

HAWAIIAN AIRLINES NEW SERVICE LAUNCH - ONTARIO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT PUBLIC RELATIONS CAMPAIGN

THE CHALLENGE

Founded in Honolulu in 1929, Hawaiian Airlines is Hawaii's longest-serving and largest airline. The nation's 12th largest airline, Hawaiian plans to connect Hawaii with more U.S. cities than any other airline. The company's growth is dependent upon aggressive mainland expansion, including adding service in Ontario to capture the explosive growth in the Inland Empire market. A typical new city launch is planned six months in advance, but the plan for the Ontario market called for a shortened launch window of only three months to take advantage of the full summer travel season. In addition to a general advertising campaign and special introductory fares, the challenge was to create awareness for the new daily nonstop service specifically with the following target audiences: the community, elected officials, business leaders, travel agents and wholesalers, airport supporters, and the media.

THE APPROACH

To create maximum awareness, five events were planned for the week of the inaugural flight. A community kickoff event was held at Ontario Mills, which averages 50,000 daily attendance, and included Hawaiian entertainment plus five Hawaiian Airlines trip giveaways. Cross promotion efforts with Hilo Hattie and

Disney included Hawaiian merchandise and tickets to the Hollywood premier of Disnev's summer blockbuster Hawaiian movie Lilo & Stitch. At the Ontario Convention Center, Hawaiian Airlines hosted a VIP luncheon with the area's top 150 business leaders and an evening travel agent reception including the top 150 travel agencies and wholesalers in the Inland Empire. A media brunch was held at the Ontario Airport as well as the Inaugural Gate Ceremony to celebrate the departure of the first flight. The Gate Ceremony included speeches by the Ontario mayor, representatives from the Los Angeles City Council and Los Angeles World Airports, plus other government officials and business leaders. The event featured Hawaiian entertainment, lei presentations to passengers and dignitaries, and an authentic Hawaiian Kahu minister blessing ceremony.

THE RESULTS

All events boasted maximum attendance with extensive coverage in major electronic and print media. With the extensive media exposure and awarness generated, Hawaiian Airlines experienced strong bookings with summer flights running 80% of their 252-seat capacity and many flight dates sold out.



