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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HAWAII'S MOTIVATIONAL APPEAL FOR INCENTIVE TRAVEL  
RECOGNIZED IN INTERNATIONAL STUDY**

**HONOLULU** – Hawai'i's meetings industry received an early gift for the holidays being recognized as an "up-and-coming destination" for motivational events in the recently released *Focus on Destination Selection* study by the Site International Foundation.

The research study incorporated input from planners in determining the key factors that go into selecting locations for performance rewards or motivational marketing programs.

"We are very pleased to be recognized by the SITE International Foundation," said Mike McCartney, president and CEO of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. "Hawai'i has always been known for its inspirational beauty and cultural appeal. And, as shown by this study and Hawai'i's selection as the location for the 2011 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meeting, Hawai'i is increasingly being recognized for its world-class facilities and convenient Asia-Pacific location for serious business meetings."

The Site International Foundation's mission is to increase usage of motivational experiences and incentive travel worldwide and provides research and educational programs to its 2,000-plus members in 92 countries.

In its *Focus on Destination Selection* study, Hawai'i was one of only three places worldwide, and the only one in the United States, cited as an up-and-coming destination, the other two being Africa and China.

In commenting on the findings, Steve O'Malley, Vice President of Site International Foundation and Research Committee Chair, said, "This study documented that among planners, 82 percent ranked cultural or exotic appeal as the greatest influencer in selecting a destination."

O'Malley also noted, "While a destination can be seen as inspiring and motivational, the local community must work together to demonstrate to potential audiences how they can be an ideal choice for extraordinary experiences while simultaneously demonstrating value to the business owners approving the destination selection."

Michael Murray, HVCB vice president of sales and marketing for corporate meetings and incentives, said the SITE International Foundation study re-affirms Hawai'i's strength as an incentive travel destination.

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“Planners know that the Hawaiian Islands’ appeal is universal to all age groups and backgrounds, which makes an offer to come here especially effective as a motivator to meet production goals and achieve objectives,” said Murray. “Plus, they appreciate the industry-wide collaboration that Hawai’i’s meetings professionals offer at each step of the process in helping to meet their clients’ expectations about the islands as a rewarding experience.”

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:** 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.

**Statewide Meetings Contact:**

Michael Murray, CMP, CMM, CASE  
Vice President, Sales and Marketing, CMI Division  
Hawai’i Visitors and Convention Bureau  
mmurray@hvcb.org  
(808) 924-0253

Patrick Dugan  
Senior Vice President  
McNeil Wilson Communications  
Patrick.Dugan@MWC-Anthology.com  
(808) 539-3411

For information about hosting corporate meetings and incentives in Hawai’i, visit HVCB’s website at [BusinessAloha.com](http://BusinessAloha.com) or call 1-888-424-2924.

**Hawai’i Convention Center Contact:**

Neil Mullanaphy  
Executive Director, Sales and Marketing  
The Hawai’i Convention Center  
nmullanaphy@hccsmg.com  
(703) 647-7410

Teddi Anderson  
President  
The Limtiaco Company  
TeddiA@TheLimtiacoCompany.com  
(808) 535-9099, ext. 103

For more information about the Hawai’i Convention Center, visit [www.hawaiiiconvention.com](http://www.hawaiiiconvention.com) or call (808) 943-3500. For additional information about SMG, visit [www.smgworld.com](http://www.smgworld.com).