

"HVCB Tourism Industry Update" is a weekly briefing of travel news and developments affecting Hawai'i's visitor industry, compiled by the HVCB Market Trends Department.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: **Darlene Morikawa**
dmorikawa@hvcb.org
808.924.0259

Inside this issue...

1. FEATURE

- ➔ Deadline for Implementation of Biometric Passport Extended

2. HAWAII

Consumer Travel Behaviors

- ➔ Total Passenger Volume to Hawai'i Up Seven Percent for Latest Seven-Day Period

Current Industry Developments

- ➔ HVCB Celebrates Tourism's Success with 102nd Annual Luncheon
- ➔ HVCB and Partners Attend 2004 ASAE Annual Meeting with *Hawai'i is Cookin'* Theme

3. NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL

Consumer Travel Behaviors

- ➔ International Arrivals to the U.S. up 20 Percent in May
- ➔ Survey: Ability to View Hotel Room Photos Online Key Factor in Consumer Decision

Current Industry Developments

- ➔ Travel Agent E-Ticketing Reach Record Levels in July

1. FEATURE

↑ TOP

➔ Deadline for Implementation of Biometric Passport Extended

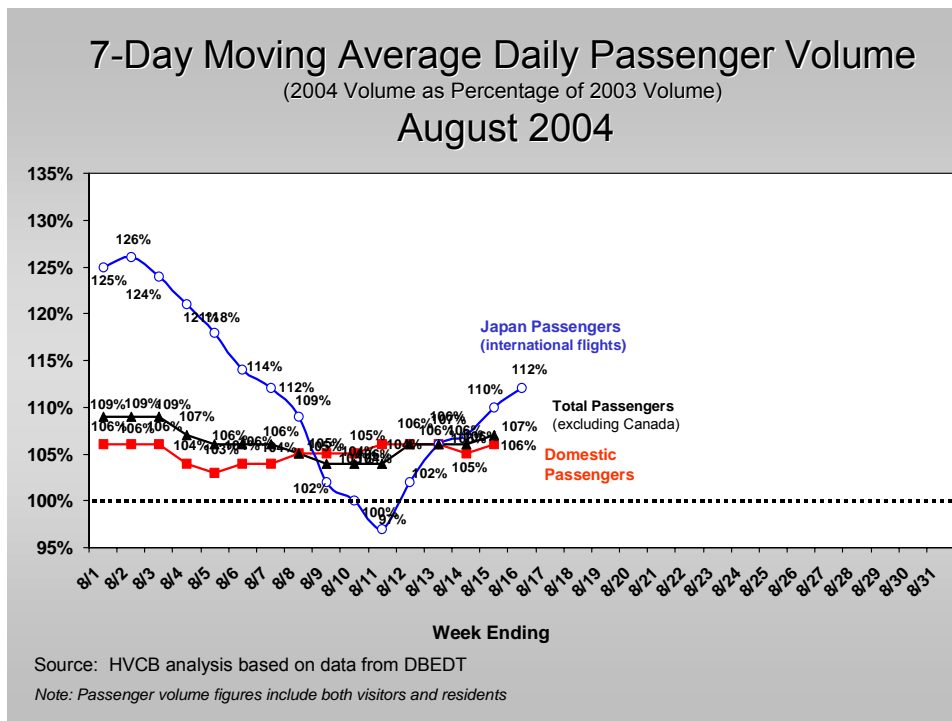
President Bush signed the bill granting Visa Waiver Program (VWP) countries one additional year (by October 26, 2005) to begin producing new passports with biometric identifiers (H.R. 4417), according to the [U.S. Department of State](#). The bill was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on June 14, 2004; and by the U.S. Senate on July 22. The law previously required the 27 VWP countries (including Japan and Australia) to begin issuing passports with biometric technology by October 26, 2004. Many of these countries would not have been able to meet this deadline, which would have resulted in a drop in visitor arrivals.

- A biometric identifier is an electronic scan of a physical feature (e.g., eye, hand, fingerprint or face) that allows immigration inspectors to distinguish travelers.
- Travelers from VWP countries total nearly 14 million, accounting for two-thirds of all overseas leisure, business, student and medical travel to the U.S.

