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Hawai'i Tourism Authority and Meet Hawai'i Execute Three-Year Partnership with JTB to Attract High-Value Business Events from Japan

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) and Meet Hawai'i remain committed to strengthening the Japan market for the Hawaiian Islands. Furthering this commitment, HTA, Meet Hawai'i and JTB have signed a Memorandum of Understanding codifying a three-year partnership to promote and secure targeted business meetings, conventions and incentive events from Japan.

“Ensuring a strong pipeline of Japan meetings, conventions and incentives business for Hawai'i is critical to having the right combination of business and leisure travelers supporting our communities statewide,” said Mufi Hannemann, HTA's board chair. “This partnership with JTB over the next three years demonstrates the collaborative approach and focus of all entities to make it happen.”

“Hawai'i, with its beautiful nature, history, and culture, is not only an attractive destination for the Japanese but is also globally recognized as a leading location for business events,” said Yamaguchi Takeshi, executive officer, head of JTB's Purchasing & Products Management Business Division. “However, due to the recent depreciation of the yen and the high cost of living in Hawai'i, the demand for business events, including meetings, incentive travel and conventions by Japanese companies has been slow to recover. Recognizing the importance of this market for both Japan and Hawai'i, we have decided to form a partnership to actively promote its recovery.”

Takeshi continued, “In line with the partnership agreement, we are committed to contributing to Hawai'i's continued development in collaboration with its residents. We aim to uphold the spirit of responsible tourism, ensuring the preservation of Hawai'i's beauty for future generations while also considering how travelers and businesses can contribute to Hawai'i's future.”

The three-year partnership will commence on January 1, 2025 and continue through December 31, 2027. Partnership highlights include the following key initiatives:

- Establishment of JTB Ambassador Program - Through training with Meet Hawai'i, JTB will implement an ambassador program to strengthen the company's expertise in organizing business events in the Hawaiian Islands. The program's goal is to enhance JTB's ability to attract targeted business meetings and events and create tailored proposals to address customers' needs.
- Development of JTB ONLY Plan - JTB will provide customers with value-added information on Hawai'i travel, including updates on each island and regenerative tourism experiences to guide first-time and repeat visitors during their trip.
- Collaboration on Exchange Programs - HTA, Meet Hawai'i and JTB will collaborate to develop exchange programs that promote relationship building and cultural understanding of Japan and Hawai'i by providing opportunities for participants to experience each other's cultures firsthand.

- Enhanced Support Programs for Organizing Business Events - JTB will enhance its support programs, which are aimed at helping clients execute their business events in Hawai'i more effectively.

“This partnership strengthens our collaborative, proactive efforts to reinvigorate the high-value Japan meetings market and provides yet another strategic way for tourism to support Hawai'i's communities,” said Daniel Nāho'opī'i, HTA's interim president and CEO. “We must ensure the Hawaiian Islands remain top-of-mind among existing and potential clients and support them in organizing their upcoming business events throughout our state.”

Meet Hawai'i works on HTA's behalf to reinforce the brand of the Hawaiian Islands as a world-class destination for business meetings, conventions and incentive programs, and provide support to prospective customers globally. For more information, visit [MeetHawaii.com](https://meethawaii.com).

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Download photos from Memorandum of Understanding Signing (September 27, 2024):

<https://finnpartners.box.com/s/ejig0wqbn0lrzs21n95pxv3v3kuknbqn>

Photo credit: Hawai'i Tourism Authority

About the Hawai'i Tourism Authority

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority is the state agency responsible for representing The Hawaiian Islands around the world, and for holistically managing tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with community desires, economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, and visitor industry needs. HTA works with the community and industry to Mālama Hawai'i – care for our beloved home. For more information about HTA, visit hawaii-tourism-authority.org or follow @HawaiiHTA on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Threads](#), and [X](#).

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