives on behalf of HTA for visitor education, visitor industry engagement, and public relations activities; serving as advisors to HTA on the respective islands and The Hawaiian Islands statewide brand; collaborating with HTA's Global Marketing Team to develop and implement familiarization trips and press trips to areas that are welcoming visitors; providing island-based visitor education support during promotions, trade shows, and missions in major market areas, and coordinating with city and county government officials and designated organizations during crisis management situations.

- Contract reports are submitted on a quarterly basis, providing detailed updates on ongoing activities and performance. The next progress report will cover the period from July to September and will be delivered in October.

### ***Global Support Services for Brand Management & Marketing***

**Overview:** The Hawai'i Tourism Global Support Services for Brand Management and Marketing support HTA's comprehensive pre- and post-arrival visitor education and destination management efforts, as well as HTA's Global Marketing Team throughout the U.S., Canada, Japan, Oceania, Korea, China, and Europe. The support services include providing market insights to boost strategy, management and development of creative and digital assets, social media, website management, including GoHawaii.com, application development and maintenance, and maximizing emerging technology to support the updating of our Ma'ema'e Toolkit and Brand Guidelines. The resources are also shared broadly with the public for the community, visitor industry, businesses, media, travel trade, and meetings, conventions and incentives industry representatives to utilize in their respective areas.

- Contract reports are submitted on a quarterly basis, providing detailed updates on ongoing activities and performance. The next progress report will cover the period from July to September and will be delivered in October.

### ***Sports***

**Overview:** HTA is committed to continuing its support for amateur, collegiate and professional sports programs and events seeking to hold tournaments, exhibitions, and other activities in Hawai'i. Such events and programs extend the brand image of, and attract visitors to, our islands. These visitors will travel to support these events and programs while concurrently stimulating our state and local economies. As part of this program, HTA requires all its sports events and programs to include a community

engagement and benefit component as part of their proposal. Community engagement and benefits may involve activities, such as youth clinics, coaches' clinics and other activities designed to provide Hawai'i's youth with access to resources and guidance not normally available to them.

- HTA staff is working on a solicitation to seek out a sport consultant to evaluate incoming proposals, seek additional opportunities, work with venues to support events, and develop an overall sports strategy.

## VIII. PLANNING & EVALUATION BRANCH

**Functional Statement:** The purpose of the Planning & Evaluation Branch is to strategically plan for the near, mid, and long-term health and vitality of our visitor industry and manage destination issues that affect communities and the visitor experience. This includes the development, monitoring, and oversight of various plans for the HTA including but not limited to the Strategic Plan, the Destination Management Action Plans (DMAPs), and the Tourism Management and Marketing Plan. Other activities include development of policy as it relates to tourism.

### *Evaluation*

Evaluation of each island's Destination Management Action Plan (DMAPs) is being conducted by Pacific Research and Evaluation, LLC. The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of accomplishing each DMAPs goals, objectives and actions, identify gaps, and provide recommendations to improve execution of future DMAPs. The contractor presented their findings to the Ho'okahua Hawai'i Committee on July 24, 2024.

### *Product Development*

**Overview:** Develop, lead, assess, and optimize the development of new products and experiences. Leverage data and research to identify opportunities and areas where the development of programming is needed.

### *EDA's Noncompetitive Travel, Tourism & Outdoor Recreation Grant*

Work continues with DLNR in managing and monitoring their contract for their 7 projects. As part of staff's review of the O'ahu Coral Restoration Enhancement Project, staff conducted a site visit of the DLNR's Coral Restoration Lab at Sand Island Access Road on July 19, 2024 to see how the coral is grown.

| Project Name                                  | Contract/Budget Amount | Spent as of 7/30/2024  |
|---|------------------------|--|
| DLNR Outdoor Recreation Projects              | \$7,200,000            | \$967,655  |
| Branding and Marketing Campaigns              | \$4,000,000            | \$4,000,000  |
| Urban Trails                                  | \$750,000              | \$0 – discussions taking place for refurbishment of surfboards along the Waikīkī Historic Trails.  |
| Community Tourism Collaborative - Agritourism | \$750,000              | \$0 – awaiting EDA approval to conduct an agritourism study and develop an Agritourism Plan that will inform the design of the Community Tourism Collaborative |

## X. FINANCE BRANCH

Contracts List: Pursuant to Hawai'i Revised Statutes §201B-7 (9), please note the below contracts executed during the month of July 2024.

| Contract No.  | Contractor                | Description  | Contract Amount | Total Contract Value | Start Date | End Date   |
|---|---------------------------|--|-----------------|----------------------|------------|------------|
| • 25001   | Abila, Inc.               | Microix and MIP Cloud Services   | \$15,319.41     | \$15,319.41          | 7/01/2024  | 10/31/2025 |
| 24012 S2  | Allana Buick & Bers, Inc. | Professional Architectural & Engineering Services for Hawai'i Convention Center Rooftop Repair | \$3,864,900.00  | \$4,167,727.10       | 7/26/2024  | 12/31/2026 |
| Contract Type:<br>• Sole Source<br>† Procurement Exemption<br>⊖ Emergency |                           |  | \$3,880,219.41  |                      |            |            |

Other activities related to procurement, contracts, Hawai'i Convention Center, and Legislative Audit will be reported in the Budget, Finance, and Convention Center Standing Committee report at the HTA board meeting.