CONSUMER TRAVEL BEHAVIORS

➤ Total Passenger Volume to Hawai'i Up Seven Percent for Latest Seven-Day Period

According to statistics published by the state [Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism](#), total domestic and international (excluding Canada) volume on nonstop flights arriving in Hawai'i is up seven percent over 2003 levels for the latest seven-day period ending August 15, 2004. Domestic passenger volume is up six percent over prior-year levels, while nonstop passenger volume from Japan increased 12 percent for the seven-day period.



CURRENT INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS

➤ HVCB Celebrates Tourism's Success with 102nd Annual Luncheon

Following one of Hawai'i's biggest summers for tourism, HVCB will hold its 102nd Annual Luncheon on Thursday, September 2, and the Sheraton Waikiki. This year's theme is *Ho'okahi 'Ka Ilaui Like 'Ana* (Together With One Purpose), symbolizing the collaborative and productive working relationship of HVCB, its Island Chapters, HTA, and the visitor industry. The guest speaker for the luncheon is John Toner, newly appointed chairman of HTA and executive vice president of the Ko Olina Resort Association. Musicians and dancers from the Polynesian Cultural Center will greet arriving guests, with luncheon entertainment provided by Kaleohone. Also participating will be Aloha Festivals' Royal Court, which begins its statewide celebration next month. HVCB will also present its 2004 Maile Awards during the luncheon. Registration begins at 11:15 a.m., with the program starting at noon.

- Cost is \$45 per person, or \$450 for a table of 10.
- For more information or to make reservations, visit www.hvcb.org/luncheon; call (808) 924-0262; or e-mail luncheon@hvcb.org

➤ HVCB and Partners Attend 2004 ASAE Annual Meeting with *Hawai'i is Cookin'* Theme

[HVCB](#) and its travel partners are representing the state with the theme, "*Hawai'i is Cookin'*," in Minneapolis at the 2004 American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting. Michael Murray, director of sales for HVCB's CMI division said, "our *Hawai'i is Cookin'* theme has the twofold message of, one, Hawai'i is a hot travel destination and two, we're going to cook up some great deals in Minneapolis to schedule association meetings in the Islands." During the tradeshow exposition (August 14-17), HVCB and its partners will host a dominant exhibit display highlighting Hawai'i's natural beauty, cultural appeal, diverse meetings infrastructure, and range of pre- and post-meeting activities.

3. NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL

↑TOP

■ CONSUMER TRAVEL BEHAVIORS

➤ International Arrivals to the U.S. up 20 Percent in May

The U.S. welcomed 3.2 million international visitors, up 20 percent over the same month last year, according to the [Office of Travel and Tourism Industries](#) (OTTI) of the U.S. Department of Commerce. May marked the fourth consecutive month of double-digit international arrivals growth, helping boost year-to-date international arrivals to 14.5 million, up 17 percent compared to the first five months of 2003.

- Japanese arrivals totaled 1.5 million through May 2004, an increase of 33 percent over prior year figures.
- Through May 2004, Canadian arrivals to the U.S. equaled 5.5 million, up 15 percent from 2003 levels.

➤ Survey: Ability to View Hotel Room Photos Online Key Factor in Consumer Decision

Sixty-seven percent of respondents on a Hotels.com survey of website users said that the ability to view hotel room photos online is key in their decision to book a room online, reported [eMarketer](#). Another 50 percent of respondents were concerned about hotel location and the accuracy of a hotel's description online, when booking over the Internet. The survey also asked about hotel amenities that consumers seek when choosing a hotel. Top responses include:

- Complimentary breakfasts (64%)
- Swimming pool (56%)
- Luxury room amenities (36%)
- Jacuzzi bathtub (35%)
- Fitness center/spa (26%)
- Kid-friendly features (19%)
- In-room refrigerator (19%)
- High-tech features (16%)

■ CURRENT INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENTS

➤ Travel Agent E-Ticketing Reach Record Levels in July

According to the [Airlines Reporting Corporation](#) (ARC), average e-ticketing as a percentage of total ticketing by ARC-accredited travel agencies and corporate travel departments reached a record level of 87 percent in July, up nearly four percentage points from the same month last year. Average weekly sales per member-agency location also continued well above 2003 levels, with average weekly sales up 13 percent compared to last year. ARC also reports that domestic airfares for July 2004 were five percent below prior-year levels.

We welcome any suggestions or comments that you may have that will help us improve the quality of the weekly Tourism Industry Update. Please feel free to share your ideas:

Darlene Morikawa ✦ dmorikawa@hvcb.org ✦ tel. 808.924.0259