



ISLAND MATTERS *Mufi Hannemann*

The Value Of Infrastructure Improvements

It's all about tourism. We have just unveiled a new radio show to tout the state's No. 1 industry every Tuesday morning from 7 to 8 a.m. on AM 690 and 94.3 FM The Answer.

Tourism Tuesday is a new talk radio segment covering all things tourism — the accomplishments, achievements and importance of Hawai'i's economic engine.

During the very first *Tourism Tuesday* show Nov. 14, veteran talk show host Mike Buck and I discussed a myriad of topics, including the ongoing debate over transient vacation rentals, the threats to the Tourism Accommodations Tax, the increase in criminal activity against tourists, our homelessness challenges, the need for long-overdue improvements at DK International Airport, and parking hassles in Waikiki, among others.

Tourism as an industry, for all that it does for the well-being of our state's economy, is often underappreciated and taken for granted. Some folks assume that visitors will always frequent our state in huge numbers, no matter what, or that Hawai'i is immune from the

major natural or manmade disasters that are occurring elsewhere.

This show hopes to address many of the misconceptions and inaccuracies associated with tourism, and make the case that it's in all of our best interests to work collaboratively to ensure that our visitor industry is "No Ka 'Oi."

This week, we had two of my staff, HLTA millennials Jared Higashi and Alex Roth, go on air to share their take on tourism as young professionals working in the hospitality industry, along with some of HLTA's initiatives to engage the up-and-coming generation.

As this show will be aired live every Tuesday morning, if you would like to ask questions, feel free to con-



The author and host Mike Buck unveil *Tourism Tuesday*, a new radio show on all things tourism. PHOTO COURTESY ALEX ROTH

tact the Mike Buck show on Facebook, or call in to the studio at 246-5467.

Each week will be different, as we will feature various hospitality industry executives and employees from around the 808 as guests on the show. We look forward to seeing this radio show develop, and hopefully

our audience will also weigh in by sharing your mana'o and ideas to strengthen Hawai'i's largest private-sector provider of employment.

Future Of Existing Buildings

I recently moderated a panel discussion for The Future of Existing Build-

ings event hosted by Chelsea Group and its hardworking CEO George Benda.

Chelsea is a building-science consulting firm specializing in preserving and enhancing existing mechanical infrastructure in commercial office, retail and industrial facilities.

The whole-day session was conducted in collaboration with HLTA's Engineering Council. This was my second consecutive year moderating the closing panel, and I have to say I am always impressed by the passion and depth of knowledge from both the speakers and the audience.

The panel that I led featured a notable array of industry experts: Dave Lee, director of system facilities and biomedical engineer-

ing at The Queen's Medical Center; Josh Stanbro, director of the city's newly created Office of Sustainability; and Jim Kelly, vice president for corporate communications at Hawaiian Electric Co.

The panelists covered in-depth topics, including the future challenges to our existing power infrastructure; tips for making existing buildings more energy efficient; identifying reasonable solutions to mitigate seawater flooding-related problems in our most vulnerable buildings, especially in Waikiki; reflections on the outcomes of the Waikiki Community Center; and the necessary steps to take to ensure we can realize the vision of a sustainable Honolulu.

It was also an opportunity

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to demonstrate the priority that the hospitality industry places on being clean, green and sustainable. If the state's lofty goal of 100-percent clean energy by 2045 is going to be attained, it will take everyone's effort to make it a reality.

One of the main takeaways from the day's conversation was the importance of planning for resiliency.

It was pointed out during the panel that, typically, when a natural disaster occurs and wipes out the infrastructure, as we have witnessed all too frequently, things are rebuilt the same way they were the first time.

Unless there is a creative plan in place to make the necessary improvements and changes during the rebuilding process, the same problems will occur all over again. I certainly appreciated that fact, since one of my mayoral actions was dealing

with the huge sewage spill in Waikiki that was a result of decades of neglecting improvements and repairs to our wastewater system infrastructure.

We not only rebuilt it differently, but put forth procedures and practices to mitigate against those types of negative incidents reoccurring in the future.

That's why it is so important to regularly check, test, repair and upgrade infrastructure and plan wisely, so that you'll always be prepared to take the necessary steps to deal with calamities and tragedies, whenever they may occur.

As I have always maintained when it comes to infrastructure — "The longer you delay, the more you're going to pay."

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Christie I, of Waiālae says:

"I cannot thank you enough for the fabulous work you did in seeing me through my dental procedure. I am so grateful to have my confidence, my self-esteem and most importantly-my beautiful smile! My dental problems started when I was 12 years old. Since that time I've never been back to the dentist until I got the courage to come into your office. Growing up, I never had any friends. The boys called me "corroded". I never smiled and when I'd talk I would cover my mouth: People could not understand me because I would not open wide enough to speak clearly. It wasn't until my teeth were falling out that I knew I had to do something. I could not continue living this way. Today, I smile more and a better person to be around. My husband has noticed how much happier I am. So, with that said, thank you Dr. Miyasaki for your patience and never making judgments."

—Much Aloha, Christie



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