



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HVCB TEAM PUSHES FOR MEETINGS BUSINESS AT BACK-TO-BACK EVENTS

HONOLULU – Starting today, sales teams led by the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) are seeking new leads for meetings business in the Hawaiian Islands at major tradeshows being held back-to-back in Chicago and Las Vegas.

"The Motivation Show and IMEX America are both strong opportunities to showcase the Hawaiian Islands as an ideal place to conduct business," said Mike McCartney, president and CEO of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA). "The meetings, conventions and incentives market continues to be an area of growth to Hawai'i's visitor industry. The HTA together with the Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) and HVCB are committed to marketing Hawai'i as a premier meetings destination as we prepare to host the APEC 2011 Leaders' Week in November."

The Motivation Show, October 4-6, takes place in Chicago and has been the world's largest incentive exhibition in recent years. The following week, IMEX America will make its U.S. debut in Las Vegas, October 11-13, and bring to planners and exhibitors the successful tradeshow format that has worked so well in Europe.

"Both of these events are being attended by top buyers in the meetings industry, and we're confident of generating leads on group bookings when they recognize the advantages that Hawai'i offers to help grow their business," said John Monahan, HVCB's president and CEO. "Incentive travel continues to be a strong and consistent source of business for Hawai'i, and we have seen a resurgence in new business opportunities for booking association and corporate meetings this year."

At The Motivation Show, more than 5,000 executives representing the incentive, recognition, loyalty, and motivation segments of the meetings industry are expected to participate in this tradeshow designed to offer strategies to inspire workforce productivity.

HVCB's sales team is led by Kathy Dever, HVCB's Midwest regional sales director, and includes representatives from seven Hawai'i industry partners: The Kahala Hotel & Resort; Makena Beach & Golf Resort; Marriott Resorts Hawaii; Paradise Cove Luau; Hawaii State Tours; TMG Hawaii; and Maui Jim Sunglasses.

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A message the sales team will be promoting at The Motivation Show is the Hawaiian Islands' proven track record as an incentive travel destination for companies needing to provide added motivation for workers to meet sales and production goals.

The industry response to the introduction of IMEX America has been huge, with thousands of meetings and convention professionals participating and more than 1,500 exhibitors from around the world. Unique to IMEX America is its program of 2,000-plus qualified hosted buyers, the largest ever held in North America, taking part in pre-scheduled appointments with exhibitors and at the tradeshow. The hosted buyers represent associations, corporations, and agencies worldwide, with 80 percent coming from North America.

Hawai'i's display area at the tradeshow will have a dominant presence showcasing the images, colors, music, and appealing qualities of the Hawaiian Islands. HVCB's Joan Palmtag, Western regional sales director, and Joseph Nagle, Eastern regional sales director are organizing Hawai'i's presentation.

They are being joined by sales representatives from 40 Hawai'i industry partners: Akina Aloha Tours; Aloha Holidays; Aston Hotels & Resorts; Blue Hawaiian Helicopters; DeSilva Meeting Consultants; Dolphin Quest; Fair Wind Cruises; Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa; Grand Wailea – A Waldorf Astoria Resort; Gray Line Hawaii, Polynesian Adventure Tours; Halekulani Hotel; Hawaii Forest & Trail; Hilton Hawaiian Village Waikiki Beach Resort; Hilton Waikoloa Village; Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa; Hyatt Regency Waikiki Resort & Spa; Interisland Airways; Island Partners Hawai'i; Kathy Clarke Hawaii; Kauai Beach Resort; MC&A Inc.; Kualoa Ranch; Makani Catamaran Honolulu; Makena Beach & Golf Resort; Marriott Resorts Hawaii; Maui Jim Sunglasses; The Mauna Lani Bay Hotel & Bungalows; Panache Destination Management; Paradise Cove Luau; Polynesian Cultural Center; Prince Resorts Hawaii, Roberts Hawaii; Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii, Starwood Hotels & Resorts Waikiki; TMG Hawaii; The Kahala Hotel & Resort; The Westin Maui Resort & Spa; Travel Plaza Transportation, Trilogy Excursions; and Turtle Bay Resort.

HVCB is contracted by the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA), the state of Hawai'i's tourism agency, to provide marketing management services for the conventions, meetings and incentives market segment. HTA was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of Hawai'i's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs.

Special note to media: The Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) recognizes the use of the 'okina ['] or glottal stop, one of the eight consonants of the (modern) Hawaiian language; and the kahakō [ā] or macron (e.g., in place names of Hawai'i such as Lāna'i). However, HVCB respects the individual use of these markings for names of organizations and businesses.

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For information about hosting corporate meetings and incentives in the Hawaiian Islands, visit HVCB's website at BusinessAloha.com or call 1-888-424-2924.

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For more information about the Hawai'i Convention Center, visit www.hawaiiiconvention.com or call (808) 943-3500. For additional information about SMG, visit www.smgworld.com.